

**Normative Beliefs about Aggression and Retaliation:
Association with Aggressive Behaviour and Anticipatory
Self-censure**

Naumana Amjad*

Martin Skinner

Psychology Department, University of Warwick, UK

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the anticipatory role of self-censure in regulating aggressive actions as proposed in Bandura's social cognitive theory. Association between aggressive behaviour, normative beliefs about aggression and self-censure was examined in a sample of adolescents girls and boys (N=118). Normative beliefs with their sub-types (extreme retaliation, justified retaliation, general aggression) were significantly and positively associated with aggressive behaviour confirming earlier research. Self-censure was significantly and negatively associated with retaliation beliefs as well as aggressive behaviour indicating that higher the beliefs about aggression and aggressive behaviour lower the feelings of self-criticism for one's aggression. Mediation analysis were carried to test the hypothesis that effect of beliefs on aggressive behaviour was mediated through self-censure. Self-censure mediated effect of excessive retaliation beliefs on aggressive behaviour but did not mediate the effect of equal retaliation beliefs on aggressive behaviour. Females reported more self-censure than males and reported significantly lower frequency than males for certain types of aggressive acts such as hitting, slapping and swearing. Self-censure mediated sex differences in these specific acts. The findings are discussed with their theoretical and practical implications