

## Assessment of Types of Violence among Adolescents

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### المستخلص

**الهدف:** تقييم أنواع العنف بين المراهقين في مدينة بغداد. دراسة وصفية استعمل فيها أسلوب التقييم أجريت على عينة عرضية مكونة من ٦٠ من والدي المراهقين لمعرفة أنواع العنف المراهقين في أسرهم. تم اختيارهم على وفق معايير محددة أعدت لإشراكهم في برنامج تثقيف صحي تجاه السيطرة على العنف المراهقين في مدينة بغداد. **المنهجية:** تم بناء الاستمارة الاستبائية لأغراض الدراسة مكونة من جزئين؛ الجزء الأول يتضمن الخصائص الديموغرافية للوالدين مثل (الجنس، العمر، المستوى التعليمي، الحالة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية) والجزء الثاني يتضمن أنواع العنف المراهقين المسجلة لدى الوالدين. جمعت المعلومات من خلال تقنية مقابلة الوالدين في البيوت والمراكز الصحية والمدارس خلال المدة من ١ تشرين الثاني ٢٠٠٨ إلى ٣١ كانون الأول لعام ٢٠٠٨. **النتائج:** استعمل في تحليل البيانات أسلوب الإحصاء التحليلي الوصفي (التكرارات والنسب المئوية). أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن أغلب المراهقين لديهم عنف جسدي ونفسي بينما لا يوجد عنف جنسي. استنتجت الدراسة أن العنف المراهقين مشكلة لأنها وبلا ريب تؤثر على صحة المراهقين وأسرهم. **التوصيات:** أوصت الدراسة على ضرورة إجراء دراسات وتصميم برامج لتنفيذها على الوالدين والمراهقين معاً لتسوية النزاعات واستعمال أسلوب حل المشكلات وكيفية منع عوامل الخطورة المساهمة في عنف المراهقين.

### Abstract

**Objective(s):** To assess the types of violence among adolescents in Baghdad City.

A descriptive study which was using the assessment approach was conducted on purposive sample of 60 parents of adolescent for identify types of adolescents violence in their families, was selected according to specific criteria for participating in health education program towards adolescents' violence control in Baghdad city.

**Methodology:** A questionnaire was constructed for the purpose of the study. It was consisted of two parts; the first part which included the parents' demographic characteristics for parents (sex, age, educational level and socio-economic status); the second part included types of adolescent violence that reported by parents. Data were collected through the interview technique with the parents in the homes, health care centers, and school, from November, 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 to December, 31<sup>st</sup> 2008. Data were analyzed through use of descriptive analysis (Frequencies and percentages).

**Results:** The results of the study indicated that the majority of adolescents had physical and psychological violence. So, there was no sexual violence. The study concluded that adolescents' violence is a problem, because it was definitely impacted on health of adolescents and their families.

**Recommendations:** The study recommends that studies and programs can be designed and implemented on the parents and adolescents or together for resolve conflicts, problem-solving approaches and how to prevent risk factors which contribute in adolescents' violence.

**Keywords:** Types of Violence, Adolescents



## Introduction

Violence and human abuse are not new phenomena, but they have increasingly become community health concerns <sup>(1)</sup>. It caused by a complex web of interconnected factors including religious, moral, ethical, social, political, cultural differences <sup>(2-3)</sup>. It is a major cause of injury and death among adolescents <sup>(2,4)</sup>.

Adolescent is a person whose age is from onset of pre puberty (approximately age of 11 years) to end of adolescence (approximately age of 21 years) <sup>(5)</sup>.

Center of Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that each year, violence causes more than 1.6 million deaths worldwide, prevention efforts required the collaboration of many partners and the orchestration of efforts across the global <sup>(6)</sup>.

Parents must protect their children from injury, violence, abuse and neglect. It is important that parents model healthy behaviors for their children <sup>(7)</sup>. There is a critical need for a sound research based for public policy related to violence control <sup>(8)</sup>.

Community health nurses (CHNs) must play a key role in prevention, early detection and promote intervention <sup>(3)</sup>. The nations' young are increasingly affected by violence both its perpetrators and its victims <sup>(9)</sup>. World Health Statistics Reports increasing in injuries and violence by 2030 <sup>(10)</sup>.

CDC states that young violence is a serious problem that can have lasting harmful effects on victims and their families, friends and communities <sup>(11)</sup>. As well as, Report of the Surgeon Youth Violence reports that scientific research is an essential underpinning of the public health approach to the problem of youth violence <sup>(12)</sup>.

## Methodology:

Design of the study: A descriptive approach is carried out to achieve the purpose of the study.

Setting of the study: The study is conducted on parents who are interviewed at homes, health care centers and schools.

Sample of the study: A purposive "non-probability" sample of 60 parents (fathers or mothers) who have violent adolescents in their families, those of 11 to 20 years old, fathers and mothers and live in Baghdad city.

Data collection: The data were collected through interview with the parents by using a questionnaire which was constructed by the researchers for the purpose of the study, includes:

1. Parents' demographic characteristics of sex, age, level of education and socio-economic status.
2. Types of violence among adolescents which was reported by parents.
  - 2.1. Psychological violence that included any verbal or behavioral actions that diminish an others' self-worth and self-esteem.
  - 2.2. Physical violence that included any physical injury or aggravated assault (slapping, beating).
  - 2.3- Sexual abuse for girls or boys.
  - 2.4- Homicide threats of adolescents to others,
  - 2.5. Any suicidal thoughts among adolescents.

The data collection started from November, 1st 2008 through December, 31st 2008. The scale for measuring socio-economic status of the family indicated by Tiwari and Kumar <sup>(13)</sup>.

Statistical data analysis: Appropriate statistical approach is used that includes frequencies and percentages to describe the distribution of demographic characteristics of parents and their adolescents' violence according to the types of violence.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the parents' demographic characteristics

List	Type of Violence	n = 147 Adolescents			
		Boys	Girls	Total	
		No.	No.	Frequency	Percent
1.	Psychological Violence	88	50	138	93.87
2.	Physical Violence	88	57	145	98.63
3.	Sexual Violence	—	—	—	—
4.	Homicide Threat	2	—	2	1.36
5.	Suicidal Thought	2	3	5	3.40

No.=Number

This table indicates that almost more than half of the sample is males (51.67 %). Most of them are aged 40-44 years old (35%). Large number of the sample is intermediate school

graduate (28.33 %).The socio-economic status is accounted as moderate (53.33 %) for more than half of the sample.

**Table 2.** Distribution of adolescents according to type of violence

List	Demographic characteristics	Sample (60)	
		Frequency	Percent
1.	Patient's sex		
	Male	31	51.67
	Female	29	48.33
2.	Parents' age (years)		
	35-39	9	15
	40-44	21	35
	45-49	17	28.33
	50-54	7	11.67
	55 and over	6	10
3.	Parents' education		
	Illiterate	4	6.67
	Able to read and write	4	6.67
	Primary school graduate	9	15.0
	Intermediate school graduate	17	28.33
	Secondary school graduate	8	13.33
	Institute graduate	8	13.33
	College graduate and above	10	16.67
4.	Parents' socioeconomic status		
	Low	18	30.0
	Moderate	32	53.33
	High	10	16.67

This table indicates that the most of adolescents have physical violence (98.63 %). Most of them have psychological violence (93.87 %). Only two cases of boys have

violence of homicide threat and suicidal thoughts are accounted for adolescents' girl (three cases only).

## Discussion of the Results:

### Part 1: Discussion of the parents' Demographic characteristics

Related to the age of parents' distribution, most of the sample is at age 40–44 years (Table1). Such age of parents is evidenced in this fashion as fact that no parents have adolescent kids with age younger than the present one.

Concerning the educational level, large number of parents are intermediate school graduate results out of this data analysis are supported by Youssef and others who states that a significant trend is observed between the level of the father's education and mother's education and violent behavior among children<sup>(14)</sup>.

With regard to the socio–economic status, this character is accounted for more than half of the sample as moderate level. Such result supported by the studies which determines that the violence occurred in every community, regardless of race, socio-economic levels, educational levels, ages. In other words, no population are unaffected by domestic violence<sup>(4,15)</sup>.

### Part 2: Discussion of adolescents' distribution according to type of violence

The study findings demonstrate that there are various types of adolescents' violence (Table 2). Majority of the adolescents in the study have physical violence.

Such results are supported by Youssef and others indicates that physical fighting is a common form of interpersonal violence among adolescents and a permanent of injury and homicide are in this group<sup>(14)</sup>. Moreover, CDC reports that males are more likely to be involved in a physical fight than females<sup>(16)</sup>.

Related to psychological violence, most of the adolescents have psychological violence too. This results supported by Porter indicates that emotional abuse is a component of all forms of abuse, when it exists alone it can be difficult to identify and even more difficult to validate for the purpose of reporting<sup>(4)</sup>.

The result out of the study discovers that no sexual violence has been reported. Such finding is supported by Cottschalk who states that the sexual abuse hidden behind closed doors at homes and neighborhoods<sup>(17)</sup>.

Concerning the homicide threat by adolescents, only two cases in the present study. The results agree with that of Word Report on Violence and Health which reports that young violence (involving people between the age of 10 and 29 years) including a range of aggressive acts from bullying and physical fighting, to more serious forms of assault and homicide<sup>(18)</sup>.

Relative to suicidal thoughts of adolescents that report by parents, the result indicates that the highest rate of suicidal thoughts is accounted for girls. Such trend is supported by several studies reports that women on average, have more suicidal thoughts than men<sup>(3,18)</sup>.

### Recommendations

1- Further studies can be carried out on the adolescents for how to prevent risk factors that contribute to adolescent' violence.

2-Program can be designed and implemented on the parents and adolescents or together with their parents for how to resolve conflicts, to use problem solving approaches and to promote effective communication skills.



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