

Teacher Attachment and Intention of Aggressive Behaviour among School Children

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Abstract: *The main purpose of this study was to determine the relationships between teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour among school children. This study involved 426 school children using self-administered questionnaire from six government daily secondary schools. The school children were selected using simple random sampling method. Respondents were males (199) and females (227) between 13-17 years old. Teacher attachment was measured using inventory of parents attachment (IPPA) with respect to teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed that there is a significant with negative weak relationship between teacher attachment and school children intention of aggressive behavior ($r = -0.126, p < 0.05$). Also the result of t-test analysis showed that there is no significant difference between male and female school children in term of intention of aggressive behaviour ($t=1.050; p=0.294$). Moreover, the relationship indicates that lack of teachers monitoring and cooperation influence student to engage in intention of aggressive behaviour. It is recommended that policy makers and school counselors should give more emphasis on the improvement of good and suitable environment in the school to improve children satisfaction in the school environment and thus help improve their ability not to engage in aggressive behaviour.*

Keywords: *Aggressive Behaviour, Intention, Students, Teacher Attachment.*

I. Introduction

Aggressive behaviour among school children remains a serious and pervasive problem in schools today (DeVoe & Chandler, 2005; Moon, Hwang & McCluskey, 2011). Research on the occurrence of aggressive behaviour in schools have shown in nations throughout the world, such as in Ireland (O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001), Italy (Gini, 2004), Norway (Roland, 2000), and United States (Spriggs, Iannotti, Nansel & Haynie, 2007). Intention to engage in aggressive behaviour among school children comprise of factors like bad friends, lack of teachers monitoring, and harsh environment (Muñoz-Reyes et al., 2012). Moreover, many psychological, physical changes, social factors and experiences that occur in the environment determine students to engage in aggressive behaviour (Gallup et al., 2011; Savrun, 2000). Research has maintained the idea that experience in school aggressive behaviour has disturbing effects on school children (Salmon, James, Cassidy & Javaloyes, 2000; Dake, Price & Telljohann, 2003). Aggressive behavior could end in net harm in terms of a person's own well-being and phenomenology like shortened life and producing unhappy feelings to the welfare of others around the person, or the society as a whole but still be adaptive in an evolutionary sense. Aggressive behaviour is not maladaptive if the likely benefits overshadow the likely charges and school children take planned threats all the time, at all stages of the life cycle in which a person cannot rightfully regard dangerous behaviours as maladaptive based only on their costs (Gallup, O'Brien & Wilson, 2011; Sylwester & Pawlowski, 2011).

Moreover, the concept of intention of aggressive behaviour in the school has been known to be a vital focus for teachers and educators owing to its virtual steadiness over time and regularly link to a range of negative outcomes later in the life of students such as poor adjustment, substance use, crime, academic problems, suspension, dropping out of school and expulsion (Kazdin & Weisz, 2003). School children intention to involve in aggressive behaviour often come from several factors like inconsistent, overly permissive or harsh environment, exposure to aggressive act and poor social attachment (Cortazar, 2006). It is define as a behaviour in which an individual or a group of children frequently attacks, humiliates, and/or excludes a relatively powerless person in schools (Veenstra, et al., 2005). Aggressive behaviour among school children takes many ways towards other people which lead to vandalism (Casas, Weigel, Crick, Ostrov, Woods & Jansen Yeh et al., 2006). According to Keller, Spieker and Gilchrist (2005) avoidant attachment is significantly related with highly involving in aggressive behaviour. Despite the lack of influence of disorganized attachment on aggressive behavior described above, it remains possible that disorganized attachment from teachers, like avoiding a

student, is related with assessable bias to understanding others' intentions as hostile or the tendency to choose an aggressive method.

Studies have shown that students who respond to unsafe environment by developing insecure attachments from teachers always accept unprincipled interactive orientation to influence him or her to engage in aggressive behavior (Ellis et al., 2011). A student who engage in high levels of aggressive behavior is due to teachers practices is effective in most contexts (Henggeler & Schaeffer, 2010; Liddle, 2010; Waldron & Brody, 2010). More sure, one form of environmental influence that is often used to control dangerous or illegal adolescent behavior is punishment, like school expulsion and imprisonment. Some research suggests that such retaliatory reactions to adolescent school children to engage in aggressive behaviors actually make the behaviors worse (Atkins et al., 2002; Gatti, Tremblay & Vitaro, 2009). Clearly, engaging in aggressive behaviour could be costly or beneficial in the sense that the riskier the choice, the greater the potential benefits, but the less likely they are to be realized; therefore, engaging in aggressive behaviour means greater conflict in conclusions or consequences (Figueredo & Jacobs, 2010). It is clear that when school children are raised in high stress environment like discrimination, low attachment from the school, school disorganization, feeling disconnected from schools and teachers, student experiencing high levels of conflict from teachers and negative attachment with teachers often leads student the intention to engage in aggressive behaviour that are destructive to themselves and others (Steinberg, 2008). Interestingly, when teachers are harsh in the school environment it often hurt school children / students, and the fact that school children familiarize (explain) developmentally to such rearing situations does not suggest that such environments either promote child well-being or should be accepted as incapable of being improved in form or character or strength to the facts of life (Ellis, Figueredo, Brumbach & Schlomer, 2009; Pollak, 2008). Instead, being in a school with high stress from teachers in the environments enable school children to make the best of a bad situation and even though the best may still constitute a high risk approach that risks the person's survival and health, and is harmful to the long term welfare of the school as a whole (Mulvihill, 2005; Shonkoff, Boyce & McEwen, 2009).

Moreover, intention and real aggressive behaviour sometimes matter in the mind of a student (Munn et al, 2007). Moreover, real aggressive behaviour takes numerous systems besides intention and the most common methods are name calling, verbal assault, and teasing (Hoare et al, 2011; Green et al, 2010). Most researchers argue that intention of aggressive behaviour is in a state of mind which represent intent to cause harm and it is at the extremely high end of the aggressive behaviour continuum like murder and serious assault (Geen, 2001; Bushman and Anderson, 2001). The effect of real aggressive behaviour requires serious harm to other children in the school environment (Surgeon General, 2001). Similarly, Berkowitz (1993) considered it as impulsive, thoughtless that is unplanned driven by anger that has the ultimate motive of harming, hurt and destroy the target (person), and occurring in reaction to some perceived provocation (Pulkkinen, 1996). More sure, intention to engage in real aggressive behaviour can thus be categorized along each of the following extents; degree of hostile or agitated affect, present; learning and practice; degree to which the primary or ultimate goal is to harm the victim versus benefit the perpetrator; and degree to which consequences were considered proximate goal of all aggression (Anderson and Bushman, 2002a; Bushman and Anderson, 2001). Though, real aggressive behaviour on perpetrators (committees), as well as victims (sufferers), is very serious because it is related with social exclusion that is, the denial of rights and opportunities that others take for granted (Davis & Hill, 2001). It is more challenging to change secure teacher attachment in secondary schools because students spend less time with a single teacher (Pajares & Urda, 2008). But positive teacher attachment in the school was linked to engagement, effort, and attention and produce higher academic grades (Hughes et al. 2008). Moreover, a conflict between teacher and students always reduced cooperative participation and school liking, and increased intention to engage in aggressive behaviour (Ladd and Burgess 2001).

II. Statement Of Problem

This study attempts to examine the relationship between teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour among secondary school children in Selangor state, Malaysia. The intention of aggressive behaviour which has attracted the researcher to conduct this research work on this topic is due to how lack of teachers monitoring and negative attitude contributes to students to engage in aggressive behaviour. Meanwhile, adolescence is a period that includes many emotional and behavioral changes, and some of these changes are problematic among students in the school. Moreover, the focus of this paper is on the student's intention, and how this intention is influenced by teacher attachment.

Objective of the research

Three main objectives were outline by the researcher to solve the above traceable problems observed in the districts.

To describe the level of teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behavior among school children in Selangor state, Malaysia.

- To examine the difference between male and female's intention of aggressive behaviour.
- To identify the relationship between teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour

III. Methodology

3.1 Population and Sample

The population of this study was school children in government daily secondary schools in Selangor State, Malaysia. Respondents were selected by using a simple random sampling technique. A total of 426 school children were selected as the respondents of the study. Data for this study was obtained through a questionnaire survey in six randomly selected secondary schools in Selangor state Malaysia between 24th March, 2013 and 5th November, 2014 from school children whom the researcher wants to get information from. A simple random sampling technique was used to randomly select the six government secondary schools. As Yates, Daniel, David, Moore; Daren & Starnes (2008) stated that a simple random sample is a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (a population). Moreover, each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process. These six secondary schools were selected from four districts areas that involved urban and rural government daily secondary schools in Petaling Perdana, Hulu langat, Gombak, and Klang. The Selangor state was selected because of its modernization and development. Out of the determined sample size of 426 respondents from six secondary schools in both urban and rural area were determined for using stratified random sampling procedure, 199 for boys and 227 for girls. On the other hand, a set of structured questionnaire survey was administered to the 450 selected respondents and 426 (98.66%) were successfully retrieved, while 24 sets of questionnaire were invalid which were not included in the data analysis.

3.2. Instrumentation

3.2.1 Teacher attachment

The instruments of the survey questionnaire on Inventory of teacher attachment for this survey were adapted from previous studies (Armsden and Greenberg, 1987; Mark (2009). The questions were designed based on 23 items for teacher attachment. All these items were measured using a four-point Likert point-scale options from 1= always true; 2= sometimes true; 3= not very true; and 4= never true. The IPPA assesses teachers' perceptions of the positive and negative affective/cognitive dimension of attachment with their peers in accordance with attachment theory. (My teacher respects my feelings; I feel my teacher does a good job as my teacher; I wish I had a different teacher; My teacher accepts me as I am; I feel it's no use letting my feelings show around my teacher).

3.2.2. Intention of aggressive behavior:

Aggressive behavior questionnaire was used to measure the intention of aggressive behavior. The scale was originally developed by Buss & Perry (1992). This instrument comprises 34 items referring to different types of aggressive behavior. It assesses some aspects of aggressive behavior: (my friends say that I argue a lot, At times I can't control the urge to hit someone, I get into fights more than most people, other people always seem to get the breaks, I flare up quickly, but get over it quickly, I often find myself disagreeing with people, I can't help getting into argument when people disagree with me, I have threatened people I know, I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things, I let my anger show when I do not get what I want etc). The 34 items in the questionnaire for this study were measured using the Likert scale. They are as follows: 1=strongly agree; 2=agree; 3= strongly disagree; and 4= agree. In this study the internal consistence of the intention of aggressive behaviour scale was found to be acceptable (Cronbach alpha =.78), indicating that it had a high degree of reliability.

3.3. Data analyses

Analyses of data use SPSS programme. The research used descriptive statistics to find out the level of teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour. And Pearson correlation analysis was run to find the strength of the relationship of teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour. Lastly t-test analysis was done to find out the gender differences in intention of aggressive behaviour.

IV. Results And Discussion

Respondents were male and female school children. Majority of the respondents was female 227 (53.3%) follows by their male counterparts 199 (46.7%). Most of the respondents are Muslims both from urban and rural areas. And majority of the respondents were living together with the parents that came from urban and rural areas as well.

Table 1: Personal profile of respondents (N= 426)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	199	46.7
Female	227	53.3

Table 2: levels of Teacher attachment and Intention of aggressive behaviour

Teacher attachment	N%	Mean	SD
Low	96	22.5	58.28
Moderate	198	46.5	
High	132	31.0	5.63

Source: Field work, 2014

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Table 2 describes the level of teacher attachment and school children intention of aggressive behaviour. Results shows that 198 (46.5%) was emerged as moderate level of the teacher attachment among the respondent intention to involved in aggressive behaviour. While 96 (22.5%) was emerged as the low level of teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour. Similarly, results shows that 132 (31.0%) was recorded as high level of teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour. This is an indication that student with lower levels of school connectedness were significantly more likely to be involved in aggressive behaviour (Glew et al., 2005; Skues, Cunningham & Pokharel, 2005). More specifically, school environment is also vital in considering how school children's attitudes toward aggressive behaviour, teacher's role models, and personality characteristics contribute to intention to engage in aggressive behavior (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). Moreover, school environment and school safety, in relation to aggressive behaviour victimization have also received substantial amount of research attention (Meyer-Adams & Conner, 2008; Wienke Totura et al., 2008). These studies consistently report that negative school environmental factors like lower levels of teachers monitoring can increase the frequency of intention to involved in aggressive behaviour and reduce the chance of school children feeling safe in their school. On the other hand, it has been found that school environment had minimal impact on intention to involve in aggressive behavior. Additional research is needed to examine school environmental factors as predicting intention to engage in aggressive behaviour (Pellegrini & Bartini's, 2000). Though, association between school connectedness like sense of belonging in school and aggressive behavior has also been observed (Glew et al., 2005; You, Furlong, Felix, Sharkey & Tanigawa, 2008). It is consistently find that school children sense of school connectedness can reduce the risk of negative outcomes, such as student aggressive behaviour, exposure to aggressive behaviour and substance misuse (Brookmeyer, Fanti & Henrich, 2006; Wang, Matthew, Bellamy & James, 2005).

Table 3: Pearson product moment correlation between independent variable and outcome

Variables	Y	X ₁
Y (Intention of Aggressive Behavior)	1	
X ₁ (Teacher Attachment)		-0.126*

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The analysis shows that there is significant with negative weak relationship between teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour ($r = -0.126, p < 0.05$). This finding is in agreement with Maddox & Prinz (2003) who found that student engaging in intention of aggressive behavior may be related to subsequent lack of monitoring by the teachers. Similarly, Pianta & Stuhlman (2004) stressed on conflict in teacher and student attachment like associations considered by unfriendly and disharmonious interactions, on the other hand, are associated with negative student outcomes, such as lower achievement scores, an increase in school children externalizing behavior, an increase in school children internalizing problems, and lower social competence ratings. In addition, fewer studies emphasis on negative interactions, but those that do suggest the link between negative teacher and interactions and negative student outcomes, and negative school reputations to increase school children intention to involve in aggressive behaviour (Webster-Stratton, Reinke, Herman & Newcomer,

2011). Moreover, there is evidence that shows teacher and students attachment weaken as school children get older (Hughes, 2012).

Importantly, as school children in early adolescence start developing new ideas about the world and themselves, experiencing physical and emotional changes, and as school typically becomes larger and less nurturing, many school children would experience a disconnect between the care they receive and the care they need (Kennedy, 2011). However, not only can positive teacher attachment protect against depression and misbehavior in adolescents school children, positive teacher attachment weakened the negative influences of adolescents' poor effort, and conflictive teacher and student attachment (Wang, Brinkwork & Eccles, 2012). This paper compared level of teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour among school children in Selangor state, Malaysia. This study found a significant negative weak relationship between teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour. Result shows that the level at which negative weak attachment by the teachers in the school environment studies serve as a medium to student intention to engage in aggressive behaviour was moderate, because the analysis indicated that the level of intention of aggressive behaviour is moderate at 249 (58.5%) out of 426 total respondent and (mean 58.28, SD=5.63). Teacher's attachment is moderate at 198 (46.5%). According to Larose et al.(2005) insecure students were more poorly prepared for exams, could not concentrate, always afraid of failure, gave less time to his or her studies and sought less help from teachers which may in turn contribute to engaging in aggressive behavior. In contrast, rejected students /school children tend to have lower grades and greater risk of dropping out from school (Bub et al. 2007).

Table 4. Significant differences on intention of aggressive behaviour based on gender

Variable	N	%	Mean	t	Sig
Male	199	99.33	11.35	1.050	0.294
Female	227	98.06	13.26		

Source: Field work, 2014

The two gender scores suggested that there was no significant difference 426 ($t = 1.050, p = 0.294$) in intention of aggressive behaviour scores for males ($M=99.33, SD = 11.35$) and females ($M = 98.06, SD = 13.26$). This finding is in agreement with Landsford (2012) study who found that, in countries like Kenya males and females have very similar rates of intention to engage in aggressive behavior. Moreover, these findings are true for Western society, but are not true of all cultures. Similarly, Ostrov & Houston, (2008) argued that, male and female are more similar in the rate of intention to engage in aggressive behavior in urban and rural schools, adding also that intention of aggressive behavior were linked closely by an interaction with males and females. Previous studies have investigated the association between intention of aggressive behavior and individual characteristics like gender, and psychosocial problems, as well as direct relations to student and the school environment (Espelage & Horne, 2008). Similarly, Barboza et al, (2009) argued that factors like school environmental influences can help to contribute to intention to engage in aggressive behaviour. Past findings also show that males are usually victims and perpetrators of direct forms of aggressive behaviour, while females experience indirect aggressive behaviour like social rejection and relational aggression (Varjas et al., 2009). In social science research, gender is widely recognized to be a significant empirical variable for understanding many aspects of human behaviour. In psychology, gender is often used empirically, without much awareness of its social or conceptual significance. Moreover, Stewart and McDermott (2004) note that psychologists use gender in empirical research in at least three different ways: first, focusing on sex differences; second, focusing on within-sex variability; and third, focusing on the gender-linked power relations that structure many social institutions and interactions. Moreover, psychologists adopting a sex-difference perspective consider how and why average differences in personality, behaviour, ability, between the sexes might arise (Block, 1973; Eagly, 1997; Maccoby, 1998). Analysis of the factors influencing the development of aggressive behaviour has been a major concern for scholars and researchers in this empirical field. Gender is one of the individual factors that have been used as a predictor of differences in aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Male and female are more often resort to direct aggression (physical and verbal), and rarely make use of indirect or relational aggression (Ortega & Monks, 2005). As they mature, male tend to keep using direct aggression strategies, whilst female tend to make more use of indirect strategies (Crick, Casas, & Nelson, 2002; Crick & Nelson, 2002). However, findings are somewhat contradictory: some authors report no sex difference in intention to engage in aggressive behaviour (Peets & Kikas, 2006; Toldos, 2005), although it is generally agreed that boys make significantly more use of intention to involved in aggressive behaviour (Benítez & Justicia, 2006; Hadley, 2003). Similarly, (Hokoda, Lu & Angeles, 2006; Leadbeater, Boone, Sangster & Mathieson, 2006), report no gender difference in intention to involved in aggressive behaviour.

Though, mixed findings have also been reported regarding gender differences amongst school children intention of aggressive behaviour, research have found that males are more often likely to involves in aggressive behaviour than females (Espelage, Mebane & Adams, 2004), whereas other researchers report the reverse (Cerezo, 2006; Veenstra, et al., 2005); another research have observed similar levels for males and females (Felix & McMahan, 2007; Scheithauer, Hayer, Petermann& Jugert, 2006). Obviously, gender differences in intention to engage in aggressive behaviour emerge more clearly when research focuses on the kind of victimisation suffered by adolescent's school children. Males are more likely than females to be the victim aggressive behaviour, whereas females are more likely than males to suffer bothrelational and indirect aggressive behaviour (Craig, Pepler& Blais, 2007). More sure, a number of research have found no differences between males and females intention to involved in aggressive behaviour in the school (Leadbeater et al., 2006). Moreover, findings on gender differences in intention of aggressive behaviour involvement have been observed and more recent studies argue that there is slight gender differences in intention to engage in aggressive behaviour (Goldstein et al., 2008). Of note, a current meta-analysis showed insignificant gender differences on measures of aggressive behaviour (Card, Stucky, Sawalani & Little, 2008). More sure, there appears to be no clear consensus regarding gender differences in intention to engage in aggressive behaviour. Some researchers (Richardson & Green, 2007) have stressed the need to analyse the kind of attachment between the students involved, noting that respondents report making greater use of indirect strategies in interactions with friends and acquaintances, regardless of the gender of the aggressor and the victim. Psychological research into adolescence can make use of gender to explore how certain psychological traits may themselves be "gendered", in other words viewed as strongly associated with masculinity and being male, or femininity and being female. Povedano, Hendry, Ramos and Varela (2011), for example, have examined gender differences in the contribution of individual variables (self-esteem and satisfaction with life) to accounting for student victimisation in schools. Their approach not only explores gender differences, but also uses gender as an analytical tool, charting the social significance of gender in a number of "gendered" traits typically associated with masculinity, in which in most published studies males have scored higher than girls, such as self-esteem and school victimisation (Lila, Herrero & Gracia, 2008).

V. Conclusion And Recommendation

In all, the research has come to it success in which all the designed aims were completed effectively. The level at which teacher attachment and intention to involve in aggressive behaviour was analyzed through descriptive statistics and the results show moderate level. Secondly the strength of the relationship was also examined through Pearson correlation analysis and result confirmed that there is asignificant negative weak relationship between teacher attachment and intention of aggressive behaviour. Finally the correlation analysis was used to find how teacher attachment can contribute to intention of aggressive behaviour. The t-test analysis was conducted and it proved that gender contribute significantly to students involvement in intention of aggressive behaviour in the state of Selangor, Malaysia. Based on this therefore, lack of proper monitoring and care from the teachers influence school children to involve in aggressive behaviour. This finding is supported by (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network 2006) who argued that disorganized and avoidant students are the most to engage in aggressive behaviour in schools. This appears to show that there are no differences in aggressive behaviour between males and females which may lead to intention to involve in aggressive behaviour. This paper is suggesting that aggressive behaviour strategies may be used for different purposes by males and females. Programmes aimed at preventing aggressive behaviour in the school thus need to take into account the whole range of socialising contexts (students, family, and school), and to focus more specifically on gender-related issues like communication skills, gender roles, development of gender identity. Future research should therefore adopt a between-gender and/or within gender approach, using gender as an analytical tool, when examining relationships between contextual variables such as community, family and school. A study by McCormick, O'Connor, Cappella & McClowry (2013) found that teachers are the primary non-familial adult in students/school children's lives, with attachment between students and teachers critical to school children early school experiences. Similarly, Hughes & Kwok, (2007; Hughes, Lou, Kwok & Loyd, 2008), and Hamre & Pianta, 2001; O'Connor et al, 2011).found in their study on the level of support or conflict in the attachment between a teacher and students depends on many factors such as students early academic skills and behaviours, supportive attachment between teacher and students lead to more positive behavioural conclusions for students over time.

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