

Hostility and normative beliefs in reactive and proactive aggression: A structural model

J.M. Andreu; J.M. Ramirez



Social information-processing proposes that the tendency to be hostile will lead a person to display interpersonally angry or reactive-aggressive strikes, but not necessarily to instrumentally aggressive behaviors. While the reactive aggression includes behaviors that depict anger ("irritable", "hot-tempered", "easily angered"), temper ("has temper tantrums"), the proactive aggression includes instrumental and coercive behaviors ("tries to dominate others", "bullies", "threatens"). We hypothesized that hostile biases would relate significantly to the reactive aggression and not to the proactive aggression. A sample of 652 students (356 males and 296 females) was selected from different educational centers in Madrid. Subjects were selected from each classroom, in order to obtain a representative sample. Their average age was 19.28, with a range of age, between 15 and 28 years old (standard deviation: 1.45). Several self-report instruments, previously adapted to Spanish populations, were used: The AQ of Buss and Perry (1992), composed by four scales, related to physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and hostility; the CAMA of Ramirez (1993) which examined attitudes towards interpersonal aggression, involving several categories of aggressive acts in different situations; and the SAS (Situational Aggression Scale) of Andreu (2001) which examined aggressive acts of different intensity in different circumstances, related to offensive and reactive situations. Structural Equation Modeling techniques were used to evaluate the relationship between hostility and reactive aggressive, and between normative beliefs and proactive aggression. The model presented was tested with AMOS program that allows the simultaneous assessment of both measurement and structural models. Results indicated that both the measurement and structural models were adjusted. As hypothesized, hostility was associated with reactive aggression while normative beliefs were associated with proactive aggression.

Communicating author:
J.M. Andreu. Phone: 34916137424,
Fax 34913943189, e-mail: jmandreu@psi.ucm.es