CHAPTER-III
PROBLEM AND HYPOTHESES

Technological advancement and modernization, which contribute to rapid economic growth, are universally desired. However, violent conflict has been found to be greatest in developing nations, least in modern nation and intermediate in least developed nations. Growing urbanization result in migration of population from neighbouring places, leading to loosening of social sanctions and depersonization, unemployment, income disparity, increase in population, cultural homogenization, etc. which have been found to be conducive to violence. In fact, progressive crumbling of the family system, due to changes in the socioeconomic climate has been considered as a basic cause of the problem of violence (Palermo & Simpson, 1994).

Over the last decade the Indian society has undergone a metamorphic change as global flow of communication has resulted in cultural homogenization, leading to radical social restructuring. The main victim of this cultural holocaust has been our value system. Humanistic, familial and benevolent values have been regaled to the background, as there is a mad rush towards materialistic goals. In this process family has been reduced to a group of separate individuals within a hypothetical circle where each one is moving towards a different horizon.

The bonds of kinship neighbourhood and friendship which united the family (Nisbel, 1966) are loosing their meaning and have been supplanted by codified laws and certificated advisors. Children are the main sufferers as breakdown of the joint family system and advent
of double income/ single parent families have rendered them at the mercy of paid maternal surrogates. The concept of contractual relationships is thus ingrained from infancy, and gets reflected in later life. Alongwith this multi channel visual media dishes out sumptuous visual treats of glamorized versions of violence, corrupt practices, breakdown of family ties and attainment of materialistic goals. The projection leads to imitation, triggering aggression in predisposed individuals, desensitization of feeling of sympathy and acceptance of violent acts as socially acceptable responses to stress and frustration (Pennell & Browne, 1999). This in turn, through its influence on anticipatory guilt reactions, prosocial orientation and cognitive affective reactions lead to aggression (Bandura et al. 1996). Cognitive mechanisms, which assuage the experience of blame and violation of internalized norms, have been found to be associated with cognitive sources of aggression (Cermak & Blantany, 1995).

Over the last decade, not only in India, but across the globe, there has been an unprecedented spurt in violence. Hegemony, fundamentalism, racialism, diminishing physical resources, unemployment, weakening of social institutions both social and personal, glamorization of violence and corrupt practices have lead to insecurity and distrust. The social environment has undergone a drastic change as globalization and transcontinental flow of communication has accelerated the process of social change. No culture is static, but the events during the last decade appear to have shaken the basic cultural tenents of our society. Values which were expounded and cherished are becoming obsolete.
In view of the rapid social change being witnessed, it was felt that a study of the relationship between culture and aggression could provide insight into the genesis of aggression.

The term culture has been used in social psychology as a label for observation in the form of similarities and differences among belief, attitudes, values etc. on one dimension and food, clothing and other physical entities on the other, as probable causal, explanations for observable behaviours. The first dimension is subjective and is reflected as a change in behaviour within oneself or across people of the same generation, in order to resolve the discrepancy between behaviour and culture which in turn result in a change within oneself and across people of the same generation. Thus, difference between younger and older generation signal difference in underlying cultures of these two groups and surface in the form of generation gap. The second dimension is objective and connotes the physical aspect since rural and urban societies differ in terms of objective dimension and the older generation /rural masses are considered to epitomize the traditional customs and values, it was felt that a comparison across rural/urban subcultures and subsequent generations could provide insight into the genesis of aggression. Therefore the following problems was formulated for the present study.

**Problem:** Values and Aggression

An across generational and subcultural (urban-rural) study of Aggression and Values as mediated by insecurity and guilt reactions.

**Objectives:**

The following were the objectives of the study:
1. To study the independent and interactional effects of sub-cultural variations and generation on aggressive behaviour.
2. To study the relationship between values and moral disengagement.
3. To study the relationship between aggressive behaviour and values / moral disengagement.
4. To study the contribution of values, insecurity and guilt reactions to aggressive behaviour.

**Hypotheses:**

To fulfill the objectives of the study the following hypotheses were formulated.

1. There would be a differential effect of generation on different parameters of aggressive behaviour.
2. There would be a differential effect of sub-cultural variations on different parameters of aggressive behaviour.
3. There would be an interactive effect of sub-culture and generation on aggressive behaviour.
4. Values would be differentially related with moral disengagement.
5. Values would be differentially related with aggressive behaviour.
6. Moral disengagement would be positively related with aggressive behaviour.

The design and methodology used for validation of these hypotheses has been discussed in the next chapter.