

# Family Functionality and Aggressiveness in High School Students in Lima

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## Abstract

The study aims to establish the relationship between family functioning and aggression in secondary school students in an educational institution in Lima, Peru. The design used is non-experimental, correlational - descriptive, basic type with a quantitative approach. The population consisted of 101 students, between males and females who were in the first and fifth year of secondary school. The ages ranged from 12 to 18 years, and the population was of the census type. The instruments used were the Aggression Questionnaire (AQ) by (authors Buss & Perry 1992), adapted in Peru by Matalinares, Yaringaño, Uceda, Fernández, Huari, Campos and Villavicencio (2012) and the APGAR scale, familiar perception by Gabriel Smilkestein (1978), adapted in Peru by Castilla, Caycho, Shimabukuro and Valdivia (2015). The results show that there is no relationship between the study variables, a result that is repeated in its dimensions, physical, verbal, hostility and anger.

**Keywords:** Family functioning; Aggressiveness; Adolescents; Education; Peru.

## Introduction

Aggressiveness is a problem that has generated concern in all areas of society. Osofsky (1999) considers that in many countries aggressiveness has become a phenomenon that generates a negative impact provided by the family and society. Boscan (2011) indicates that violence in educational institutions is a problem that has gained ground since the 1970s in countries such as the United States, Sweden, Norway and the United Kingdom. UNICEF (2017) in its annual report states the situation in Mexico, where 8 out of 10 children or adolescents have had some experience of aggression at school or on the streets and 1 out of 10 children and adolescents have suffered some type of aggression at home.

In Peru, INEI (2016), on social relations, 75% of students have been victims of aggressive behaviour by their peers on some occasion. It is detailed that 40% and 50% of those attacked do not seek help; between 25% and 35% of classmates do not help the victims of school violence, leaving these cases unresolved or waiting for tragedies to happen before becoming aware of the seriousness of the matter.

The WHO (2014) finds that the populations of greater risk are the adolescents and young people, 35% have been victims of aggressive behaviors, on the part of their friends, which originated problems in the mental health, physical consequences and making difficult the affection between pairs.

Romo, Anguiano, Pulido and Camacho (2008) argue that aggressiveness is reflected in the abuse experienced in childhood, which can cause adolescents to be aggressive or isolated. These events are unquestionably the result of inadequate family functioning.

Arias (2013) family models can predict violent behaviors in children who belong to conflictive homes and witness deficiencies will be vulnerable to present inadequate behaviors in the interaction with others, determining the association of aggressive behaviors. Romer et al., (1999) postulate that through the concession of beliefs and values that parents inculcate with their children, contributing to the general well-being of all family members. Hernandez. Jadue (2002) mentions that children who grow up in dysfunctional families, when

they present aggressive reactions, inadequate social composition and family integration, irresponsibility in the care of their children and with problems about some vice, are indicators of families of children defined with aggressive behaviors. Therefore, Buschgens et al., (2010) postulate that parental figures are the beginning of the socialization that is provided to children, then the socialization will be established by the relationship with their peers in order to generate welfare.

We cite studies by Quispe and Rodríguez (2016) and Vitor (2016), who conducted research on family functioning and aggressiveness, the former finding an inverse and weak relationship and the latter finding no relationship at all. Joaquín (2018) and Nasi (2018) showed that the variables family social climate and aggressiveness are independent of each other, with no relationship between them. Saravia (2017) found that there is no relationship between family functionality and hostility. Mazón, Valverde, and Yanza (2017) determined that family dynamics and aggressive behavior of students are not significantly related. Ruíz (2014) finds that dysfunctional families, which are mostly chaotic, are detrimental to the normal development of people to a greater or lesser extent.

The present study seeks to demonstrate the relationship between family functionality and aggressiveness and its types, in high school students in a private educational institution in 2019. It can be seen in previous studies that in similar conditions the results have shown to be in favor or not of the findings of this study, which is why it is decided to contribute to the knowledge in an approach that explains if family functionality is related to the rates of aggressiveness among students.

With regard to the theories we find Smilkestein (1978); Castellón and Ledesma (2012); Fernández, Avilés and Castillo (2009); and Apolaino and Martínez (1988), on family functionality, it is the perception of care and support that an individual receives from his own family system through the interaction of psychological, biological and social elements, which has a systemic character, therefore, a sense of belonging of its members.

While Landa (2015), Consuegra (2010), Corsi (2003), Miller (1991); López, Sánchez, Pérez and Fernández (2008) and Buss and Perry (1992), define aggressiveness as a personality trait, emotional

period and the capacity of the human being to resist the environment's domains. Aggressiveness is a consequence of learning by association, and as such, can be expressed

from the behavioural aspect, through physical and verbal aggression; in the emotional aspect, through anger; and in the cognitive aspect through hostility.

## Method

Quantitative approach study, basic type, correlational design - descriptive, because it tries to determine how the variables relate to each other. In order to operationalize the variables that support the instruments, the following variables were used in the case of family functionality: adaptation, participation, growth, affection and resolution; and in aggressiveness: physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and hostility, using the ordinal scale, a census was carried out with 101 secondary school students, ranging in age from 12 to 18 years, who constituted the population, between males and females, from the first to the fifth grade of secondary education.

The instruments used to evaluate family functioning were the APGAR Family Scale and the validity of the construct was determined by factorial analysis of the principal components. Reliability was performed by Cronbach's Alpha quotient analysis ( $\alpha=.770$ ). In the case of aggressiveness, the Buss and Perry Aggression Questionnaire (1992) was used, this presents construct validity by means of exploratory factorial analysis, obtaining 60.819% of accumulated variance, obtained validity by means of factorial analysis, whose results are (0.836) of reliability, corresponding to Cronbach's Alpha. Reliability in the total scale ( $\alpha=.88$ ) Cronbach's Alpha and respectively in physical aggressiveness ( $\alpha=.86$ ) verbal aggressiveness ( $\alpha=.68$ ) anger ( $\alpha=.77$ ) and minor hostility ( $\alpha=.72$ ).

## Results

Of the 101 students at the secondary level, to whom the instruments were applied, we found the following results:

A statistically significant correlation is that which shows a  $p$  (sig.) value of less than 0.05. From the table we affirm that there is no statistically significant correlation between family functioning and aggressiveness, both being independent of each other. This indicates that aggressiveness in the population studied does not depend on family functioning. According to studies and theories there are personal and social factors that are related to aggressiveness (Table 1).

With regard to the correlations obtained with the dimensions of the aggressiveness we find:

It is stated that there is no statistically significant correlation between family functioning and physical aggression, both being independent of each other. This would indicate that direct aggression behaviours such as physical mistreatment, hitting, pushing in a corporal way or using external objects to cause damage are not explained by family factors (table 2).

It is stated that there is no statistically significant correlation between family functioning and verbal aggression, indicating that these are not the family factors that explain the expression of affection, through aggressive styles such as resistance presented by secondary school students to external coercion (Table 3).

Family functioning and anger are not related, which shows that they are not the family factors that condition the appearance of an accumulation of feelings, expressed as irritation, rage or anger that is acquired through anger, when students perceive vulnerability in their rights (table 4).

**Table 1.** Family functioning and aggressiveness

			Aggressiveness
Rho de Spearman	Family functioning	Rho	.014
		P	.893
		N	101

**Table 2.** Family functioning and physical aggression

			Physical aggressiveness
Rho de Spearman	Family functioning	Rho	-.037
		P	.714
		N	101

**Table 3.** Family functioning and verbal aggression

			Verbal aggressiveness
Rho de Spearman	Family functioning	Rho	.070
		P	.587
		N	101

**Table 4.** Family functioning and anger

			Anger
Rho de Spearman	Family functioning	Rho	.046
		P	.649
		N	101

**Table 5.** Family functioning and hostility

			Hostility
Rho de Spearman	Family functioning	Rho	.020
		P	.843
		N	101

The results show that there is no statistically significant correlation between family functioning and hostility, demonstrating that the disapproving attitude towards one or more people presented by the high school students in this study does not depend on family factors in table 5.

## Discussion

The study found that the variables familiar functionality and aggressiveness, as shown in table 1 ( $p=0.89$ ), do not present correlation and are independent of each other. This indicates that aggressiveness in the population studied does not depend on family functionality. Saenz (2016) studied the relationship between family social climate and aggressiveness in the students of an alternative basic education centre, obtaining as a result that there is no significant correlation between the variables. Another study, Quispe and Rodríguez (2016), found no relationship between family functioning and aggressiveness in secondary school students at an educational institution in Lima. On the other hand, Joaquín (2018) carried out an investigation in which he determined the relationship between family social climate and aggressiveness in first and second year secondary school students at an educational institution. Nasi (2018) found that there is no relationship between family social climate variables and aggressiveness. Finally, Mazón, Valverde and Yanza (2017), showed that there is no relationship between family dynamics and aggressive behavior in first year high school students at the national technical school in Mexico.

Also reviewed were studies that do not coincide with the present findings, such as: Vitor (2016) who finds a relationship between family functioning and aggressiveness, agrees with Saravia (2017) who

demonstrates the relationship between family functioning and hostility in adolescents, and with Ruíz (2014) that there is also a relationship between dysfunctional families and children's behavior.

In view of this panorama, the following theories seek to explain the results of the study: the theory of social learning given by Bandura and Ribes (1975) who maintain that human beings present social influences not only in the family environment but also in subcultural influences, such as the customs and behaviors that occur in society, without separating other elements, such as biological or genetic aspects, socioeconomic level, among others, which can influence the development of aggressive behavior patterns. The imitation of aggressive behaviour will depend on the positive stimuli it receives, and also involves the interaction of the individual with the social environment.

Renfrew (2001) and Fernández (2008), also consider that aggression has several determining factors related to biological, environmental, behavioral, cognitive, emotional and socio-family causes, that is, in the observation and imitation of aggressive behaviors, this is found in us as an instinctive force and in the interaction that the individual has in the social environment, it is manifesting learned behaviors. Likewise, Chapi (2012) emphasizes that the aggressive behavior is not due to a determined factor in the family, but through the impulse that the human being presents before stressful situations. In other words, the individual protects himself against aggressions made by other people. In view of this we know that the human being is daily faced with psychosocial conflicts that we live today in our environment, which makes the individual is predisposed or alert to protect himself before any threat.

Corsi (2003) refers that the aggressive behaviour is the capacity that the human being presents to resist to the influences of the environment, that is to say, the acquisition of aggressive behaviours is given by the diverse events that we pass in our daily life, reason why when having resistance and wanting to protect itself, it acquires aggressive behaviours. So human aggressiveness has physiological, behavioral and experiential factors. These arguments would be reinforcing the result of the study on the relationship between family functionality and aggressiveness, because they present other factors or variables that are not linked to the family.

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