

**Article history:**

Received June 31, 2022

Accepted July 19, 2022

Published August 31, 2022

# Teachers' Aggression: Empirical Investigation from Students

**Zeenat Kanwal**

Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur - Pakistan

 [zeenat.kanwal@salu.edu.pk](mailto:zeenat.kanwal@salu.edu.pk)**Mavara Siddiqui**

Institute of Business Management - Pakistan

 [mavara.siddiqui@iobm.edu.pk](mailto:mavara.siddiqui@iobm.edu.pk)**Vishnu Parmar**

Institute of Business Administration, University of Sindh, Jamshoro - Pakistan

 [vishnu\\_parmar@yahoo.com](mailto:vishnu_parmar@yahoo.com) <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8751-5810>**How to Cite:**Kanwal, Z., Siddiqui, M., & Parmar, V. (2022). Teachers' Aggression: Empirical Investigation from Students. *Academy of Education and Social Sciences Review*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.48112/aessr.v2i2.379>**Publisher's Note:**

International Research and Publishing Academy (iRAPA) stands neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in the published maps and institutional affiliations.

**Copyright:**

© 2022 Academy of Education and Social Sciences Review published by International Research and Publishing Academy (iRAPA)

This is an Open Access article published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY): lets others distribute and copy the article, to create extracts, abstracts, and other revised versions, adaptations or derivative works of or from an article (such as a translation), to include in a collective work (such as an anthology), to text or data mine the article, even for commercial purposes, as long as they credit the author(s), do not represent the author as endorsing their adaptation of the article, and do not modify the article in such a way as to damage the author's honour or reputation.

## Abstract

*This study investigates the profound impact of aggressive behaviour on students by a teacher and what were the long-term effects the victims suffered in their life due to a teacher's aggressive action in that particular period. This study aims to understand the need to treat students with dignity and concern for the issues they face during their studies. There is no doubt that teachers create the mindset of an individual through which they choose the direction of their goals. Therefore, it's crucial to realize what disaster a teacher can bring to an individual's life while adopting aggressive behaviour. This has not just ruined the teaching profession's image in students' mind, but has also put a question mark on the dedication of teachers towards their teaching practices in their classrooms. In a country like Pakistan, physical, verbal, emotional, and mental violence has been part of the classrooms. Purposive sampling was used to collect data from 115 university students through a closed-ended self-developed questionnaire. In this study, the student's point of view was the center of focus and how their life got affected due to a teacher's disrespectful behaviour termed as their 'Aggressive Nature' that disturbed their personality development and created hurdle to achieve success in their life.*

**Keywords:** Aggression, Behavior, Teachers, Students

## INTRODUCTION

Livelihood in the present time has taken a very drastic curve, where occupations demand are unreachable as compared to the past. Professions now not only ask for an honest commitment, but to dedicate oneself to the highs and lows of whatever sort of work one chooses. These demands exceed all limits concerning human control because it includes accountability of one's mental health, which sometimes with some people is not a winning situation and they fail to fulfill what is asked of them to prove their dedication. When we say profession, there is a query raised- what kind of profession are we talking about? Two reasons give rise to two professions (Whipp et al., 2001).

One of the reasons is to choose to earn, fulfilling physical needs like bread, bed, and a roof; whereas, the other kind consists of the priority that fulfills one's mental needs like passion, interest, and joy. Yes, we do get a chance to choose our profession having both of these reasons, but then one of them would be placed first in any case, and that would decide which kind one has as his/her occupation. It has been said that teaching is a noble profession, but it is more than that. Especially, when being qualified in one's subject of study and being healthy and sound in the updated knowledge of your subject, which is not enough to make your place stable in this profession. Here, this job demands one to breathe like life support and worship it like it is a significant part of one's faith. Teaching is not about delivering what we learn and know in terms of knowledge. Still, it is about delivering a teacher's entire personality to the individuals, who will set their life based on what vibes they would get from their teachers (Birhan et al., 2021).

When it comes to learning and attaining knowledge in the classroom, the theory of behaviorism follows the pattern of rote learning to form an individual's personality. This is what most teachers who cannot manage their classrooms effectively follow. But then, the responsibility of learning not occurring, ultimately comes upon the shoulders of a teacher (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002). One of the other learning theories, which is well known as constructivism, demands reasons if the students struggle to learn even after listening to their teachers in the class. This theory suggests the clarity and understanding of concepts.

According to Alqurashi and Bagadood (2022), a teacher guides a person toward the truth they have to see as a fact of their life. They create professions of all disciplines in their classrooms and ensure the future of an entire nation. Basically, this career makes a person responsible enough for each individual to offer their services to their personal or professional life. A teacher is and will be blamed for any happening in an individual's life. With such sensitivity, a person chosen for this job should have an extremely well-balanced personality, where one knows how to have self-control over situations that sometimes do not go in their favour. It is not just the student who expects various roles from a teacher to play in their life, but the entire society demands. This profession consists of many personality traits defined by a teacher's attitude before their students. (Ibrahim, 2014).

According to Ab Wahab et al. (2022), a vast difference prevails between how students presume their teachers' effectiveness in the classroom and their self-concept. Students with a higher perception of the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom have higher self-conceptualization than those with medium or low perception (Ibrahim, 2014). A situation that makes one lose their flow and get aggressive is a term used

to define the loss of control over things and getting into negative energy, which of course, is dangerously harmful for teachers to adopt it. The aggression that a teacher suffers from makes the surrounding dark and meaningless for them, including their students, to get a deep profound impact. The depth varies from person to person, but in most cases, it is way too deep and it stays with the child till they get old enough to transfer the same dark deep scars to others' lives.

### **Definition of Aggression**

In psychology, the term aggression refers to a range of behaviours that can result in physical and psychological harm to oneself, others, or objects in the environment. The expression of aggression can occur in many ways, including verbally, mentally, and physically (Cherry, 2016).

### **Forms of Aggression**

Aggression can take various forms, including physical, verbal, mental, and emotional.

### **Purposes of Aggression**

Aggression can also serve several different purposes: (a) express anger or hostility; (b) assert dominance; (c) intimidate or threaten; (d) achieve a goal; (e) express possession; (f) respond to fear; (g) react to pain; and (h) compete with others.

### **Research Questions**

RQ1: How severe is the impact of aggressive behavior by a teacher toward students?

RQ2: How can it affect students' personal and professional life and competent skills?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

While attempting the foundation research on clinical depression in teachers, McLean and Connor (2015) explain how children from preschool level, coming from a disturbed family background with multiple issues, especially from their mother's end create emotional instability in their personalities. They try to look up to their teachers at school to fill the vacuum and they ultimately expect from teachers more than their mothers. This unique instinct empowers the role of a teacher in an individual's life. Aggression which is the attitude one possesses due to a concrete reason of depression (another mental disorder) can become harmful for the individuals embedded in the character of a teacher, who holds a huge responsibility to deliver to his/her students some positive vibes rather than negative in the form of adopting aggressive behaviour towards students. Children being great imitators should be given support and examples to imitate; watching the teacher shouting or insulting students may provide wrong directions and signals to the students, which may retard and exhaust their mental development and effect their overall personality in later life. Students find their role model in their teachers, especially in the early stage, when their minds are blank slates and the person who gets the right to write new lessons upon their minds is none other than their teachers.

Due to the disturbing and stressful situations in a teacher's life, the level of aggression may find its roots to get deeper. Here we talk about the most sensitive and initial stage for an individual while growing; the kindergarten life of a child, where their base is constructed (McLean & Connor, 2015) with serious responsibilities. While teaching the KG students, the burden of having an aggressive attitude does not just become harmful for the teachers, but it brutally affects teacher student rearing. McLean and Connor (2015) explain in their paper how children with weak academic skills get a negative impact for the rest of their lives because of aggressive teachers dealing with them at the preschool stage. In their research, the subject that happened to be at the most failing point for the students suffered aggression from their teachers was maths. In their research, they got to test about six academic skills that a child should possess while studying in the KG. This included vocabulary, comprehension, word identification, picture vocabulary, math fluency, and applied problems, out of which maths was the most challenging for the students, who could not be supported due to aggressive reaction that they received from their teachers.

McMahon et al. (2020) studied teachers and students who experienced significant physical aggression. They used an antecedent-behavior-consequence (A-B-C) framework to understand how incidents of physical aggression directed toward teachers unfold. Their sample included 193 elementary and secondary teachers. The study identified common antecedents, such as breaking up fights, discipline, and directives, and expected consequences, such as student removal, school staff involvement, favourable outcomes, and inaction.

Mérida-López & Extremera (2022) conducted a study to test the buffering effect of emotional intelligence in associations between aggression against teachers, perceived stress, and withdrawal intentions. The sample

comprised 329 secondary school teachers assessing aggression against teachers, perceived stress, withdrawal intentions, and emotional intelligence. The study revealed that emotional intelligence was negatively related to perceived stress and withdrawal intentions among teaching professionals in the context of harmful student behaviours was rampant.

Antisocial behaviour that teachers adopt to practice their legitimate power negatively is quite common. During this practice, there is a high chance that the teachers misunderstand students' instincts in any particular situation (Spilt et al., 2010). Here, the selfish behaviour of teachers toward students create a negative image of teachers in the students' perceptions and they start accepting instructions for the sake of staying in the class and not being punished rather than to learn something that can add knowledge to their understanding. This aggressive behaviour is where a teachers burst out at students and force them to do what they say would ultimately result in creating stubborn behaviour in students. This doesn't stop here, but indulges in the student's an intention to see other people the same way in their life who instruct them like parents, elder siblings, or other teachers besides the one who was aggressive at them. Teachers are the primary source of directing an individual's life toward a pattern of progress (Ibrahim, 2014).

Students who seek bookish knowledge only, as they have the mentality for rote memorization, do not need teachers. They may utilize textbooks and other materials to fulfill their requirements in the classroom. The fundamental responsibility of teachers is to tackle students with their appreciative statements and exciting initiatives to make their attention towards what they are studying. (Willis, 2007). According to early 20th-century developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky in his writing 'Zone Of Proximal Development', there is a certain highest level of understanding that a students can reach with the guidance of a teacher. They are the only ones who can stretch an individual's personality and broaden the chances of identifying their areas of expertise, which may be considered a difficult task, but not an impossible one (Mintz, 2005). Emphasis upon teachers' classroom management practical skills is because it is the best solution for reducing risks of aggression in children. Undoubtedly teachers who practice classroom management skills with their pupils do get a positive response in the behaviour of the students and it would also give rise to constructive instructional practices to happen in the classroom (Oliver, Wehby, & Reschly, 2011). In an individual's life, the place of a mentor is something that is genuinely connected with emotions and no matter how hard one must try to be rigid in life, but the topic of remembering that one teacher who gave one an identity of who he/she is will always melt a heart to speak the language of feelings, to define the relationship they experienced with their teachers (Ozer, 2013).

## METHODOLOGY

This research study is descriptive in nature and purposive sampling is conducted through a closed-ended questionnaire. The participants are asked to choose their most appropriate answers to the questions. The survey participants were from Karachi and belonged to different professions, including university students enrolled in master's program in various disciplines. Through this survey, an attempt was made to collect the data and analyze how their life got affected by the aggressive behaviour they suffered in their schools by their teachers. This survey helped us find students' views on aggression by their teachers with concerns regarding gender variables. This research study has shown whether there is a significant difference in students' opinion concerning gender variables. The sample size included 115 respondents.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The responses obtained from the questionnaire depicted different trends. 40% of male and 60% of female individuals attempted to fill out the questionnaire. They belonged to different professional backgrounds, and some were students at the university level. The respondents belonged to different fields of life, such as students, teaching, engineering, business, administration, corporate sector, education, finance, HR, marketing, fashion design, and management. 37% participants were students, and 70% were professionals in their respective fields.

Amongst these 115 individuals, 88% of the respondents accepted that they were treated aggressively by their teachers in different grades starting from grade 1 till the university level. Amongst the different levels of aggression, physical, verbal, emotional, and mental were included. 56% of the participants experienced verbal aggression and 36% mental aggression by their teachers in classrooms.

Upon a question to analyze the intensity of how much these individuals still have the incident of aggression that happened to them in their intentions, 56% admitted that they can still recall every bit of the moment of atrocities depicted by the teachers, whereas 44% had a vague image of the incidents. The common sentences

teachers usually use to express their aggression towards students; in this part, 60% of the individuals stated that their teacher intentionally emphasized their weak points in front of the whole class, which mentally disturbed them in the classroom. Others stated that they were disturbed due to their teachers' loud announcements about the students' mistakes. 20% of the people also said that they used to get an ignorant reaction from their teachers as if they were not a part of the class, which shook their confidence level, and they used to find themselves nowhere to look for help.

Upon asking whether the aggressive behaviour by their teachers had a positive or negative impact on them, the response was that 70% was negative and was 30% positive. Whereas, 92% said that they could never imagine having the same teacher teaching more students with aggressive attitude they became victims of. 60% of the individuals declared that they would have been more efficient and positive in their professional life if they had not experienced the aggressive behaviour of their teacher. One of the other dominant trends noticed in the questionnaire was when these individuals were asked about the subject in which they suffered from their teacher's aggression. The response was mathematics on a larger scale than statistics, English, finance, management, and Sindhi (one of the regional languages of Pakistan) on a minor scale.

## **CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this paper was to highlight the issues that individuals in their professional-level career-based life suffered due to the victimization and aggressive nature of their teachers during their time in school. Negativity in surroundings is digging its paws deeper throughout the world. It's high time the teaching profession corrects these serious mistakes that can affect an individual's life. This profession has some very critical responsibilities toward humanity. If they are not taken sincerely, there will be a huge gap between past, present, and future generations.

### **Limitations**

This study was conducted to obtain students' opinions regarding their (past) teachers' aggressive behaviour during their studies. Sometimes, some students deliberately ignite teachers' aggression through their acts and omissions. More insights could be obtained if teachers and students were in the same setting and would be comparable as well.

### **Recommendation**

Teachers build careers and make people realize which direction their life might take. Their slight turn in behaviour, positive or negative, can impact the students' future. It is highly recommended to design special character-building for teachers. The government is supposed to make it mandatory in every school to conduct courses or workshops that would make the teachers aware of their student's behaviour. It should not just stop here, but the next level is to evaluate and check upon teachers in educational institutions to see whether they are practicing the character-building techniques they were taught about.

## **COMPETING INTERESTS**

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

## **REFERENCES**

- Ab Wahab, M. K., Zulkifli, H., & Abdul Razak, K. (2022). Impact of Philosophy for Children and Its Challenges: A Systematic Review. *Children*, 9(11), 1671.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/children9111671>
- Alqurashi, Y. O., & Bagadood, N. H. (2022). The Status of Teachers of Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Practicing Strategies for the Modification of Aggressive Behaviour in Saudi Arabia. *IJCSNS*, 22(1), 241.
- Birhan, W., Shiferaw, G., Amsalu, A., Tamiru, M., & Tiruye, H. (2021). Exploring the context of teaching character education to children in preprimary and primary schools. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 4(1), 100171.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2021.100171>
- Cherry, K. (2016, July 21). *What Is Aggression?*. Retrieved July 21, 2016.  
<https://www.verywell.com/what-is-aggression-2794818>
- Ibrahim, A. W. (2014). The Students' Perception of Teachers' Classroom Effectiveness on Their Self-Concepts in Lagos Metropolis. *Journal of Teaching and Teacher Education*, 2(02).
-

---

<http://dx.doi.org/10.12785/jtte/020209>

- Jones, M. G., & Brader-Araje, L. (2002). The impact of constructivism on education: Language, discourse, and meaning. *American Communication Journal*, 5(3), 1-10.
- McLean, L., & Connor, C. M. (2015). Depressive symptoms in third-grade teachers: Relations to classroom quality and student achievement. *Child Development*, 86(3), 945-954.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12344>
- McMahon, S. D., Peist, E., Davis, J. O., Bare, K., Martinez, A., Reddy, L. A., ... & Anderman, E. M. (2020). Physical aggression toward teachers: Antecedents, behaviors, and consequences. *Aggressive Behavior*, 46(1), 116-126.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.21870>
- Mérida-López, S., & Extremera, N. (2022). Student aggression against teachers, stress, and emotional intelligence as predictors of withdrawal intentions among secondary school teachers. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, 35(3), 365-378.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2021.1948020>
- Mintz, S. (2005). *Writing a Winning Teaching Statement*. The Centre For Teaching and Learning; Columbia University, 10.
- Oliver, R. M., Wehby, J. H., & Reschly, D. J. (2011). Teacher classroom management practices: Effects on disruptive or aggressive student behavior. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 7(1), 1-55.  
<https://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2011.4>
- Özer, B. (2013). Avoidance strategies used by educators in difficult classroom situations. *International Journal of Academic Research*, 5(2).
- Spilt, J. L., Koomen, H. M., Thijs, J. T., Stoel, R. D., & van der Leij, A. (2010). Teachers' assessment of antisocial behavior in kindergarten: Physical aggression and measurement bias across gender. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 28(2), 129-138.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0734282909340236>
- Whipp, A. M., Vuoksima, E., Bolhuis, K., de Zeeuw, E. L., Korhonen, T., Mauri, M., ... & Boomsma, D. I. (2021). Teacher-rated aggression and co-occurring behaviors and emotional problems among schoolchildren in four population-based European cohorts. *PLoS one*, 16(4), e0238667.  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0238667>
- Willis, J. (2007). *Brain-Friendly Strategies for the Inclusion Classroom*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.