



PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE AMONG A SAMPLE OF ADOLESCENTS ATTENDING PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTERES IN AL-HILLA CITY

Ahmed Abdulhassan Mohsen*

Muna Fadhil Abbas**

*Postgraduate student / Collage of Health and Medical technology-Baghdad

Ahmedabdulhassan84@gmail.com

**Assist. Prof/ Community medicine , Collage of Health and Medical Technology

Abstract

Background: adolescents represent substantial majority in all societies around the world, adolescence is the period which is witnessing a lot of changes on the physical, emotional and social level. To understand how these changes affect on the adolescents and identify health problems and behaviors that lead to these problems in the future and helps to develop a new generation free from physical, psychological and social diseases, by finding the best ways to reduce and deal with them .

Objective: a cross – sectional study was conducted , to determined the prevalence of violence and its association with demographical characteristics of Adolescents who attending the Primary health care centers in AL-Hillah City .

Methods : the study include the adolescents patients with the age 10-19 years from both sex, who attending the Primary health care centers in AL-Hillah City . And complete all questions of the questionnaire, the data has been collected from the 15th of March to 15th of August 2016.

Results : The overall study sample was 461 patients, which include 250 male and 211 female .The results of the present study showed that the highest percentage of adolescents were obtaining the primary education (35.4%), in addition to that the socio-economic situation for the most studied sample was in the moderate income category(51.6%). The prevalence of the adolescents within the studied sample who was exposed to various types of violence was(39.3%) , including physical (12.4%), emotional(24.1%) and sexual (2.8%) violence. The percentage of adolescents who are within the age group of 15-19 years more vulnerable to violence (26.5%) from the adolescents within the 10-14 years age group (12.8%). The percentage of exposure to violence was higher among male than female (22.6%,16.7%).

Conclusion : Almost forty percent of adolescents within the studied sample were exposed to various types of violence, including physical, emotional and sexual violence.

Recommendation: Providing all the health care centers with experts in the field of mental health to help adolescent understand the psychological changes that occur in this period, also for the treatment of psychological conditions resulting from the exposure to violence and teach them the right way to deal with this situation.

Key words : Adolescent , violence , socio-demographic characteristic .

Introduction

Adolescence is an important period in the human life, its definition varies from country to another. An individual's who aged from 11 to 21 years considered adolescent according to The American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, while the World Health Organization (WHO) give a wider range of age to describe this period of life, from 10 to 19 years[1] . Also there is another literatures defined adolescents as the Individuals between the ages of 13 to 19[2]. Adolescents represent a large and important majority in all societies around the world. Globally there are more than 1.2 billion adolescents living in different countries, which are approximately represents 30% of the world's population with the rang of



age between of 10 and 24 years[1]. Three-quarters of them are living in the developing countries[3].

Violence can be defined as extreme force behavior by individual against individual which cause physical or psychological harm, There are conflicting views on whether the concept of violence is limited to physical harm or includes verbal, emotional and psychological harm. Exposure to violence is considered one of the risk factor for physical injury and it may be have a bad influence on mental health, that people who witness different situations of violence or are victims of painful events may be accompanied by a range of serious negative consequences on a person such as anxiety disorder and post-traumatic stress (PTSD) [4], in addition to depression, as local and international studies have shown. adolescents who seem to have psychological symptoms as a result of exposure to various types of violence, they more likely to show a weakness in the academic performance and behavior disorders which have good effects on their lives in the future[5,6].

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) it is estimated that, annually, more than one million individuals lose their life as consequence of violence, mostly related to accidents or suicide with more impact in young ages [7]. Globally, Adolescent's violent behavior is represent very important and a major public health problem [8]. According to a study occur on adolescence with age group (12-24) years, which preformed to find the incidence of deferent type of violence, That was as follows emotional abuse was (15.6%), physical abuse in male compared to female (7.5% , 19.5%), also the emotional abuse was 16.2 in male, 14.8% in female, while the sexual abuse have no clear differences in their prevalence rate depending on the gender criteria (2.0% 1.8%,) [9].

Subject and method

This study was a cross – sectional study included patient at age from 10- 19 years for both gender which included (461) patient . In this study the sample size has been calculated according to this formula $n = \frac{NZ^2P(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + Z^2P(1-N)}$, where (*n*)is sample size ,(*Z*) is level of confidence for 95% is taken as (1.96) ,(*N*)is Population Size for both sector , (*P*) is expected proportion of prevalence health problems in adolescent from previous study is taken as(0.50) , *d* is precision is taken as (0.05). considering the dropout rate as 20% for increased precision in the sample , the sample size was 480 and 19 patient rejected interview complete , which become total sample (461) is calculated as minimum for sample selection from population[10] .This study was conduct from the 15th of March to 15th of August 2016. Systematic random sampling method was used to select the patients from primary health care centers. The data collection was by direct interview (face-to-face), and diagnosis of doctors in primary health care centers .

Results

Table (1) indicates that (28.6%) of the Adolescent sample that have been studied are within the age group (10-14 years), and (71.4%) of them in the age group (15-19), The study also showed that (54.2%) are males and (45.7%) are female, as well as the marital status was (69.4%) single, (26.7%) married and (0.9%) Widowed, (3.0%) divorced respectively, also The results of educational level for the Adolescent sample that have been studied as follows uneducated, (12.1%) can read and write (11.5%), those with primary education (35.4%), those with intermediate education (25.4%), those with secondary education (12.4%) and Adolescent with university or higher education(3.3%) respectively.



Table (1) :Distribution of study sample according to age, gender, martial stat and educational level .

Variables		(F) N=461	(%)	Cum. (%)
Age group	10-14	132	28.6	28.6
	15-19	329	71.4	100.0
Mean \pm SD	15.84 \pm 2.653			
Gender	male	250	54.2	54.3
	female	211	45.8	100.0
married status	single	320	69.4	69.4
	married	123	26.7	97.2
	Widower	4	0.9	98.0
	Divorced	14	3.0	100.0
Educational level	Illiteracy	56	12.1	12.1
	Read and write	53	11.5	23.6
	primary	163	35.4	59
	Intermediate	117	25.4	84.4
	Secondary	57	12.4	96.7
	University or higher	15	3.3	100

Table (2) The adolescents who experienced different type of violence in this survey were(39%) of the total sample studied, it appeared that the highest percentage of those who exposed to emotional violence (24.1%), followed by exposure to physical violence (10.8%) and sexual violence (2.8%) . While, the rate of adolescence who exposed to violence within the home was (19.7%), followed by exposure to violence in the school(13.4%) and finally exposure to violence in other places(5.9%).



Table (2):- The Percentage of violence, type of violence, and place of exposure of the studied sample of adolescents.

Variable		Frequency (F)	Percent (%)	Cum. %
Violence	Non exposed	280	60.7	61.0
	Exposed	181	39.3	100
Total		461	100	
Type violence	Physical violence	57	12.4	71.8
	Emotional violence	111	24.1	97.2
	Sexual violence	13	2.8	100
Total		180	39	
place of exposed	House	91	19.7	50.6
	School	62	13.4	85.0
	Other place	27	5.9	100
Total		180	39	

Table(3) The table shows that percentage of adolescents who are within the age group of 15-19 years more vulnerable to violence (26.5%) from the adolescents within the 10-14 years age group (12.8%). While adolescents within the younger age are more likely to exposed to physical violence (16.6%) from the older adolescents (14.9%), and on the contrary, the emotional and sexual violence were more common among older adolescents (45.9%, 6.6%) if it compared with the percentages of younger adolescents. The percentages of violence household was close between the two age categories (23.9%, 26.7%), while the percentage well be higher among older adolescents who are exposed to violence in schools and other places (28.3%,12.2%). No significant variation between age group were found for violence $p < 0.05$ but it was highly significant for type of violence and place of exposed at $p < 0.05$.



Table (3): The percentages Distribution of the violence, the type of violence and place of exposure by age group for the studied sample.

Variable			Age group		Total	P value
			10-14	15-19		
Violence	non exposed	No	73	207	280	0.130
		%	15.8	44.9	60.7	
	exposed	No	59	122	181	
		%	12.8	26.5	39.3	
Type Violence	Physical violence	No	30	27	57	0.0001*
		%	16.6	14.9	31.5	
	Emotional violence	No	28	83	111	
		%	15.5	45.9	61.3	
	sexual violence	No	1	12	13	
		%	0.6	6.6	7.2	
place of exposed	House	No	43	48	91	0.0001*
		%	23.9	26.7	50.6	
	School	No	11	51	62	
		%	6.1	28.3	34.4	
	Other place	No	5	22	27	
		%	2.8	12.2	15.0	

Table (4) reveal that the percentage of exposed to violence was higher among male than female (22.6%,16.7%). Also male were more exposed to physical violence and emotional violence (19.3%,34.8%)if it was compared with female (12.2%,26.5%), while the percentage of sexual violence was close between male and female (3.3%, 3.9%). Male were more exposed to violence in both house and school(32.2%, 18.9%), while female was more exposed to violence in other places(8.3%). No significant variation between gender were found for each of the following violence, type of violence and place of exposure at $p < 0.05$.



Table (4): The percentages Distribution of the violence, the type of violence and place of exposure by gender for the studied sample.

Variable			Gender		Total	P value
			male	female		
Violence	non exposed	No	146	134	280	0.263
		%	31.7	29.1	60.7	
	exposed	No	104	77	181	
		%	22.6	16.7	39.3	
Type Violence	Physical violence	No	35	22	57	0.587
		%	19.3	12.2	31.5	
	emotional violence	No	63	48	111	
		%	34.8	26.5	61.3	
	sexual violence	No	6	7	13	
		%	3.3	3.9	7.2	
place of exposed	House	No	58	33	91	0.173
		%	32.2	18.3	50.6	
	School	No	34	28	62	
		%	18.9	15.6	34.4	
	Other place	No	12	15	27	
		%	6.7	8.3	15	

Discussion

The size of the sample studied was 461 adolescent, which divided into two age groups 10-14 and 15-19, according to World Health Organization standards [11], the sample distribution ratio within the age group 10-14 years of age was (28.6%), while the ratio within the 15-19 age group was (71.4%), the study samples was composed from (54.2%) male and (45.8%) females as shown in table (1). This percentage was approximate to studies done in other provinces in Iraq, including the proportions of a study conducted in the province of Mosul in 2006 it was (54.6%) and (46.8%) while the percentage was (50.1%) and (49.9) in the study conducted in Dohuk province in 2008 for males and females respectively. [12,13] this variation in rates is due to the nature of the studied sample. The study also showed the marital status of adolescents, where the proportion of married couples was (26.7%) and unmarried was (69.4%), this values represent the highest percentages that found in the marital status classifications that adopted in this study as revealed in table (1).

Several reviews occur in Iraq give deferent values to the marital status, one of them preformed in 2011 revealed that the percent of married individual from 15 years and above was 61.8% [14]. Iraqi society encourages early marriages and so out of the concept that

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Email: biomgzn.sci@uokufa.edu.iq



marriage protects young people from deviation and the formation of forbidden relationships unacceptable in the society, so The percentage of marital status may vary from place to place and from year to year, depending on the prevailing tradition in the community as well as economic and social factors Which plays an important role in the delay or encourage early marriages[14]. As for the level of education of adolescents it was as follows, according to ascending order (3.3%, 11.5%,12.1%, 12.4%, 25.4% and 35.4%) university, read and write, illiteracy, intermediate, secondary and primary respectively as shown in table (1).

Overall, the proportion of adolescents who have been exposed to violence is (39.3%), including (12.4%) were physical violence, (24.1%) have been subjected to emotional violence and (2.8%) have been subjected to sexual violence. The highest percentage of adolescents who have been exposed to violence within the home(19.7%) as listed in table (2). These results are higher than reported in the study [15], that included various types of violence. Based on our results it was appear that exposure to violence increase with age (12.8% in 10-14, 26.5% in 15-19), physical violence more common among younger adolescent(16.6%), while emotional and sexual violence were more common among older adolescent (45.9%, 6.6%) The percentages of violence household was close between the two age categories (23.9%, 26.7%), while the percentage well be higher among older adolescents who are exposed to violence in schools and other places (28.3%,12.2%). No significant variation between age group were found for violence at $p < 0.05$ but it was highly significant for type of violence and place of exposure as listed in table (3). The study of [15,16], were agreement in some aspect with our study. male appear to be more exposed to violence than female (22.6%,16.7%). Also male were more exposed to physical violence and emotional violence (19.3%,34.8%) if it was compared with female (12.2%,26.5%), while the percentage of sexual violence was close between male and female (3.3%, 3.9%). Male were more exposed to violence in both house and school(32.2%, 18.9%), while female was more exposed to violence in other places(8.3%). No significant variation between gender were found for each of the following violence, type of violence and place of exposure as listed in table (4). Our result was agreement and contrast in some aspect with the study of [15], the result physical and sexual violence was agreement with our study, while the result of emotional violence was higher among female than male (16.2% vs14.8%).

The Conservatives nature of Iraqi society which imposes certain restrictions on movement of the girls out of the house and the way treat them with others as well as the shame of the answer clearly and openly to such questions may cause inaccuracies in the data. As well as males have a broader movement and mobility and to deal with an area they are more susceptible to various types of violence in the home, school which may be result from weak economic situation of the parents and the negligence of children.

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