

## ABSTRACT

An Examination of the Factors Associated with the Development of Aggression among Children and Adolescents Within the Socio-cultural context of Trinidad

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The study examined the factors related to the development of aggression among children and adolescents between the ages of 9 and 15 years. One hundred and seventy students (170) from Primary and Secondary Schools in Trinidad completed the Direct and Indirect Aggression Scale (DIAS), The Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ), Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventories (CFSEI-3), and The Rotter's Internal and External Locus of Control Scale (Rotter's I-E scale). The factor structures of these scales were examined using exploratory factor analysis. The independent variables of age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and parenting styles were conceptualised as social constructs within the socio-cultural context of Trinidad. The data were analysed using Pearson's Correlation, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). A Sobel test developed by Preacher and Hayes (2004) was also carried out. The findings revealed significant main effects for age group, gender, ethnicity and parenting styles. Self-esteem was found to significantly mediate the relationship between age group and aggression. Overall, the SEM model provided a good fit to the data and partially supported the theoretical model that was developed for this study. The findings of the study are

discussed within the socio-cultural context of Trinidad and have important implications for future researchers.

*Keywords:* Christine Haytha Descartes; children and adolescents; direct aggression; indirect aggression; parenting styles; self-esteem; locus of control.