بيئة الطالب وعلاقتها باشكال العنف المدرسي

د. رياض شلتاغ الرديني	د. انتظار إبراهيم أسد العطار	الباحث النفسي عماد خزعل عيدان
دكتوراه في طب المجتمع/ المدير الوطني للرعاية النفسية الأولية/ دائرة الصحة العامة – وزارة الصحة العراقية	اختصاص طب أطفال/ مديرة وحدة الصحة النفسية/ قسم الصحة العامة/ دائرة صحة بغداد الكرخ/ وزارة الصحة العراقية	بكلوريوس في علم النفس/ شعبة الصحة النفسية/ دائرة الصحة العامة – وزارة الصحة العراقية

المستخلص:

المقدمـة: العنف يعني استخدام القوة البدنيـة أو السلطة ضد شخص آخر أو جماعة أو مجتمع، او التهديد بهما مما يسبب الضرر والاذى. العنف المدرسي مشكلة صحية عامـة واسعة النطاق، وهناك العديد من الأدلة على أن الاعتداء البدني والنفسي والجنسي آخذ في الازدياد بشكل كبير في جميع أنحاء العالم.

اهداف الدراسـة: هي تقدير سـعة انتشار ألاشكال المختلفة للعنف المدرسي بين طـلاب الابتدائية الذين يحضرون بانتظام للمدارس الحكومية في بغداد/ الرصافة وعلاقتها ببيئة الطلاب داخل البيت والمدرسة والمجتمع.

منهجية الدراسة: دراسة مقطعية لعينة عنقودية عشوائية مؤلفة من 1080 طالبا ومن كـلا الجنسين في المرحلة الابتدائيـة لصفوف الرابع والخامس والسادس في تسعة مدارس في ثلاث مديريات للتربية في بغداد/ الرصافة، وتم إعتماد نسخة أداة فحص إساءة معاملـة الأطفال (إيكاست-سي)، وتضمنت الاداة معلومات إضافية عن بيئة الطالب في المنزل والمدرسـة والمجتمـع وأنواع العنف التـي جـرى تحليلها هـي الاسـاءات الجسـدية والنفسية والجنسية. وتم ابلاغ جميع الطلبة بخصوصية وسرية المعلومات وطوعية المشاركة.

النتـائج: الاطفـال يتعرضـون الـى معدلات عاليـة مـن العنف النفسي (55%)، ومعدلات عاليـة مـن العنف الجسدي (48%)، و 6٪ مـن العنف ذو الطـابع الجنسـي، وان هـذه المعدلات ترتبط ببيئة الطالب في المدرسة والبيت والمجتمع حيث ان اغلب المدارس لتقوم بالتوعية للوقاية من العنف كما وان تقريبا نصف المدارس تخلو من ساحات لعب مناسبة وحدائق مدرسية ولاتهتم بدروس الرياضـة والرسم بشكل حقيقي، اكثر مـن نصف الطلبـة تعرضـوا الـى العنف داخـل المنزل، والـى مشـاهد ذات طـابع عنفي مـن خـلال التلفزيـون، واستخدام وسـائل لعب وألعاب عنفية. وان ثلـثهم لـديهم شـعور بعدم الطمانينة ومعرضـون للعنف خـارج المدرسـة، وخمس منهم لـديهم مشـاعر انعدام الأمـان والخوف، ومعرضين للعنف داخل المدرسة.

استنتاجات: هناك انتشـار واضـح للأشكال المختلفـة للعنف المدرسـي وانها مرتبطـة ببيئـة الاطفال المتمثلة في الأسرة والمدرسة والمجتمع والتي يجب اخذها بالحسبان عند وضع ايـة ستراتيجية للتقليل منه.

Students Environment and Its Relationship to Forms of School Violence Baghdad, 2017

Riyadh Al- Rudaini

National Director of Primary Mental Health/ NCDs Department, General Directorate of Public Health, MoH-Iraq. FICMS/ CM

intithar Ibrahim AL-atta

Pediatric Specialized Doctor ,Mental Health Unit/Department Of Public Health ,Baghdad Al_Karkh DOH_ Iraq

Emad E. Khazaal

Psychologist in Mental Health Section/ NCDs Department, General Directorate of Public Health, MoH- Iraq.

Abstract

Background: Violence means the use of physical force or power against another person, group, or community, with the behavior likely to cause harm. school violence is a broader public health problem, there is an evidence that physical, psychological and sexual abuse are increasing exponentially throughout the world. The study aims to estimate the various forms of school violence in the experience of students regularly attending public schools and their association to the students' environment.

Method: A cross-sectional study with a random sample group of 1080 children of both sexes in the selected 4th, 5th and 6th class from 9 public primary schools in 3 directorates of education, Baghdad/ Al-Rusafa. A self-assessment questionnaire was administered according to Child Abuse Screening Tool Version (ICAST-C) and

additional information for the child home, neighborhood and school environment. The types of violence analyzed were abuses of physical, psychological and sexual nature. All students were informed about the privacy, confidentiality and the voluntary nature of the study.

Results: Children were exposed to high prevalence (55%) of psychological violence, 48% of physical and 6% violence of a sexual nature. It was significantly correlated to their environment (school, family, and neighborhood), where the majority of schools had no awareness materials to prevent violence, with about half of schools had no a suitable playground, a school garden, a real article lesson, and a real sports lessons. More than half of the children exposed to violence inside the home, TV viewing of violent scenes, playing with violent games. A third of them felt insecure, vulnerable to violence outside school and fifth of them felt insecure, vulnerable to violence inside the school.

Conclusion: There was a high prevalence of various forms of violence related to school, family, and neighborhood environment of children, that taking into consideration when developing strategies to reduce it.

Keywords: Prevalence; Violence; school violence; Children; environment

Introduction

Child violence and abuse has received increasing attention over the past decades for its great social importance. [1] The prevalence of various types of violence against children remains largely unknown in Iraq, there is an evidence that physical, psychological and sexual abuse are increasing exponentially and social groups composed of children and adolescents are identified as having the greatest risk of violence and abuse. [1] The World Health Organization (WHO) describes the violence as 'any act or omission that harms the well-being, the physical, psychological integrity, or the freedom and the right of full development' of children and adolescents. [2]

The main concerns when evaluating children and adolescents subjected to violence are the immediate consequences, usually translated by an increased level of anxiety, depression, poor school performance and the possible emergence of aggressive reactions. In addition to the significant late effects of violence on the child's health development (physically, socially, and mentally). An adverse environment in the childhood stage may be the cause of biological abnormalities in adulthood and is proven to be associated with an increased risk of heart disease, metabolic and autoimmune diseases, strokes and even dementia. [3, 4]

Despite the exposure to extremely violent episodes may be relatively low in childhood, maltreatment by parents, classmates or the social environment that the child inhabits, or even the repeated observation by the child of aggressive and violent behavior among

spouses, violence in the neighborhood, at school or in the community, can have cumulative effect, both immediate and future, on the physical and mental health of the child.[5] This observation, supporting the conclusion that violence is present in everyday life of children and adolescents.

A form of violence to which school students are often exposed is the aggressive behavior among students known as bullying. It is characterized by repeated and intentional acts of oppression, humiliation, discrimination, tyranny, aggression, and domination of people or a group of other people or groups. This behavior can be considered an important risk factor for the future adoption of more serious violent behaviors, both by the offender as the victim. [6]
An even more serious aspect of violence against children and adolescents that is gradually taking epidemic proportions is sexual abuse. [7] There is no comprehensive data at national level covering the prevalence of these events, which is, however, considered high.

The present study aimed to estimate, by means of the questionnaire ICAST-C [8], the prevalence of violent events in the experience of students aged between 10 and 14 years, regularly attending public schools in the Al- Rusafa Baghdad city and their association to students' environment.

Methodology:

This is a cross-sectional study with random sample group of children in 9 public primary schools that selected randomly from 3

directorates of education in Baghdad/ Al-Rusafa and from each selected school three classes were randomly chosen, one 4th grade and the other 5th and 6th. The interviewed students were informed about the privacy, confidentiality and the voluntary nature of the study. The total number of participants was 1080 students of both sexes. This community is predominantly made up of low-income populations and characterized by strong social inequality.

Data were collected during the period 1st March to 30th April 2017. A self-assessment questionnaire was administered according to Child Abuse Screening Tool Version (ICAST-C) [8] and additional information for the child home, neighborhood and school environment. This questionnaire has been translated into several languages, including Arabic, has been internationally validated and used in 40 countries and allows the anonymous self-report of the exposure to different forms of violence, whether at home, by the hands of parents, relatives or caregivers, or at school.[2, 9]

After the extensive explanation about the importance of the questions, the anonymity of responses and the importance of its complete filling, the questionnaire were distributed to children who read and responded it without demonstrating difficulties in understanding the issues.

Data were organized from the calculation of sample size, considering the calculations of percentages and inferential statistical techniques. The inferential techniques used were the chi-square test

and logistic regression analysis, both considering the significance level of $P<0.05$. The development of the study met national and international standards of ethics in research involving human beings.

Results

Of 1080 students; only 993 completed the questionnaire well, the response rate 92%. Where 526 of participants were boys (53%) and the mean age among them was 13 years; among the 467 girls (47%), the mean age was 12 years. Of all students, 735 students (74%) lived with both parents, 258 (26%) lived with one parent (either separated parents or dead one of them).

For home, neighborhood and school environment of students: Among the studied children, 418 (42.1%) reported they felt unsafe outside school, 212 (21.4%) felt unsafe at school, 497 (50.1%) exposed to violence at home, 337 (33.9%) exposed to violence outside the home, 606 (61%) watch violent television shows, and 724 (72.9%) play violent video games.

The percentage of schools that has a suitable playground allows movement and play was 52.1%, these contained a real school garden was 24.3%, and a real article lesson was 56%, sports lessons was 51.2%,

while these that used awareness materials to prevent violence was 14.9%. (Table 1)

Table 1: School environment of student		
Variable	**n. (993)**	**%**
Violent style in education	337	33.9
Present a suitable playground allows movement and play	517	52.1
Present a real school garden	241	24.3
Present a real article lesson	556	56.0
Present a real sport lesson	508	51.2
Present of awareness materials to prevent violence	148	14.9

The prevalence of psychological violence (ridicule, verbal abuse, theft of private property, humiliation, blame, threats, discrimination, punishment, and threatened for getting bad grades) was the most frequently detected, with 55% from colleagues, 36% from teachers. Physical violence (kicking, beating with hands, kicks, slapping, pulled the ear), also showed a high incidence in these students reaching 48% from colleagues, 23% from teachers. In the case of sexual violence (verbal sexual harassment, touched the body in a sexual way or in a way that made the child uncomfortable), the prevalence was lower if compared to others reaching 6% from colleagues, 1.3% from teachers. (Tables 2)

Table 2: Distribution of violence types in the studied sample		
Variable	**n. (993)**	**%**
Psychological violence by colleagues	546	55.0
Psychological violence by teachers	357	36.0
Physical violence by colleagues	476	48.0
Physical violence by teachers	228	23.0
Sexual violence by colleagues	60	6.0
Sexual violence by teachers	13	1.3

For all type of violence (physical, psychological and sexual), when related to age and gender, there was no significant correlation between age and a greater degree of violence (P=0.275). While different conclusion can be inferred for gender, i.e., according to the study data, the boys were the significant correlation with greater degree of violence (P=0.001).

The home environment was reflected in the school environment and the state of violence in it. The level of child-parent education was significantly related to the levels of school violence. Children of the least parent education were more likely to be subjected to school violence than the children of the highest education parent (P=0.001). Violence inside the home was significantly correlated with violence in school (P=0.001), also the children that viewing TV violent scenes and play violent games were significantly correlated to the levels of school violence (P=0.001). (Table 3)

Table 3: Distribution of home environment by school violence					
Variable	**Category**	**School violence n. %**	**Total n. %**	X^2	*P-value*
Father education	None or primary school	223 (89.6)	249 (25.0)	375.7	0.001
	Intermediate or secondary	214 (49.0)	437 (44.0)		
	College or post graduate	81 (26.4)	307 (31.0)		
Mother education	None or primary school	231 (93.1)	248 (25.0)	539.8	0.001
	Intermediate or secondary	210 (46.5)	497 (50.0)		
	College or post graduate	77 (31.0)	248 (25.0)		
Violence inside home	Yes	479 (96.4)	497 (50.0)	843.1	0,001
	No	21 (4.2)	496 (50.0)		
TV. violent viewing	Yes	360 (59.4)	606 (61.0)	48.74	0.001
	No	142 (36.6)	387 (39.0)		
Violent game	Yes	201 (65.3)	308 (31.0)	30.68	0.001
	No	317 (46.3)	685 (69.0)		

The school environment is an important factor for influence the behavior of students in school. The use of violent methods by teachers in education is significantly correlated to the levels of school violence (P=0.001). The absence of sufficient spaces that allow for playing and movement of students, the absence of gardens within schools and absence of art and sports lessons were significantly correlated to school violence (P=0.001). The lack of attention to the dissemination of awareness material against violence in inside the classes and corridors of the school was significant increases the incidence of violence (P=0.001). (Table 4)

Table 4: Distribution of school environment by school violence					
Variable	**category**	**School violence n. %**	**Total n. %**	X^2	*P-value*
Violent style in education	Yes	247(73.3)	337(33.9)	91.26	0,001
	No	271(41.3)	656(66.1)		
Playground	Yes	210(40.5)	518(52.0)	23.09	0.001
	No	265(55.8)	475(48.0)		
School garden	Yes	94(39.0)	241(24.2)	22.09	0.001
	No	424(56.4)	752(75.8)		
Art lesson	Yes	186(33.4)	556(56.0)	28.83	0.001
	No	332(76.0)	437(44.0)		
Sport lesson	Yes	153(30.1)	508(51.1)	202.6	0.001
	No	365(75.2)	485(48.9)		
Awareness material	Yes	45(30.4)	148(14.9)	17.134	0.001
	No	473(65.0)	845(85.1)		

Discussion

The results obtained that school children are exposed to a lot of challenges and show an exceptionally serious situation, both in relation to the current situation as regards the development of these children already affected by an underprivileged socioeconomic environment.

Where a high percentage (52%) suffered some form of physical abuse, 55% suffered psychological and emotional pressures with consequences to their own image, nearly quarter of studied children felt unsafe at school and nearly half of them felt unsafe at school and 6% exposed to some form of sexual abuse, which is extremely serious, given the deleterious effects that such violence can have on the development of the individual. The late effects of sexual violence can generate a sense of powerlessness and lack of control over the environment in future adults, and the ways of overcoming this situation vary between genders. [10, 11]

A survey conducted in the United States in 2006 found that about 80 thousand American children have suffered sexual abuse; this number becomes even more impressive taking into account that retrospective studies in adults found that only 1 in 20 cases of sexual abuse is identified or reported to authority [7].

The home and school environment are considered very important in the issue of school violence; it was directly affecting child behavior. At home, the majority of students exposed to

domestic violence; played with violent games and TV viewing of violent scenes that all encouraged violence behavior. Half of the students are exposed to the wrong methods by the teachers in the education means, half of the schools do not have playgrounds and gardens and do not give importance to the sports and articles lessons or disseminated awareness materials for violence. All these things are working to reduce levels of violence within schools.

A recent research carried out on a sample population in the United States showed that on   a regular basis, 86% of young people watch violent television shows, 65% play violent video games, 43% see simulated violence on television or the internet, and 15% observe actual violence on the internet. [12]

With the results, we can infer that the prevalence of various forms of violence was high in the environment of these children; and that purely repressive measures, although necessary, do not solve the problem. In the short term, it is not possible to change a social system that usually coexists with violence. More studies are needed to establish preventive measures and concomitantly establish ways to help these children deal with this serious problem. [10, 11]

The limitations of the results refer mainly to the analysis of self-reported data; the reliability of information is limited by the ability of participants to remember the violent events, and by their willingness to disclose these events. Additionally, the random selection of participants was made only with the children attending

school at the time of the interview, not taking into account the absenteeism or the school dropout, which by themselves could be related to the factor under study.

Conclusion

There was a considerable degree of prevalence of violence (physical, psychological, sexual) experienced by children aged between 10 and 14 years, with psychological and physical violence as the most prevalent. Student's environment has significant affected the prevalence of various forms of school violence that taking into consideration when developing strategies to reduce it.

Recommendation

1- Protecting children is not the responsibility of a single agency or a governmental institution, all governmental and private institutions in addition to the parent and whole community should collaborate to protect children environment.

2- Implementation and enforcement of laws including activate Iraqi laws that concern the child, expedite the adoption of the Child Protection Act, develop child protection institutions, and prohibiting violent discipline.

3- A wide-ranging action to raise community awareness about effects of violence on the development, health and safety of the

child and community participation via community leaders, teachers, policemen, judges, and NGOs for violence advocacy.

4- Education and life skills: such as providing life training and other social skills, as well as parent and caregiver support: e.g. providing formation for parents of young people, first-time parents and economic strengthening.

5- Response and support services: e.g. guaranteeing children who have been exposed to violence, adequate access to emergency care and to psycho-social services.

6- Initiate educational programs and training courses for school teachers, to raise knowledge and skills in detection, assessment, reporting, and prevention of violence.

References

1. Schwartz KA, Preer G, McKeag H, Newton AW. Child maltreatment: a review of key literature in 2013. Curr Opin Pediatr. 2014; 26(3):396-404.

2. World Health Organization (WHO). The world health report 2000 - Health systems improving performance [Internet]. Genebra: WHO; 2000. Available from: http://www.who.int/whr/2000/en.

3. Miller GE, Chen E, Parker KJ. Psychological stress in childhood and susceptibility to the chronic diseases of aging: moving

toward a model of behavioral and biological mechanisms. Psychol Bull. 2011; 137(6):959-997.

4. Shonkoff JP. Leveraging the biology of adversity to address the roots of disparities in health and development. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A. 2012; 109(Suppl 2):17302-17307.

5. Boxer P, Sloan-Power E. Coping with violence: comprehensive framework and implications for understanding resilience. Trauma Violence Abuse. 2013; 14(3):929-937.

6. Shitgirl R, Lin H, Avila RM, Flores G. Parental characteristics associated with bullying perpetration in US children aged 10 to 17 years. Am J Public Health. 2012; 102(12):2280-2286.

7. Hornor G. Child sexual abuse: consequences and implications. J Pediatr Health Care. 2010; 24(6):358-364.

8. Runyan DK, Dunne MP, Zolotor AJ. Introduction to the development of the ISPCAN child abuse screening tools. Child Abuse Negl. 2009; 33(11):842-845.

9. Zolotor AJ, Runyan DK, Dunne MP, Jain D, Péturs HR, Ramirez C, et al. ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tool Children's Version (ICAST-C): Instrument development and multi-national pilot testing. Child Abuse Negl. 2009; 33:833-841.

10. JM Chandy, RW Blum, MD Resnick. Gender-specific outcomes for sexually abused adolescents. Child Abuse Negl. 1996; 20:1219-1231.

11. Dube SR, Anda RF, Whitfield CL, Brown DW, Felitti VJ, Dong M, et al. Long-term consequences of childhood sexual abuse by gender of the victim. Am J Prev Med. 2005; 28: 430-438.

12. Ybarra ML, Mitchell KJ, Korchmaros JD. National trends in exposure to and experiences of violence on the Internet among children. Pediatrics. 2011: 128(6): e1376-1386.