

Theoretical and methodological approaches to the correction of aggressive behaviour in adults with frustration-related manifestations

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Abstract. The purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of a comprehensive psychological correction programme for aggressive behaviour in adults with pronounced frustration-related manifestations. Psychodiagnostic methods were employed (an author-developed frustration level questionnaire, the Rosenzweig Picture-Frustration Study, the Buss-Durkee Inventory, and the Self-Actualisation Personal Profile) to examine the interrelations between levels of frustration, aggression, and self-actualisation, and to assess the dynamics of change following the correction programme. The results demonstrated a substantial reduction in the level of personal frustration, which was reflected in lower mean values, median values, and percentiles. The Rosenzweig test indicated a shift from barrier-dominant responses towards solution-oriented tendencies, reflecting enhanced adaptability in frustration-inducing situations. A decrease in both direct and indirect forms of aggression was recorded using the Buss-Durkee method, including reductions in irritability and hostility. Correlational analysis identified a strong association between reduced frustration and lower levels of verbal aggression, and between the rise in problem-solving tendencies and the decline in hostility. The most pronounced positive changes were observed among respondents who presented with a high level of emotional instability at the beginning of the programme. Additional effectiveness was achieved through the integration of emotional-somatic and cathartic techniques, which facilitated a deeper processing of aggressive experiences. The group format played a decisive role, as the support and shared experience of other participants fostered greater awareness of personal behavioural patterns. In summary, the correction programme, which combined cognitive, emotional, and social components, proved effective in reducing levels of frustration and aggression. The practical value lies in the potential use of the developed programme as an instrument for preventing and correcting aggressive behaviour in adults within psychological support systems

Keywords: self-control; cognitive-emotional approach; irritability; emotional self-regulation; group dynamics; correction programme

Introduction

Aggression and frustration in adulthood constitute one of the key issues in psychology, as they directly influence the quality of interpersonal relationships, social adaptation, professional functioning, and the psycho-emotional state of the individual. In adulthood, manifestations of aggression often take latent or socially acceptable forms, yet even in such forms, they may hinder constructive communication, increase the likelihood of conflict situations, and reduce psychological well-being. Frustration arising from encounters with objective or subjective obstacles is one of the factors

that provoke aggressive reactions. This issue is particularly relevant in conditions of ongoing social transformation, economic instability, high levels of uncertainty, and heightened psycho-emotional tension, which create additional conditions for the emergence of chronic frustration among the adult population. Accordingly, the analysis of the relationship between frustration and aggression is not only theoretically significant, but also practically necessary for the development of psychological correction and prevention programmes aimed at reducing destructive forms of behaviour.

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The scientific literature addresses aggressive behaviour in adults from diverse theoretical and applied perspectives, yet it remains a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. P. Sturme (2022) conducted a retrospective analysis of the principal theories of aggression, ranging from psychoanalytic explanations to contemporary integrative models. According to the researcher, scientific thought has progressively evolved from reductionist models, including the hydraulic model of aggression, to more comprehensive approaches that combine biological, psychological, and social dimensions. This analysis provided a methodological foundation for the further identification of effective interventions. H. Girasek *et al.* (2022) emphasised that aggressive behaviour in patients with psychiatric disorders results from the interaction of multiple risk factors, including the type of diagnosis, comorbid conditions, socio-economic status, and personal history. The researchers highlighted the importance of accurately predicting aggression through standardised assessment tools to ensure safety and optimise treatment programmes.

U. Kurilova (2022) theoretically substantiated and empirically confirmed that the development of reflective mechanisms is an effective means of correcting aggressive behaviour in adolescents as a form of psychological defence. The statistically validated results demonstrated a reduction in impulsive aggressive reactions in conflict situations following the correctional intervention. O. Herasymchuk & T. Lisyanskaya (2025) analysed the complex and multifaceted phenomena of aggression and frustration through a comparative examination of their structural components and mechanisms of emergence in the context of major psychological schools, including psychoanalysis, behaviourism, cognitive psychology, and neurobiology. The conclusions confirmed the necessity of methodological pluralism and the integration of knowledge from different fields to gain a deeper understanding of the causes of destructive behaviour and to develop effective prevention strategies, which represents an important step towards a more harmonious society.

Ş. Bicer Hazir (2025) examined human aggression through an integrated biological and socio-psychological framework. The study demonstrated that aggression is neither purely innate nor entirely determined by the environment, but emerges from the complex interaction of evolutionary mechanisms and social learning. Evidence was provided that biological predispositions to aggression may be expressed and modulated in response to the social context, which opens new avenues for corrective strategies. D. DeMarsico *et al.* (2022) focused on cyber-aggression and developed a new scale, the “Cyber Motivations for Aggression and Deviance”, which demonstrated reliability and validity. Eight motivational factors of cyber-aggression were identified, confirming its multidimensional character. This

expanded understanding of the psychological mechanisms of aggression in the digital environment and broadened the toolkit for preventive work with adults.

Q. Alam (2023) highlighted the multifactorial character of aggression, demonstrating that it emerges from the interaction of social, cognitive, instinctive, and learning mechanisms. This approach enables aggression to be viewed not as an isolated psychological phenomenon, but as a product of the complex interaction of numerous processes that either reinforced or neutralised one another. A. Lankford (2021) broadened the understanding of frustration by emphasising its sexual dimension as a distinct form of dissatisfaction. The author demonstrated that sexual frustration may provoke aggression through mechanisms of revenge, displacement, or the display of power. The study indicated the need to incorporate additional forms of frustration into broader models of aggressive behaviour. Despite the diversity of approaches, the literature devotes insufficient attention to the comprehensive analysis of theoretical and methodological approaches to correcting aggressive behaviour in adults with frustration-related manifestations. Most studies concentrate either on general theories of aggression or on specific clinical or social contexts, leaving the integration of different models into practical corrective strategies insufficiently explored.

The purpose of the study was to systematise theoretical and methodological approaches to correcting aggressive behaviour in adults with frustration-related manifestations. The objectives were to synthesise contemporary approaches to the examination of aggression and frustration; analyse the potential for integrating different models in the development of effective psychological correction programmes; and determine the prospects for applying comprehensive methods to mitigate aggressive tendencies in adults.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in 2024-2025, with participants recruited from social media platforms. A total of 158 individuals aged between 33 and 52 participated. All participants provided informed voluntary consent. Inclusion criteria comprised pronounced personal frustration, a tendency towards aggressive behaviour according to preliminary testing, and the absence of severe mental disorders. Participants with diagnosed psychotic conditions, active addictions, or severe somatic pathologies that might impede participation in the programme were excluded. The study consisted of three interrelated stages. The diagnostic stage involved initial testing using four psychodiagnostic instruments: an author-developed frustration level questionnaire, the S. Rosenzweig (1935) Frustration Reaction Test, the Bass-Darke Aggression Level Questionnaire (n.d.), and the “Self-Actualisation Profile of Personality” – SAMOAL (Pryyshak & Matsko, 2012). The formative stage consisted of implementing a psychological correction

programme grounded in cognitive-behavioural therapy, social learning theory, and self-determination theory. The control stage consisted of repeated testing aimed at assessing indicator dynamics and determining the effectiveness of the intervention.

The programme had a preventive focus and comprised five blocks: block 1 – awareness of aggression, including diagnostics, the creation of a safe environment for analysing emotional reactions, and the development of an understanding of the functions of aggression; block 2 – analysis of sources of frustration and their influence on behaviour, with consideration of the basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness; block 3 – development of emotional self-regulation skills, including mindfulness, conscious breathing techniques, relaxation methods, and cognitive strategies for delaying reactions; block 4 – transformation of aggressive impulses into goal-directedness, including the formation of personal and professional goals with the use of the SMART model and self-motivation techniques; block 5 – consolidation of results, including the integration of strategies into daily life, the formulation of development plans, and the identification of social support resources.

A separate module was directed at developing a positive attitude towards failure, grounded in a growth mindset (Dweck & Yeager, 2021). Practical implementation of this approach was conducted through the exercise “Analysis of failure as a lesson”, which included describing the situation, analysing causes, extracting lessons, formulating alternative actions, and planning future steps. An autonomous format with independent work on modules was used at the initial stage, which included a block of cognitive restructuring. One of the key techniques was the “Thought diary”, which required the recording of situations, automatic thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and reactions; a stage of thought disputation (analysis of evidence “for” and “against”, search for alternative interpretations); and an additional column “Alternative reaction” with constructive behavioural models. This method contributed to reduced impulsivity, the adoption of more adaptive strategies, and an enhanced subjective sense of control.

A range of exercises was integrated for working with emotions: “Emotional dictionary”, “Emotion mapping”, “Trigger analysis”, and “Post-event reflection”. They supported deeper self-observation and consideration of individual differences. Spiral learning became an important technique, implemented through the exercises “Rewrite your biography” and “Emotions and needs”. The cognitive-behavioural block included methods for identifying and disputing irrational thoughts (Ali, 2024), reinterpreting situational appraisals (Dodge, 2024), replacing negative beliefs with realistic and adaptive ones (Diachkova *et al.*, 2024), and self-instruction techniques (Prayogi *et al.*, 2024). The exercise “Analysis of obstacles and action planning”, based on

the coping model of R. Lazarus (1991), was applied in addition. Cathartic release was used to integrate the affective component: body-oriented practices for experiencing anger and hypno-practices, which facilitated the safe release of aggression, tension reduction, and the transition toward more adaptive behavioural models. Hypno-practices were introduced on an optional basis, which enabled the assessment of varied participant attitudes towards this technique.

Sessions were conducted in a group format, with each session lasting 2 hours, and held twice a week over 16 weeks. Normal distribution of variables was checked using the Shapiro-Wilk and Lilliefors tests. The analysis of results employed the paired t-test for identifying dynamics, comparisons of means, medians, and percentiles, Pearson and Spearman correlation analyses for identifying linear and non-linear interrelations, and regression analysis for assessing variable influence. The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki (2013). Participants were informed about the purpose and objectives of the study, had the right to withdraw without consequences, and were guaranteed confidentiality. Participants who showed signs of depression or high emotional instability were identified and advised to seek additional psychological support. This recommendation was also given to all participants in the program.

Results

Results of the implementation of the psychocorrective intervention programme and their interpretation

In psychology, aggression is understood as behaviour aimed at causing harm to another person or oneself, which may manifest in verbal, physical, or indirect forms (Maia & Tinatin, 2024). A classical explanation of its emergence was provided by the frustration-aggression hypothesis of J. Dollard *et al.* (1939), which argues that an obstacle on the way to a goal inevitably generates aggression. Nevertheless, later research demonstrates that frustration does not always lead to destructive actions but creates emotional tension that may be channelled either destructively or constructively. Contemporary studies highlight the multidimensionality of this relationship: individual traits, levels of self-control, emotional intelligence, and sociocultural conditions significantly determine the response (Lazarus, 1991). Under conditions of discrimination or limited resources, aggression may become a systemic reaction, whereas in a supportive environment, frustration may stimulate resilience and the development of coping strategies.

Psychological practice assigns particular importance to reducing aggression in adulthood. The cognitive-behavioural approach, social learning theory, and self-determination theory are recognised as effective. The cognitive-behavioural approach focuses on working

with maladaptive beliefs and thinking patterns that provoke aggression. Social learning theory demonstrates that aggressive behaviour is developed through observation and reinforcement from the social environment. Self-determination theory by E. Deci & R. Ryan (2012) posits that frustration of the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness contributes to the emergence of aggressive reactions. The combined application of these approaches allows addressing cognitive, social, and motivational mechanisms.

The development of emotional self-regulation and group interaction becomes an important component of corrective programmes. Emotional regulation involves the ability to recognise and modify one's own states, which reduces impulsive responses; its effectiveness

is demonstrated through mindfulness practices and cognitive reappraisal (Zhang & Zhang, 2023). Group work creates a space for social learning, support, and feedback, reduces isolation, and promotes the formation of new behavioural models (Freud, 1949; Wang *et al.*, 2024). The integration of individual self-regulation techniques with group dynamics supports the consolidation of new response strategies, transforms destructive impulses into constructive forms of interaction, and enhances psychological resilience. Analysis of the data from the developed frustration level questionnaire demonstrates the effectiveness of the intervention programme, reflected in a noticeable reduction in personal frustration. Figure 1 presents the distribution prior to the frustration level questionnaire.

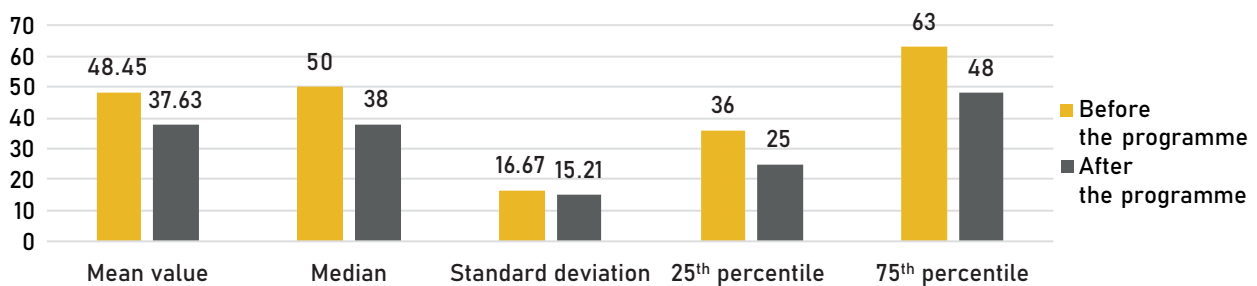


Figure 1. Frustration level questionnaire

Source: compiled by the author

Figure 1 shows that the mean decreased from 48.45 to 37.63, and the median from 50 (N = 158). The shift in central tendencies is confirmed by a narrowing of the standard deviation (from 16.67 to 15.21) and changes in percentiles (the 25th decreased from 36 to 25, the 75th from 63 to 48), which indicates an overall reduction in score dispersion and a decline in frustration among most participants. The next stage of distribution analysis covers separate groups. In the experimental group, the mean score declined from 48.91 to 33.22 (N = 98). In the control

group (N = 60), the mean changed only slightly: from 47.7 (SD = 17.96) before the intervention to 44.82 after it. Medians in the experimental group shifted from 50.5 to 32.5, whereas in the control group, 45.5 was recorded after the intervention and 49.5 before it. The range of values in the experimental group contracted from 60 to 54, and in the control group stood at 57 after the intervention and 60 before it. Figure 2 presents the distribution indicators prior to the developed frustration level questionnaire (for the experimental group).

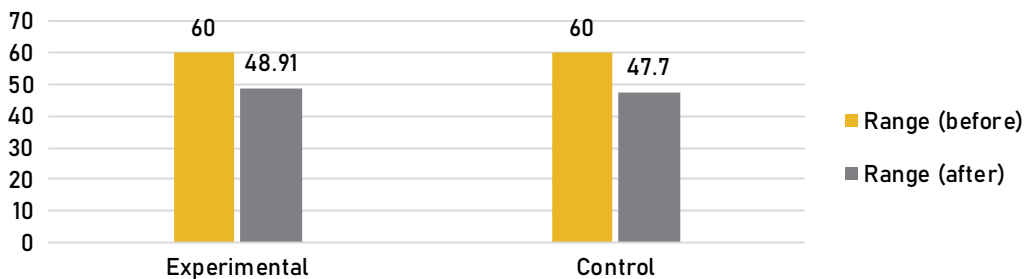


Figure 2. Frustration level questionnaire (experimental group)

Source: compiled by the author

Analysis of percentiles and variance confirms the substantial impact of the programme on the experimental group: the lower quartile decreased from 36 to 21, and the upper quartile from 63 to 42, whereas no

similar changes were observed in the control group (25th: 29.25; 75th: 57.75). A sharp reduction from 252.74 to 177.95 indicates levelling and homogeneity of the results, which demonstrates a shift among the majority

of participants towards a markedly lower level of frustration after the intervention. The distribution of results according to the Rosenzweig Picture-Frustration Test indicates a pronounced decline in the Object Dominance (OD) indicator, which reflects a reduced focus

on external barriers. The mean value of Ego-Defensiveness (ED) remained almost unchanged, demonstrating the stability of ego-defensive mechanisms, whereas NP increased, which indicates a strengthening of motivational persistence. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Dynamics of indicators according to the C. Rosenzweig test

Group	Indicator	Before	After	Δ (After-Before)
Experimental	OD	8.48	7.42	-1.06
	ED	6.9	6.81	-0.09
	NP	5.57	7.07	+1.5
Control	OD	8.43	8.18	-0.25
	ED	6.43	6.53	+0.1
	NP	6.17	5.93	-0.24

Source: compiled by the author

The ED indicator changed only marginally (-0.09), which demonstrates the stability of ego-defensive mechanisms and confirms that the programme did not lead to an increase in defensive aggression. NP, in contrast, increased by +1.5, which represents the most substantial positive shift: it reflects a strengthened motivational persistence and a greater focus on seeking ways to overcome difficulties. This dynamic confirms the corrective effect of the intervention, directed at a re-orientation from destructive fixation towards constructive activity. In the control group, the deltas showed

only minor fluctuations without systemic dynamics: OD declined insignificantly (-0.25), ED increased slightly (+0.1), and NP decreased (-0.24). These outcomes indicate the absence of stable positive tendencies and confirm that the changes in the experimental group were due to the programme rather than external random factors. The results indicate that the main effect concerns not so much the shift in mean values as the reduction of extreme manifestations, specifically among participants who demonstrated high levels of aggression before the intervention. The indicators are presented in Figure 3.

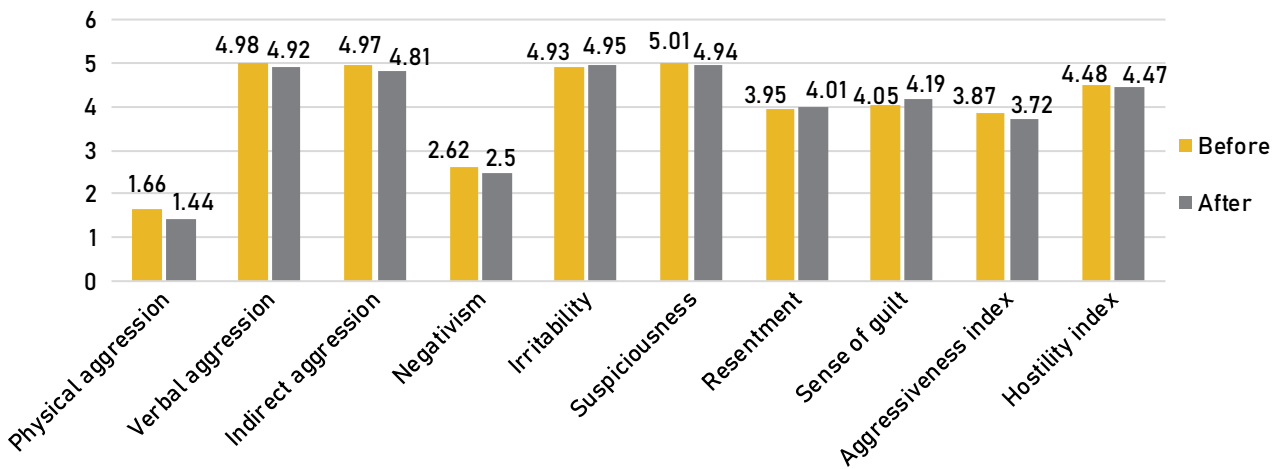


Figure 3. Dynamics of mean aggression scores (experimental group, N = 98)

Source: compiled by the author

The obtained data indicate that the programme was effective primarily in smoothing the most intense forms of aggression, which is confirmed by medians and upper quartiles, whereas mean values show only moderate changes. The most distinct decrease was observed in physical aggression: the mean value decreased from 1.65 to 1.41 points, and in the experimental group from 1.66 to 1.44, with the median decreasing from 2 to 1 and the upper quartile from 3 to 2. This means that for an average participant, the level of physical aggression became lower, and the most aggressive

respondents demonstrated a noticeable reduction in the intensity of reactions. Verbal and indirect aggression remained relatively stable; however, the percentile analysis revealed a decrease in the upper quartile of indirect aggression from 6 to 5, which indicates a reduction in intensity among those with the highest scores. Negativism decreased from 2.62 to 2.5 points, with the median declining from 3 to 2.5, which reflects changes at the level of the “average” participant. Feelings of guilt increased from 4.05 to 4.19, primarily due to an increase in the lower quartile, which is interpreted as

strengthened reflection and self-control among those who had previously been less inclined to acknowledge responsibility for their aggression. Irritability proved to be the most stable variable: mean, median, and quartile values changed only minimally. The indices reflected the dynamic as well: the mean level of aggressiveness decreased from 3.89 to 3.76, and in the experimental group from 3.87 to 3.72. Hostility remained almost un-

changed at approximately 4.5 points. These findings show that the intervention had the greatest impact on reducing physical aggression and negativism, whereas other forms displayed either stability or minor shifts. The SAMOAL questionnaire, comprising eleven subscales, made it possible to identify both general and differentiated changes in the sphere of self-actualisation. The changes are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of the SAMOAL questionnaire

Subscale	Before intervention (M)	After intervention (M)	Δ (delta)	Dynamics
Values	7.35 ± 3.74	8.12 ± 3.68	+0.77	↑ substantial
View of human nature	7.34 ± 3.81	7.99 ± 3.62	+0.65	↑ substantial
Self-compassion	6.85 ± 3.93	7.44 ± 3.71	+0.59	↑ substantial
Sociability	7.18 ± 3.69	7.70 ± 3.55	+0.52	↑ substantial
Self-understanding	5.46 ± 3.88	6.12 ± 3.73	+0.66	↑ moderate
Creative aspiration	6.94 ± 3.75	7.41 ± 3.66	+0.47	↑ moderate
High need for cognition	6.87 ± 3.82	7.36 ± 3.64	+0.49	↑ moderate
Autonomy	6.92 ± 3.59	6.95 ± 3.60	+0.03	→ stable
Communication flexibility	7.04 ± 3.35	7.10 ± 3.39	+0.06	→ stable
Time orientation	7.36 ± 3.77	7.40 ± 3.74	+0.04	→ stable
Spontaneity	6.82 ± 4.27	6.85 ± 4.34	+0.03	→ minimal shifts

Source: ccompiled by the author

The obtained data confirms that the programme has a targeted impact: the greatest increases were observed in areas related to humanistic values, self-acceptance, and social openness. In turn, temporal orientations, autonomy, and spontaneity remained relatively stable, which can be interpreted as core personality characteristics. Before the intervention, mean values ranged from 5.46 (“Self-understanding”) to 7.36 (“Time orientation”), with the greatest variability observed in “Spontaneity” (SD = 4.27) and the lowest in “Communication flexibility” (SD = 3.35). Medians largely coincided with means, reflecting a symmetrical distribution. Percentile analysis demonstrates considerable individual differences, notably for “High need for cognition” with an interquartile range of only 3.42, whereas “Time orientation” reached 9.48.

After the intervention, increases were observed in key domains: “Values” rose from 7.35 to 8.12, “View of human nature” from 7.34 to 7.99, “Self-compassion” from 6.85 to 7.44, and “Sociability” from 7.18 to 7.7. This indicates strengthened self-acceptance, social openness, and a humanistic orientation. In contrast, “Autonomy” and “Spontaneity” showed only minimal fluctuations, confirming their relative stability. Standard deviations remained within the range of 3.55-4.34, indicating that inter-individual differences persist. In the experimental group, positive dynamics are more pronounced. Mean values of “Values” increased to 8.32, “View of human nature” to 8.02, and “Self-understanding” from 5.34 to 6.12. The lower quartile of

“Self-understanding” rose from 2.34 to 3.16, and “Self-compassion” from 4.11 to 4.73, demonstrating the effect of the programme primarily among participants with the lowest initial scores.

According to the frustration level questionnaire, the mean score in the experimental group decreased from 48.91 to 33.22 points (N = 98; SD = 15.9 → 13.34), corresponding to high statistical significance: $t(97) = 13.407$; $p < 0.001$. The correlation between measurements ($r = 0.699$; $p < 0.001$) confirms the reliability of the scale, and the effect size (Cohen’s $d = 1.354$) indicates a strong programme impact on reducing frustration tension. Data from the Rosenzweig Picture-Frustration Test indicate uneven dynamics. The OD indicator (“Obstacle dominance”) decreased from 8.48 to 7.42, $t(97) = 4.144$; $p < 0.001$; Cohen’s $d = 0.419$, reflecting a moderate effect. Ego-defensive reactions (ED) remained stable (6.9 → 6.81; $p = 0.724$; Cohen’s $d = 0.036$). Meanwhile, the NP indicator (“Need-oriented persistence”) increased from 5.57 to 7.07, $t(97) = -4.385$; $p < 0.001$; Cohen’s $d = -0.443$. Thus, the intervention prompted a shift from a focus on obstacles to enhanced internal motivation and persistence.

The Bass-Darkie methodology indicated no statistically significant changes in most aggression subscales. Physical and verbal aggression, indirect forms, and indices of aggressiveness and hostility remained statistically stable ($p > 0.05$), with effects ranging from minimal to small (Cohen’s d within -0.254 ± 0.138). This suggests limited programme effectiveness in the

direct modification of aggressive behaviour. Within the SAMOAL questionnaire, the most pronounced increase occurred in the "Values" subscale (7.12 → 8.32; $t(97) = -2.451$; $p = 0.016$; Cohen's $d = -0.248$). Other subscales, including "View of human nature", "High need for cognition", and "Creative aspiration", showed positive, though statistically non-significant, trends. Consequently, the most notable changes occurred in value orientations, whereas the majority of other aspects of self-actualisation remained relatively stable. Overall, the t-test results indicate a significant impact of the programme on reducing frustration and fostering more constructive coping strategies. However, the effect on aggressive behaviour is limited, and the development of personal characteristics is selective, with dominant growth observed in the domain of values.

Correlation and regression analysis demonstrated substantial changes in the structure of relationships between self-actualisation, frustration, and aggressiveness after the implementation of the programme. Before its implementation, the subscale "Time orientation" exhibited a negative association with aggressiveness ($r = -0.225$; $p = 0.026$) and with self-understanding ($r = -0.297$; $p = 0.003$), indicating a reduction in aggressive behaviours among respondents with a stronger temporal perspective and capacity for self-reflection. Meanwhile, "Self-understanding" demonstrated a strong positive correlation with "Sense of guilt" ($r = 0.536$; $p < 0.001$), reflecting a combination of self-criticism and deep self-assessment. Following the programme, the correlation structure underwent changes. The subscale "Values" began to correlate negatively with verbal aggression ($r = -0.215$; $p = 0.033$), while "High need for cognition" correlated negatively with indirect aggression ($r = -0.239$; $p = 0.018$). These findings suggest that strengthening value orientations and cognitive interests reduced the need for external aggressive reactions and promoted the formation of more constructive behavioural strategies. Nevertheless, the close positive link between "Self-understanding" and "Sense of guilt" remained unchanged ($r = 0.525$; $p < 0.001$), confirming the stability of mechanisms of emotional reflection irrespective of the intervention.

The frustration level questionnaire recorded a decrease in the mean score from 48.91 to 33.22 points ($SD = 15.9 \rightarrow 13.34$; $t(97) = 13.407$; $p < 0.001$). The confidence interval for the difference between means was [13.362; 18.005], and the effect size corresponded to a large magnitude (Cohen's $d = 1.354$; Hedges' $g = 1.349$), indicating high reliability of the positive impact of the programme. The Rosenzweig Picture-Frustration Test showed uneven dynamics: the "Obstacle dominance" score decreased from 8.48 to 7.42 ($t(97) = 4.144$; $p < 0.001$; $d = 0.419$), whereas "Ego-defensiveness" remained unchanged ($6.9 \rightarrow 6.81$; $t(97) = 0.354$; $p = 0.724$; $d = 0.036$). The most pronounced change was observed in "Need-oriented persistence", which increased from

5.57 to 7.07 ($t(97) = -4.385$; $p < 0.001$; $d = -0.443$). The observed dynamics indicate a shift from externally oriented reactions (fixation on obstacles) towards more constructive internal strategies for overcoming difficulties.

The Bass-Darkie methodology (adaptation by A. Osnitsky) did not demonstrate statistically significant changes in most subscales. Physical aggression decreased from 1.66 to 1.44 points, but this difference was non-significant ($t(97) = 1.37$; $p = 0.174$). Similar results were observed for verbal aggression (4.98 → 4.92; $p = 0.593$), indirect aggression (4.97 → 4.81; $p = 0.168$), negativism (2.62 → 2.5; $p = 0.09$), and irritability (4.93 → 4.95; $p = 0.853$). Integral indices also remained practically unchanged: aggressiveness decreased from 3.87 to 3.72 ($p = 0.062$), and hostility from 4.48 to 4.47 ($p = 0.953$). The intervention effect according to Cohen's d ranged from -0.254 to +0.138, corresponding to a small or negligible magnitude of change. Results from the SAMOAL test indicated selective changes. In the "Values" subscale, the mean increased from 7.12 to 8.32 ($t(97) = -2.451$; $p = 0.016$; $d = -0.248$), whereas most other indicators, including autonomy, spontaneity, and communication flexibility, remained statistically unchanged. This confirms that the primary effect of the programme was the reinforcement of participants' value orientations while other components of self-actualisation remained relatively stable. Regression analysis showed limited explanatory power of the models. For "Self-understanding" ($R^2 = 0.121$), the only significant predictor was "Irritability" ($\beta = 0.237$; $p = 0.021$), whereas "Sense of guilt" showed only a trend-level effect ($\beta = -0.19$; $p = 0.065$). For "Self-Sympathy" ($R^2 = 0.061$) and "Creative aspiration" ($R^2 = 0.086$), the models were statistically non-significant ($p > 0.5$). Overall, the programme had a selective but pronounced effect: it substantially reduced frustration levels and diminished fixation on external obstacles, promoted increased persistence and the development of value-based behavioural regulation, whereas the level of aggressiveness remained relatively stable. This indicates a predominant impact of the intervention on the frustration-value sphere of personality while preserving basic patterns of aggressive behaviour.

Comparative experiment on the effectiveness of a programme for overcoming aggression in a frustrated personality

Observations indicate limited effectiveness of the autonomous format, manifested in a substantial number of clarifying questions arising from high self-criticism and anxiety, characteristic of the study group. Furthermore, a deficit in understanding of personal emotions and behavioural patterns complicates independent assimilation of the material. Group dynamics enabled participants to express emotions openly, practise assertive strategies, and adopt adaptive models of interaction, positively influencing their behaviour and emotional regulation.

During the process, participants' persistent beliefs regarding the exclusively destructive nature of aggression were identified, alongside the perception that its suppression contributes to heightened anxiety and internal conflicts (Gross, 1998). The application of cognitive challenging techniques enabled participants to question their own beliefs, separate them from identity, and develop new, adaptive attitudes towards aggression. Reframing exercises facilitated the transformation of aggression from a destructive force into a resource for self-realisation, enhancement of emotional flexibility, and development of constructive coping strategies. Participants learned to perceive aggression as neutral energy capable of supporting goal attainment and the protection of personal boundaries, contributing to a reduction in frustration levels and the development of more adaptive behavioural patterns.

At the initial stages of the programme, participants demonstrated increased sensitivity to failure and potential errors. This manifested in slowed progress in task completion, observable during the first week of sessions. Behavioural responses fell into two contrasting patterns: some participants began to isolate themselves and avoid activity, demonstrating a tendency towards withdrawal, while others exhibited heightened inquisitiveness combined with aggressive intonations, indicating latent anger. Such ambivalence of reactions is interpreted as a consequence of internal conflict associated with feelings of shame and guilt, which, according to the study, can block cognitive functions and reduce learning effectiveness.

During the implementation of the programme, humour was observed to function as an emotional defence. Participants frequently used jokes, puns, or even sarcastic remarks as a means of tension reduction. This aligns with classical psychoanalytic conceptions of humour as an anxiety-reducing mechanism (Freud), and with contemporary research highlighting its role in social adaptation (Saracoglu, 2019). Humour also served a unifying function, promoting group cohesion and creating an atmosphere conducive to safe emotional exchange. Despite considerable age differences among participants (ranging from 30 to 50 years), responses to humorous interventions were consistently positive, indicating similarity in cognitive and affective patterns. For this reason, the programme incorporated additional humorous elements to reduce tension, overcome age-related stereotypes, and foster an atmosphere of trust and openness.

Another challenge at the implementation stage of the programme was the participants' limited ability to recognise and describe their own emotions. Many experienced difficulties not only in naming emotions, but also in expressing them, with considerable suppression in some cases manifesting as dissociation. Such manifestations align with alexithymia, which impedes access to personal feelings, particularly among

individuals with a history of trauma (Luminet *et al.*, 2024). In response, a module focused on the development of emotional intelligence was incorporated, emphasising the ability to identify, understand, and manage emotional states.

Participants demonstrated difficulty in formulating and verbalising their own needs, reflecting a longstanding strategy of suppression. This deficit in self-knowledge correlates with alexithymia and interoceptive awareness problems (Sifneos, 1973). Aggressive behaviours were often observed to function as indicators of unmet needs, supporting the classical frustration-aggression theory, where aggression emerges as a consequence of goal obstruction. Respondents frequently attempted to satisfy their needs indirectly, through helping others with the expectation of reciprocity. Such strategies rarely yielded results: even when goals were achieved, the level of satisfaction remained low due to a cumulative "basket" of chronically unmet needs. This reinforced the view that learning to identify and articulate personal needs constitutes a fundamental step in reducing aggression. Additional sessions for individual case analysis were organised to support this process, overcoming barriers to self-expression. Within the extended emotional intelligence module, it became evident that a universal approach was insufficient for the heterogeneous group. Respondents refrained from critiquing the methods, but with strengthened group dynamics and a sense of safety, they began to express their needs openly. Repetition of exercises in varied formats facilitated the development of stable skills, integration of knowledge into daily experience, and the overcoming of cognitive barriers.

The gradual establishment of a trusting environment led to increased openness and a willingness among participants to acknowledge their own aggression. Initial avoidance of direct verbalisation was overcome through exercises focused on rewriting emotional triggers, resulting in emotional and cognitive disclosure. Group discussions enabled participants to recognise the universality of their experiences, which, according to I. Yalom & M. Leszcz (2020), constitutes a therapeutic factor in group dynamics. Awareness of shared experience represented a turning point, supporting acceptance of personal aggression as part of normal emotional life and creating conditions for its constructive transformation.

Management of aggression largely depended on participants' capacity to recognise and modify destructive cognitive patterns that provoke frustration and anger. For the target group, formed under conditions of deprivation and rigid social norms, there was a high likelihood of rigid, irrational beliefs that fuelled aggressive responses. Exercises enabled participants to become aware of automatic thoughts, analyse their validity, generate alternative explanations, and reduce tendencies towards catastrophising or impulsive

reactions. Regular application of cognitive strategies facilitated the development of more resilient thinking patterns and a shift from aggressive behaviour towards goal-directed activity.

Difficulties in seeking help were also identified, accompanied by feelings of isolation and mistrust towards others, stemming from prior experiences of emotionally immature relationships. These tendencies were expressed in two patterns: intropunitive, involving self-blame, and extrapunitive, involving the attribution of blame to others. To overcome these barriers, a module on developing skills for seeking support and utilising social resources was integrated, including identification of support networks, training in assertive help-seeking, practice in accepting assistance, and use of informational and social resources.

A limiting factor in the effectiveness of the programme was the participants' high anxiety, manifested in a tendency towards catastrophic predictions and "what if" questioning. Participants learned to structure potential obstacles, evaluate their probability and consequences, and formulate specific action plans according to the principle "if... then...". This approach transformed abstract anxious thoughts into realistic plans, reducing uncertainty and fostering the development of proactive coping strategies.

Work with participants demonstrated a strong need for clear, step-by-step instructions, reflecting low tolerance for uncertainty and a reliance on external guidance. This characteristic likely stems from previous life experiences dominated by dependence on external authorities. In response, an adapted guide, "Strategies for overcoming destructive aggression: Seven methods", was created, integrating cognitive-behavioural techniques, emotional self-regulation methods, and stress management strategies. Practical strategies included identification of triggers and underlying beliefs, application of deep-breathing and counting techniques to regulate physiological arousal, engagement in physical activity as a cathartic mechanism, participation in creative activities for emotional sublimation, development of social communication skills and reliance on social support, and access to professional intervention in cases of chronic aggression. This structured system addressed participants' demand for concrete tools while reducing aggressive impulses through the expansion of behavioural strategy repertoires.

Analysis of group dynamics indicated that some participants, particularly those occupying dominant roles in professional or family contexts, interpret aggression as the sole effective means of influence. This reflects entrenched behavioural scripts in which aggression functions as a means of control and achieving desired outcomes. Such an approach reveals cognitive rigidity and a deficit of constructive communication skills, complicating adaptive emotional regulation. Empirical data on high levels of indirect and verbal aggression

initially prompted the inclusion of empathy-building exercises in the programme; however, further analysis demonstrated that respondents already exhibited high empathy and a tendency towards altruism. They instead displayed difficulty asserting their own needs and excessive self-sacrifice, potentially exacerbating frustration responses. Empathy-focused modules were therefore replaced with components aimed at developing assertiveness, internal motivation, and constructive emotional expression. This adjustment accounted for the specific characteristics of frustrated personalities, for whom aggression manifested not as a lack of compassion but as a result of accumulated frustration and socially internalised behavioural models. Such adaptation enhanced programme effectiveness and channelled participants' aggressive energy towards constructive self-realisation.

During implementation, it was observed that purely cognitive techniques aimed at restructuring thought processes did not produce a sufficient effect. The creation of a safe group environment initially promoted openness, but early stages also elicited latent aggression and internal tension, which manifested indirectly, particularly through sarcasm, sometimes directed at the group facilitator. These behaviours gradually diminished over time. Cognitive-behavioural techniques were generally well received; however, hypnopractices elicited scepticism among some participants. For individuals with high openness to experience and imaginative thinking, these methods proved particularly effective, whereas more critical participants remained distant. Observations confirmed that even elements of group interaction, namely repetition of key phrases, emotional reinforcement, and support, contributed to the reduction of barriers and the emergence of new behavioural patterns. Although the program is designed for independent completion, with additional modules on emotional intelligence to support this, the author's observations indicate that the group format remains more effective, as participants who engaged in collective sessions showed better progress compared to those working individually. Flexible adaptation of the programme, combining cognitive techniques, body-oriented practices, hypnoprocedures, and social support, proved most effective in overcoming destructive aggression and facilitated profound changes in emotional regulation.

Discussion

Recent studies on frustration and aggression, conducted across diverse theoretical and methodological paradigms, gradually formed a comprehensive understanding of this complex psycho-emotional process. The scientific discourse demonstrated an evolution from classical frustration-aggression models towards integrative concepts incorporating motivational, emotional, cognitive, and social factors. All these approaches

highlight the multifaceted and deeply interconnected nature of emotional processes, motivational structures, and behavioural patterns, which underpin both the emergence and the regulation of aggressive tendencies. A. Kruglanski *et al.* (2023) proposed conceptualising aggression as a means of restoring a sense of significance, extending beyond the standard frustration-aggression model. Findings from the intervention programme support this perspective: high levels of fixation on obstacles and increased verbal aggression were interpreted as manifestations of a compensatory mechanism aimed at preserving subjective significance under conditions of limited resources and chronic stress. Concurrently, reductions in frustration were accompanied by substantial decreases in hostility, indicating a diminished need for aggression as a means of maintaining control. Comparison with the study by N. Din & M. Ahmad (2021) allowed for an explanation of observed dynamics in direct and indirect forms of aggression. The researchers emphasised that the capacity for emotional regulation serves a protective function, mitigating the impact of frustration on aggressive behaviour. Techniques applied in the programme, including mindfulness, breathing exercises, and body-oriented methods, created conditions for constructive emotional processing, thereby reducing the intensity of verbal and physical aggression. Indirect forms were partially retained, aligning with the notion of transforming aggressive energy into socially acceptable modes of expression.

Results also correspond with the findings of J. Dugré & S. Potvin (2023), who identified specific patterns of neural activation in the transition from frustration to aggression. The observed reduction in impulsive aggressive behaviours following programme participation can be interpreted as evidence that systematic application of cognitive-behavioural and emotion-focused techniques facilitates restructuring of cognitive appraisals, thereby reducing activation of mechanisms associated with uncontrolled affective responses. This suggests that the intervention impacts not only behavioural outcomes but also neuropsychological processes, promoting more stable patterns of responding to frustrating stimuli. M. Ellenberg *et al.* (2025) emphasised that aggressive behaviour arises not automatically in response to frustration, but only when the threat affects the individual's need for significance. In comparison with these findings, results from the aggression management programme indicate that cognitive reorientation and group dynamics reduce not only the intensity of frustration responses but also the need to compensate through aggression. Reductions in aggression occur even when participants' sense of significance remains under threat, indicating the possibility of learning alternative methods for restoring self-worth without resorting to aggressive behaviour. Therefore,

the findings extend the propositions of the Significance-Seeking Theory, demonstrating that systematic work on cognitive and emotional patterns diminishes the role of aggression as a tool for self-affirmation.

The study by C. Lagios *et al.* (2025) demonstrated the complexity of displaced aggression and its high relevance across various domains. The researchers concluded that mechanisms underlying this phenomenon remain insufficiently defined and proposed an integrated framework for its explanation. In comparison with these conclusions, results from the aggression management programme indicate that correction of cognitive attitudes and the development of emotional regulation skills reduce the likelihood of aggression being displaced onto secondary targets. Decreases in hostility and irritability among participants confirm that training in constructive response strategies under conditions of frustration mitigates the risk of redirecting negative emotions. The findings refine the propositions of C. Lagios *et al.*, demonstrating that targeted interventions could serve as an effective means of preventing displaced aggression in real-life interpersonal and professional contexts. In the dissertation by H. Yazdi (2025), frustration was conceptualised as a multidimensional phenomenon arising in response to various types of obstacles and manifesting through emotional, cognitive, and behavioural reactions. Several categories of triggers and affective dimensions were distinguished, alongside a typology of individual susceptibility to frustration. In alignment with these positions, results from the aggression management programme confirm that reductions in personal frustration were accompanied by qualitative changes in cognitive response strategies. Positive dynamics observed in the Rosenzweig test, reflected in an increased orientation toward solution-seeking rather than barrier-focused thinking, illustrate the practical application of H. Yazdi's ideas on the multidimensionality of this phenomenon. Correlational links identified between frustration and aggression emphasise that interventions targeting cognitive attitudes could reduce not only the subjective perception of obstacles but also the aggressive tendencies typically arising from them.

The study by K. Bertsch *et al.* (2021) established that anger, rather than other emotions, mediates the relationship between frustration and aggressive behaviour in women with borderline personality disorder. Comparison with results from the aggression management programme confirms the central role of anger in the development of aggressive responses, while demonstrating that its intensity could be regulated through targeted psychotherapeutic interventions. Reductions in verbal aggression and hostility, closely associated with overall decreases in frustration levels ($r = 0.62$; $r = -0.54$), indicate that control over the emotional sphere facilitates a decrease in aggressive tendencies. These results therefore refine the conclusions of K. Bertsch *et*

al., demonstrating the effectiveness of structured programmes in mitigating the role of anger as a principal mediator between frustration and aggression.

Comparative analysis allows for the generalisation that no single concept could fully explain the mechanisms linking frustration and aggression. Integration of findings from various approaches, however, enabled the outlining of prospects for the creation of comprehensive programmes for the prevention and correction of aggressive behaviour, incorporating cognitive strategies, emotional mediators, social support, and individual differences. A shared conclusion highlights the necessity of multi-level interventions combining cognitive-behavioural techniques, development of emotional self-regulation, use of group dynamics, and development of constructive motivational orientations. Collectively, these studies point towards greater individualisation of intervention programmes, extension of their duration, and integration of interdisciplinary approaches, opening new possibilities for the effective reduction of aggressive behaviours and the harmonisation of the psycho-emotional state of the individual.

Conclusions

The study demonstrated that the aggression management programme was largely effective, while also highlighting certain strengths and limitations in its outcomes. In particular, the importance of flexible integration of cognitive and affective techniques was confirmed, alongside the role of group dynamics as a factor facilitating deep transformation of behavioural and emotional patterns. Social interaction and support from fellow participants created conditions for vulnerability, acceptance of one's own feelings, and overcoming defensive mechanisms that impede change. Empirical data confirmed the effectiveness of the programme. Results from the frustration level questionnaire showed a reduction in the mean score from 48.45 to 37.63, and a median decrease from 50 to 38 ($N = 158$). A reduction in score dispersion, evidenced by a narrowing of the standard deviation from 16.67 to 15.21, along with changes in percentiles (the 25th percentile decreased from 36 to 25, the 75th from 63 to 48), indicated an overall reduction in personal frustration levels among the majority of respondents. Positive dynamics were also observed in the Rosenzweig test: participants focused less on barriers and more on seeking solutions and achieving goals, demonstrating increased adaptability in frustrating situations.

It was further identified that aggression levels measured by the Buss-Durkee Inventory decreased

not only in direct expressions (verbal and physical aggression) but also in indirect forms, such as irritability and hostility. Correlational analysis established a strong association between reductions in frustration and decreases in verbal aggression ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$), as well as between increased solution-orientation and reduced hostility ($r = -0.54$, $p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that modification of cognitive strategies in frustrating situations directly influences qualitative reductions in aggressive behaviours. Participants with higher initial levels of emotional instability exhibited the most pronounced changes, highlighting the importance of the programme for populations at high risk of aggressive tendencies.

An additional factor contributing to the success of the programme was the integration of emotional release techniques, including body-oriented practices and hypnotherapy, which allowed participants to process aggressive experiences cognitively, emotionally, and subconsciously. Although reception of these practices varied, their effectiveness was particularly notable for participants with high openness to experience and a propensity for imaginative thinking. This emphasises the necessity of individualising programmes and accounting for respondents' cognitive styles. Consequently, the outcomes of the programme confirm that overcoming aggressive tendencies requires a comprehensive approach combining cognitive-behavioural methods, emotional processing, cathartic techniques, and structured social interaction. Limitations of the study include group heterogeneity and the relatively short duration of the intervention, which did not allow for observation of long-term effects. Further programme development should involve extending its duration, expanding the emotional self-regulation module, and utilising extended group formats, thereby promoting deeper and more enduring restructuring of personal and behavioural patterns. Collectively, these factors support consideration of the programme as a promising tool in the field of psychological prevention and correction of aggressive behaviour.

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Conflict of Interest

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Теоретико-методологічні підходи до корекції агресивної поведінки у дорослих з фрустраційними проявами

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Анотація. Метою дослідження було виявити ефективність комплексної програми психологічної корекції агресивної поведінки у дорослих із вираженими фрустраційними проявами. Для цього застосовувалися психодіагностичні методики (авторський опитувальник рівня фрустрації, тест Rosenzweig, методика Buss-Durkey, самоактуалізаційний профіль особистості), за допомогою яких досліджували взаємозв'язки між рівнями фрустрації, агресії та самоактуалізації, а також оцінювали динаміку змін після корекційної програми. Результати показали значне зниження рівня особистісної фрустрації, що підтверджувалося зменшенням середніх значень, медіани та перцентилів. За тестом Rosenzweig спостерігався перехід від орієнтації на бар'єри до пошуку рішень, що свідчило про підвищення адаптивності у фрустраційних ситуаціях. Було зафіксоване зниження як прямих, так і непрямих форм агресії за методикою Buss-Durkey, включаючи дратівливість та ворожість. Кореляційний аналіз засвідчив тісний зв'язок між зменшенням фрустрації та зниженням вербальної агресії, а також між зростанням орієнтації на вирішення проблем і зменшенням ворожості. Найбільші позитивні зміни спостерігалися у респондентів із високим рівнем емоційної нестабільності на початку програми. Додаткову ефективність забезпечила інтеграція емоційно-тілесних і катартичних технік, які сприяли більш глибокому опрацюванню агресивних переживань. Груповий формат відіграв визначальну роль, оскільки саме підтримка й досвід інших учасників дозволили активізувати процес усвідомлення власних патернів поведінки. Узагальнюючи, було підтверджено, що програма корекції поєднувала когнітивні, емоційні та соціальні компоненти й виявилася ефективною для зниження рівня фрустрації та агресії. Практичне значення полягає у можливості використання розробленої програми як інструменту профілактики та корекції агресивної поведінки у дорослих у системі психологічної допомоги

Ключові слова: самоконтроль; когнітивно-емоційний підхід; дратівливість; емоційна саморегуляція; групова динаміка; корекційна програма