CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The study conducted by the researcher tried to understand the various factors at home which influence the aggressive behaviour of children in schools as reported by the class teachers with the help of a behaviour checklist and a rating scale. The various independent factors that were included in the study were parenting styles, parental supervision, marital conflict, and influence of media and games. The results of the same are discussed in this chapter.

A. Demographic classification of schools and children selected for the sample (Phase 1)

To undertake the present study the researcher identified 90 schools in Bangalore city across State, CBSE and ICSE boards through purposive sampling technique. Out of the 90 schools identified, 38 schools gave the permission to conduct the study. Out of the 38 schools, 17 were CBSE board schools, 9 were from the ICSE board, and 12 from the State board. The number of CBSE schools was seen to be more compared to ICSE and State board schools. In the grade wise selection of students, grade 2 children were the highest to be selected for displaying aggressive behaviours (33%), followed by grade 3 (24%), grade 1 (22%), and grade 4 (20%). It can therefore be seen that teacher’s selection of children for displaying aggressive behaviours has been highest in grade 2, and lowest observed aggressive behaviours were reported from grade 4.

B. Demographic classifications of sample population of parents (Phase 2)

The demographic classification of the population shows that the in the education level of parents, nearly 52% of fathers fall below the formal college level education, of that nearly 23% of them are high school drop outs. For mothers also we can see that nearly 53% of them fall below the formal college education level, where nearly 28% of them are high school dropouts. It can be seen that the education qualification of parents are more on the lesser education level, i.e., mostly high school drop outs and non-graduates. The annual income of the family shows that nearly 60% of the population lie in the income bracket of 5 lakh per annum and below, which shows that the major proportion of the population fall in the middle class category. In the population it is seen that 75% of women are home makers, whereas 25% are working population. One of the reasons could be that in this population, women educated up to masters level or professional level is around 17% of the population, where as
it is around 28% for men in the population and hence maybe women taking up a professional career also is lesser. The joint family system is also seen to be more prevalent in this population, where nearly 62% live in joint families, where there is the presence of at least one member of the extended family. Whereas nuclear family set up is only 38% of the sample. Therefore it can be seen that in the Indian middle class, the prevalence of joint family systems is still not vanished. This might be so because of economic support or help the joint family system provides.

C. Aggressive behaviors across the sample of children in schools selected

The present study focused on the nature of different types of aggression in boys and girls in different types of school, and by grades through grade 1 to grade 4. 366 children were selected as sample of children who display aggressive behaviours from 38 schools in Urban Bangalore private schools through a teacher’s checklist and rating scale.

In the overall sample studied it is seen that direct aggression in classrooms is the most prominent form of aggression in schools, followed by verbal, and indirect is the least seen form. It is also seen that the most prevalent behaviours in order of intensity and frequency are hitting, Yelling, Pushing, pushing to the ground, and teasing in that order. The results is also supported by a study by Shaikh et al., (2014) in a North Karnataka district, which shows that physical active direct aggression like hitting, slapping, pushing etc was significantly more common in boys than among girls. The findings are also in line with the thinking of Bjorkqvist et al., (1992) that the trend in aggressive behaviours appears in the order of physical direct, verbal and indirect and passive aggression. A similar study by Datta et al., (2012), studying the magnitude and the types of aggressive behaviours in school children also shows that physical direct aggression is commonly seen in boys, whereas girls are more into display of verbal indirect passive aggression

It is seen that there is significant difference (0.01 level) in the display of direct aggression, where boys are higher in the display of direct aggression than girls and there is not as much significant difference in the display of indirect and verbal aggression in both boys and girls. This finding is also supported in a study by Bjorkqvist et al., (1992), at the age cohort of 8 years, there is a significant difference between the genders on direct aggression, boys displaying more of it. On indirect aggression, there was only a slight (insignificant) difference, the girls scoring somewhat higher. In the same study, Bjorkqvists et al., (1992), in
the age cohort of 15 years, found that boys again scored significantly on physical aggression, while girls in this age scored significantly higher in indirect aggression. This shows that on indirect aggression, although there is a tendency for girls to be more on indirect aggression, it might start much later in their age through their pre adolescence and adolescence. In a meta-analytic review of 148 studies on child and adolescent direct and indirect aggression by Card et al., (2008), results confirmed the prior findings of gender differences favouring boys in direct aggression and trivial gender differences in indirect aggression. These studies support the present study, where girls are only minimally different in the display of indirect aggression, and boys are significantly different (higher) in the display of direct aggression.

**D. Aggression studied across grades from 1 to 4**

In the selection of students through grades, the least numbers selected are from grade 1; the numbers selected sharply increase in grade 2, where it is the highest in prevalence, slowly and steadily decrease in grade 3 and grade 4. With the pattern seen above, it could be understood that as and when a child enters grade 1 from nursery classes, everything seems new to the child, and hence the children would be more restrained in their behaviours. The first year of schooling therefore shows lesser prevalence of aggressive behaviours in children. By the second year children seem to be accustomed to the environment and less inhibited in displaying their negative behaviours and therefore the number of children selected for displaying aggressive behaviours is highest in grade 2. By the age of grade 3 and grade 4, through age, certain socially appropriate behaviours are learnt and hence children learn self-regulation. Therefore the gradual decrease in the numbers is seen naturally through grade 3 and 4. Therefore it is seen that the intensity of aggression is highest in grade 4, although the number of children selected for displaying aggressive behaviours is the least in grade 4, which is an interesting feature to note.

In the overall aggression among boys and girls through grades 1 to 4, it is clearly understood that the intensity of overall aggression gradually increases in both boys and girls through the grades and it is seen at the highest intensity (rated as ‘often’ by the teachers) at grade 4. This can be attributed to the slow increase in the verbal and indirect aspects of aggressions in grades 3 and 4 in both boys and girls. This shows that a small percentage of children who continue to be aggressive through grades increase their problem behaviours in intensity as compared to previous grades which is a detrimental feature to note.
In the category of grade segregation of aggressive behaviours, it is very well seen that in grades 1 and 2, direct aggression is seen as the most prominent form of aggression in boys, whereas verbal aggression is the prominent form of aggression for girls. It is also seen that in classes 3 and 4, verbal aggression becomes the prominent form followed by direct aggression. This is supported by similar findings from other researches, Bjorqvists et al., (1992), Datta et al., (2012). A very interesting feature seen is that, in grade 2 for boys, they are highest in direct aggression, whereas for girls of grade 2, verbal and indirect are highest in prevalence compared to boys. This shows that the social maturity in girls is seen earlier to boys even in the display of aggression.

Also comparatively, the prevalence of indirect aggression form slowly increases through grade 1 to grade 4. As quoted by Bjorkqvists et al., (1992), indirect aggression is dependent on maturation, a certain level of both verbal and social skills is needed. Therefore for children who are in elementary classes, it is seen developmentally that direct aggression is the earliest to develop, then develops verbal aggression, as and when their verbal abilities develop. The last to develop would be the indirect aggression when their social skills development starts. As seen in the analysis, the highest number of children selected for the display of aggressive behaviours is seen in grade 2 classrooms, and physical aggression in this grade is the highest compared across all grades. Girls through all the four grades are higher on verbal aggression than on indirect or physical aggression. This is supported by other studies which also found that physical aggression in boys are more common and verbal aggression in girls Datta et al., (2012).

E. Parenting styles and Aggressive behaviors in children in classrooms

A null hypothesis was framed to understand the relationship between parenting styles, which was studied under three styles, authoritative, authoritarian and permissive styles and aggressive behaviours, which was studied under, Direct, Indirect and Verbal aggression. There were four sub factors under Authoritative parenting namely, Warmth and inclusion, Reasoning and Induction, Democratic Participation, and Good and Easy going nature. There were four sub factors under Authoritarian parenting namely, Verbal Hostility, Corporal Punishment, Directiveness and Non-reasoning and Punitive. And three sub factors under Permissive parenting style namely, Lack of following up, Ignoring Misbehaviour and Self-Confidence. Aggressive behaviours in children was categorised as direct, indirect and verbal aggression. Results revealed that there was no significant relationship between any of the
parenting styles (classified by Baumrind, 1971 as Authoritative, Authoritarian and permissive), and aggressive behaviours displayed by children in schools. This says that the behaviour of children at school is not related to any of the aspects of parenting styles which parents display with the children at home. The present study, which focuses on the Indian middle class population, suggest that what parents do at home with children, the overt ways of dealing with children at home, do not have any substantial effect on the positive or negative behaviours of children outside home. The parents’ default belief which is “What I do with my child at home decides what my child learns or displays” is may be undergoing a gradual transition in the current scenario. The reasons for this according to the researcher might be attributed firstly, to the huge amount of influence that the external environment has on a child, like peers, school environment, neighbourhood influences. These combined with non-availability of quality time with parents or elders in the family might make the children more vulnerable to negative influences. Secondly, the amount of exposure to information and technology the child has access to from a young age, and the impact of getting over loaded with information might have an overbearing influence on the child. Therefore this gradual shift of having the child’s behaviour control within the family influences, to the unknown external factors is a point of concern.

The descriptive data from the sample population also shows that, the parents are not very confident in following a distinct approach, there is an overlap of approaches which indicates the confusion among parents towards disciplining their children. This could also lead to child not getting positively or negatively influenced by the parenting styles, since the child also looks for consistency to learn from the social environment and when the consistency is not seen, the child leans on to other observational learning which it finds consistent and reinforcing. This could come from peers, media, and school environment.

The Focus Group Discussion with parents, where some of the statements made by them taken from the transcript like “we can’t stop them from learning things outside so we have to accept that this is how much we can do”, shows the confusion the parents have in terms of their influence on the children. One more statement from a participant says “at the end of the day you can only show the path, but there is no control over your child’s behaviour outside, you will definitely be influenced by other factors also, no matter how you teach them”, also throws light on the parent’s role in their child’s life. Therefore the FGD with parents highlighted the parent’s belief that, although they want to have an influence in their child’s
behaviour, in the present days, their role might have taken a back seat compared to the past times because various other outside factors.

To get further clarity into the study findings, the researcher conducted a drill-down analysis. The researcher first tried to understand if there is significant difference in the parenting approaches of fathers and mothers. The t-test revealed that there is indeed a very significant difference in the approaches of both parents. This was observed in all the three major categories of parenting styles and also in the sub factors of parenting. This indicated strongly that there is a presence of ‘dual parenting’ in the sample population, where both father’s and mother’s use different approaches to discipline the child. To explore further, the differences of the parenting approaches of both parents were correlated with aggressive behaviours of children. The results showed that there is no significant relationship between the differences in parenting and aggressive behaviours of children in schools. This reinforces our results that even though there is a presence of dual parenting in the population, the effect of that does not influence the aggressive behaviour of children in school.

Taking from the theoretical frame work of Bandura (1971), his social learning theory, suggests that aggression is acquired through watching others. Learners acquire new form of behaviour (observational learning effect) through modelling. The theory originally evolved from behaviourism, but now includes many of the ideas that cognitivists also hold; as a result it is sometimes called social cognitive learning. It focuses on the learning that occurs within a social context. It considers that people learn from one another, including such concepts as observational learning, imitation, and modelling. Considering the above theoretical framework, the behaviour of the children learnt in the social context becomes a part of their learning and display the same. In the context of the present scenario, the time children get to spend at home and with family are considerably reduced, because of the academic curriculum, school hours, involvement with media and other gadgets, after school hour tuitions, and non-availability of parents for guidance and supervision. Taking into consideration these contextual changes in the present, children tend to look upon to the role models they are exposed to on a regular basis for their learning. Therefore the behaviour and learning also to a large extent comes from their school, neighbourhood and media influences, rather than from just parenting styles which has been shown in the results of this study.

The Social-cognition information processing theory of Huesmann (1998), gives us a unified model which emphasizes four steps in the process of enacting an aggressive response that
should be most predictive of behaviour in a social-conflict situation. First step is attention to and interpretation of situational cues, where which cues are given most attention and interpretation of those cues vary from person to person and depends on person’s neurophysiological predispositions, current mood state, and previous learning history as reflected in the activated schemas. Because emotional state persists for some time, a person may enter a social interaction in an emotional state that is unrelated to the current situational cues. That emotional state may influence which cues the person attends to and how the person interprets the cues to which he or she has to attend. So a person who finds hostile cues as most salient or interprets ambiguous cues as hostile will be more likely to experience anger and activate schemas and scripts related to aggression. The second step is the search for a script and schema activation and retrieval, to guide behaviour. It is presumed that more aggressive individuals have encoded in memory more extensive, well-connected network of social scripts emphasizing aggressive problem solving. The third step is the evaluation of the scripts. Before acting out the script, it is proposed that one evaluates the script in the light of internalized activated schemas and normative beliefs to determine if the suggested behaviours are socially appropriate and possible to do and if the expected outcome is likely to be desirable. The last and the fourth step would be interpretation of environmental responses, of how a person interprets the society’s response and how that interpretation affects the person’s mood or schema. This sometimes helps the aggressive scripts to be maintained even in the face of strong negative responses from the society.

In the light of this theory, the present results can help us to understand that aggressive behaviours are encoded scripts in the schema, depending on the past learnings and exposures. When seen from the urban Indian, middle class settings, parents are very confused about their approaches adopted, like autonomy vs. regulation, psychological control vs. behaviour control, limit setting vs. permissive behaviours to discipline children. And also seen is that fathers and mothers have different approaches and styles of child rearing. Parents though are very keen on their child’s overall development and progress but are not very consistent in their behaviours towards their child. Above it, the overwhelming influence of technology and peer pressure since early childhood, confuse the child further. This leads to the child becoming susceptible and vulnerable to outside influences to form their schemas and scripts and to behave accordingly. And since the child is confused with the inconsistencies at home, it becomes very easy for the child to access the information or scripts that the environment provides consistently and to encode it in their schemas. These schemas which are formed
through consistent exposures to certain cues in the environment are accessed as scripts, which provide a basis for the behaviours displayed. This theory provided by Huesmann, in the current context and situation gives us the broad understanding of displaying certain behaviours and maintaining them, in spite of the negative responses given by the society.

There are several studies conducted to explore the relationship of parenting styles and aggressive behaviour in children in the West. There has been only a handful of studies which support the results of the present study which shows that there is an insignificant relationship between parenting practices and aggressive behaviours in children (Veenstra et al., 2005; Shayesteh, Hejazi, and Foumany, 2014; Elvis Fili 2016; Underwood et al., 2008; Laura McKee et al., 2008). It has been revealed that after controlling for children’s characteristics, only low-socioeconomic background and a family risk for externalizing disorder remained associated with being a bully-victim, and that parenting was not associated with victims of bullying and it did not influence bullying behaviour over and above the child’s characteristics (Veenstra et al., as cited in Bowes et al., 2009). The study which shows that parenting was not associated with school behaviour of being bullies or victims, although they had experienced low parental warmth and rejection compared to the victims or non-bullies supports our present study, where children’s display of aggressive behaviour, do not have a significant association with parenting approaches. It was also seen that for girls, mother’s negative inter parental conflict strategies, was positively associated with social and physical aggression at school, but no relations emerged for parenting styles (Underwood et al., 2008). A study in Australia and US showed that, temperament consistently predicted, child’s social and aggressive behaviours, and only some evidence of father’s authoritarian parenting also contributing (Russell et al., 2003). Studies also show that in adolescents and also in pre-schoolers, there were no significant relationship found between parenting style and aggression (Shayesteh, Hejazi, Foumany, 2014; Elvis Fili 2016). A review study by Laura McKee et al., (2008), examined previous research on the association of three parenting behaviours (Warmth, hostility and control) with child externalizing and internalizing problems. Findings revealed a relatively little evidence for the specificity of parenting and child externalizing behaviours. One study in the Indian context by Sharma and Marimuthu (2014), on the prevalence of aggression and psychosocial factors associated in youth shows that the risk factors were physical abuse in childhood, substance abuse in family, negative peer influence, family violence, academic disturbance, ADHD, mood disorder, TV and
media, which shows that risk factors identified in childhood for later aggression was more to do with extreme family disturbances and external environment influences during childhood.

A thorough review of literature has given only a handful of studies which support these findings. These studies, though a few to quote, reiterate the present study results that parents approach to deal with children at home, does not impact their behaviour in school at a significant level. They suggest that there are certain factors like temperament mental disposition, school factors, parental conflict, substance abuse, neighbourhood, peer influence, and media which might be influencing the aggressive behaviours in children, which needs to be focused to understand their role in the development and maintenance of problem behaviours.

In the Indian context, the literature search has yielded one study by Sharma and Sandhu (2006), which was a community study of associations of parenting dimensions and externalizing behaviours. The study revealed that correlations between non reasoning, verbal hostility, physical coercion, autonomy and indulgence parenting dimensions and externalizing behaviors were significantly positive whereas regulation and connection parenting dimensions showed a significant negative correlation with externalizing behaviors. They concluded that parenting behaviours significantly influenced externalizing behaviours in children. This study which is contradicting the present results might be attributed to the differences in sampling process and methodological differences in conducting the study. The present study chose a purposive sampling technique to choose the sample, while the above quoted study has been conducted using a random sampling. The present study was an Ex Post Facto study to understand the aggressive behaviours of children in schools and its association with parenting styles. For this, the aggressive sample of children was collected from schools, as identified by teachers. The parents were then approached to elicit their responses on their parenting behaviours. In the study quoted above, the child’s behaviour and parenting behaviours were both elicited by the parents. The objective of the above study was exploratory in nature and the child’s behaviour was a part of observation by the parents at home and surroundings. These differences in the design and methodology might have led to the contradictory results.

There are many studies in the West which also shows certain contradictory results to the present study (Brenner & Fox, 1998; Shawna, Inna and Elizabeth, 2013; Querido, Warner and Eyeberg, 2002; Mulvaney and Mebert, 2007; Trentacosta and Shaw, 2008; Denham, Workman et.al 2000). These studies indicated that use of verbal and corporate punishment
was the strongest predictor of reported problem behaviour in young children (Brenner & Fox, 1998). It was also revealed that there was a strong positive relationship between maternal spanking and child aggression, beginning as early as 1 year, spanking predicted child behaviour problems, and in later ages, maternal warmth did not counteract the negative consequences of spanking (Shawna, Inna and Elizabeth, 2013). A study revealed that parent-reported child behaviour problems were associated with maternal education, family income and parents’ endorsement of authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting and also that Authoritative parenting style was most predictive of fewer behaviour problems in children. Proactive parenting (supportive presence, clear instructions, and limit setting) predicted fewer behaviour problems over time, after controlling for the initial problems; the converse was true for parental anger (Denham, workman, et al., 2000). Rejecting parenting in early childhood predicted antisocial behavior in early adolescence, after controlling for toddler difficult temperament (Trentacosta and Shaw, 2008). Corporal punishment was associated with increased internalizing behaviors at toddlerhood and with increased externalizing behaviour problems both in toddlerhood and at first grade (Mulvaney and Mebert, 2007).

These studies quoted above have shown that child behaviour problems like externalizing disorders, conduct disorders are significantly correlated to maternal and paternal parenting styles like lack of warmth, corporal punishment, over indulgence and so on. The present study which shows conflicting results to the above shown and many other similar studies in the West, may be attributed firstly, to the differences in the context, culture, situation and environment compared to the Indian scenario. Secondly, differences might be attributed to the methodological differences in the study design, like in the western studies reviewed, many of them are longitudinal studies, which impact the results differently than a study which is conducted at a single point of time. Thirdly, there might also be differences in process of sample selection. The present study focuses only on children with problem behaviours, an ex post facto study design, identified by teachers and hence it is a purposive sampling procedure, and not a random sampling method adopted in many studies quoted which might have led to certain contradictory results. These studies which contradict the results of the present study shows that in the Indian context, there has been a lacunae in the published studies in this area which can substantiate or contradict the findings in this context and culture. Therefore it becomes very important to test these findings at different time points and different populations in India.
F. Parental supervision and aggression in children

The supervision aspect of parents was studied by a survey questionnaire designed by the researcher to understand the parent’s knowledge and involvement in the child’s day to day activities. The supervision aspects of parent’s were studied under three areas, home, school, and neighbourhood, and aggression was studied under direct, indirect and verbal aggression respectively. The results revealed that the parent’s supervision on children at home and neighbourhood had a significant negative relationship (p<0.05) with aggressive behaviours displayed in school. This indicated that higher the supervision on children at home and neighbourhood lesser the aggressive behaviours and vice-versa.

A very interesting point in the results shows that although parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian and permissive), has no significant influence on child’s behaviour outside home, but the supervision aspects of parenting has been seen to have an inverse relationship with aggressive behaviours, which might indicate that more than disciplining strategies used by parents at home, day to day involvement with the children and knowledge about their activities and whereabouts could be more influencing their behaviours. Also seen in the results is that there is no relationship between supervision on school related activities by parents and aggressive behaviours by children. It probably shows that parents have a lesser influence on the school related activities of children in comparison to areas of home and neighbourhood. The reason perhaps could be because of parent’s being less educated; lack of time, or it could also be that the children do not share as much information on the school happenings with the parents. Therefore it is seen that parents’ role in supervision many times could be limited to home and neighbourhood influences and it might be difficult to have as much control or awareness on the influences on children in the school environment.

The qualitative interviews conducted by the researcher gives the essence of supervision in today’s context, as one of the participant said, “It is more of mentoring than parenting which becomes important, that you are a part of child’s day to day life, without exactly being intrusive”. The results of this study clearly indicate the same findings, which reiterate that parental monitoring or supervision is an important aspect of parenting which is often neglected by the parent, because of lack of time or lack of knowledge of the importance of the parent’s involvement in child’s life and not intrusion, as suggested in the FGD. The participants had unanimously stated that supervision of children is the most
important aspect, which can happen effectively either in the presence of parents or absence of them, if the foundation for it is built in childhood by opening up channels of effective communication and spending qualitative time with children in the available time.

There are certain important aspects of supervision that could be analysed from the sample population from the survey questionnaire given to parents. The survey shows that mothers most of the times, play the role of supervision in the sample population. It also reveals that in the population selected, parents supervision is maximum in the school related activities, like studying, doing homework, checking school bags, enquiring about the school activities with children. While the supervision on child’s activities at home like watching TV, playing games, playing with friends are the least supervised by parents. Also one more interesting feature to note is that although parents report that they ‘always’ enquire kids about the school happenings, children telling them or sharing with them about the happenings in school is only ‘Sometimes’ as reported by parents. Therefore we can see that most of the parents in the sample population are not having an effective two way communication channel with children. One more key feature that could be noted in this population is that the percentage of parents’ reporting that their children ‘do not have friends’ or ‘do not go out to play’ is high, comparatively. Therefore it can be seen that when children do not have free play time outside home, they are either studying, watching TV or with gaming gadgets. The reason for this could be parents’ anxiety that children get spoilt by friend’s influence, or the child burdened by school homework, studying or tuitions, in which the child finds no time to go out and play. Whatever the reason, this could be seen as a very high concern for the appropriate and all round development of young children.

As rightly pointed out in the sample population, parent supervision at home and neighbourhood is minimum, i.e., apart from study and school related checking, parents are not aware of the child’s activities in other areas like watching TV, gaming, playing with friends, enquiring about friends and activities. Therefore the results show an inverse relationship, which points that lesser the supervision at home and neighbourhood activities, higher the displayed aggressive behaviours.

There are many studies in the West which supports the findings of the present study, Pettit et al., (2001), examining the antecedents of monitoring behaviours found that mothers
endorsing a proactive, preventive approach to dealing with child’s misbehaviour early in childhood tended to have a higher monitoring knowledge scores in adolescence, which shows that early monitoring habits among parents have a positive influence on the child in their later ages also. Li, Feigelman and Stanton (2000), found that low levels of perceived parental monitoring were associated with participation in several health risk behaviours, including sexual behaviour, substance/drug use, drug trafficking, school truancy, and violent behaviors. They concluded that inverse correlation between perceived parental monitoring and adolescent risk suggests that parental monitoring initiatives may be an effective intervention tool. Patterson and Stouthamer-Loeber (1984), found that monitoring and discipline correlated significantly to delinquency measures in adolescents. Also that monitoring scores differentiated moderate offenders from persistent offenders. Cookston (1999) pointed out that supervision was lowest in single-father homes, was slightly higher in single-mother homes and was highest in intact families. Compared to females, males evidenced higher problem behaviours with both medium and low level supervision groups. Wilson (1987), found a significant association between parental supervision and delinquency among boys up to and including age 16, which confirmed the earlier findings. A review by Crouter and Head (2002), have also found associations between low levels of parental monitoring and poorer behavioural adjustment outcomes, both concurrently and longitudinally. In his handbook of childhood behavioural issues (Crouter et al., 2002), emphasizes on the requirement of parental supervision in middle childhood to guard against any drift towards delinquent behaviour as they begin to establish and maintain peer relationships and interact with more people outside family, as studied and quoted by Kerns et al., (2001). A study by Laird et al., (2003) highlights the fact that there exists a reciprocal relationship between parental knowledge and delinquent behaviour of adolescents that low levels of parental knowledge predict increases in delinquent behaviour and that high levels of delinquent behaviour predict decreases in parental knowledge.

Consistent with the previous researches in the West, the present paper also points out the need for adequate parental supervision in childhood to have a positive influence on their aggressive behaviours outside home. Therefore as previous researches indicate early to middle childhood is the right time for parents to get involved with the child in positive ways, which can lead to better supervision in later years; the present study also supports the previous findings.
G. Marital conflict and aggression in children

The current study included marital conflict among parents as one of the factors which was hypothesized to have a null relationship with aggressive behaviours of children at school. The conflict in the couple were studied using a Conflict Tactic Scale original developed by Straus (1990a), which contained 19 items for each spouse, under which there were two questions under each item, which brings it to 38 questions. The referent period used in this study for partners is 6 months. The CTS Scale has been divided into three major sub factors, they are, reasoning, verbal aggression and violence. Under each question, there are two sub-questions, where one sub-question elicits the behaviour of the respondent, and the other sub-question tries to understand the spouse’s behaviour as seen by the respondent. The respondents would answer both the questions under each item, one taken as displayed tactic of the respondent towards the spouse and the other perceived tactic of the spouse by the respondent. A Pearson correlation was then computed to understand the relationship of the conflict tactics (reasoning, verbal and violence) of each spouse separately to the aggressive behaviours displayed by children at school categorised under, direct, indirect and verbal aggression.

The results of the correlation of conflict tactics of each spouse and aggressive behaviours of children in schools has shown that there is no significant relationship between the conflict tactics used by fathers or mothers to the aggressive behaviours of their children displayed in schools. There was no significant relationship between the mother’s displayed reasoning, displayed verbal or displayed violent behaviour towards the spouse and aggressive behaviours in children and mothers’ perceived reasoning, perceived verbal conflict or perceived violent behaviour of the spouse on the aggressive behaviours of children. And there was no significant relationship between Father’s displayed reasoning, displayed verbal conflict or displayed violent behaviour towards the spouse and aggressive behaviours displayed by children and father’s perceived reasoning, perceived verbal conflict, and perceived violent behaviour of the spouse on the aggressive behaviour of the children.

The results indicate that the parent’s overt or covert resolution tactics of conflicts at home in the presence or absence of children, do not have a significant impact on the child’s behaviour outside home i.e. in the classrooms in schools. This could be attributed to the reason that in the present sociocultural context and the socioeconomic section of the sample population, which is seen from the descriptive analysis, that most of the times, the parents have
responded to display reasoning behaviour with each other compared to verbal conflict. While violence behaviour among the couples are hardly present according to their responses. Therefore the presence of intense or acute conflict is perhaps not been seen in this population.

It is seen in the middle class population that fathers perhaps will be hardly available for the family due to their work schedule and work pressure of making the ends meet, and mothers mostly took care of everything in the house. This could make them so preoccupied all the time that they may not find the time for themselves or with their spouse to express conflict or resolve them. They perhaps could feel that they ought to accept the situation as it is and try to resolve it within themselves. Their coping strategies most of the times could be internalizing their issues and not dealing with it assertively. And hence, it could be possible that kids do not directly get influenced or impacted by the parents’ constructive or destructive conflict tactics in the selected population.

It is also seen in the qualitative interview done by the researcher that parents do feel that there is definitely a negative impact when there is an unresolved, continuous conflict at home, and also how much the child is exposed. The impact might not be that it might lead only to aggressive behaviours in school; it might more lead to withdrawal symptoms in children, where they tend to get into shell, become fearful, or anxious. Like one of the participant expressed “it could be that the child can become quite to avoid it. ‘I don’t like this’, ‘I don’t like this noise, so I’ll get into my own shell’, and the kid might get withdrawn and subdued and be a victim of all the other aggressive behaviours outside.” One more participant voiced an opinion in the similar line “They could also be victims of aggression, or they become apathetic where they don’t show any emotions at all. They might learn to stay with ‘I will save my skin and let them do what they want to do’ and the child may think ‘I will go into my room and when the noise stops I come outside’”.

Therefore it can be seen in the opinion of parents’ also, the conflict at home is dependent on many factors like intensity, frequency, resolution, exposure and also a child can display many problem behaviours like withdrawal, subdued, low academic achievement, anger and aggression, apathy and so on.

There are certain studies in the West that shows that conflict in the parents’ and children’s appraisals of them and their impact on them (Stocker, et al., 2003; John, 1998; Kerig, 1998; Grych and Fincham, 2008; Grych, Fincham, Jouriles & Donald, 2000; Gordon et al., 1997; Cummings et al., 1994). It is seen that children’s feeling of being to blame for marital conflict
and being threatened by it mediated between marital conflict and children’s internalizing problems but not their externalizing problems (Stocker et al., 2003). Properties of conflict, family factors and child’s characteristics were related to children’s appraisal. The most consistent predictors were the level of hostility expressed in the interaction, children’s prior experience with physically aggressive inter parental conflict, and children’s age. These findings indicate that children’s perceptions and interpretations of inter parental conflict are influenced by the larger occurs as well as the way the conflict is expressed (John, 1998).

Appraisals of conflict properties, threat, self-blame, and perceived control, moderated the effects of inter-parental conflict on externalizing, total problems, and anxiety in boys. Conflict properties, threat, self-blame, perceived control and self-calming acted as moderators of internalizing in girls (Kerig, 1998). This indicates that although high level of conflicts in parents can impact the children through externalizing or internalizing behaviours, the moderating variables of play a significant role in the appraisal of the conflict and its influence on children. Grynch and Fincham (2008, 2000), showed that appraisals of marital conflict were influenced by its content, intensity and cause and suggested that the meaning of conflict to children is an important determinant of its impact. Also that perceived threat mediated the association between interparental conflict and child adjustment and internalizing problems for both boys and girls, and self-blame mediated the association for boys. Perceived threat and self-blame did not mediate links with externalizing problems. They also concluded that their study provided evidence for a process by which exposure to conflicts may lead to internalizing symptoms in children. Gordon et al., (1997), revealed that adolescent perception of parental conflict and distress, direct and indirect effects were found for boy’s concurrent internalizing behaviour and only a partial support for the indirect effect for externalizing problems. Cummings et al., (1994), revealed that the appraised destructiveness of a conflict was significantly related to perceived threat in boys and self-blame in girls. For boys, threat predicted internalizing, externalizing or total behaviour problem and for girls, self-blame was associated with internalizing problems. A study by Hart, Nelson and Robinson (1998), showed that Overt and relational aggression in Russian Nursery-school- age children, were more linked to parenting styles, and a weak association to marital conflict only to boys. A regression analysis indicated that marital hostility did not make significant incremental predictions to overt and relational aggression above and beyond parenting styles, although parenting styles did continue to make significant contributions to aggression after controlling for marital hostility.
The above studies indicates that the appraisal of a conflict by children, in terms of content, intensity, frequency is an important link to the impact of the conflict on child’s behaviour. Also, many studies have pointed out that perceived threat and self-blame, perception of the conflict by children moderated the effect of internalizing behaviour than externalizing problems in children.

The present study has explored the direct association between marital conflict tactics among parents and children’s aggressive behaviour in school, which has revealed an insignificant relationship. When looked at from the context of the above mentioned studies, the impact of appraisal of the conflict in terms of the content, intensity, duration, resolution impacting behaviours of children through intervening variables like perceived threat, self-blame, guilt and perceived parenting style so on, can lead to either externalizing or internalizing behaviours or positive coping strategies. Many studies point out that the effect of destructive marital conflict studied through moderating or mediating variables lead to more of internalizing behaviours than externalizing. This could be taken as a support for the present findings that the direct impact of conflict on children has not influenced their aggression in schools. The reason might be that the appraisal of the conflict by children would not have had a direct impact on the children’s display of aggressive behaviour, but might have impacted indirectly through internalizing behaviours through a moderating or a mediating variable (self-blame, guilt, perceived threat) which has not been under the purview of this study.

There are some studies which support the exposure hypothesis in the area of effects of marital conflict on children (Cummings et al., 2004; Katherine, Noni, Aimee, & Erin, 2003; Martin and Clements, 2002; Ferguson and Horwood, 1998). They indicated that exposure to destructive conflict tactics and negative parental emotionality increased the likelihood of aggressive behaviour when they witnessed a conflict, whereas constructive conflict tactics and positive parental emotionality decreased the probability of aggression (Cummings et al., 2004). Straus (1990a), in his study has also pointed that being a witness to violence puts a child at risk for a number of serious mental health and other problems, regardless of the socioeconomic status. It has also been analysed that witnesses had significantly worse outcome relative to non-witnesses and children from verbally abusive homes (Katherine, Noni, Aimee, & Erin, 2003). E.M Cummings(2001), in his book, ‘Marital interaction: Effects on child development’, states that children are affected by marital conflict (a) Owing to exposure to these situations, and (b) because of the effects that marital conflict has on children via changes in parenting practices. He concludes that the current theory is that
children’s adjustment is negatively affected when marital conflict increases children’s emotional insecurity about family functioning. Young people reporting high levels of exposure to inter parental violence had elevated rates of adjustment problems at age 18. These problems included mental health problems, substance abuse behaviours and criminal offending, exposure to father initiated violence was associated with increased risk of anxiety, conduct disorder and property crime, while exposure to mother initiated violence was associated only with increased risks for later alcohol/dependence (Ferguson and Horwood, 1998). Parental marital physical aggression was positively associated with children’s observed dysregulated responding to interparental conflict and negatively associated with children’s self-reported behavioural disruption. The findings suggested a potential pathway linking exposure to marital conflict, children’s regulatory strategies, and children’s behavioural adjustment outside the home (Martin and Clements, 2002).

Grynch and Fincham (1990), in their Cognitive-Contextual frame work on Marital conflict and Child adjustment, has summarised that the research on marital conflict and child behaviour problem indicates that (a) exposure to more frequent episodes of interparental conflict leads to greater distress in children and a greater incidence of behavior problems, and conversely the cessation of conflict is associated with a reduction of problem behaviors; (b) exposure to more intense forms of marital conflict, such as conflict involving physical aggression, is also related to child problems and is more upsetting to children than less intense conflict (c) correlations between conflict and behavior problems appear to be higher in clinic samples than nonclinic samples.

The above mentioned studies supporting the exposure hypothesis in marital conflict clearly indicates that children who are exposed to marital conflict, especially physical violence or abuse are more prone to emotional dysregulation and behavioural problems compared to children who are not exposed to marital conflict. The present study which has revealed that there is no significant association between interparental conflict strategies and aggressive behaviour in children, also can consider the above quoted studies as a support for the results, since there is no evidence of children being a witness or non-witness in the parent’s conflict. And hence it could be seen that if children would not have been regularly witnessing the intense conflict among parents, it would not impact the children’s behaviour outside home significantly. As discussed earlier as seen in the sample population, the quality time spent by the father at home perhaps could be very negligible, since fathers in the sample population would mostly be much occupied in making the ends meet and the time available for children
with both the parents would be minimal. Hence, may be, any destructive or constructive conflict strategies of parents to be witnessed by children would also not be very feasible.

Studies in the West has shown a fair amount of empirical support for the spillover hypothesis, or the notion that the affect experienced or expressed in one relationship system can be transferred or carried over to another relationship system (Coiro & Emery, 1998.; Katz & Gottman, 1993; Schoppe-Sullivan, Schermerhorn and Cummings, 2007; Krishnakumar and Buehler, 2000). That is negative affect arising in marital conflict is thought to spread to and contaminate or disrupt interactions between parent and child (Cox, paley & Harter, 2001). When relations between marital conflict, parenting (behavior control, psychological control and warmth), and children’s adjustment (externalizing and internalizing) were examined. Behavioural control continued to mediate relations between marital conflict and change in internalizing symptoms overtime. These results advance parenting process models for relations between marital conflict and child adjustment and provide impetus for study of other pathways, including direct and child effects (Schoppe-Sullivan, Schermerhorn and Cummings, 2007). A Meta-Analytic review by KrishnaKumar and Breuler (2000), found a moderate association and support for spillover hypothesis. They said that the parenting behaviours most impacted by inter parental conflict are harsh discipline and parental acceptance.

These supporting spillover hypothesis argue that marital conflict is mediated through negative parenting styles and hence affect child behaviour. The present study has not tested the mediating relationship of marital conflict and parenting styles influencing aggressive behaviours in children. Also, as discussed there is no significant relationship with parenting styles and aggressive behaviours in children and hence even if parenting styles is mediated by marital conflict, the impact of negative styles or dual parenting styles might not be influencing the behaviours of children in this population which again reinforces our argument that parents or home influence on children is minimal compared to outside influences in the population studied.

There are many studies in the West that shows a significant relationship between child behaviour problems and marital discord or conflict or disharmony (Lynn and Gottman, 1993, Morrison and Coiro, 1999, Betsy et, al 1998, Jouriles, Pfiffner and O’Leary, 1988; Jouriles, Christopher and Daniel, 1989; Dadds and Powell 1991). It has been revealed that separation and divorce are associated with increases in behavior problems in children, regardless of the
level of conflict between parents. However they found that in marriages that do not break up, high levels of marital conflict are associated with even greater increases in children’s problem behaviour (Morrison and Coiro, 1999). Aggressive behavior showed the strongest sequential relation to interparental conflict and the strongest predictive relation to increased aggressive functioning. Results for the relation between child responses and increases in depressive functioning were weaker than those found for aggressive functioning (Betsy et al., 1998). Marital conflict was positively correlated with observations of toddler deviance and maternal reports of conduct problems. They say that the results indicate that marital conflict is associated with toddler conduct problems. The results also suggest the importance of examining parenting practices and child characteristics that may mediate the relationship between marital conflict and child behavior problems (Jouriles, Pfiffner and O’Leary, 1988). Parental disagreement predicted aggression in children of clinic and non-clinic samples, and marital adjustment and parental disagreement predicted anxiety in boys, and marital adjustment and parental disagreement did not predict immaturity in the sample (Dadds and Powell, 1991). Erath and Bierman (2006), in their hierarchical regression analysis revealed direct pathways linking aggressive marital conflict to child aggressive-disruptive behavior at home and school and a partially mediated pathway linking aggressive marital conflict to child aggressive-disruptive behavior at home.

The above quoted studies have shown that marital disruption and intense conflict in a marriage has a significant relationship with conduct disorder, aggression, problem behaviour in various populations in the West. It is seen that in the literature found in this area, there are a lot of contradictory results and various outcomes of the impact of marital conflict on children. There are many factors which could contribute to certain impact or outcomes in children. Therefore it becomes important in the Indian context to test these results under different points of time and different populations since there is a lacuna in the available published studies in this area.

The present study does not support these findings; the reasons could be, firstly, the cultural differences in the population studied. Secondly, the methodological differences, since most of the studies use mediating or moderating variables to study the direct and indirect influence of marital conflict, on the problem behaviours, where in the present study the mediating or moderating variables were not explored since the primary associations did not show significant associations. It is also seen from the descriptive data that what parents have
reported about their conflict strategies are mostly reasoning and verbal conflicts. Violence is hardly seen in the population. Therefore looking at conflict strategies which are reported by parents, it seems that the child would either not be exposed to intense physical conflicts and the milder forms of conflicts used by parents would not have influenced the child to display aggressive behaviours outside. And hence the present study which was an Ex Post Facto study, designed to explore a direct association of inter parental conflict tactics and its influence on the displayed aggressive behaviour in classroom identified by the class teachers, shows there is an insignificant association. This result shows that in the Indian context of middle class families, children are not directly impacted by parents’ behaviour with each other, on their display of aggressive behaviour outside home in schools.

H. TV watching and its influence on aggressive behavior in children

The present study tries to find the relationship between the hours of TV watching among children and their display of aggressive behaviours at school. Also the study tried to understand the differences in the aggressive behaviours displayed by children who watch different types of contents or programs on TV. To study this, the researcher designed a survey questionnaire to understand the duration of TV watched by children, and the content watched by them. The survey questionnaire was targeted for the parents to respond about their child’s TV watching habits. The children accompanied also helped in filling the survey questionnaire.

The influence of TV on children’s behaviour was studied under duration and content as mentioned above. To understand the impact of duration of TV watching on the display of aggressive behaviours in children, the researcher tried to study the duration of TV viewing under weekdays and weekend. A Pearson correlation was computed to understand the relationship between number of hours of TV watched on each day on a week day and number of hours of TV watched each day on a weekend to the display of direct, indirect and verbal aggression in children in schools. As seen in the frequency table (4.32) and (4.33), nearly 45% of the population watch TV between 1-2 hours on a weekday, and 56% of the population watch more than 3 hours of TV on each day on weekends. The results revealed that there has been no significant association between number of hours watched either on a weekday or a weekend and the display of aggressive behaviours by children in schools.

In the second part, the researcher tried to find if there are any significant differences in the display of aggressive behaviours (direct, indirect and verbal) in children who watch certain
types of content or programs on TV. For this the researcher divided the content watched on TV as follows: (a) physical fighting, (b) exposure to adult content, (c) Family politics, (d) Foul language, (e) Horror content. The ANOVA revealed that there was a significant difference in the display of direct aggression ($p<0.01$), indirect aggression and overall aggression ($p<0.05$) in children who watch physical fights on TV and there was a significant difference in the display of direct aggression ($p<0.05$) in children who watched horror shows on TV. The mean indicated that more exposure to physical fighting, more they would be on the display of aggressive behaviours. And also more the exposure on ‘horror content’ higher the direct aggression in children. It was also seen that there was a significant difference in the display of direct aggression ($p<0.05$) in children who watch family drama content, like serials, family movies etc. The post hoc indicated that when children watch ‘family drama’ content on TV, ‘always’, the aggressive behaviours displayed is lesser in intensity than children who ‘never’ watch. It is therefore an inverse relationship. It can be understood that when children are mostly watching family dramas or serials, their direct aggression is significantly lesser than when they are exposed to violent or horror content. This could mean that when children are watching ‘family drama’ content ‘most of the times or often’, the learnings from that would not be seen as an overt display of aggression through physical ways, but it could be covert or indirect ways of manipulation, back biting, social aggression, which is not picked up as significant by the study, since it is difficult to identify these behaviours and learnings as compared to direct aggression. Therefore the results clearly reveals that, duration of watching TV, i.e. the quantity of time spent in front of the TV, has a lesser impact than the quality of the programs watched on TV. Therefore it could be understood that supervision of children on what they are watching is more important than how much they watch.

The qualitative interview with parents to understand their opinion of what is the influence of TV watching has on their kids also showed the similar responses. As one of the participants said “I think the influence of media is more than the influence of parents because, the time that the parents can spend with the child is limited since the school takes up most of the time, after that they are with friends or in activities and media is a more powerful medium, its more colourful and more attractive than parents. We all talk about telling nice moral stories to children, whatever we make it colourful, for them it is boring and more like a class lecture as compared to Hanuman. So I think media has an overbearing larger influence on children”. This statement was unanimously accepted by all the other participants. This perhaps shows
that what children watch on TV, it might be cartoon, serials, movie; they are very likely to pick up the negative content of the program and automatically get tuned to respond in a negative way to triggers or situations.

Script theory by Huesmann (1986, 1998), (as cited in Human aggression, Anderson & Bushman, 2002), proposed that when children observe violence in the mass media, they learn aggressive scripts. Scripts define situations and guide behaviour. A person first selects a script to represent the situation and then assumes role in the script. Once the script has been learnt it can be retrieved anytime and used as a guide for behaviour. As theorized by Huesmann (1998), children who watch physical violence, learn to use those learnings in specific situations or to certain cues, and the script becomes chronically accessible.

A meta-analytical study by Bushman and Huesmann (2006), to study the long-term and short-term effects of violent media on aggression in children and adults, shows that the short term effects are mostly due to the priming of existing well-encoded scripts, schemas or beliefs and children can encode new scripts, schemas, and beliefs via observational learning with less interference than adults. They say that observational learning is a process through which behavioural scripts, world schemas, and normative beliefs become encoded in a child’s mind simply as a consequence of the child observing others.

Albert Bandura (1973), in his social learning theory has explained the modelling behaviour of individuals by four inter related sub factors, namely, attention, retention, motoric reproduction, and reinforcement and motivation. In his theory, Bandura suggests that aggressive behaviours in children are learnt through mass media using the same modelling behaviours. Therefore as seen in the social learning theory, the influence of mass media on children is perhaps a very subtle and a gradual influence, which keeps getting reinforced by consistent exposure to the content of what is viewed by the child, and also what is understood by the child as a message of the content.

Huesmann (1988), presented a theory of information processing model for the development of aggression. It is argued that the aggressive child is one who has acquired aggressive scripts to guide behaviour early in life. Once established these scripts become resistant to change and may even persist in adulthood. Aggressive scripts are acquired and maintained through both observational and enactive learning processes. These processes interact with each other as actual aggressive behaviour engenders conditions under which the observation of aggressive behaviours is more likely and creates conditions that provoke rather than inhibit aggression.
Thus the observed violence not only provides scripts for future behaviour but also triggers the recall of existing aggressive scripts. This theory of Huesmann provides an insight for the present research to understand the significant relationship of TV watching habits of children to the displayed aggressive behaviour at school. The more saliently the aggressive scene is observed by the child, the more the child ruminates upon, fantasizes about and rehearses the observed scene, the more likely it is that an aggressive script based on that scene is recalled and followed in a social problem-solving situation (Huesmann, 1986).

In support of our results, there are many studies which have shown that there is a significant association with the watching of violent television programs and aggressive behaviour in children (Eron, 1963; Eron, et al., 1972; Joseph, 1987; Ostrov, Gentile and Crick, 2006; Gentile, Coyle and Waish, 2011; Wiegman, Kuttscreuter, Baarda, 1992; Gentile, Mathieson and Crick, 2011). It was seen that a positive significant relationship between the violence ratings of the favourite programs as reported by mothers and fathers and aggressive behaviours of boys as rated in school by peers. Also there was a negative relationship between total time watched by boys and as reported by mothers and aggressive behaviours (Eron, 1963). A two year longitudinal study by Ostrov, Gentile and Crick (2006), found that media exposure predicted various subtypes of aggression and prosocial behaviour. The parental reports of media exposure were associated with relational aggression for girls and physical aggression for boys at school. Also, children’s consumption of media violence early in the school year predicted higher verbally aggressive behaviour, higher relationally aggressive behaviour and higher physically aggressive behaviour and less prosocial behaviour later in the school year (Gentile, Coyle and Waish, 2011). A study in Netherlands concluded that viewing of prosocial behaviour on television did not find a significant positive correlation on the display of prosocial behaviour. However, positive correlations were found between aggression and television violence viewing (Wiegman, Kuttscreuter, Baarda, 1992). A study by Huesmann et al., (1973), found a probable causative influence of watching violent TV programs in early formative years on later aggression. Several other studies (Coker et al., 2015; Huesmann et al., 2003), also show that Media violence, TV viewing are positively associated with physical aggression in children and also Bullying in school (Kuntsche et al., 2006), where in most weekend television viewing cultures, viewers were prone to kick or push another student in addition to verbal forms of bullying, which was not the case of weekday viewing cultures. A longitudinal study by Huesmann et al., (2003), reveals that childhood exposure to media violence predicts young adult aggressive behaviour for both
males and females. Identification with aggressive TV characters and perceived realism of TV violence also predict later aggression. They say that the relations persist even when the effects of socioeconomic status, intellectual ability, and a variety of parenting factors are controlled.

There are only a few published studies in India on the effect of TV watching on the children. One study by Thomas and Chandrahood (2014), on the television viewing habit and violent behaviour among school children showed that a majority of samples had moderately high television viewing habit and there was a significant positive relationship between the television viewing habit and violent behaviour among school going children. They concluded that parents should be educated and motivated to encourage discussions in this aspect and to generate awareness.

One more study by Reddy and Shashidhar (2013), studied the Television viewing effects among the high school children in urban field practice, they found that headache, eye strain, sleep disturbances, neck pain, and nail biting were the health disturbances on TV viewing. A study by Mukherjee, Gupta and, Aneja (2014), studied the television viewing habits in children. The sample belonged to lower socio-economic strata with poor maternal literacy, concluded that 100% of children. Children watched excessively (>2hr daily), with majority viewing unsupervised and low quality content. There were minimal parental restrictions and no active discussions regarding contents.

The above theoretical and empirical studies show that the exposure to violent content on television, does have a significant short term impact on the displayed aggression of children in schools and outside home and also have a long term impact of continued aggression in adolescence and young adulthood. The present study which is also in line with the above studies, shows that even in the Indian scenario, in the middle socioeconomic society, viewing violent or negative content on TV, most of the times, has a definite influence on the displayed physical aggression in children, as compared to children who rarely view violent content on TV. As there is a lacuna in the published studies in this area, it can be seen that the present study results need to be tested in different populations and in different points of time.
I. Gaming habits and its influence on aggression in children

The gaming habits of children were studied to understand its association to the aggressive behaviour of children displayed in school. To study the same the researcher designed a survey questionnaire for the parents to understand the duration and content of the games played by their children. The survey questionnaire aimed at understanding from the parents the duration of time involved by their children in gaming on the gadgets (mobile, play stations, TV, computer, X-Box) on each day on a week day and on weekends. Also to understand the content of what is being played on the gadgets by children and its influence on the display of their aggressive behaviours.

The duration of playing was categorised as: (i) do not play, (ii) < than 1 hr, (iii) between 1-2 hrs, (iv) between 2-3 hrs, and (v) more than 3 hrs. The content of playing was categorised into following types: (i) Physical fighting games like boxing, kicking, punching, wrestling, (ii) shooting games, (iii) killing games, (iv) racing games and (v) running and escaping games.

To understand the relationship of duration of gaming and aggressive behaviours, a Pearson correlation was computed on the number of hours played each day on a week day and numbers of hours played each day on weekends. The frequency tables shows that nearly 45% of children play games on the gadgets for less than an hour everyday on the weekday, closely followed by nearly 40% saying they “never play” on week days, while during weekends nearly 30% play between ‘1-2’ hours each day.

A Pearson correlation was computed to understand the relationship between the duration of time involved in gaming gadgets during week day and weekends and the different types of aggressive behaviours displayed by children in the school. The correlational analysis shows that there is no significant association between the duration of time involved in gaming and the different types of aggressive behaviours displayed by children in school. This could be so because in the population selected as sample, children playing games in the gadgets is quite less compared to the media usage. It could be so considering the socioeconomic strata of the selected population, which is low-middle socioeconomic class. And hence the impact of gaming on their behaviour might not be significantly associated.

In the second part of analysis, the content played on the gadgets, was analysed using a One-way ANOVA, to understand if there is any significant differences in the display of aggression.
in the children who play different contents on the gadgets. The results revealed that there is no significant difference in the display of aggression in children who were involved in different content of gaming (Physical, shooting, killing, racing, and running and escaping), which explains that playing games on gadgets do not have any significant difference in the display of aggressive behaviours in children. Perhaps, as discussed earlier a strong reason for this result might be the socioeconomic strata of the sample population and the exposure or the availability of financial means to have an access to these gadgets (apart from mobiles). Therefore as seen by the researcher the population considered did not consider gaming as such a big menace as compared to TV. The FGD, with parents to get their perspective on the video gaming habit in children and their display of aggressive behaviour outside home showed that, parents in the group were not very convinced that gaming habits will lead to aggressive behaviour, but perhaps felt that high involvement in gaming may lead them to become loners or hyper. As told by one of the participants “I think they become like zombies, they go into a state where they don’t care about anything else, and they become totally disconnected from the rest of the world”. One more participant opined that “Will they become aggressive with gaming I don’t know, or get an aggressive trait not sure, but I feel they become very hyper with it”. As seen in the results some of the responses of the participants do show that unlike TV, gaming habits might not directly cause aggression, but lead to other problems like being withdrawn, becoming loners, hyper active and so on. In the present sociocultural and socioeconomic strata selected, the researcher opines that unlike in the West, gaming has not become a menace or as addictive for children, because of various limitations. And therefore gaming is not yet been considered a very huge problem to tackle for parents in the selected population. And hence the results show that there is no relationship between either duration of playing on children’s behaviour or the content of what is played.

There are many researches in the West which do not support the results of the present study (Anderson and Bushman, 2001; Silvern and Williamson, 1987; Gentile et al., 2004; Polman, Castro, Aken, 2008; Irwin and Gross, 1995; Bartholow and Anderson, 2002) A Meta-Analytic review by Anderson and Bushman (2001) reveals that violent video games increase aggressive behaviour in children and young adults. Analyses also reveal that exposure to violent content increases physiological arousal and aggression-related thoughts and feelings and decreased prosocial behaviour. They concluded that results were consistent with the General Affective Aggression Model which predicts that exposure to violent games will increase aggressive behaviour both in short term and long term. Silvern and Williamson
(1987), revealed that there was no difference between television and video gaming conditions, and concluded that violent video games arouse children in the same way as violent television cartoons. Also one study revealed that adolescents who expose themselves to greater amounts of video game violence were more hostile, reported getting into arguments with teachers more frequently, were more likely to be involved in physical fights, and performed more poorly in school (Gentile, et al., 2004). An experimental study by Polman et al., (2008), investigated the differential effects of actively playing vs. passively watching the same violent video game on subsequent aggressive behaviour. It was seen that after the actual participation of actually playing the violent video games, boys behaved more aggressively than did the boys in the passive game condition. For girls, the same condition did not relate to aggression. They concluded that specifically for boys, playing a violent video game should lead to more aggression than watching television violence. Studies also supported that subjects who played the video game with aggressive content exhibited significantly more aggression during free-play and more interpersonal aggression during frustrating situation than youngsters who played nonaggressive video games (Irwin and Gross, 1995). In another experimental study (Bartholow and Anderson, 2002), it was seen that playing a violent video game resulted in more aggression in UG students than a non-violent game. Also that this effect was larger for men than for women.

An updated meta-analysis by Anderson (2004), reveals that exposure to violent video games is significantly linked to increases in aggressive behaviour, aggressive cognition and aggressive affect, and cardiovascular arousal, and to decreases in helping behaviour. They say experimental studies reveal this linkage to be causal. Correlational studies reveal a linkage to serious, real-world types of aggression. They concluded that methodologically weaker studies yielded a smaller effect sizes than methodologically stronger studies.

Griffiths (1999), reviewed articles in the empirical studies in the area of video gaming and aggression, which argued that all the published studies show that there is a definite short term increase in the aggressive behaviours in children soon after playing violent video gaming. But they indicate methodological problems, where they have included only short term measures of aggressive consequences.

As discussed an exhaustive review of literature showed that there is a definite short term impact of playing aggressive games on the subsequent aggressive behaviour in children. The studies quoted are in contradiction to the present results of this study. The reasons for this
could be firstly, most of the studies quoted in the west had an experimental design, in contrast to an ex post facto study design of the present study. The present study measured the exposure to the gaming content through a survey questionnaire to parents, where parents’ knowledge about the gaming content was very crucial to the results. Secondly, as seen in the descriptive statistics, the exposure to gaming gadgets and gaming content has been comparatively very low in this section of the population selected. As discussed in the earlier section, many houses do not own any gadgets except playing simple games on the mobiles. Also as seen in the descriptive data on the content of games played, most of the times children and parent report that they are playing only ‘racing’ games, which shows that this is the most prevalent games found in the mobile gaming apps. Therefore as compared to the studies of the West, the Indian middle class houses perhaps do not have the financial ability to provide for any of these gadgets. Hence as seen, there is no significant difference in the display of aggressive behaviour of children who are exposed to certain gaming contents. Thirdly, many of the studies quoted are also longitudinal in nature, which impacts the results very differently. Fourthly, there has been a lacunae in the published studies in this area in India, and therefore the present results has not been as much tested in the population selected and in the Indian scenario.

There are some studies which have found mixed results or not a very significant relationship of gaming on aggressive behaviour in children (Sherry, 2001; Unsworth and Ward, 2001; Wiegman and Schie, 1998; Fleming and Wood, 2001). It was suggested that effects of violent video games has a smaller effect on aggression, than it has been found with television violence (Sherry, 2001), which is in line with our present results which show that the influence of TV aggression is more than Gaming influence on aggression in children. It was also seen in one of the studies that there was a preliminary evidence of violent video games might lead to an antisocial effect on young players. They also pointed out on the inconsistencies in the findings from a vast body of research and they say that the rate of advancement in video game technology make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions about the relationship between exposure to video games and aggressive behaviours (Unsworth and Ward, 2001).

Wiegman and Schie (1998), studied the video game playing and its relations with aggressive and prosocial behaviour. The results showed that no significant relationship was found between video games use in general and aggressive behaviour, but a significant negative relationship with prosocial behaviour was supported. A study by Bartholow et al., (2005),
showed that trait hostility, empathy, and hostile perceptions partially account for the video game violence exposure effect on aggression. This shows that more than the exposure per se, there are certain factors that influence the aggression in children, which could impact their display of aggressive behaviour. Fleming and wood (2001), showed that there was no significant increase in the aggressive mood scores for either boys or girls after playing a violent video game. Also positive mood, as measured by positive affect, showed no significant increase or decreases after playing either violent or non-violent game.

A Meta-Analytical review by Ferguson (2007), tried to understand the positive and negative effects of violent video games. It revealed that studies on video game violence provided no support for the hypothesis that violent video games playing are associated with higher aggression. However they found that playing violent video games was associated with higher visuospatial cognition. It was also seen that in young adolescents, bullying and delinquent behaviour were predicted by trait aggression and stress level, and neither violent video game exposure, nor parental involvement, predicted delinquent and bullying behaviour (Ferguson et al., 2014). It was seen that neither randomized trial or real life past exposure of violent video games caused any difference in aggression. But trait aggression, family violence, and male gender predicted aggression and violent crime (Ferguson et al., 2008).

A few studies quoted above support the present results, showing that the effect of video gaming on children’s aggression does not have a significant relationship, and also the personality traits, hostile perceptions and other environmental factors are also influencing the aggressive behaviours in them. As discussed earlier, one of the larger concerns which could have led to the contradictory results in the present sociocultural and lower-middle to middle income population could have been that the exposure to gaming gadgets or video games is negligible because of the economic and financial constraints of this section of the population. Therefore it could be concluded that video gaming influence has not been a concern in the Indian middle class population compared to the influence of media.

J. ANALYSIS OF FGD

The FGD conducted by the researcher gave an insight into certain issues which was highlighted by parents as influencing their child’s aggressive behaviour which has been discussed in the previous sections. One of the issues not in the purview of this study was school factors. The participants of the FGD brought it up as one of the core concerns in their
child’s development of aggressive behaviours. This shows that parents’ perception of child’s problem behaviour was looked at from the school factors also, which was equally important for the parents. Below shown is a flow chart of parents’ opinion of the various school related factors influencing the children’s aggressive behaviour.
The participants put across their opinion that the factors that might influence the children’s aggressive behaviour, stems from peer pressure, where the child’s desire to fit in the group, and to be accepted by the group induces problem behaviour, if the child tend to succumb to the external pressure. As one of the participants statements shows “they might do that just to fit in, peer pressure, somebody else is doing it, so if I don’t do it I might not be included, sense of belonging. So, not fitting in, and sometimes also to fit in”. As one more said “So it is like a learnt behaviour, sometimes acceptance of others, if you are doing all these you are absorbed, and somewhere accepted that you will be a part of our group and we are of the same group”. So it can be seen that apart from family and home influences on children’s behaviour, parents also equally believe in the outside influences of friends and peers.

Participants also stressed upon the environment of the school, like the academic pressure on the children, and how sometimes it can be detrimental.

Ragging and bullying was one of the common themes that came out in the FGD, where the participants expressed that the bullying in schools mostly happen through role modelling and imitation, and victims of bullying also learn to become bullies through consistent exposure, which was really a concern.

The above concerns of the FGD brought out in this section shows that in the population selected, other than the variables chosen and discussed, the school factors were also
considered as an important influence in forming the child’s problem behaviour. Hence it could be seen that in the present study the relationship of aggressive behaviour with parenting styles or conflict at home which is insignificant can also be attributed to the external influence of school variables which has not been considered in this study.

Therefore, it could be seen from this section that aggressive behaviours can be developed and maintained through various observational and vicarious learning inside and outside home. There can be many factors which could contribute for a child’s aggressive behaviour, apart from only parenting approaches and conflicts among parents. Therefore it is important for the parents’ to have an understanding about their limitations and strengths in the area of rearing a child, and to inculcate appropriate habits of supervision and being involved in their life from a very early stage in their child’s life.