

Human Aggression (Part 7)

Rahiman Bin Jumat

3.1.3 Beliefs

Many types of beliefs play a role in preparedness to aggress. Efficacy-related beliefs are particularly important. Those who believe that they can successfully carry out specific aggressive acts (*self-efficacy*) and that these acts will produce the desired outcomes (*outcome efficacy*) are much more likely to select aggressive behaviors than those who are not so confident of the efficacy of aggressive acts (Bushman & Anderson, 2002). In other words, confidence level influences ones' act. Aggression-related beliefs significantly predict future levels of aggressive behavior (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997). The source of such beliefs in children is often the family.

3.1.4 Attitudes

Attitudes are general evaluations people hold about themselves, other people, objects, and issues (Bushman & Anderson, 2002). It is also believed that positive attitudes towards violence in general also prepare certain individuals for aggression. More specific positive attitudes about violence against specific groups of people also increase aggression against those people (Bushman & Anderson, 2002).

For example, attitudes about violence against women are positively related to sexual aggressiveness against women. Males prone to aggress against women are not generally aggressive against all people in all situations; rather, they specifically target women (but not men) who have provoked them (Anderson, 1996). Perry (2007) has mention in his studies that the human brain mediates all human behavior — aggression, violence, fear, ideology — indeed, all human emotional, behavioral, cognitive and social functioning. This three pound mass of 100 billion neurons and 1000 billion glial cells is infinitely complex and yet certain principles of brain organization and function can lead to insights regarding neurological factors involved in violence and aggression (Perry, 2007).

3.1.5 Values

Aggression preparedness is also influenced by values and beliefs about what one should or ought to do. For many people, violence is a perfectly acceptable method of dealing with interpersonal conflict, perhaps even a preferred method (Bushman & Anderson, 2002). For example, the value system in parts of the southern and western regions of the United States dictates that affronts to personal honor must be answered, preferably with violence (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). There is evidence that some youth gang violence results from similar codes of honor and personal respect (Baumeister & Boden, 1998).

3.1.6 Long-Term Goals

Long-term, abstract goals also influence the preparedness of the individual for aggression. For example, the overriding goal of some gang members is to be respected and feared. This can also be found in war and sport. Those people have set their goal to win in the battle field. Such a goal obviously colors one's perceptions of episodes, values, and beliefs about the appropriateness of various courses of action. Similarly, a personal life goal of obtaining wealth can increase one's preparedness for instrumental aggression (Bushman & Anderson, 2002).

Two basic models of the relationship between war and sports have been identified: the drive discharge model and the culture pattern model. According to the drive discharge model, tendency towards aggression is innate, a buildup of aggressive tension causes warfare, and warlike sports make war less likely by providing an alternative outlet for aggressive tension (Sipes, 1973). The culture pattern model holds that the intensity and configuration of aggressive behavior is acquired from the surrounding culture, aggression levels are consistent across multiple areas of a culture, and behaviors and attitudes concerning war tend to match those concerning warlike sports (Sipes, 1973). The drive discharge model suggests that levels of aggression do not vary across societies, although the type of aggressive behavior can vary, with an inverse relationship between the propensity to war and to warlike sports (Sipes, 1973). The culture pattern model predicts that levels of aggression vary across societies, with a direct relationship between the propensity to war and to warlike sports (Sipes, 1973).

3.1.7 Scripts

The interpretational and behavioral scripts a person brings to social situations influences that person's preparedness for aggression (Huesmann, 1998). Scripts are composed of many of the preceding elements.

3.1.8 Age

Many species including human, babies and children does not act aggressively as compared to the elder. This may mean that the biological impulses to behave aggressively only emerge around puberty (Baumeister & Bushman, 2008). Then again, perhaps it is just that children can't do much damage, being smaller and weaker and subject to external control (Baumeister & Bushman, 2008). Although they are so incline to act aggressively, fears to the possible consequences make it hard for them to commit violent crimes. The high level of aggression among toddlers again fits the theme that nature says go and culture says stop.

The aggressive impulses may seem to increase again at adolescence, partly because suddenly there is much more stake (the sex drive makes it important for young men to outdo each other, so as to appeal to young women), but the long-term trend is still toward learning to restrain aggression (Baumeister & Bushman, 2008).

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