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An Exploratory Study: Lack of Assertiveness and its Relation with Aggression and Appearance Anxiety

Hafsa Habib
Clinical Psychologist/Lecturer, Peshawar Medical College, Riphah international University, Pakistan.
Summiya Ahmad
Associate Professor, Psychology Department, University of Peshawar, Pakistan.

Abstract

Aggression and appearance anxiety are one of the crucial concerns in psychology, whereas human aggression and appearance anxiety has expected unlimited consideration. Even though some studies reported that self-assertiveness is associated to aggression and appearance anxiety, the mechanism whereby appearance anxiety and self-assertiveness affects aggression and appearance anxiety still unclear. This study explored the association between aggression and appearance anxiety cause self-assertiveness, as well as the outcome of self-appearance as a mediating factor. This research uses the Assertiveness scale, Appearance anxiety Scale, and the Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire. The association is explored by self-reported scales from N = 40 male and female from Peshawar university, Sarhad university, Iqra university and Hayatabad Medical Complex (HMC) in which n = 20 were male and n =20 were female, the average age was M = 21.3 years (SD = 3.147); Results showed that the aggression and appearance anxiety is related with lack of assertiveness. The higher the level of low assertiveness have positive relationship with the higher levels of aggression and appearance anxiety; Assertiveness was negatively related with aggression and appearance anxiety and positively correlated with low aggression and lack of appearance-anxiety.

Keywords: self-assertiveness, aggression and appearance anxiety, mediating effect, appearance anxiety

Introduction

According to models of cognitive vulnerability, depression develops and persists because of maladjusted self-schema that reflects vulnerability and low self-esteem. It is hypothesized that these cognitive sensitivity characteristics combine with social stressors to raise possibility for depression and other emotional disorders. These factors are triggered by undesirable life situation or destructive moods. According to this school of thought, experiencing aggressiveness, and concern about one's looks can lead to a lack of self-assertiveness, but they can also be used to explain how through mediation and under what circumstances through moderation certain variables affect assertiveness.

According to Galassi, assertive behavior is the most complex behavior displayed during an interpersonal engagement in which a person expresses their feelings, reactions, wishes, and attitudes. Additionally, it expresses the individual's thoughts and rights to others in a straightforward, firm, and honest manner while

respecting their own emotional state, attitudes, wants, feelings, and moralities. (Galassi and Galassi, 1977, p. 233.)

Different authors have given different definitions of assertiveness. Lazarus (1971) defined assertiveness as a subunit of "emotional freedom" and emphasized its importance. According to him, assertiveness is a "social competence." According to Jakubowski (1973), assertiveness is the ability to defend one's own human rights without infringing upon the fundamental rights of others. It is a behavior that permits an individual to act in his own best interest and defend himself without excessive fear, according to Alberti and Emmons (1974). It has been described as a behavioral, emotional, and cognitive reaction that optimizes an individual's chances of achieving their own objectives. (Rich and Schroeder, 1976).

Antisocial behavior is linked to the personality attribute of aggression. An integrated explanatory paradigm for aggressiveness has been provided by Anderson and Bushman (2002). It incorporates the interaction of situational and environmental elements with personal, cognitive, and emotional components. The aggressiveness scale, developed by Buss and Perry in 1992 and consisting of 29 items categorized into four categories physical aggressiveness, verbal aggression, rage, and hostility is one of the most often used tools for this type of research. The instrumental component is represented by the first two elements. Anger is the emotional component that involves physiological activation, whereas hostility is the cognitive component that incorporates sentiments of injustice and antagonism. Anger appears to serve as a psychological link between cognitive and instrumental functions. Taking into account the entire scale, the male participants in the initial trial were more aggressive. (Buss & Perry, 1992).

Aggression and assertiveness are interlinked and appearance anxiety according to social cognitive theory, poor expectations about one's capacity and performance can result in delinquent behavior, and aggression and appearance anxiety are induced by the aggressor's cognitive bias. (Ganooverway et al., 2009). Specially, decreasing aggressive and extreme behavior comprises strong sense of assertiveness (Bandura, 1994; Bandura, 1997). Research has indicated that the externalization of violence and criminal behavior can be effectively controlled by assertiveness in emotion regulation. Additionally, there is a negative correlation between appearance anxiety and aggressiveness in emotion regulation. (Caprara et al., 2010; e.g., Wu et al., 2015). Furthermore, research across a variety of fields has demonstrated that appearance

anxiety and aggressiveness were predicted by a lack of assertiveness. (Buser et al., 2015).

Essentially, a decrease in aggression was associated with an increase in assertiveness (e.g., Buser et al., 2015). The study by Wei et al. (2008) on sense of assertiveness, self-efficacy, and self-control in sports relates to a person's belief in their ability to play sports and their assessment of their ability to use their own skills or abilities to complete tasks in sports; in other words, it can refer to a subjective judgment that controls one's aggressive and assertive sports behaviors while fostering self-efficacy in their personality and competence. (Wei et al., 2008).

Purpose of the Research Study

The objectives of the study is to explore aggression and appearance Anxiety analysis that will investigate whether lack of assertiveness as a mediator effects to an independent variable as a dependent variable. On other side the moderation investigation, explored whether the statistical relation between independent variables predict an independent variable. While this variance between these two types of variable is explicit in recent study. The main goal of this research investigation is to measure the mediating and moderating relationship and effect of aggression and appearance anxiety aggravates lack of assertiveness.

Research Objective

1. To find out the negative and positive effect of assertiveness on the aggression and appearance anxiety.

Hypotheses

1. Aggression and appearance anxiety will be negatively associated with lack of self-assertiveness.

2. When aggression and appearance anxiety is low then it also affects the level of self-assertiveness.

Methodology

The Aggression, appearance anxiety and self-assertiveness Scale is used. The Buss perry aggression Scale was use to measures the most necessary psychometric properties and the validity of scale. The Appearance anxiety Scale is comprised of 10-point scale and measures general self-esteem in different people.

In addition to the Aggression and appearance anxiety and self-assertiveness questions, the survey has been done and collect on the following demographic information: date of birth, ethnicity, gender, age from 18 to 40 and One of the research

goal is to explore how certain demographic variables associated to students' aggression and appearance anxiety to endorse or prove previously stated outcomes related to gender, age with their aggression. The Peshawar Universities, Sarhad University, Iqra University, Leady reading hospital, Mercy Hospital, Prime hospital, and HMC Peshawar were selected for data collection by using convenient sampling technique.

Study Design

The research design is used in this study is descriptive correlational research design the purpose is to find out relationship between variable assertiveness, aggression and appearance anxiety.

Instruments

Buss and Perry Aggression Scale

Mark Perry and Arnold H. Buss from the University of Texas in Austin. An aggressiveness questionnaire was created. Four scores were produced via replicated factor analyses: verbal and physical aggression, hostility with anger. Anger assists as a moderator between hostility and physical and verbal aggressiveness, according to correlational study. Over time, the scales established internal consistency and stability. Men accomplished significantly higher on physical anger and much better on verbal and hostile aggression. For Anger, there was no difference in sex. Different personality qualities were connected with different scales. The different types of aggression's peer nominations and scale scores were connected. These results point to the necessity of evaluating both the total amount of aggression and its constituent parts.

There are four magnitudes on the feedback form. The CFA results for physical aggression were favorable: The verbal aggressiveness CFA scores were good, with $\chi 2 /df = 1.762$. The results of the CFA on rage were positive: $\chi 2 /df = 1.105$. The results of the hostility CFA were positive: RMSEA = 0.022 and $\chi 2 /df = 1.196$. Item factor loadings ranged from the lowest ($\alpha = 0.461$) to the greatest ($\alpha = 0.709$. For the measurements of physical aggressiveness there were nine items, and for verbal aggression five items, the anger measured by seven items, and hostility was evaluated by eight items, the corresponding Cronbach's alpha coefficients were 0.816, 0.755, 0.809, and 0.802. The overall scale's Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated 0.92 as it demonstrating strong reliability. The Cronbach alpha for this scale in Chinese was 0.94. (e.g., Yang and Wang, 2012).

Appearance Anxiety Inventory

A self-report measure called the AAI is used to evaluate body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) symptoms.

A person rates each of the ten questions on a 5-point Likert scale. The item scores are added to create the score. F scores can have a range of 0 to 40. The mean score for community members was 13.0, but it is 27.0 for those with BDD. Scores at or above the suggested cutoff point of 19 indicate the probable presence of BDD.

The Assertiveness Inventory

Michael L. Emmons and Robert E. Alberti's Assertiveness Inventory. The 17-item Assertiveness Inventory (AI) is a self-report tool used to gauge an individual's assertiveness. The scale was given to 238 young people in Study AI, and the responses were examined to determine the measure's concurrent validity and psychometric qualities. The test-retest reliability coefficient was found to be r = 0.92, the α-reliability coefficient was found to be 0.93, and the Guttman split-half reliability was found to be 0.84. It was discovered that the scale has excellent temporal stability and internal consistency. The Rathus Assertiveness Scale and Wolpe-Lazarus Scale showed a strong correlation with the AI's concurrent validity, which was statistically significant (P ⩾ 0.001). The concurrent validity of the scale with other conceptually related measures was investigated in a study with 51 young individuals as sample subjects.

Data Analysis

The SPSS 21.0 has been used for statistical investigation to evaluate correlation, regression and variance analysis and for evaluation of constructing models AMOS 20.0 has been used to conducting path analyses. In line with Gerbing and Anderson's (1988) two-step protocol, this investigation validated the measurement model prior to construction. To verify the variations amongst the components, we employed CFA in our data analysis. As the next phase, we would begin the structural model analysis if the variables' discriminant validity was good.

Participants

42 university students (males =22, females =20) has been provided with questionnaires assessing aggression, appearance anxiety and assertiveness. In total, 120 questionnaires have been distributed to the students.

Procedure

Questionnaires were distributed to the subjects on different places in university, in

library, lecture rooms, in hospitals. Subjects were instructed to read the scale carefully and fill the items on questionnaire after being educate about the purpose and duration (10–15 minutes) of the evaluation time. Participants were also confirmed thorough privacy and confidentiality that they can terminate their contribution whenever they want to cancel it.

Results

Aggression, appearance anxiety and lack of Assertiveness:

Table 1: Alpha Reliability Coefficient for Major Study Variable (N=42)

Variables Items	Mean	SD	α	Range Actual	Potential	Skew
Aggression	29	64.25	13.2	17.1	59-77	30-90 .717
AAI	10	26.07	7.64			
Assertiveness	35	41.25	17.1			

Note: AA=Appearance Anxiety

The mean total score for assertiveness was 3.47, SD = 0.62, representing that the overall level of assertiveness score for male and female was mostly low. As shown in Table 1, the results demonstrated the mean score for assertiveness is significantly low in male and female as compare to aggression and appearance anxiety. A regression analysis demonstrated that the lack of assertiveness shows high level of aggression and appearance anxiety (β = 24.9, $p < 0.131$), the level of assertiveness also showed low Appearance anxiety the (β = .071, $p < 0.845$) and for aggression the (β = .233, $p < 0.269$) The depended variable assertiveness score for t test is (t= 1.546, $p < 0.131$) indicating that the overall assertiveness score was generally low. As shown in Table 1, the results show there were significant differences between assertiveness with appearance anxiety and aggression.

Table 2: Paired Sample t-test of Aggression, Appearance Anxiety and assertiveness (N=42)

Conditions	M	SD	t(2)	Sig	95% CI		β
					LL	UL	
Aggression	64.25	13.27	1.122	.269			.233
AAI	26.07	7.64	.197	.845	1.15	14.39	.071
Assertiveness	41.62		1.546	.131			24.8
		17.27					

*Note=AAI represent Appearance Anxiety Inventory while for aggression and appearance anxiety.*p<.05, **p<.01 &***p<.001*

Table 2 displays t-value and mean difference of Aggression, Appearance Anxiety and assertiveness. There was a significant difference on the scores of aggression (M=69.11, SD=6.27) appearance anxiety (M=69.33, SD=6.51) and for assertiveness (M= 41.62, SD= 17.27) conditions; t (2) aggression, t =1.12, p= .269, AAI, t = 0.197, p= .845 and for assertiveness t= 1.54, *p*=0.1

Table: 3 Coefficient Correlations for aggression and appearance anxiety with dependent variable assertiveness, (N= 42)

variables	Aggression	Appearance Anxiety
Aggression	1	-
Appearance Anxiety	-.064	1

Dependent Variable: Assertiveness P < 0.001,

In table 3 and 4 the Aggression level display positively correlated with Appearance anxiety whereas r (.18) = 1.000, p < .001), and significantly correlated with appearance anxiety   (r (.04) = .06, p < .001). Appearance anxiety significantly but negatively correlates with aggression r (-.06). As well as its concerns significantly negatively correlated with appearance anxiety r (.043) = -.005, p < .001) and, interestingly, both aggression and appearance anxiety significantly positively correlated with each of aggression and Appearance anxiety (r (.18) = 1.000 and r (.04) = 1.00 p < .05).

Table:4 Correlations for Aggression and Appearance Anxiety with Dependent Variable Assertiveness, (N= 42)

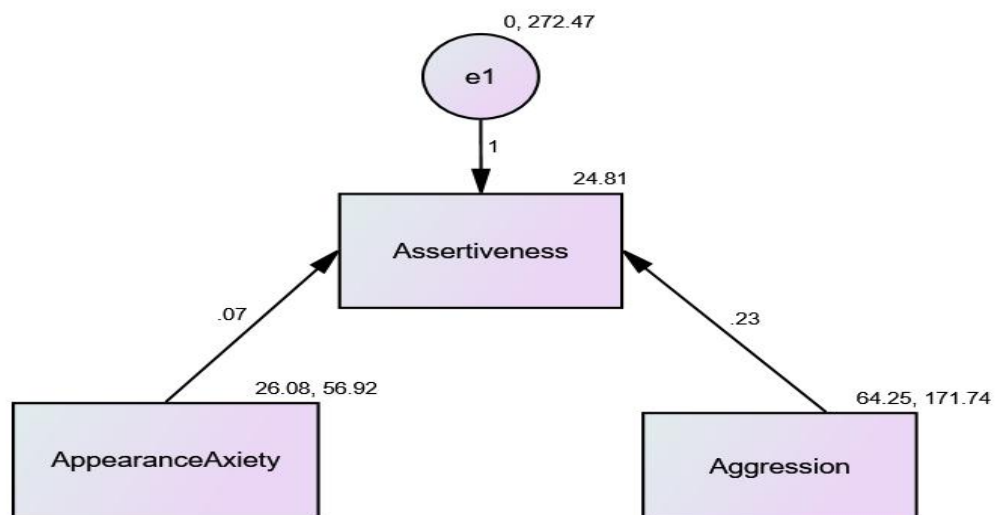| Variables	Assertiveness	Appearance Anxiety	Aggression
Assertiveness	1	-	-
Appearance Anxiety	*.04	1	-
Aggression	.18	*.06	1

*Level of significance = p < .001

Assertiveness Model Summer

Regression analysis found that the higher the aggression level showed lack of assertiveness (β = 0.188, p > 0.001), and that as the assertiveness decrease the aggression level increased (M= 64.2, SD= 13.27), the level of appearance anxiety also increased (β = 0.071, p > 0.001). The mean total score for aggression and appearance anxiety was (M= 26.07, SD = 7.64), indicating that the overall appearance anxiety level of the male and female was generally high.

Table 5 Model SEM on AMOS display clearly that the assertiveness in male female was low so the aggression and appearance anxiety was high.

Table 5: The SEM Model display for Aggression, assertiveness and appearance anxiety.

Discussion

The findings demonstrated that compared to teenagers with low assertiveness, those with high assertiveness displayed reduced aggression and appearance anxiety. The association between juvenile appearance anxiety and aggressiveness and lack of assertiveness was mediated by assertiveness. According to the study's findings, there were notable variations in both physical aggression and appearance anxiety in terms of aggressiveness. Gender disparities were mostly determined by individual trait variations, and this was also supported by earlier research. (Coulomb-Cabagno and Rascle, 2006; Maria et al., 2006; Wu and Jiang, 2012). A number of factors, including gender disparities and a lack of confidence in oneself, are thought to contribute to the variations in aggressiveness and appearance worries, according to some academics (Carol, 1974). According to some research, boys are more prone to have nervous system malfunction, challenging temperaments, impulsivity, and learning difficulties, which are risk factors for the development of attacks. (Gorman-Smith and Loeber, 2005; Lahey et al., 2006). These findings were consistent with those of earlier research (Vaughn et al., 1984; Zhu and Pan, 2004; Cheng et al., 2010). Regarding the section on the differences between demographic groups in terms of self-control and assertiveness, I have added the following: when a youth's level of aggression or appearance anxiety rises, they encounter many problems with assertiveness; a reduction in these two variables will be optimal for the person's psychological traits, which typically involve a process of ongoing mental health improvement. It is evident that when a person's physical and mental health significantly improves, their level of assertiveness and self-assertiveness also rises significantly, which is also consistent with the fundamental principles of the theory of human evolution. Assertiveness's direct impact on appearances and aggression (Buser et al., 2015; Brubacher et al., 2016; e.g., Khademi Mofrad and Mehrabi, 2015).

According to this study, aggressiveness and appearance anxiety are positively correlated with assertiveness, and assertiveness also functions as a mediator between the two. Aggression and appearance anxiety are significantly predicted negatively by assertiveness.

Using techniques and skills to increase self-assertiveness capacity and resources through self-control (e.g., Duckworth et al., 2014) would undoubtedly be a helpful and potential way to address the issue of aggression in competition, especially under the stress and pressure situations occurring in competition. This is a major

applied and practical implication. Combining these findings, the study suggests that assertiveness be emphasized in everyday competition and that efficient training techniques be used to strengthen self-control, to keep young people from acting aggressively or feeling anxious about their appearance in social situations or high-stress situations.

Therefore, among young people, self-assertiveness acts as a moderator between assertiveness and violence. First of all, this study's descriptive correlational study methodology precluded drawing conclusions about causality. To gain a deeper understanding of the mechanism by which assertiveness influences aggression and appearance anxiety, future research endeavors ought to employ a longitudinal strategy. Second, our attention was drawn to the role that a lack of assertiveness plays in the relationship between aggressiveness and appearance anxiety. However, there are still a number of significant mediating factors that need to be investigated, including personality traits and self-esteem, and these should be the subject of future research. It is yet to be confirmed whether the findings of this investigation may be extrapolated to other contexts.

Even though these limitations, the outcomes of this study help us understand the central relationship between assertiveness and aggression and appearance anxiety to a certain extent as well as its possible causes and mechanisms in the context of Pakistani especially in Peshawar culture.

Conclusion

Male and female displayed more aggression and appearance anxiety than assertiveness. As assertiveness decreased, the levels of aggression also increased. Higher the level of assertiveness will affect the aggression and appearance-anxiety level. Lack of assertiveness was negatively correlated with aggression and appearance anxiety and positively correlated with self-control. Self-control also negatively correlated with aggression and appearance anxiety. Furthermore, self-assertiveness had a full mediating effect between lack of assertiveness, aggression and appearance anxiety in the current study. In summary, assertiveness in daily life will reduce their aggression and appearance anxiety. Then, lack of assertiveness will increase aggression and appearance anxiety and it should be considered as the key indicator of psychological selection, and the mechanism of psychological selection of boxers should be improved. Therefore, this new conceptual framework can be a valuable and novel perspective for future research of aggression in applied fields such as

psychology, educational, teaching, industrial, and organizational and sports, providing possible targets for intervention and forming a basis for further research.

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