

REACTIVE AND PROACTIVE AGGRESSION AND ITS JUSTIFICATION IN INMATES

Luis Millana¹, Jesús M. Alvarado¹, J. Martín Ramirez¹, Luis Gonzalez Cieza²

¹ Sociopsychobiology of Aggression Research Group

Institute for Biofunctional Studies.

Universidad Complutense Madrid, Spain

² Agency for Reeducation and Reintegration into
Society of the Abused Minor (ARRMI), Madrid, Spain.

6th annual CICA-STR , Burgas, BULGARIA,
September 8-11, 2012

OUTLINE

- ✓ **Background**
- ✓ **Aim of the study**
- ✓ **Methods**
- ✓ **Results**
- ✓ **Conclusions**
- ✓ **Limitations and Perspectives**

MEANING OF AGGRESSION?



6th annual CICA-STR, Burgas, BULGARIA,
September 8-11, 2012

INMATES



6th annual CICA-STR , Burgas, BULGARIA,
September 8-11, 2012

“REACTIVE AGGRESSION”



6th annual CICA-STR , Burgas, BULGARIA,
September 8-11, 2012

“PROACTIVE AGGRESSION”



6th annual CICA-STR , Burgas, BULGARIA,
September 8-11, 2012

PROACTIVE/REACTIVE AGGRESSION

Dodge (1991) propounded two kinds of aggressive behaviors:

1. **Reactive aggression:** produced as a response to a provocation
very sensible to all kinds of stimuli
(f.ins. offenses to self-esteem)
they react with anger in a disproportionate and out of control way,
rather than starting an aggressive act
2. Proactive aggression

PROACTIVE/REACTIVE AGGRESSION

Dodge (1991) propounded two kinds of aggressive behaviors:

1. Reactive aggression: produced as a response to a provocation

2. **Proactive aggression**: instrumental purpose

obtaining some goal, profit, or any other good

(f.ins. domination)

lack of any affective manifestation

➤ it's common finding both kinds of aggression in the same person: around 53% of children who engage in some form of aggressive behavior are both proactively and reactively aggressive (Dodge et al., 1997)

PROACTIVE/REACTIVE AGGRESSION

General population:

- proactive aggression is associated with antisocial outcomes in adulthood
 - (criminal behavior, smoking and drinking)
- whereas reactive aggression is not associated (Pulkkinen, 1987, 1996)
- boys: proactive aggression predicted delinquency-related violence,
 - whereas reactive aggression predicted later dating violence (Brendgen et al., 2001)

Delinquents:

- proactive aggression is associated with delinquency in children (Fite et al., 2008)
- adolescent delinquents
 - differed from non-delinquents on their levels of proactive aggression, but not on reactive one
 - are more reactively aggressive than higher educated peers, but no more than lower educated peers (Coralijn et al., 2005)
- girls under arrest:
 - proactive aggression is associated with callous–unemotional traits and biased outcome expectations for aggression, whereas reactive aggression is associated with poorly regulated emotion and anger to perceived provocation (Marsee et al., 2007)

JUSTIFICATION OF INTERPERSONAL AGGRESSION

General population:

- similar but not identical justification in all populations.
- mild aggression was more acceptable than stronger aggressive acts
(Ramirez, 1991, 1993, 1998; Fujihara et al., 1999)

Prisoners:

- the degree of hedonicity was higher in the inmates
- the higher intensity of aggression, the more pleasurable to the aggressor, but only within certain limits (no for too severe acts)
(Cabanac et al., 2008; Martín Ramirez et al., 2009)
- slightly higher physical aggression among women than among men
(Ireland, 2000)

Young delinquents:

- higher justification of aggression, preferably of its more severe forms, in practically all situations
(Millana et al., 2010)

HYPOTHESIS

- higher proactive/reactive aggressive in inmates
- higher justification of aggression than in inmates
- the more violent behavior, the higher justification,
except for extremely severe acts.

SUBJECTS

INMATES
a socially maladjusted population

N = 371

CONTROLS
a socially adjusted population

N = 261

	MALES	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES
N	336	35	141	120
Age range	15 to 56 yrs.		15 to 58 yrs.	
Mean age (SD)	26.59 yrs. (11.03)		24.05 yrs. (8.76)	

QUESTIONNAIRES

✓ **CAMA** (Moral Attitude on Aggression Questionnaire)
Ramírez (1986)

✓ **RPQ** (Reactive Proactive Aggression Questionnaire)
Raine et al. (2006)

RESULTS

6th annual CICA-STR , Burgas, BULGARIA,
September 8-11, 2012

CORRELATION BETWEEN BOTH TESTS

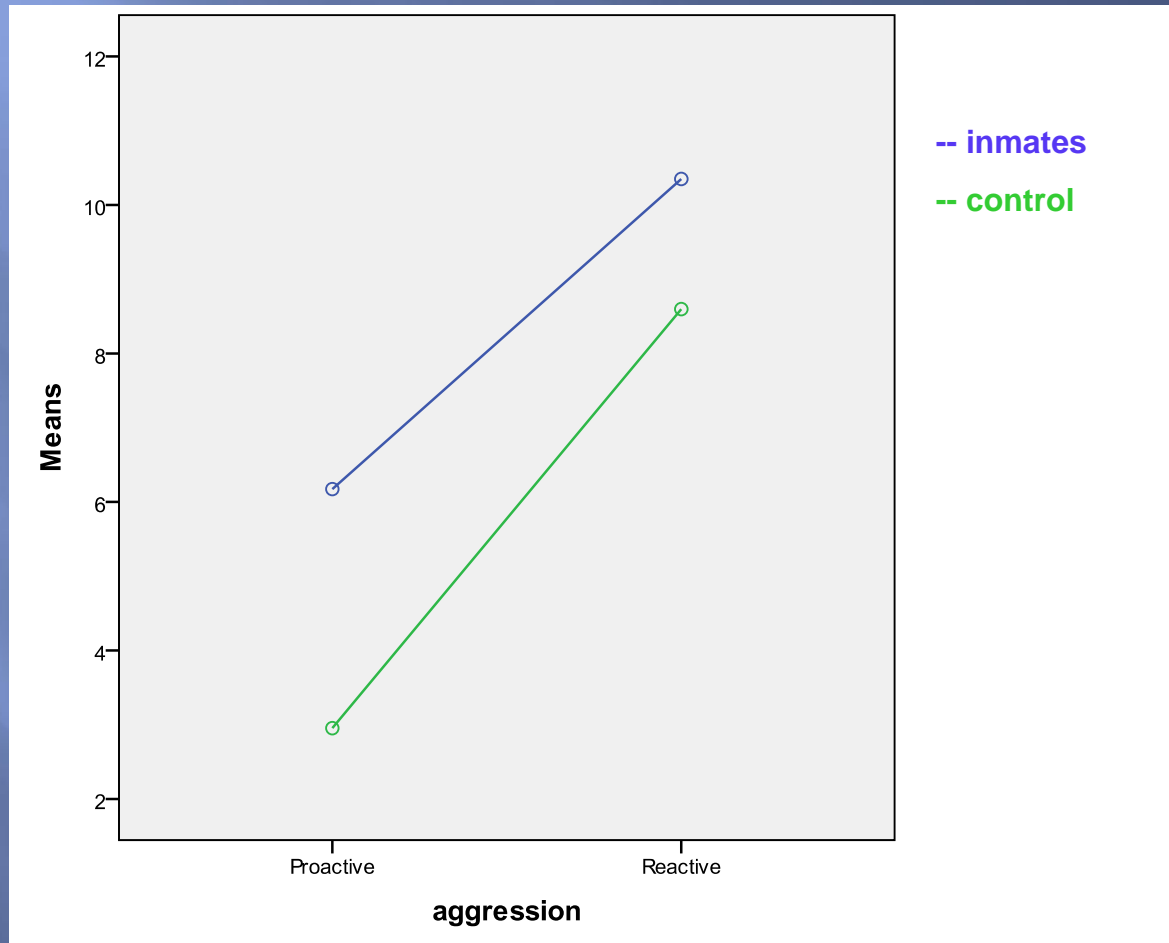
	RPQ-PA	RPQ-RA	INSTRUMENTAL	EMOTIONAL	RPQ	CAMA
RPQ-PA	1					
RPQ-RA	.702**	1				
INSTRUMENTAL	.375**	.494**	1			
EMOTIONAL	.380**	.416**	.697**	1		
RPQ	.933**	.911**	.463**	.426**	1	
CAMA	.413**	.497**	.925**	.917**	.487**	1

**P<0.001

CORRELATIONSHIP RPQ vs CAMA

- ✓ a positive lineal relationship between aggressivity and justification of aggression
 $R=.49$
- ✓ justification of aggression has a higher correlation with the reactive dimension than with the proactive one

PROACTIVE/REACTIVE AGGRESSION IN INMATES



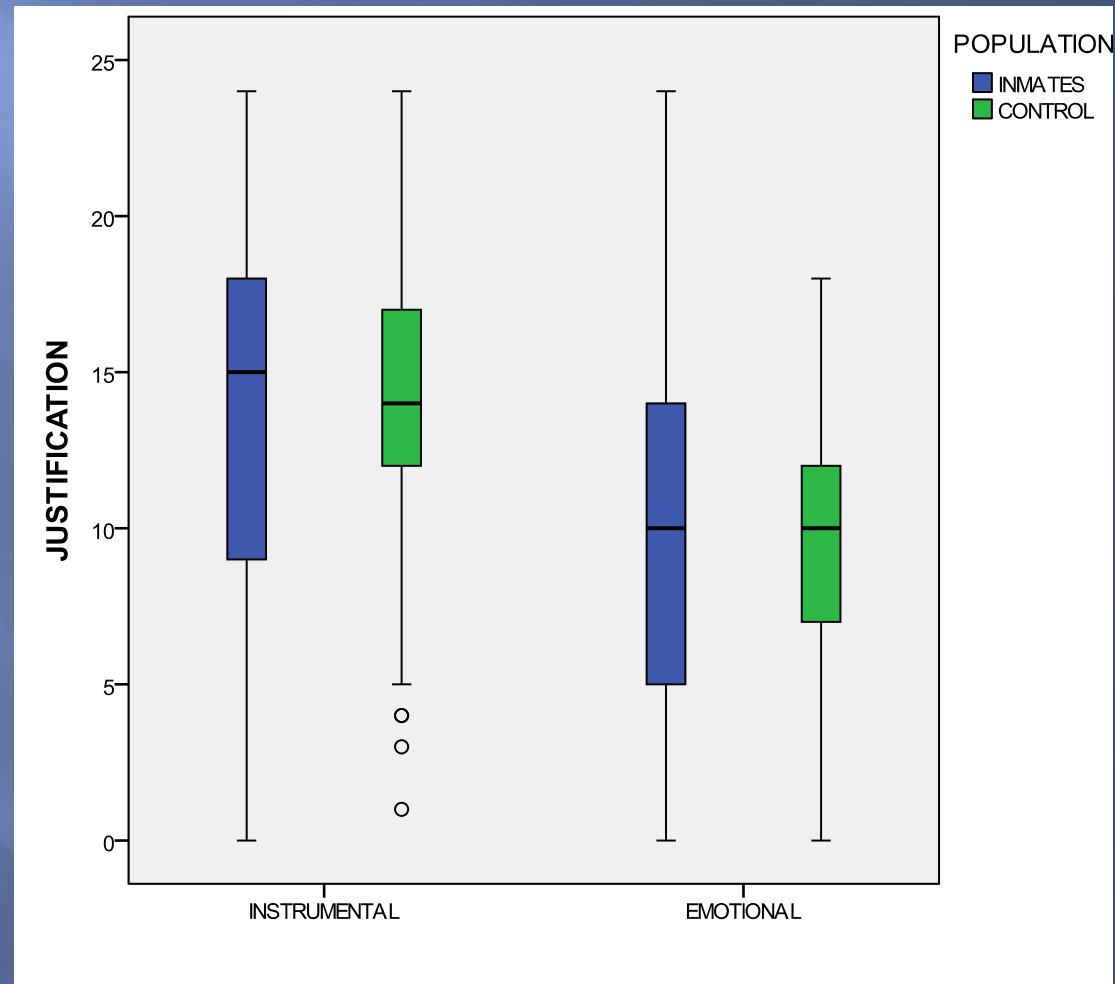
Main effect: $F(1,625) = 65.056$ ($p < 0.001$)

Interaction effect: $F(1,625) = 29.997$ ($p < 0.001$)

INMATES VS. CONTROLS

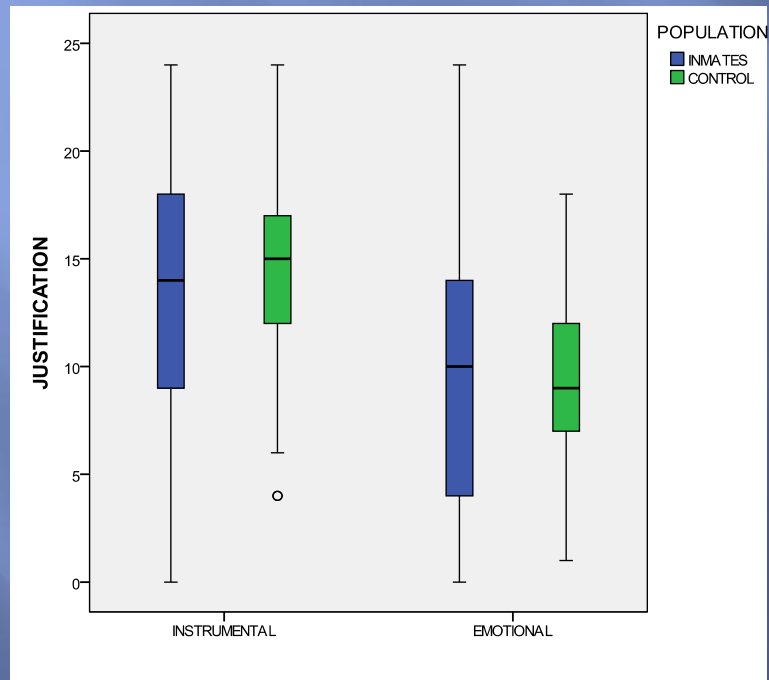
- ✓ aggression level was higher in inmates in the control group for both dimensions: proactive and reactive [F(1,625)=65.056(p<0.001)]
- ✓ this gap was higher for proactive aggression than for reactive one [F(1,625) = 29.997 (p<0.001)]

INSTRUMENTAL/EMOTIONAL JUSTIFICATION OF AGGRESSION

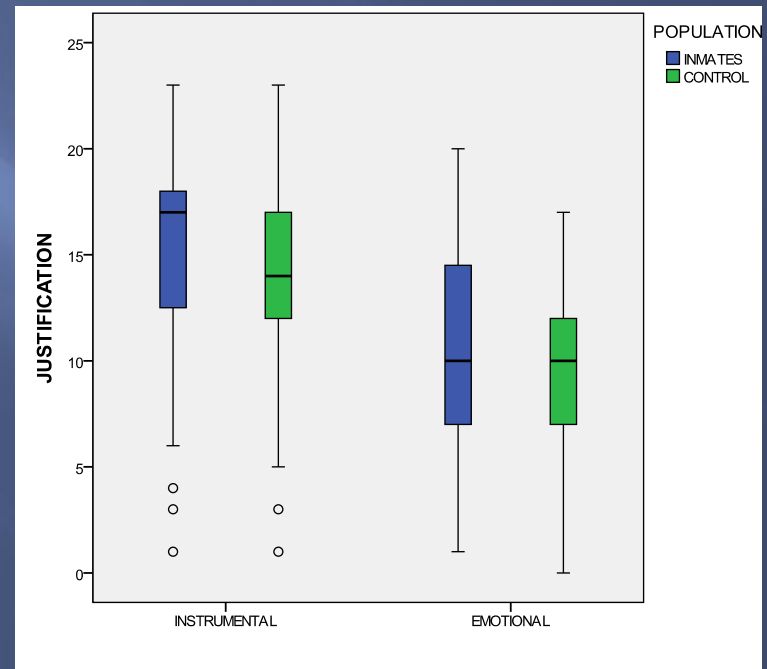


MORAL JUSTIFICATION OF AGGRESSION by sexes

Male inmates vs. Male controls



Female inmate vs. Female controls



MORAL JUSTIFICATION OF AGGRESSION

- ✓ overall: higher in inmates than in controls
- ✓ analyzing the kind of motivation:
 - instrumental aggression was more justified than emotional aggression in both populations
 - emotional aggression was more justified by inmates than by their control counterparts
 - between both populations: no significant difference in the justification of instrumental aggression, overall
 - Males: higher justification of emotional aggression in inmates, whereas higher justification of instrumental aggression in controls
 - Females: both emotional and instrumental motivations for aggression were more acceptable in inmates than in controls, as well as than in both male populations

JUSTIFICATION OF AGGRESSION best predictors

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12.341	.850		14.514	.000
	RPQ_RA	1.154	.082	.494	14.148	.000*
2	(constant)	8.172	1.402		5.830	.000
	RPQ_RA	1.219	.083	.522	14.757	.000
	population	2.508	.674	.132	3.719	.000*
3	(constant)	8.053	1.387		5.805	.000
	RPQ_RA	.930	.112	.398	8.316	.000
	population	3.238	.694	.170	4.662	.000
	RPQ_PA	.388	.103	.188	3.785	.000*

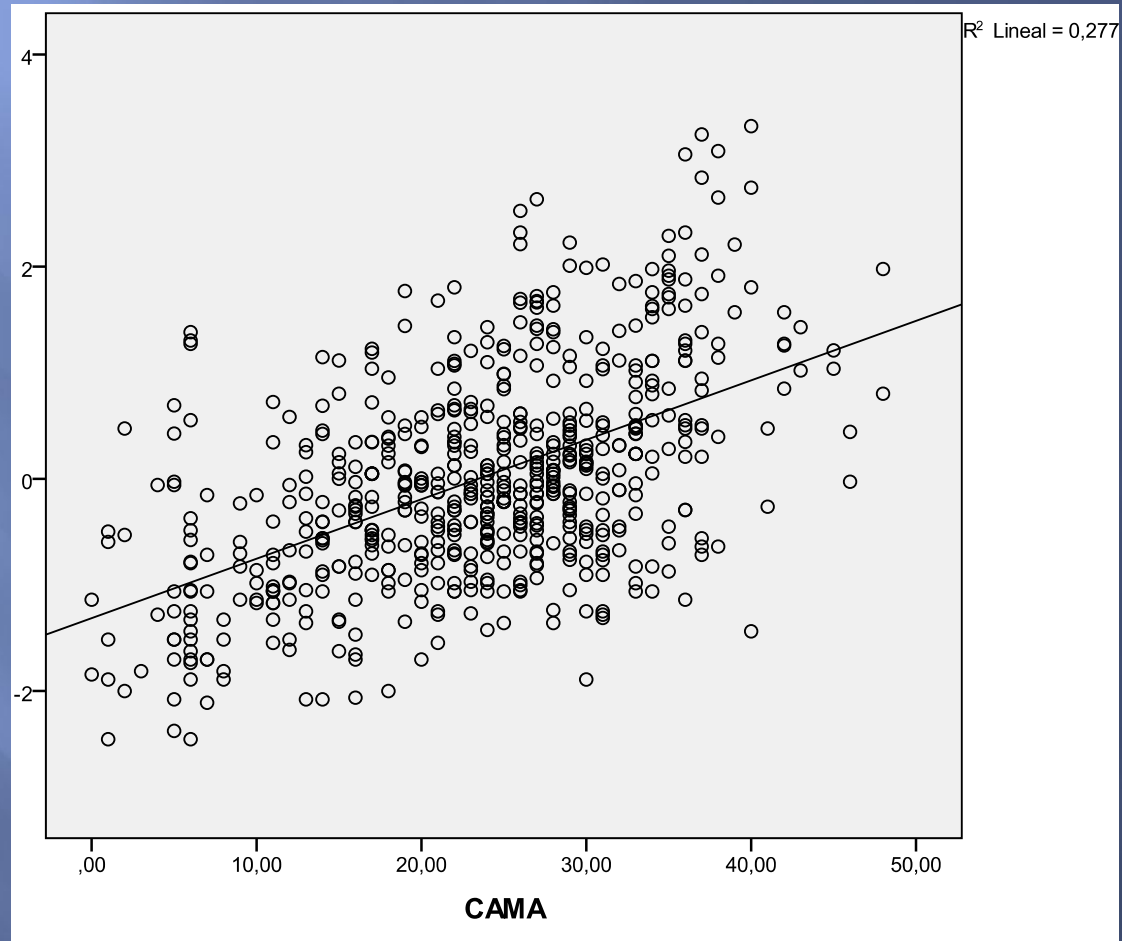
^aDependent variable: CAMA
* p<0.001

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	.494 ^a	.244	.243	8.17670
2	.510 ^b	.261	.258	8.09336
3	.527 ^c	.277	.274	8.00765

- a. Predictor variables: (Constant), RPQ_AR
- b. Predictor variables: (Constant), RPQ_AR, POPULATION
- c. Predictor variables: (Constant), RPQ_AR, POPULATION, RPQ_AP
- d. Dependent variable: CAMA

REACTIVE/PROACTIVE AGGRESSION AND ITS MORAL JUSTIFICATION

REGRESSION RESIDUAL STANDARDIZED



FACTORS LEADING TO PREDICTIONS

✓ a regression analysis showed that the justification could be predicted by the following factors:

- level of aggressivity (measured by RPQ)
- population (being imprisoned or not)

✓ but not by the sex and age of the subjects
(this is not significant)

✓ range of explicative variables of justification of aggression:

1st	RPQ-RA
2nd	population
3rd	RPQ-PA

CONCLUSIONS

1. **Positive correlation between level of aggression and its moral justification:**
 - the level of aggression was higher in inmates
 - the level of justification of aggression was higher in inmates
2. **The justification of the aggression may be predicted by the following factors:**
 - **level of aggressivity** (measured by the RPQ)
 - **kind of population** (being inmate or control group)

but not by sex or age (this is not significant)
3. **Range of explicative variables of a justification:**

RPQ-RA > population > RPQ-PA

LIMITATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

1. Limitations:

1. small sample
2. heterogeneous age range
3. heterogeneous sex range

2. Perspectives:

- link with the personal history of each subject

Time is over!

Para ver esta película, debe
disponer de QuickTime™ y de
un descompresor .

thank you for your attention

**and special thanks to all students
who have supported us in the
data collection**

Thoughts much appreciate!

WORK AHEAD

▣ <aggressionresearch@med.ucm.es>