



Keywords

Word	Definition
Aggression	Intent to harm outside the rules; hostile behaviour
Assertion	Well-motivated behaviour within the rules
Instrumental aggression	Has an intent but is within the rules
Instinct theory	When aggression is spontaneous and innate
Catharsis	Cleansing the emotions; using sport as an outlet for aggression
Aggressive cue hypothesis	Suggests that aggression is caused by a learned trigger

Key skills

- Understand the theories that explain the causes of aggression in sport including instinct, frustration-aggression, learned cue and social learning theories.

Aggression in sport

Aggression

- The intent to harm
- Outside the rules
- Reactive
- Out of control
- Deliberate and hostile

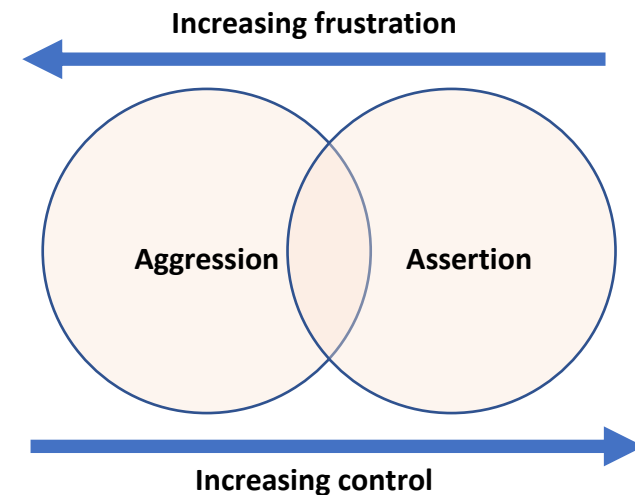
Example: Punching someone after a foul in rugby

Assertion

- Controlled
- Well motivated
- Generally within the rules
- Goal-directed
- Not intended to harm

Example: 50/50 challenge in a team game when both players are going for the ball with determination

Sometimes there is difficulty placing sporting actions in the aggression or the assertion category, creating a grey area, for example, in boxing it is within the rules to punch your opponent but there is also the intent to harm.





Theories of aggression

Instinct theory

An **innate** instinct to be aggressive, which builds up and inevitably must be expressed.

Instinct theorists believe sport plays an important role in society by allowing aggressive behaviour to be released in socially acceptable ways (Catharsis).

The frustration-aggression hypothesis

Aggression is the direct result of frustration that occurs because of a goal blockage.

Frustration always causes aggression.

If frustration occurs, it has a cathartic effect, therefore reducing the level of frustration immediately.

Aggressive cue hypothesis

Revised version of the F-A Hypothesis. It tries to explain why aggression isn't always displayed when frustration is present. Aggression only occurs if socially acceptable cues are present, eg. Encouragement from coach, previous praise for similar behaviour

Social learning theory

Aggressive behaviour is learnt through observing others. If behaviour is **modelled** by a significant other it is considerably more powerful. If the behaviour is copied and then **reinforced**, aggressive behaviour is strengthened.

Strategies to control aggression

- Do not reinforce aggressive acts in training
- Punish aggression with fines
- Punish players by sending them off
- Substitute an aggressive player or remove them from the situation
- Reinforce non-aggression
- Talk to players to calm them down
- Promote peer-group pressure within the team
- Walk away from the situation
- Apply the rules consistently and fairly
- Use mental rehearsal or relaxation to lower arousal
- Point out non-aggressive role models
- Set non-aggressive goals
- Apply sanctions immediately

Pathway

Previous knowledge: Personality, attitude, achievement motivation, confidence and self-efficacy, attribution, social facilitation and inhibition, arousal, anxiety and stress management.

Future links: Leadership, group dynamics, goal setting

Careers: from curriculum narratives

Cross curricular links