

Aggression theory

Science



Physical violence is one of the types of violence that may be clearly explained by aggression theory. Physical violence entails: “choking, grabbing, hitting, hitting with weapons or objects, kicking, obliging a person to do something involuntarily, pulling, punching, pushing, scratching, shoving, slapping, etc.” (Do..., n. d.).

Aggression Theory Explaining the Type of Violence Chosen

Externally-stimulated Aggression is the school of Aggression Theory which can clearly explain physical violence. Externally-stimulated Aggression begins with the premise that aggression occurs because of “innate predispositions” as well as “external stimuli” (Smith, 1999).

The external stimuli referred to here is technically known as “frustration” (Types, n. d.). Explaining further, let’s take the following example:

Let’s look into my father’s motivation of fear, anxiety, and violence which all contributed largely to his “frustrations”. My father has always been a violent individual. He flares up over little “frustrations” like:

- 1) when mother asks how utility bills are going to be paid this time;
- 2) when my big brother complains about how small our house is;
- 3) when my little sister asks him to help get something at the top of the closet;
- 4) when I ask him not to hurt or yell at my mother etc.

It all started when he resigned in 1983 as a city engineer and he puts up his own and went into private construction instead. This new business/job of his, however, is not helpful since it is irregular, unlike when he was working for the government where he receives a fixed monthly income.

In fact, it is too irregular that he cannot even provide the family's basic needs like food, school supplies, health insurance etc. Sometimes he has clients who would pay him to build their houses, swimming pools, renovate their homes, etc, however, most of the time he does not have anything to do, thus, most of the time he doesn't have money.

He gets "frustrated", and depressed, then drinks, or proceeds to the casino to play poker and does not come home until early morning. He became an alcoholic, and he also became addicted to poker. He still gets contracts to build houses and other infrastructure projects but he only obliges to the most expensive ones.

Because he is too picky, there were only a number of offers coming in then until no offers were coming in at all, which of course contributed largely to his "frustrations". Even though large infrastructure projects were coming in then and the profits were a bit high, my father still cannot contribute to the family's needs.

This is because when he gets a contract, he tends to make a loan without even making sure if it is worth it. What happened was he earned but his debts were thrice his gains. He borrowed money from his friends but these were not enough to pay off everything.

In the end, he was sued for bouncing checks. He was also sued by his friends. We lost some of our properties because of the aforementioned as well.

Since then he became so "frustrated" and fearful, he would not come out of the room when he hears that some people knock over at our gate and then

throws whatever he gets hold of, kicks whatever is available, or hit whomever is in the room with him.

He feels that every time somebody comes over to visit, these people are either arresting officers who are going to invite him down to the police station for questioning or people whom he promised he'd pay back on that certain day.

What he would do is to ask my mother to go outside and tell them he is not home (which makes me so scared since somebody might just hurt my mom for all her alibis or the people's anger might be transferred to her and she would be the one to get hurt).

This situation of ours became worse as days go by. He became so "frustrated" he would slap my mother when my mother refuses to give him money he would spend on poker, throw breakable things at us when he is too irritated with his problems, unleash his exceedingly big guard dogs inside the house to threaten us, and countless other violent acts.

There are three basic conditions which bring forth anxiety (Franken, 1994). It could be: 1) Overstimulation, wherein information for a certain individual is overflowing; 2) Cognitive Incongruity, wherein an individual is having difficulty reconciling with some event; and 3) Response Unavailability, wherein a person does not know how to handle an excruciating situation (Franken, 1994).

The three basic conditions aforementioned apply to my father. "Overstimulation" appears in this situation as the countless monetary problems which have too many details for him to handle. Cognitive

Incongruity, on the other hand, emerges as the several cases with regards to bouncing checks and the debts he owes to other people.

Response Unavailability, however, surfaces as the debts he incurs every time he gets infrastructure projects or every time he needs it. Instead of working hard and saving, his only recourse is to borrow money which causes his downfall.

This only shows as well that he does not know how to handle a difficult situation which is what exactly termed as Response Unavailability. And this increases his anxiety and “frustrations”.

Reduction or Elimination of Violence

Fortunately, there are ways to reduce, if not totally eliminate violence as suggested by the Theory of Aggression utilized:

It is important for my father, for example, to “focus on the other components of the frustrating stimulus than the frustration” (Dugan, 2004).

Instead of losing control over the irrepressible and uncontrollable occurrences or instead of believing that there is no way to solve the problem, he should be “self-certain” meaning not only knowing his strengths but both strengths and weaknesses since if that is the case then he would not be able to cope with any stressful incident in his life since a solution to a problem is only devised when he turns his anxiety into fear and then deal with the other components of the frustration that has been produced (Franken, 2004).

References

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