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Aggressive Behavior among the University Students

Lama Majed Qaisy1*

¹Faculty of Educational Sciences, Department of Educational Psychology, Tafila Technical University (TTU), AI - Tafilah, Jordan.

Author's contribution

This whole work was carried out by author LMQ.

Opinion Article

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ABSTRACT

Aims: This study aimed to identify the degree of aggressive behavior among the university students.

Study Design: This study used the analytical descriptive design.

Place and Duration of Study: The study was conducted at Tafila Technical University, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; in the second semester of the academic year 2013.

Methodology: The study sample consisted of 690 students who were chosen from 5 colleges at the university. The study sample was selected by randomly stratified depending on gender and college. In order to collect data about the aggressive behavior, the researcher used a questionnaire prepared by the researcher herself to identify the aggressive behavior among the university students.

Results: Summing up the findings of this study, a general statement is inferred that the prevalence of aggressive behavior among students was directed against the property of the university, and then towards the workers of it, and finally towards other students, also the result indicated a high male aggressive compared with females, and shows that 3rd and 4th year students were more aggressive compared to the 1st and 2nd year students. From the findings of the study, which conclude that students with low accumulative average were more aggressive compared to high achievers.

Conclusion: The aggressive behavior of students at University is low. The most dominated aggressive behavior was towards the university properties.

*Corresponding author: Email: lamaqaisy@yahoo.com;

Keywords: Aggressive; behavior; property; university; accumulative; students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Aggressive behavior is a form of social behavior that community seeks through multilateral institutions to reduce it. It is widespread in our current behavioral phenomenon. It is no longer limited to individuals only; but expanded to include schools, universities, institutions and nations.

Aggressive behavior is defined as any behavior intends to harm self or others, or destroys property of others. Aggressive behavior takes various form, including: Physical aggression: intending to harm self or others, such as beating, biting, hair pulling.

Verbal aggression: focuses on the speech, which is accompanied by anger, insults and threats in order to scare others. Symbolic Aggression: The term includes non-verbal ways for contempt of others, or to insult them [1].

Aggressive behavior is a common behavior among youth people, especially university students due to their developmental characteristics [2]. This group found by aggression as an easy way to solve their problems; this reaction could be a result of several factors such as: 1- Social factors (friendship, tribal relations, and gangs). 2- Economic factors (unemployment and poverty), many studies found a positive relation between low economic level and aggressive behavior. 3- Psychological factors associated with aggressive behavior such as: stress, anxiety, frustration, failure, addiction to alcohol and drugs, theft and crime. 4- Academic factors also play a great role in the presence of aggressive behavior [3,4,5]

Students found that aggressive behavior encourages them to achieve the following goals: social status, social identity, imposition of social control, social justice, and adventure [2].

It is noted that there are many factors involved in the formation of aggressive behavior among the students; some of them refer to student himself/ herself and biological composition, character, family circumstances, and other reasons due to the economic and cultural circumstances surrounding him/ her.

The aggressive behavior was explained by different theories; the Social Learning Theory believes that aggressive behavior is a learned behavior through imitating the aggressive models. Bandura indicated that individuals learned the aggressive behaviors from the social surrounded environment and from the social factors in order to achieve their goals through aggressive behaviors [6]. Frustration theory indicated that human being nature is not aggressive. Dolard realized that Frustration leads to aggressive behavior; because the human being can not satisfy one of his motives; so frustration causes the aggressive behavior [7]. Psychoanalytic Theory suggested that all instincts work to minimize stress and anxiety, and the human being works through his motives to achieve fun and pleasure which reflects his goal in life and to be away from death and destroy himself which represent the death instinct. According to these two opposing instincts human beings behave aggressive to destroy other things rather than to destroy themselves. Freud also realized that the aggressive need is an essential need like the need for food and drink [8]. Behavior Theory: to consider aggressive behavior as the behavior of the learner, and usually the individual in such behaviors to achieve the goal. It also repeats this behavior on the basis of reinforcement and punishment, which exposed them to the individual [1].

It should be noted here that the university is a place of science and knowledge, maker of generations and refining the characters and mirror of civilization and progress, a university student is a maker of tomorrow and the builder of community, he should use logic and dialogue in solving his problems without resorting to violence [9]. University violence is an act characterized by chaos and vandalism and harming others physically and morally, this phenomenon is one of the obstacles that stand in the face of the process of reform, progress and renewal of education, it did not come from a vacuum, but is the result of previous circumstances and problems as related to the university environment, such as non-availability of places and leisure for students, or a lack of playgrounds and enough yards [10] or a lack of educational atmosphere that brings them to develop their abilities, hobbies and experiences through participation in extracurricular activities [11]. The university is not just lectures and teaching and transferring of knowledge, it is a rich environment in its ability to satisfy the need of students' cognitive and fine-tuning of their personalities, and provide activities through infusing the spirit of community and training on leadership, responsibility and ability to cope up with their problems.

Jordanian universities contribute to instill values and habits which will affect the behavior of their students, but the spread of aggressive behavior among students is noted in the form of beatings, insults, destruction of the university properties, teachers and students personal properties as well. They also attack teachers and staff by writing insulting expressions on walls, and sexual harassment towards the other gender. Such conducts have a negative impact on the productivity of young people, and they enhance students disagreement with their environment. Accordingly, the researcher is much encouraged to identify the level and type of aggression practiced by the students.

Many studies have been conducted in the same area. Mahafda and Al- Zubi [4] conducted a study aimed to identify the impact of socio-economic- academic variables in aggressive behavior among the students at Hashemite University; the study sample consisted of 959 students. The results indicated that aggressive behavior towards self is more than the aggressive behavior directed towards others. Results also indicated the presence of the impact of the variables of gender, place of residence, and the academic level of the students in the tendency for aggressive conduct.

Al- Fokhaa [12] tried to find out the factors influencing aggressive behavior among the students at Philadelphia University of, the study sample consisted of 2420 students. Results indicated the existence of different levels and the tendency for aggressive behavior among students, in addition to the existence of a relationship between aggressive behavior and gender, the accumulative average, and the number of family members, while there was no relationship between aggressive behavior and variables, college, and family income.

The purpose of the study of Abu Mustafa and Al- Samiri [13] is to identify the relationship between stressful events and aggressive behavior of students at Al-Aqsa University. The study sample consisted of 524 students, the study results showed that the most common form of aggression prevalent among students is directed towards others, then university property-oriented, and there is a positive correlation between stressful events and aggressive behavior. The results of the study indicated that the aggressive behavior directed towards others is more prevalent among male students in the fourth year, while the spread of aggressive behavior between property-oriented students was in the third year.

Abdullah and Abu Fokaideh [14] conducted a study to predict the attitudes of the students at Jerusalem University toward aggressive behavior. The study sample consisted of 170 students. The results indicated that the level of violence among students was moderate, and

more prevalent among males, while there were no statistically significant differences between the university aggressive behavior and students' specialization and their study level.

The Khalifa and Al-Hooley [3] studied the manifestations of aggressive behavior and its relationship with some variables of students at Kuwait University. The study sample consisted of 900 students, the results showed high prevalence of aggressive behavior among male students, also found a positive relationship between aggressive behaviors and smoking among irregular students.

The Cook, Buehler, and Henson [15] study aimed to identify the causes of aggressive behavior. The study sample consisted of 416 young participants who live in the southeastern of the United States. The results of the study indicated that the impact of the comrades is the most causal factors for aggressive behavior, and then the impact of the family income level.

The study of Karlin [16] aimed to identify the causes of aggressive behavior among a sample consisted of 60 students. The results of the study indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between the level of parents' education and aggressive behavior of the children, and the results also showed the low level of aggressive behavior among high achieved students.

Ghoneim [17] conducted a study aimed to identify the attitudes of Princess Rahma college students towards university violence. The study sample consisted of 242 students. The results indicated that the level of violence was low among students and the presence of statistically significant differences in the tendencies of students towards university violence and study variables-sex, school year, and the accumulative average- while there was no difference between the violence and the type of university students' specialty.

1.1 Objective of the Study

The study aims at:

- 1. Identifying the degree of aggressive behavior among the students of Tafila Technical University.
- 2. Findings out the differences in aggressive behavior according to variables of gender, study level, and accumulative average.

1.2 Study Questions

The aims of the study are identifying the aggressive behavior among university students. In particular, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1. What are the degrees of the common dominated aggressive behaviors among university students?
- 2. Are there statistically differences in aggressive behaviors attributed to gender and students' studying level?
- 3. Are there statistically differences in aggressive behaviors attributed to students' accumulative average?

1.3 Procedural Definitions

Aggressive behavior: Is the harm of others, self, or property. Accumulative average: Signs of a student during the academic semesters as follows:

Less than (68%) satisfactory, (68-76) good, more than (76-83.9) very good, more than (84) Excellent.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study Population

The study population consisted of all students enrolled at Tafila Technical University-Jordan, who are aged between 18-25 years. There are 6948 students in various disciplines of the faculties of science and humanity.

2.2 The Study Sample

The study sample includes 690 students selected by random stratified method depending on the gender and college, table 1, shows the number of the study sample by levels of study, gender, and college.

2.3 Study Design

This study adopted a descriptive analytical design. Descriptive analytical method relies on the study of a particular phenomenon by describing and showing its relationship to other phenomena.

2.4 Study Instrument

To accomplish the study objective, the researcher used a questionnaire in the study which was prepared by the researcher herself; to measure the aggressive behavior among the students of Tafila Technical University.

The objective of the questionnaire was: identifying the aggressive behavior among university students. In order to prepare the questionnaire, the researcher reviewed the educational literature related to the research Muammria & Mahee [2]; Al-zyoud & Khawaldeh [12]; Abu-Mustafa & Al-Sameery [14].

The questionnaire consisted of 37 items distributed into 3 dimensions:

- -Aggressive toward students: items: 15 items 1,2,3,4,8,9,13,14,17,22,24,32,34,35,37.
- -Aggressive toward university workers: 9 items 5,11,15,16,18,19,21,30,33.
- -Aggressive toward university properties: 13 items 6,7,10,20,12,23,25,26,27,28,29,31,36.

Table 1. Study sample distributed by levels of study, gender, and college

College	Gender Study Level									
	Male					Female				
	1	2	3	4	Total	1	2	3	4	Total
Scientific	163(23.6)	58(8.41)	34(4.93)	54(7.83)	309	49(7.10)	27(3.91)	22(3.19)	31(4.49)	129(18.7)
Humanity	50 (7.24)	25(3.62)	19(2.75)	17(2.46)	111	55(7.97)	40(5.79)	21(3.04)	25(3.62)	141(20.4)
Total	213(30.9)	83(12.0)	53(7.68)	71(10.3)	420	104(15.1)	67(9.71)	43(6.23)	56(8.11)	270(39.1)
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2.4.1 Validity

to ensure the scale validity; professional judges in educational psychology, assessment and educational management checked the items suitability and their relevance to the scale domains and according to their point of views the instrument was modified.

2.4.2 Reliability

to check the instrument reliability Cronbach P was used. It was found that the reliability for the whole scale was 0.87, for the student aggressive behavior 0.83; Aggressive behavior towards university workers 0.80 and towards university properties was 0.81.

2.5 Statistical Analysis

Means and standard deviations, and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

The items' weights become as:

The item with mean of (3,01 to 4) means that the degree of university students towards aggressive behavior is high.

The item with mean of (2,01 to 3) means that the degree of university students towards aggressive behavior is moderate.

The item with mean of (1 to 2) means that the degree of university students towards aggressive behavior is low.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To answer the first question: What are the degrees of the common dominated aggressive behaviors among university students?

Means and standard deviations were used and it was found that the mean of aggressive behaviors is 1.34 with a standard deviations equal to 0.41, it also found that aggression towards university properties was the most common one with average equal to 1.36, then the aggressive behavior towards faculties and administrative staff 1.31, which is almost equal to the aggressive behavior towards other students 1.29.

Concerning item analysis the results showed the highest aggressive behaviors towards students was item 13: Making fun of the other gender mean 1.59, item 37: Stealing the property of students in order to threat them mean 1.51 and item 9: Cursing students by using bad words mean 1.46.

The highest aggressive behavior items towards university employees were: item 11: Using obscene words against employees mean 1.64, 16 mocking towards employees mean 1.49, and 15 enjoying discredit employees mean 1.39.

While the highest aggressive behavior towards university properties were: item 26 Throwing trash on the campus area. Mean 1.85, item 36: Writing on the benches inside the teaching halls mean 1.71, item 7 Dispose drinks inside teaching halls mean 1.53 as shown in Table 2.

To answer the second question "Are there statically significant differences in aggressive behaviors attributed to gender and students' studying level (P=0.05)?

Table 2. Means and Standard deviations of domains and items of aggressive behavior

N0	aggressive behavior items toward others students	Mean	SD
1-	Fights with students using hands	1.31	0.63
2-	Fights with students sharp articles	1.11	0.38
3	Fights with students due to election and celebrations	1.26	0.65
4	Instigating my friends to fight with other students	1.19	0.55
8-	Forming groups for threatening and attacking others	1.24	0.51
9-	Cursing students by using bad words	1.46	0.79
13-	Making fun of the other gender	1.59	0.88
14-	Enjoying spreading bad rumors toward other students	1.36	0.73
17-	Sending threats to other students	1.25	0.59
24-	Enjoying in taking parts in students' fights	1.19	0.49
22-	Damaging students' cars	1.11	0.42
32-	Using beatings when differences of opinion occur with others	1.29	0.67
34-	Harassing students to stir up troubles	1.22	0.62
35-	Sexual harassment to the other sex	1.26	0.65
37-	Stealing the property of students in order to threat them	1.51	0.89
	Total	1.29(low)	0.38
N0	aggressive behavior items toward university employees	Mean	SD
5	Assaulting and beating employees	1.14	0.47
11	Using obscene words against employees	1.64	0.95
15-	Enjoying discredit employees	1.39	0.73
16-	Mocking towards employees	1.49	0.87
18-	Sending threatening to workers at the university	1.19	0.53
19-	Sending false reports against employees	1.27	0.65
21-	Damaging the cars of the employees at the university	1.16	0.50
30-	Sending an e-mail containing bad phrases to employees	1.25	0.62
33-	Taking revenge from the employees who misbehave with me	1.27	0.65
	Total	1.31(low)	0.44
N0	aggressive behavior items toward university properties	Mean	SD
6-	Instigating mates to destroy university properties	1.22	0.50
7-	Dispose drinks inside teaching halls	1.53	0.94
10-	Breaking seats of teaching halls	1.25	0.63
12-	Breaking the doors of teaching halls	1.19	0.53
20-	Writing bad phrases on the walls, toilets at the university	1.38	0.82
23-	Tearing the books of the library	1.25	0.66
25-	Tearing the adds intentionally on the bill boards of the university	1.35	0.66
26-	Throwing trash on the campus area	1.85	0.98
27-	Breaking the notice boards of the university	1.22	062
28-	Cutting the trees and flowers of the university	1.47	0.93
29-	Sending e-mail with a virus to destroy universities' computers	1.22	0.60
31-	Comment on the university bill boards	1.21	0.61
36-	Writing on the benches inside the teaching classes	1.71	1.05
	Total	1.36 (low)	0.45

ANOVA was used to answer this question and it was found that there is a statically significant difference in aggressive behavior attributed to gender, students' study level and the interactions between them as shown in Table 3.

Means and standard deviations were used to knowing the differences in aggressive behavior attributed to gender the results show: female, mean 1.30, standard deviation 0.40 and male,

mean 1.34, standard deviation 0.42. This is meaning that males have higher aggressive behavior than females.

Scheffe was used for the multiple comparisons and it was the aggressive behavior that dominated in students with higher academic level compared to younger students for example, if we compare third year students with first, second and fourth year students, and the result shows that there is a positive relation between students level and aggressive behavior as shown in Table 4.

The results also indicated that a positive relationship between types of aggressive behavior and the interaction between gender and student study level. Concerning gender; the results indicate that male students are more aggressive than female students in the same study level as shown in Table 5.

To answer the third question: "Are there statically significant differences in aggressive behaviors attributed to students' accumulative average (P=0.05)?. ANOVA was used to answer this question and it was found that there is a statically significant difference in student's aggressive behavior attributed to their accumulative average as shown in Table 6.

When scheffie was used for multiple comparisons it was found that low achiever students with accumulative fair average below 68% were most aggressive students compared to students with good, very good and excellent accumulative average as shown in Table 7.

Table 3. ANOVA for the effect of the gender and study level upon aggressive behavior

Source	Type sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Р
Gender	0.59	1	0.59	3.87	0.00
Study level	12.6	3	4.21	27.8	0.00
Gender*level	3.31	3	1.10	7.28	0.00
Error	103.2	682	.151		
Total	1347.7	690			

Table 4. Multiple comparisons between mean differences of the aggressive behavior according to the study level

S	tudy level	Mean difference	Std. Error	Р
First	Second	151*	.039	.002
	Third	237*	.045	.000
	Fourth	323*	.041	.000
Second	First	.151*	.039	.002
	Third	086	.051	.42
	Fourth	172*	.047	.004
Third	First	237*	.045	.000
	Second	.086	.051	.42
	Fourth	086	.053	.44
Fourth	First	.323*	.041	.000

Table 5. Means and Standard deviations of the aggressive behavior types according to gender and study level

Gender study level	Mean	SD	N
(ATS) Female			
First	1.20	0.31	213
Second	1.41	0.49	83
Third	1.38	0.50	53
Fourth	1.38	0.44	70
Total	1.29	0.41	419
Male			
First	1.14	0.24	104
Second	1.24	0.31	67
Third	1.39	0.31	43
Fourth	1.50	0.31	56
Total	1.28	0.31	270
(ATW) Female			
First	1.22	0.33	213
Second	1.37	0.45	83
Third	1.29	0.43	53
Fourth	1.43	0.44	70
Total	1.29	0.39	419
Male			
First	1.13	0.36	104
Second	1.33	0.50	67
Third	1.58	0.61	43
Fourth	1.53	0.41	56
Total	1.34	0.49	270
(ATP) Female			
First	1.25	0.37	213
Second	1.36	0.41	83
Third	1.40	0.45	53
Fourth	1.45	0.53	70
Total	1.33	0.42	419
Male			
First	1.16	0.24	104
Second	1.34	0.48	67
Third	1.56	0.55	43
Fourth	1.82	0.48	56
Total	1.41	0.49	270

(ATS) aggressive toward students (ATW) aggressive toward workers (ATP) aggressive toward property

Table 6. ANOVA for the effect of a cumulative average upon aggressive behavior

Source	Type sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Р
achievement	12.6	3	4.20	27.4	0.00
Error	105.2	686	.153		
Total	1347.7	690			

Table 7. Multiple comparisons between accumulative average and aggressive behavior degree

New achiev	vement (i) new achievement (j)	Mean difference	Std. Error	Р
Fair	good	0.24*	.035	.000
	Very good	0.32*	.044	.000
	excellent	0.24*	.058	.001
good	fair	-0.24*	.035	.000
	Very good	.081	.047	.410
	excellent	-0.00	.061	1.00
Very good	fair	-0.32*	.044	.000
	good	081	.047	.410
	excellent	082	.066	.668
excellent	fair	-0.24*	.058	.001
	Very good	0.00	.061	1.00
good		0.08	.066	.668

5. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to identify the level of aggressive behavior among the students at Tafila Technical University from their point of view. The results of the study found that the prevalence of aggressive behavior among students was directed against the property of the university, and then towards workers in the university, and finally towards other students. The students vandalism shown through by milling and bad writings on the walls and bathrooms, benches and throwing waste into the classrooms and squares as a way to vent their feelings of anger, annoyance and frustration as a result of being a failure in the exam, a warning, or non-registration of a particular subject, such matters were found to encourage students to practice such behaviors as they occur without supervision from others propagated by the absence of deterrent instructions. This study is consistent with the result of Al-Fokahaa study [12]. The results also indicated a high male aggressive behavior compared with females. The researcher attributed to the fact that females in our society raise their tendency to suppress aggressive behavior and not to express it, frankly, because their nature and socializing were subjected her makes it unable to express her feelings and her emotions clearly making it less aggressive. And may be due to the physical and biological construction of the males' body, and it could also be due to the social development of males which encourages them to be more aggressive. This result is consistent with the result of Muammria and Mahee study [2], and with the result of Abu-Mustafa and Al-Sameery study [13] and Al-Enzi study [6]. The results also indicated that 3rd and 4th year students were more aggressive compared to the 1st and 2nd year students this may be due to the fact that new students have limited relations with others and they still have positive attitudes toward others and fear from being involved in troubles with others. This is consistent with the result of Al-Fokahaa study [12]. The study finally indicated that students with low accumulative average were more aggressive compared to high achievers and this due to the fact that aggressive behavior is a method practiced to get rid of psychological stress resulting from failure .This finding is consistent with the studies results of Abu-Mustafa and Al-Sameery [13] and Cook, Buehler, Henson [15].

6. CONCLUSION

The aggressive behavior of Tafila Technical University is low. The most dominated aggressive behavior was towards the university properties. This subject is a widespread phenomenon in many government and private Jordanian universities, so the researcher recommends conducting several studies related to learning about the motives and reasons behind the aggressive behavior, as well as to identify the problem from the perspective of other variables and different governorates. The researcher recommends conducting surveys to find out about the needs for proper counseling when students are facing academic problems, psychological and social ones.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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