

## Aggression and Matrix Reasoning

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Abstract thought is a domain of cognition concerned with organizing discrete concrete ideas into broader concepts through identifying similarities and underlying patterns. Greater ability in abstract thinking has been associated with more flexible social cognition improved perspective taking. This study demonstrates that it may also be associated with lower levels of aggression and externalizing behavior. We examined a neuropsychological testing sample (n = 344) and found that abstract thought (as measured by the Matrix Reasoning subtest of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale) was negatively associated with a variety of indices of aggression measured by the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (e.g., the Aggression Scale, the Activation Scale). These associations held even when established predictors of aggression (i.e., gender, age, education) and broader measures of intellectual functioning (i.e., verbal IQ) were statistically controlled for. Therapeutic interventions for aggression which may increase abstract thought will also be discussed.