Chapter 2

Review of Relevant Literature
In this chapter, the review of some prior significant and pertinent studies has been reported. Research reports published during the last 15 years (1990-2004) have been reviewed. Studies before 1990 have been only cursorily mentioned, if considered particularly relevant to the issue at hand. The studies have been clustered according to the main theme and arranged chronologically within the cluster.

According to Laner and Thompson (1982) serious dating relationships share a number of common features with marital relationship in contrast to other dyads. First, there is a greater amount of mutual interaction in terms of time spend together. Second, a greater exchange of personal information exists in both these relationships. Third, there is a greater presumed right to influence the partner. Finally, chances of conflict are more in these intimate relationships due to the need to negotiate roles and responsibilities and to cope with environmental stressors. Hence, even though the present investigation was done solely on college students who were currently involved in a dating relationship, relevant studies on married couples were also included in this section.

Arrangement of the Chapter

The literature considered relevant to the study has been categorized under the following headings:

1. Studies reporting prevalence of dating conflict
2. Studies indicating gender difference in the usage of different types of conflict tactics among dating couples
3. Studies on relationship of gender role identity and the usage of conflict tactics among dating couples
4. Studies on relationship of aggressiveness and the usage of conflict tactics among dating couples
5. Studies on relationship of love attitude and the usage of conflict tactics among dating couples
6. Studies denoting the interrelationship between the independent variables
   a) Aggressiveness and gender role identity
   b) Gender role identity and love attitude
   c) Love attitude and aggressiveness
7. Studies on other relevant factors associated with different dimensions of conflict in dating relationship

**Studies reporting prevalence of dating conflict**

Exploration in the area of conflict resolution through violence and aggression within dating relationship started in 1981 with Makepeace's groundbreaking study. Prior to the nineteen eighties, the phenomenon of dating violence had either been covered-up, denied or rationalized (Chesney-Lind & Sheiden, 1992). Makepeace in 1981 studied 202 subjects involved in dating relationship and found that amongst them 21.2% used some sort of violence to resolve conflict in their relationship. After this pioneering study, many studies have elucidated the fact that a substantial number of dating couples engage in violent tactics within the domain of their intimate relationship. Since then, the amount of research findings accumulated in this area is immense. In this section, only few of the relevant studies reporting prevalence of dating conflict and dating violence in the past 15 years (between 1990 and 2004) have been presented.

Levy in 1990 asserted that as many as one-third of high school youths were currently experiencing physical or sexual violence in their dating relationships.

Barnes Greenwood and Sommer in 1991 studied the prevalence of courtship violence in 202 male Canadian college students and found that over 42% of the sample had engaged in some form of courtship violence. But extreme forms of violence were not evident. White and Koss (1991) surveyed 2602 women and 2105 men in the US regarding their frequency of inflicting and sustaining verbal
aggression. The results revealed that approximately 81% of the men and 87.88% of women inflicted as well as received some form of verbal aggression at least once. In case of physical aggression, 37% of men and 35% of women inflicted some form of physical aggression; and 39% of men and 32% women sustained some form of physical aggression.

Bergman (1992) found 15.7% of girls and 7.8% of boys in three high schools (one rural, one suburban, and one urban) had experienced physical dating violence. Rates of combined physical and sexual abuse were 24.4% for girls, and 9.9% for boys. In another study, Pederson and Thomas (1992), 116 women and 50 men responded to the CTS, and 45.8% of the subjects reported experiencing physical violence in their most recent dating relationships. Of this total, 44.8% of women and 48% of men reported being physically aggressed upon by their partners; and 22% of men and 40.5% of women reported using physical aggression against a dating partner.

Suderman and Jaffe (1993) brought into light that 14.7% of all girls and 3.3% of boys in two high schools reported being physically abused in a dating relationship.

In an investigation by Clark et al. (1994) it was revealed that 50% of the subjects had insulted, refused to talk to, or made spiteful comments to a dating partner. DeKerseredy and Schwartz (1994) observed that in a Canadian sample of college students who retrospectively reported on their high school experiences, 9% of female students reported that their partners physically hurt them during high school. In addition, 14.5% of females reported that their dates physically forced them to engage in sex acts.

In 1995, Mitchell reported that 26.7% of 188 high school students used physical violence in their dating relationships.

Jezl et al. (1996) examined victimization rates in adolescent dating relationships among 114 male and 118 female students. They found that 59% of the subjects had been victimized at least once in their relationship by physical violence and 96% had experienced psychological maltreatment. Significantly more males than females had experienced overall physical abuse.

Gray and Foshee (1997) studied the difference between one-sided and mutually violent profiles among 185 adolescent students involved in a dating relationship.
relationship. Among them 77 students revealed getting involved in dating violence. About 66% of the students reporting violence agreed that the violence was mutual. Individuals in mutually violent relationships reported receiving and perpetrating significantly more violence than individuals involved in one-sided violent relationships as victims only or perpetrators only, respectively. Hanley and O'Neill (1997) explored violence and commitment among college dating couples. Violence was measured by the Conflict Tactics Scale. The results indicated that one-third of couples had at least 1 member who reported violence, but prevalence dropped to less than 20% when both member’s responses were taken into account. There was little agreement about who did what to whom. Violent couples reported greater commitment to the relationship but were also more likely to disagree with each other’s level of emotional commitment. According to Riggs and Caulfield (1997) violent men were significantly more likely than non-violent men to expect that violence would result in their winning the argument, whereas nonviolent men were more likely than violent men to believe that use of violence would result in an end to the relationship. In another study by Schwartz, O'Leary and Kendziora. (1997), it was published that among 122 male and 106 female high school students, 44% of the females and 16% of males reported engaging in at least 1 physically aggressive behavior toward a dating partner during a disagreement, with a modal form of aggression being pushing, grabbing or shoving for both males and females.

Molidor and Tolman (1998) explored 635 high school students in the US and discovered that among those students who had ever dated, 36% of the females and 37% of the males had experienced some form of physical violence in their dating relationship.

Very few studies investigated psychological abuse in dating relationship compared to physical abuse. Neufeld, McNamara and Ertl (1999) examined 623 college age women who completed the Abusive Behavior Inventory with reference to the previous 6-month period (incidence) and their entire dating history (prevalence). The results indicated that 77% of subject reported experiencing some form of psychological abuse during the same 6-month period. Lifetime prevalence was 43.1% for physical abuse and 91.2% for any psychologically abusive incident.
Knox, Custis and Zusman (2000) reported that 36% of 620 undergraduates involved in dating relationships were physically and emotionally abused. Shook, Gerrity, Jurich, and Segrist in 2000 used the modified version of the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, 1990) and measured the verbal aggression and physical aggression among 572 college students involved in dating relationships. The results indicated that 82% of the total sample reported having engaged in verbally aggressive behavior and 21% admitted to acting in a physically aggressive manner in the last one year. It was also found that the females were more likely to report using physical force than were male students. Male and female students who used verbal aggression were characteristically similar to each other.

Watson, Cascardi, Avery-Leaf and O‘Leary (2001) studied 476 high school student’s action in response to physical aggression in their dating relationships. They found that the most common responses were aggressive action (e.g., fight back), informal help seeking, threatened to actual break-up, and doing nothing (males) or crying (females). Females were most likely to fight back than males.

Bookwala (2002) studied 161 male and female undergraduates who were currently on a heterosexual romantic relationship. Among them, 52.8% of respondents reported expressing at least one act of aggression (pushing or beating), and 39.1% reported sustaining such an act from their partner.

The above studies clearly indicate that a considerable amount of aggression is used in resolving dating conflicts. Although compared to psychological abuse, rate of physical abuse is small, the salience and possible consequence of this behavior make it an alarming issue. In this context, many researchers have also noted that since Makepeace’s pioneering study in 1981, rate of psychological and physical aggression in between dating couples is constantly on the rise. Stacy, Schandel, Flannery and Conlon (1994) reported that the overall rate of dating violence has more than doubled since 1982 and 1 in 5 college students had experienced some form of violence in their most recent dating relationships. Contrarily, Billingham (1999) investigated dating violence over a 10-year period and found an overall reduction in both verbal aggression and violence between dating partners as they attempted to resolve conflicts.
Studies indicating sex difference in the usage of different types of conflict tactics among dating couples

Disagreement surrounds the question as to who is the abuser and who is the abused in a dating couple. It is popularly believed that in an intimate relationship, it is usually the men who abuse, and the women are almost always the victim. Contradicting this notion, a number of researchers have pointed out that women are, sometimes, more aggressive than men when it comes to close relationships. While a substantial amount of studies have not found any significant sex difference in case of inflicting violence in dating relationships (Arias et al., 1987; Deal & Wampler, 1986; Laner & Thompson, 1982; Sigelman, Berry & Wiles, 1984; Burke et al., 1988). In this section, some of the studies depicting sex difference or no sex difference in using different types conflict tactics in dating relationships have been illustrated.

Marshall and Rose (1990) studied premarital violence amongst 454 college undergraduates and found that women declared expressing more violence while men claimed receiving more violence. Similarly in another study done by Riggs, O'Leary and Breslin (1990) revealed that significantly more women (39%) than men (23%) reported engaging in physical aggression against their current dating partners. Percentages of men expressing physical violence were 24.6%, and for women were 28.4% when Thompson (1990) studied courtship violence and the male role in 336 undergraduates. The author also detected that women were twice as likely as men to slap their partners.

Follingstad, Wright and Sebastian (1991) studied the sex differences in motivations and effects of dating violence in 207 men and 288 women. The study found that women were twice as likely to report perpetrating dating violence as men. Female victims attributed male violence to a desire to gain control over them or to retaliate for being hit first, while men believed that female aggression was based on their female partner's wish to 'show how angry they were and to retaliate for feeling emotionally hurt or mistreated'. After studying 149 men and 128 women, Stets and Henderson (1991) declared that women were 6 times more likely than men to use severe aggression (19.2% vs. 3.4%). Men were twice as likely as women to report
receiving severe aggression (15.7% vs. 8%). In an US national sample of 2603 women and 2105 men, it was found by White and Koss (1991) that 37% of the men and 35% of women inflicted some form of physical aggression, while 39% of the men and 32% of the women received some form of physical aggression.

In 1992, Bookwala, Frieze, Smith and Ryan used the Conflict Tactics Scale on 227 women and 78 men involved in a dating relationship. The results revealed that women reported the expression of violence nearly as much or more than men in their relationships. DeMaris (1992) explored the male versus female initiation of aggression in 80 men and 118 women involved in dating relationships. It was observed that when one partner is the usual initiator of violence, the partner was most often the woman. In another study by Caulfield and Riggs (1992) 667 unmarried college students responded to the CTS. The results pointed out that in a number of CTS-items women scored significantly than men. For example, 19% of women slapped their male partners, 13% of women kicked, bit, or hit their partners with a fist while only 3.1% of men engaged in these activities. In a study done by Pedersen and Thomas (1992), women reported more frequent expressions of physically and verbally aggressive conflict resolution tactics than did men. Men were more likely than women to report being targets of verbal and physical aggression by their partner.

In a report by Stickel and Ellis (1993), women had higher scores on the measure of physical abuse given to partners, while men were significantly higher on the overall measure of dominance and possessiveness.

Clark, Beckett, Wells and Dungee-Anderson (1994) studied courtship violence among 76 male and 235 female African-American undergraduates. They found that female subjects reported using more physical violence against a dating partner than did males; 33% of the male subjects and almost 50% of female subjects had used physical aggression towards a date. Harris (1994) investigated the relationship between gender and aggression among 414 undergraduates (55% female) and found that women used more aggression than men and expected more approval for aggression from friends. Men were more likely than women to feel guilty, apologize and speak politely to their dates.
Fiebert (1996), in an interesting study, explored 371-college student’s perception of men as victims of women’s assaultive behavior. Majority of the subjects (63%) were unaware of the finding that women assault men as frequently as men assault women. Foshee (1996) studied gender differences in adolescent dating abuse and announced that 36.5% of dating females and 39.4% of dating males reported being victims of physical dating violence. In terms of perpetration, 27.8% of females and only 15.0% males reported perpetrating dating violence.

In search for the reasons why women initiate assaults, Fiebert and Gonzales (1997) studied 968 women drawn from an US college campus. Among them 29% of the women confirmed having initiated assaults during the last 5 years. Women in their 20’s were more likely to aggress than women aged 30 and above. In terms of reasons, women appear to aggress because they did not believe that their male victims would be injured or would retaliate. Women also claimed that they assaulted their male partners because they wished to engage their attention, particularly emotionally. O’Keefe in a study in 1997 discovered that females were more likely to be violent toward a dating partner when they believed that female-to-male violence was justifiable and that male-to-female violence was not justifiable.

In a study by Milardo (1998) it was pointed out that 83% of the women, compared to 53% of men showed some indication that they would be somewhat likely to hit their dating partner. Molidor and Tolman (1998) investigated the occurrence of violence in adolescent dating relationships in 301 female and 330 male high school students. They found that male and female adolescents did not differ in overall violence. But adolescent girls experienced significantly higher levels of severe violence and reported more severe physical and emotional reactions to the violence. Ryan (1998) reported in a study of 656 college dating students that 34% of the women and 40% of the men reported being victims of their partner’s physical aggression. Simonelli and Ingram (1998) studied the physical and emotional abuse amongst 70 male students involved in dating relationships. Forty percent of the subjects reported being target of some form of physical aggression from their female partners, while only 23% reported expressing physical aggression towards their partner.
Goodyear-Smith and Laidlaw (1999) in an analysis of couple violence clearly pointed out that within the general population, women initiate and use violent behaviors against their partners at least as often as men. Shook et al. (2000) in a study found that the females in their study were more likely to report using physical force than were males. Hamed (2001) in a study with 874 students in romantic relationships found that women were more likely to experience sexual victimization, whereas men were more often the victims of psychological aggression. Rates of physical violence were similar across genders. But women were less likely to use physical violence in self-defense than men.

Linder et al. (2002) investigated gender differences in relational aggression and victimization within young adult’s romantic relationships. It was clearly shown that men and women reported equal levels of romantic relational aggression, and men reported higher levels of victimization than women. Simonelli, Mullis, Elliot and Pierce (2002) reported that in a sample of 61 men and 59 women, 10% of men and 33% of women reported of perpetrating at least one type of physical aggressive behavior against their dating partner; and 18% of men and 15% women reported receiving physical aggression from their dating partners.

Hendy, Weiner, Bakerofskie, Eggen, Gustitus and McLeod. (2003) compared six models for violent romantic relationships in 164 college men and 444 women. The results indicated that 16% of men and 26% of women report inflicting violence on their current romantic partner.

Arriaga and Foshee (2004) administered the modified version of the CTS on two occasions, 6 months apart on 280 girls and 246 boys to study adolescent dating violence. The results demonstrated that 28% of girls reported perpetrating violence with their partners (17% moderate, 11% severe) on the first occasion, while 42% of girls reported perpetrating violence (25% moderate, 17% severe) on the second occasion. For boys, 11% reported perpetrating violence (6% moderate, 5% severe) on occasion one, while 21% reported perpetrating violence (6% moderate, 15% severe) on occasion two. In terms of victimization, 33% of girls, and 38% of boys reported being victims of partner aggression on occasion one and 47% of girls and
49% of boys reported victimization on occasion two. In another study in 2004 by Kaura and Allan, it was again pointed out that women report significantly more dating violence perpetration compared to men.

*On the whole, the results are equivocal, although greater intimate aggression by women rather than men is reported somewhat more frequently.*

**Studies on relationship of aggressiveness and the usage of conflict tactics among dating couples**

Expression of aggression as an appropriate mode of conflict resolution depends on the general aggressiveness of the subject. As pointed out in Chapter 1, general aggressiveness comprises of physical aggressiveness, verbal aggressiveness, anger and hostility. In this section, studies that investigate aggressiveness of the subject and its relation to infliction of abuse in intimate relationship have been presented.

Schwartz in 1990 pointed out that male’s dating aggression was strongly predicted by their justification of aggression.

Sallinen-Kuparinen, Thompson and Klopf (1991) studied 232 Finnish and 145 American university students and compared their verbal aggression. The subjects showed no significant difference on Infante and Wigley’s measure of verbal aggressiveness. In keeping with general stereotypes, the men of both cultures (88 Finns, 86 Americans) were more verbally aggressive than were the women (144 Finns, 59 Americans).

Campbell and Muncer (1994) said that women tend to view aggression, particularly physical aggression in expressive terms, as a loss of control, whereas men tend to view it more instrumentally, in terms of having gained control over someone.

Crick and Groteter (1995) hypothesized that in contrast to boys, girls are more likely to focus on relational issues during social interaction (e.g., establishing close, intimate connections with others) and they exhibited significantly higher levels of relational / non-verbal aggression than did boys. Data was collected from 491 third
through sixth grade children using a 19-item peer nomination instrument. The results indicated that girls were significantly more rationally aggressive than boys.

Riggs and O'Leary (1996) tested a predictive model of dating aggression among 345 college undergraduates. The results indicated that attitude toward aggression and general aggressive behavior was found related to dating aggression only among women.

Archer and Haigh (1997) assessed the association between instrumental and expressive beliefs about aggression and self-reported physical and verbal aggression, and anger. Instrumental beliefs were found highly correlated with physical aggression, and to a lesser extent with verbal aggression. Campbell, Sapochnik and Muncer (1997) studied the sex differences in aggression. Sixteen items measuring different forms of aggressive behavior were given to 105 undergraduates together with Expagg, a psychometric measure of social representation of aggression. The only aggression scale showing a significant sex difference was indirect expressive aggression on which women scored higher than men. There was also significant sex difference in Expagg with women showing a more expressive representation of aggression. It was argued that indirect expressive aggression (involving bitching and avoiding) fails to show a relationship with social representation because it lacks formal requirements of intentional harm and consequently is not an act of 'aggression'. Venable and Martin (1997) studied argumentativeness and verbal aggression and satisfaction in 203 undergraduates who were currently involved in dating relationships. The results indicated that self and partner verbal aggressiveness (but not argumentativeness) were negatively related to both communication satisfaction and relationship satisfaction.

Bushman and Baumeister (1998) studied narcissism, self-esteem, and direct and displaced aggression. But the findings were contradictory to the popular view that low self-esteem causes aggression. Self-esteem proved irrelevant to aggression. The combination of narcissism and insult led to exceptionally high levels of aggression toward the source of insult. Mikulincer (1998) studied the association between adult attachment and anger. The results indicated that secured persons scored lower in anger-proneness, endorsed more constructive anger goals, reported more adaptive
responses and more positive affect in anger episodes, attributed less hostile intent to others, and expected more positive outcomes than insecure persons. For ambivalent persons, the anger experience also included lack of anger-control and anger-in. For avoidant persons, it included high hostility, escapist responses, and lack of awareness on physiological signs of anger. Papps and O'Carroll (1998) examined the level of self-esteem involved in the disposition to experience and express anger. Three thirty-eight individuals completed The State Trait Anger Expression Inventory (Spielberger, 1985) and The Culture Safe Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1981). The results indicated that groups with extreme scores on self-esteem and narcissism experienced and expressed higher levels of aggression. Men tended to be more aggressive and expected more approval of aggression from their friends than did women. Generally more aggression was directed against men, and friends approved more of aggression against a male target.

Archer and Haigh (1999) examined the beliefs about aggression when the type of aggression (physical or verbal) and the sex of the opponent (same sex or opposite-sex partner) were specified, among a sample of 200 students. Expressive beliefs were higher and instrumental beliefs lower for an opposite sex partner and for physical aggression.

Dye and Eckhardt (2000) studied whether the perpetrators of dating violence could be differentiated from their non-violent counterparts on measures of anger. Ninety-five males and 152 female undergraduates filled in the State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory. No differences were found between violent and non-violent subject’s levels of Trait Anger. The result suggests violent individuals have difficulty controlling angry feelings when they arise, which may increase the likelihood of externally directed forms of anger expression. Holtzworth-Munroe, Rehman and Herron (2000) found that the level of anger and hostility was related to level of perpetration of violence, with the most severely violent men having the most anger and hostility.

Brendgen, Vitaro, Tremblay and Lavoie. (2001) compared proactive and reactive aggression in dating violence amongst 525 Caucasian boys. The results revealed that reactive aggression uniquely predicted later dating violence. The
relation between reactive aggression and dating violence was moderated by mother’s warmth and care-giving behavior. Kiewitz and Weaver (2001) in a study found that high trait-aggressive individuals generally displayed more callous and hostile tendencies in their perceptions of interpersonal conflicts than low trait-aggressive males. Ramirez, Fujihara and Goozen (2001) studied the cultural and gender differences in anger and aggression in Japanese, Dutch and Spanish students. It was found that gender differences affecting anger disposition, arousal and aggressive tendencies were small or non-existent, with the exception of the Dutch sample, in which the male participants showed significantly higher levels of anger.

To study the relationship between dating violence and anger experience and expression, Eckhardt, Jamison and Watts (2002) investigated 17 men who reported at least one incident of physical aggression toward a female dating partner (DV) and 16 men who reported a non-violent interaction history (NV). They found that relative to NV men, DV men scored significantly higher on STAXI Trait Anger, Anger In, and Anger Out scale and lower on STAXI Anger Control. DV men were also found to be more verbally aggressive than non-violent men.

Bond, Critchlow and Wingrove (2003) in a study pointed out that aggression by women toward partners was associated with a general tendency to act aggressively.

The above findings highlight the salience of aggressive disposition on dating aggression.

Studies on relationship of gender role identity and the usage of conflict tactics among dating couples

Since studies exploring sex difference in dating aggression exhibit mixed results, many researchers are of the opinion that masculinity and femininity of the subject is more predictive of conflict resolution tactics among dating couples. Several studies have suggested that masculinity has a negative implication for close relationships.
Bem (1975) demonstrated that males high in masculinity and low in femininity showed less nurturance toward a needy other in an experimental situation. In some cases, masculinity also predicted males' use of psychological violence in dating relationships (Thompson, 1990) and endorsement of myths about rape (Bunting & Reeves, 1983). On the other hand, in some studies (Rosenbaum, 1986) it was found that abusive men were significantly less masculine and non-significantly less feminine than non-abusive men. According to Stets (1988), emotional expressiveness of the feminine gender identity plays an important role in inflicting physical abuse.

This section delineates those studies that report the role of gender role identity in conflict and conflict resolution between dating couples between 1990 and 2004. Since dating relationships are to some extent similar to marital relationships, some relevant studies on married couples have also been included.

Flynn (1990) examined 59 female undergraduate's sex roles and their response to courtship violence. Masculinity was found not related to how long a woman stayed with a violent partner. The author explained this finding by saying that women who are less sex typed may be either more apt to engage in conflict with their partners or may be better equipped to understand their partner's behavior. In a college sample, Thompson (1990) found that the BSRI-M Scale was positively associated with males' reports of committing physical aggression in dating relationships. This was comprehended by Lippa (1995), that men are more likely to interpret the BSRI item aggressive to mean physically aggressive, whereas women were more likely to interpret it to mean assertive. Worth, Matthews and Coleman (1990) investigated whether sex-role identification was related to courtship violence in 31 male and 78 female university students (aged 17-60 years) and the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) and a dating questionnaire were administered. The results indicated that men who participated in abusive interactions had lower femininity scores than men without such interactions. Though these men did not score higher in traditionally masculine characteristics, but they were relatively 'underdeveloped' in some traditionally female characteristics, such as being sensitive to needs of others, being affectionate, and being understanding. The authors suggested that at least some of
these qualities are associated with the ability to avoid violence or engage in communication patterns that are alternative to violence in resolving conflicts.

Thompson (1991) studied how gender and gender orientation affect physical aggression in dating relationship. Data collected from 336 undergraduate students (49.7% males & 50.3% females) revealed that physical aggression in dating relationship is not gender specific. It did not support the previously held idea that men exclusively, or nearly exclusively use abusive and violent behavior to manage conflict situations with an intimate partner, and that the more violent men will be more masculine. However gender orientation was significantly related to courtship aggression. The results indicated that both males and females who had a masculine view of themselves used physically aggressive behavior as a tactic to resolve dating conflict. The men and women who had a history of physical aggression rated themselves more highly on masculinity and were more deeply involved in their relationships. In other words the study revealed that physically aggressive behavior while dating is a tactic used by both males and females who have a masculine view of self. These findings do not coincide with Burke et al. (1988), which reports just the opposite. According to them males and females with more feminine gender identities were likely to inflict and sustain physical and sexual aggression. Sayers and Baucom (1991) examined the interactional behavior in 60 maritally distressed couple and pointed out that femininity was positively related to greater rates of negative behavior among husbands and wives. Actually wives' femininity was found to be associated with greater negative reciprocity of the wives. Level of femininity in husbands was less consistently related interactional behavior, the results suggest that husbands' femininity is associated only with the husbands' decreased tendency, relative to their wives', to terminate negative sequences. Masculinity in husbands and wives seems to be the least relevant in interactional behavior. Hence this study suggests that a greater conflict-engaging style is more closely associated with high femininity rather than gender per se.

Boye-Beaman et al. (1993) investigated the relationship between spouse gender role identity and premarital aggression. A heterogeneous sample of black (N=123) and white (N=412) couples was assessed at the time they applied for their
marriage licenses. Gender Role identity was measured by the PAQ (Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp, 1974) and aggression was measured using a modified version of the CTS (Straus, 1979). Gender identity was found differentially related to black and white samples. Femininity among white husbands seemed to temper aggression. Among black couples, wives high in masculinity or high in femininity experienced lower levels of premarital aggression, independent of the husband's gender identity. The explanation for this finding was that black females who perceived themselves as more assertive and independent, and therefore identified as masculine in the PAQ scale, and were less likely to accept violence as a normative component within their intimate relationships. Whereas undifferentiated black wives (wives who considered themselves low in both masculinity and femininity) were more likely to be the result of, rather than the precursor to, aggression. This study defined femininity in terms of expressiveness and hence it was related to reduced levels of intimate aggression. Femininity when defined primarily as negative emotions, are more related to intimate aggression (e.g., Burke, Stets and Pirog-Good 1989). In another study, Markman, Silvern, Clements and Kraft-Hanak (1993) examined men and women who dealt with conflict in heterosexual relationships. The results revealed that communication patterns are associated with gender roles rather than with gender. Among men higher femininity were found to be associated with several facilitative behaviors. Men's masculinity was associated with less dissatisfaction, with verbal intimacy, but not with the potentially advantageous aspects of instrumental problem solving. In contrast to men, women's femininity was not associated with their communication behaviors. Their masculinity, however was associated with low Support/Validation and low Discussion Facilitation – two potentially disadvantageous communication behaviors. Therefore, masculinity appeared to have limited utility for favorable communication patterns for both men and women. Men's higher masculinity predicted relationship satisfaction for both men and women; however women's high masculinity actually predicted lower satisfaction for men.

Lamke, Sollie, Durbin and Fitzpatrick (1994) examined the relationships among masculinity / femininity, expressive / instrumental competence, and satisfaction among dating couples. One hundred and seventy four college students in
dating relationships completed the Personal Attributes Questionnaire, the D. Buhrmester et al. (1989) Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire, and Relationship Satisfaction scale. The results indicated that for both males and females, relationship satisfaction was related to their own expressive competence and to perception of their partner as feminine.

In a longitudinal study, Bradbury, Campbell and Fincham (1995) examined the role of spouse's masculinity and femininity in marital satisfaction and behavior displayed in a problem-solving discussion. They used the EPAQ (Spence et al., 1979) to measure desirable and undesirable, masculine and feminine traits. The results indicated that wives' satisfaction declined when they endorsed fewer desirable masculine traits (like, dominant, assertive, forceful) and their husband endorsed fewer desirable masculine traits and fewer desirable feminine traits (affectionate, sympathetic, sensitive to other's needs). When the self-esteem was controlled for both the spouses, wives' satisfaction declined when their husbands endorsed more undesirable masculine traits (like, arrogant, egotistical, cynical). Husband's undesirable masculine traits were detrimental to wives' marital satisfaction and husbands' desirable masculine traits were beneficial to wives' satisfaction. So it can be said that masculinity of both the spouses plays an important role in determining the quality of marriage and satisfaction of the wife. Higher levels of wives' masculinity increase the likelihood of marital conflict, whereas higher levels of husbands' masculinity decrease the likelihood of marital conflict. Stets (1995) explored the relationship between gender identity (a role identity), mastery identity (a person identity), and control over one's partner in intimate relationships. The sample was 465 university students (42% male) currently dating. The results showed that the subjects with more masculine gender identity were more likely to perceive that they controlled their partners than did those with a more feminine gender identity.

Truman, Tokar and Fischer (1996) investigated the links between masculine gender roles and date rape by exploring 3-masculinity-related constructs in the contexts of rape research: masculinity ideology, attitudes toward feminism, and homophobia. Hundred and six males (aged 17-48 years) completed the survey. Results found that men who endorse in more traditional gender roles tended to hold
more date rape supportive attitudes and beliefs (i.e., adversarial sexual beliefs, acceptance of interpersonal violence, and date rape myth acceptance).

Harnishfeger (1998) examined the possible relationship of gender role conflict to male college students' receipt and use of violence in heterosexual dating relationships. One hundred and seventy five undergraduate men involved in heterosexual dating relationships responded to a questionnaire assessing demographic characteristics, gender role conflict, the seriousness of their current or most recent dating relationship, attitudes towards aggression and their receipt and use of physically violent tactics while dating. The result suggested that men’s accepting attitude toward aggression and their conflicts with aspects of traditional gender roles may relate to their receipt and use of violence in their dating relationships.

Ray (1999) studied the effects of gender role adherence, history of witnessed and experienced familial aggression, and problem solving ability on the use of aggression in dating relationships. One hundred and seventy dating college students were assessed through questionnaires. The results revealed that for males problem-solving variables predicted aggression, and for females history of family violence predicted physical aggression. The personality variables of hypermasculinity and hypersensitivity predicted physical and psychological aggression displayed by both genders.

In sum, gender role identity seems to be a significant variable of dating aggression, although the findings are equivocal.

Studies on relationship of love attitude and the usage of conflict tactics among dating couples

Though formal research on ‘love’ started in the late sixties, not too many psychologists consider the influence of love styles while investigating dating violence or dating conflict. This section will be reviewing the role of love and love attitude in conflict resolution.
Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) assessed different measures of love on 391 unmarried college students. Eros was found negatively correlated with conflict and positively related with satisfaction. The findings were same for Agape, Mania and Storge. Ludus was found positively related to conflict and negatively with satisfaction. Richardson et al. (1989) proposed that both love attitudes and conflict strategies are interwoven within romantic relationships. For example, Erotic and Agapic lovers, because of their high level of relationship investment and concern for the partner's well being, were more likely to utilize conflict strategies that were integrative, obliging and compromising in nature. Game playing Ludic lovers on the other hand, tended to employ avoidance tactics that were characterized by withdrawal, denial of conflict and general lack of concern for either conflict issues or resolution. They also refrained from using more integrative tactics. There is thus considerable evidence that love orientations are intricately related to conflict behaviors.

Bookwala, Frieze and Grote (1994) examined whether certain love styles facilitate aggression in dating relationships. One hundred and forty nine female undergraduate students involved in an ongoing dating relationship filled in the Love Attitude Scale (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1990) and the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, 1979). The results revealed that Mania was found to be the strongest predictor of courtship aggression. They explained that women who endorse a manic love style are predisposed to employ aggression as means of interpersonal control, which has been found to be an important correlate of aggression in dating relationships. Similar results were found in earlier studies by Bookwala et al. (1992), Makepeace (1981) and Sugarman & Hotaling (1989).

Hanley and O'Neill (1997) studied college dating couples on measures of emotional commitment and verbal aggression and violence in their relationship. It was found that violent couples reported greater commitment to relationship but were also more likely to disagree with each other's level of emotional commitment.

Meeks et al. (1998) studied the conflict tactics, love and relationship satisfaction among 140 heterosexual couples. Communication or conflict tactics were measured by a scale developed by Cupach (1982) and Sillars, Coletti, Parry and
Rogers (1982), and love styles were measured by the Love Attitude Scale (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986). It was found that passionate love (Eros), altruistic love (Agape) and friendship love (Storge) was positively related to satisfaction. Hence these three love types were combined to form a single measure called the “positive love”. Mania was found to be moderately related to satisfaction because of its intense affect directed towards the partner.

Larry (1999) studied the experience of love in abusive and non-abusive courtship relationships. Abuse was measured by the Conflict Tactics Scale (Starus, 1979) and love was measured by the Love Attitude Scale (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986) and Sternberg’s Triangular Love Scale (Sternberg, 1987). Two hundred and twenty four university students completed the questionnaires. It was found that verbal abusers scored higher in Passion and Erotic love than non-abusers. Abusers who isolated and emotionally controlled their partners were higher in Ludic and Manic love. Victims who were emotionally controlled by their partners scored higher in Intimacy, Passion, Commitment, Eros and Agape than did non-abusers. Abusers who perpetrated acts of jealousy were higher in Passion, Eros and Mania.

Arriaga (2002) reported that highly committed individuals who experienced substantial violence during a conflict situation interpreted severely violent behaviors of their partners as mere instances of “joking around”. Russell and Oswald (2002) investigated the role of the love styles, sexual coercion, and victimization among men. They found that men who reported engaging in coercive strategies were more likely to endorse Ludus love style, and less likely to endorse Agape love style than non-coercive men. Men who reported love styles of Storge and Pragma were more likely to report being victims of sexually coercive behavior.

Lee (1976) in his book “Colors of Love” mentioned that a common symptom of Mania is “jealousy”. So if expression of jealousy is considered as indication of Mania, then a number of studies illustrates that Mania (romantic jealousy) is the often the source of conflict in a relationship. Sugarman and Hotaling (1989) reviewed approximately forty studies and reported that jealousy was perceived to be the most pressing cause of violence in a dating relationship. But being jealous as a predictor of violence did not hold true for men. Women’s jealousy is more related to dependence
on the relationship while men's jealousy is more related to traditional gender role attitudes (White, 1981; White & Mullen, 1989). Mitchell in 1995 also found that jealousy was a significant factor of male coercion, verbal aggression, and minor physical violence among dating couples. In the study, inter-partner aggression was measured by the Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, 1979) and jealousy was measured by Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (Peiffer & Wong, 1987) and 188 eight high school students participated in the survey. Follingstad et al. (1999) also reported that jealousy played an important role in dating violence. In 2003, Puente and Cohen investigated jealousy related aggression in undergraduate students. It was found that jealousy can both be a sign of insecurity and a sign of love. It was also revealed that equating jealousy with love can lead to tacit acceptance of jealousy related violence.

In a research investigation, Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) compared the 6 love styles developed by Lee (1976) and measured by the Love Attitude Scale (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986), with Bowlby's (1973) attachment styles measured by the General Relationship Attitude questionnaire by Hazen and Shaver (1987). Eros and Agape was found to be positively correlated with secure attachment style, Ludus was positively correlated with avoidant attachment style and negatively with secure attachment style, Pragma positively with avoidant attachment style and Mania with anxious-ambivalent attachment style. In a recent study by Creasey and Hesson-McInnis (2001) it was revealed that adolescents with more insecure attachment orientations were predicted to report more negative affect during disagreement and less optimal conflict tactics (e.g. more conflict escalation) than youth with secure representations.

Relatively few studies have associated love and dating aggression. However, the available studies posit a prima-facie justification for considering love style a significant influence on dating conflict.
Studies denoting the interrelationship between the independent variables

This section illustrates the studies that lies in the overlapping area of gender role identity, aggressiveness and love attitude.

Gender Role Identity and Aggressiveness:
According to Brannon (1976), Lipman-Blumen (1984), and many others men who conform to traditional gender norms and use physically aggressive behavior, and women who cross-over traditional boundaries to use physically aggressive behavior are adhering to masculine norms which advocated being dominant, in-control, aggressive, and if needed be physical. In another study, by Bernard and Bernard (1984) evidence was provided that the abusive male is excessively concerned with his masculinity and with maintaining a strong masculine identification. Masculinity attitudes also predict males’ use of psychological violence in dating relationships (Thompson, 1990) and endorsement of myths about rape (Bunting & Reeves, 1983). According to Sidanius, Cling, and Pratto (1991), the difference between the traditional masculine and feminine gender roles has been expressed as the difference between a communal vs. an agentic orientation (e.g., Bakan, 1966; Bem 1974; Eagly, 1987), or between a linking vs. a ranking orientation (Eisler & Loye, 1983). The communal or linking domain is conceived of as capturing the “feminine principle”, and includes characteristics such as nurturance, caring, being affectionate, devoting oneself to others, being sympathetic, gentle, kind, etc. While the agentic or ranking domain is conceived as expressing the “masculine principle”, and includes characteristics like assertiveness, aggressiveness, dominance orientation, being forceful, controlling, power oriented, independent, and directive (Sidanius et al., 1991).

Aggressiveness and Love:
Mikulincer (1998) studied the association between adult attachment and anger. The results indicated that secured persons scored lower in anger-proneness,
endorsed more constructive anger goals, reported more adaptive responses and more positive affect in anger episodes, attributed less hostile intent to others, and expected more positive outcomes than insecure persons. For ambivalent persons, the anger experience also included lack of anger-control and anger-in. For avoidant persons, it included high hostility, escapist responses, and lack of awareness on physiological signs of anger.

Rholes, Simpson and Orina (1999) studied anger and attachment in an anxiety-provoking situation amongst dating couples. It was found that more avoidant men displayed greater anger during the stress period. More avoidant women also displayed greater anger.

**Love and Gender Role Identity:**

Several studies suggest that feminine and androgynous persons are more expressive, loving, and have more positive beliefs about their relationships than masculine (and undifferentiated) individuals (Bailey, Hendrick & Hendrick, 1987; Coleman & Ganong, 1985; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986; Rusbult, Zembrodt, & Iwaniskzek, 1986). Reisman (1990) concluded that girls develop more skill than boys “in communicating their feelings and being nurturing”. Several studies suggest that masculinity by itself has negative implications for close relationships. Bem (1975) demonstrated that males high in masculinity and low in femininity showed less nurturance toward a needy other in an experimental situation. Descunter and Thelen (1991) reported that androgynous subjects had less fear of intimacy than masculine and undifferentiated subjects. Cancian (1987) surveyed 133 adults concluded that the definition of love in the American culture is feminine, based on skills that women seem to be better at, such as expressing feelings and nurturance. This is biased toward the way women define love and against masculine love, which values giving practical help, sharing activities, and sex. According to Bailey et al. (1987) game playing Ludus was positively correlated with masculinity, but negatively correlated with femininity. In contrast Mania showed the opposite pattern of correlations. Masculinity was not correlated with the other four love attitudes; however, femininity was significantly correlated with all six of the love attitudes.
In sum, the variables of aggression, gender role identity and love are interconnected in complex ways, which needs to be taken into account while interpreting the influence of anyone of these on dating conflict.

Studies on other relevant factors associated with different dimensions of conflict in dating relationship

Previous studies revealed that apart from gender role identity, aggressiveness and love attitude, several other factors played an important role in instigating different types of conflict resolution within dating couples. Like in 1987, Makepeace in a sample of 2,338 American college students, identified that race, religion, social stress, isolation, disrupted home, distant harsh parenting, early dating, and school employment and alcohol problems played a significant role courtship violence. Whereas, in another study by Hird (2000), it was found that adolescent dating aggression in Britain was not significantly associated with religious affiliation, household composition, age social class, or the use of alcohol.

In this section the possible relevant factors have been classified into 5 categories:

i) Personality factors including self-esteem of the partners and their mental health

ii) Interpersonal factors including commitment to the relationship, involvement in the relationship, length of the relationship, frequency of dating and the level of satisfaction associated with it.

iii) Power and Control exercised within a relationship.

iv) Familial factors including parental aggression, type of family, etc. This category also includes the influence of peers.

v) Socio-demographic factors including age, race, religion, locality, family income, etc.

Personality Factors:

Migeot and Lester (1996) found that being a victim of dating abuse was associated with high scores on depression and low scores on internal locus of control. Coker,
McKeown, Sanderson, Davis, Valois and Huebner (2000) in a study including 5414 high school student at US found that Severe Dating Violence and forced-sex victimization among females and Severe Dating Violence perpetration among males were associated with self reported poor mental and physical health.

Graziano, Jensen-Campbell and Hair (1996) in a study found that across all relationships, high- and low-agreeable participants rated negotiation and disengagement tactics as better choices than power assertion tactics. But low-agreeable participants rated power assertion as a better choice than high-agreeable participants. Agreeable people are better able to control anger and negative affect in situations involving frustrations.

Williamson and Silverman (2001) pointed out that men low in communal orientation (a personality trait) were more likely to physically abuse their dating partners and to associate with peers who endorse violence against female partners and who were themselves abusive.

Research relating self-esteem and aggression have revealed contradictory results. A traditional body of evidence indicates that low self-esteem is related to greater aggressiveness and violence (Long, 1990; Toch, 1993). Other evidence interprets high self-esteem as being related to greater levels of aggression and violence (Blaine & Crocker; 1993). Jezl et al. (1996) studied 14 male and 118 female high school students and found that self-esteem was negatively correlated with the level of psychological maltreatment sustained in relationships. A separate analysis by gender revealed significant correlations only in case of females. Katz, Street and Arias (1997) found that self esteem and self attributions emerged as correlates of intension to forgive violence, whereas only self attributions emerged as a correlate of intension to dissolve the relationships. Bushman and Baumeister (1998) studied narcissism, self-esteem, and direct and displaced aggression. Unlike other findings, self-esteem in this study was proved irrelevant to aggression. The combination of narcissism and insult led to exceptionally high levels of aggression toward the source of insult. Lewis, Travea and Fremouw (2002) in a study found that females in the bi-directional aggression group scored significantly lower on self-esteem measures than non-violent counterparts. Also females in the control group demonstrated higher
scores on the measure of mature selfless love. D'Zurilla, Chang and Sanna (2003) investigated self-esteem and social problem solving in a sample of 205 college students. The results revealed that low self-esteem was found to be related to anger and hostility, and several problem-solving dimensions were found to be related to anger, hostility and physical aggression.

**Interpersonal Factors:**
According to Bergman (1992), greater frequency of dating positively correlated with violence. Violence tended to occur within the context of relatively long term relationship.

Kasian and Painter (1992) in their study indicated that occurrence of abusive behaviors was likely to result in a lower relationship satisfaction for both sexes. Women in more formally committed relationships were most likely to report abuse.

Arriaga (2001) pointed out that individuals with fluctuating levels of satisfaction reported relatively low commitment and were more likely to be in relationship which eventually ended.

Arriaga (2002) made an interesting study titled ‘Joking Violence’ among highly committed individuals. The results indicated that only highly committed individuals who experienced substantial violence during a conflict reported severely violent behaviors as comprising mere instances of “joking around”.

**Power and Control:**
Stets and Pirog-Good (1990) examined the relationship between aggression and the interpersonal control in 1096 dating relationships and found that men are no more likely than women to control. This challenges the notion that men are more likely to control interpersonally of their control in the wider society. Interpersonal control predicted inflicting and sustaining minor aggression, but not severe aggression. This suggests that the causal factors influencing minor aggression are different from those affecting severe aggression. In another study in 1991, Stets confirmed that interpersonal control was an important predictor of psychological aggression. Later in many studies (Ronfeldt et al., 1998; Ehrensaft & Vivian, 1999; Follingstad et al.,
1999) it was clearly noted that dissatisfaction with relationship power predicted psychological and physical abuse.

Hockenberry and Billingham (1993) examined the relationship between psychological reactance and violence within dating relationships. (According to Brehms' (1966) psychological reactance theory, people try to maintain control over their personal freedoms. And when one's freedom is perceived to be threatened or constrained, one will be motivationally aroused to counter that threat.) The study found that partners in violent relationships are more protective of their personal sense of freedom and more sensitive to perceived threats of these freedoms. According to Hockenberry and Billingham (1993) psychological reactance is significantly associated with violent conflict tactics among both men and women who are involved in mutually violent dating relationships. Markus and Oyserman (1988) suggested that men typically establish their sense of self through asserting autonomy and independence from others while women develop a sense of self that is based more on interdependence and connection with others.

Felmlee in 1994 investigated perceptions among 413 heterosexual dating undergraduates of male-female power balances in romantic dyads. It was found that male dominance, but not equality of power between genders was associated with romantic relationships longevity.

**Familial Factors:**
Billingham and Gilbert (1990) pointed out that men coming from divorced family reported more violence (both self and partner violence) than women coming from divorced families. In another study, Billingham and Notebaert (1993) revealed that subjects from divorced families reported higher scores for their own behavior on the CTS-violence sub-scale, and reported higher scores for their partners on both the verbal aggression and violence sub-scale.

Breslin, Riggs, O'Leary and Arias in 1990 noted that inter-parental aggression and dating aggression were positively related for men. Ronfeldt et al. (1998) also pointed out that men who were exposed to their fathers physically abusing their mothers were at greatest risk of escalating from psychologically to physically abusive
behaviors to their partners. According to Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning and Coffey (1999) people who witnessed only their same sex parent perpetrate physical dating marital aggression were at increased risk for perpetrating physical dating aggression, whereas respondents who witnessed only their opposite sex parent perpetrate were not. This is called the same-sex modeling effect. Palfai (2000) found that mother’s physical aggression predicted being a perpetrator and a victim of physical and psychological aggression in current dating relationships in females, but not in males. Witnessing psychological abuse of fathers by mother predicted victimization in current dating relationships in both males and females. The author explained that in females social support tends to buffer the effect of maternal aggression, whereas in males, high support, typically from peers tends to strengthen the relationship between maternal aggression and dating violence. In 2001, Reitzel-Jaffe and Wolfe, investigated the predictors of relationship abuse among young men. In the study, family-of-origin violence was found to have a direct effect on the levels of violence in the participant’s own relationships with women. Also the participant’s negative beliefs regarding gender and interpersonal violence were found to have a direct effect on their use of violence in their relationships. Carr and Van Deusen (2002) reported that witnessing inter-parental violence predicted the perpetration of physical dating violence in college man but not sexual aggression. Hendy et al. (2003) asserted that violence received from the mother was the most powerful parental model for violence in the present romantic relationship; but for women it was associated with receiving violence, whereas for men it was associated with both receiving and inflicting violence. Kaura and Allen (2004) indicated that male perpetration of dating violence was related to mother’s violence, whereas female perpetration of dating violence was related to father’s violence.

Helland (1998) investigated the role of peer group on individual’s use and acceptance of physical aggression within adolescent dating relationships. Among 245 female and 170 male subjects, 50% reported of inflicting physical aggression and 52% reported receiving physical aggression from the current relationship and 62% of the students reported having friends who used violence to resolve their relationship conflicts. Analysis indicated that participants who reported who reported inflicting
and sustaining physical aggression would be more likely to come from peer groups in which members behaved similarly. Later, in 2004, Arriaga & Foshee, also agreed that having friends in violent relationships increases the odds of dating violence.

But Gwatney-Gibbs et al. (1987) found that individual’s own experiences as victims and perpetrators are stronger influences than parents and peers in predicting courtship aggression. In brief, influences most proximate in time and place affect courtship aggression most strongly.

Schartz (1995) found significant association between childhood experience of physical discipline and use and receipt of physical coercion in dating relationships. According to Shook et al. (2000) experiences with harsh childhood punishment increases the likelihood of aggressive male for using physical force against dating partners.

**Socio-demographic Factors:**

Fiebert and Gonzales (1997) pointed out that women in their 20’s were more likely to aggress than women aged 30 and above.

Some studies (Makepeace, 1987; O’Keefe et al, 1986, Plass & Gessner, 1983) have found that blacks use more violence compared to whites. Others (Lane & Gwartney-Gibbs, 1985) have indicated that whites are more violent than blacks, and Asians report lower level of violence involvement compared to Hispanic.

Stets and Pirog-Good (1989) studied 123 female high school students currently involved in a dating relationship, and found that victims were more likely to reside in rural areas. In another study, Spencer and Bryant (2000) in an American sample found that subjects in rural school districts were more likely to be victims of dating violence than their suburban and urban counterparts.

Makepeace (1987) found that dating violence was highest among the low and high income groups, rather than middle income groups.

*The above review highlights some of the numerous associates of dating conflict and aggression, which may act as relevant variables apart from the ones chosen specifically for the study.*
Implications obtained from the review

Dating or premarital romantic relationship is present in various extent in most of the societies. Since conflict is an inevitable part in any relationship, dating conflict is also unavoidable. Conflict in an intimate relationship can be resolved in various ways and the choice of tactics made by the partners can range from constructive negotiation to the usage destructive violence. The tactics employed by the partner depends on her/his various intrapsychic factors, personality factors, family history, interpersonal factors, stress and socio-demographic factors.

From the above review, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. One way of resolving conflicts within dating relationship is the use of violence. A substantial proportion of college students reported the use of physical aggression along with verbal aggression in their relationship. Though compared to psychological aggression, the usage of violence as a tactic is insignificant, but the rate is quite alarming.

2. Both girls and boys have been found to engage in psychological and physical aggression in their relationship. But majority of the studies indicated that girls, compared to the boys, are slightly more aggressive in their intimate relationship.

3. Many studies investigated the relationship between gender role identity and the infliction of physical and psychological abuse. However, no clear-cut result was obtained.

4. General aggressiveness as a personality disposition of the subject is definitely related to the use of psychological and physical aggression in case of dating conflict. But very few studies investigated the role of physical aggressiveness, verbal aggressiveness, anger and hostility in relations to dating conflict.

5. Among the few studies that relate dating violence to love, it is indicated that the choice of conflict tactics by the subjects depends on their love attitude. However the results are not clear-cut.
6. Though dating is quite common in the Indian cities, no detailed study in the field of dating aggression has been documented. Therefore it seems justifiable to start a research endeavor to probe into the world of dating conflict and the tactics used to resolve those conflicts along with the factors that influence it.

The plan of the research is presented in the next chapter.