

Barriers that Prevent Teachers from Reporting Suspected Cases of Child Maltreatment in Elementary Schools at Mosul City / Iraq

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ABSTRACT

Objective: the study aim to identifying the barriers that prevent teachers from reporting suspected cases of child maltreatment in elementary schools at Mosul city.

Methodology: A descriptive study design was chosen to fulfill the objectives of this research which was conducted in sixty elementary schools inside of Mosul city/Iraq during the period from 1 October 2019 till 30 May 2020. The study sample consists of (60) elementary schools teachers was selected by non-probability (Purposive) sample from (60) schools inside Mosul city. The questionnaire data was filled by the teachers in a face-to-face direct interview. Statistical processing was conducted by the use of version 25 SPSS statistical package.

الخلاصة:

الهدف: تهدف الدراسة إلى تحديد العوائق التي تمنع المعلمين من الإبلاغ عن الحالات المشتبه فيها لسوء معاملة الأطفال في المدارس الابتدائية لمدينة الموصل.

المنهجية: تم اختيار تصميم دراسة وصفية لتحقيق أهداف هذا البحث الذي أجري في ستين مدرسة ابتدائية داخل مدينة الموصل / العراق خلال الفترة من 1 تشرين الأول 2019 حتى 30 أيار 2020. تكونت عينة الدراسة من (60) معلم مدرسة ابتدائية تم اختيارهم بشكل عينة غير احتمالية (هادفة) من (60) مدرسة داخل مدينة الموصل. تم ملء بيانات الاستبيان من قبل المعلمين في مقابلة مباشرة وجهاً لوجه. تم إجراء المعالجة الإحصائية باستخدام الإصدار 25 من الحزمة الإحصائية SPSS.

النتائج: أظهرت النتائج عوائق المشاركين في الإبلاغ عن الحالات المشتبه فيها لسوء معاملة الأطفال في المدارس. سجل "عدم رغبة المعلمين في التدخل" (55.0%) من عينة الدراسة بينما كانت أكثر المعوقات شيوعاً هي نقص المعرفة والتدريب على سوء معاملة الطفل حيث سجل (76.7%) من عينة الدراسة.

الاستنتاجات: الحاجة إلى تعزيز معرفة المعلمين لأن العائق الأكثر شيوعاً للإبلاغ عن سوء معاملة الطفل هو نقص المعرفة والتدريب.

التوصيات: يوصي الباحثون بتصميم وتنفيذ برامج تعليمية مختلفة للمعلمين تتعلق بسوء معاملة الأطفال لتعزيز صحة الطفل ونموه.

الكلمات المفتاحية: سوء معاملة الطفل ، المعلمين ، الحواجز.

Results: The results showed participants' barriers to reporting suspected cases of child maltreatment in schools. (55.0%) of the study sample stated, 'Unwillingness to intervene by the teachers'. The most common barriers are lack of knowledge and training on child maltreatment by (76.7) of the study sample.

Conclusion: Need for enhancing teacher's knowledge because the most common barrier to report child maltreatment is lack of knowledge and training.

Recommendation: The researchers recommend design and implement different educational programs for teachers' concerning child maltreatment to promote child health and development.

Keywords: Child Maltreatment, Teachers, Barriers.

INTRODUCTION

Child maltreatment is a major problem with immediate and long term consequences prolonging from childhood to adulthood depending on the type of maltreatment these consequences may effect on health, social, economic, and the child quality of life (1, 2).

Child maltreatment is a global issue affecting all children of different ages, gender, race, ethnicity in a variety of socio and economic states and is at the forefront of widespread social issues (3). Every year more than three million cases of child maltreatment are reports in the United States., every 10 seconds report of child maltreatment is made, and every day more than 5 children die as a result of child maltreatment (4).

The size of the child maltreatment problem was not recognized because there were no accurate statistics on the incidence or prevalence of child maltreatment, poor identification and reporting lead to a decrease in the services for the children and their families (5).

Child maltreatment happens in various forms such as physical, neglect, emotional and sexual maltreatment (6). Kenny., 2004 found underreporting cases of child abuse and neglect are linked with less educated and lack of knowledge concerning the recognition of child maltreatment and how to report between teachers (7). In addition, Goldman, (2007) found that teachers were unsure of their ability to identify any kind of child maltreatment (8). Furthermore, (Goebbels et al., 2008) mentioned that teachers internationally have a shortage of self-confidence and skills to accurately detect suspected cases of child maltreatment (9).

AIMS OF THE STUDY

Identify the barriers that prevent teachers from reporting suspected cases of child maltreatment in elementary schools at Mosul city.

METHODOLOGY

- **Design of the study:** A descriptive study design was chosen to fulfill the objectives of this research which was conducted in sixteen elementary schools inside of Mosul city/Iraq during the period from 1st October 2019 till 30th May 2020.
- **Sample of the study:** Non-probability (Purposive) sample chosen for the current study & the sample consisted of (60) teachers working in the selected elementary schools from the right and left side of Mosul city, (30) teachers from each side of the city & one teachers from each school selected.
- **Study Instrument:** The study instrument was prepared by the investigators after reviewing related literature and books that focus on the topic of the study.
A structured-questionnaire was constructed based on a conceptual framework that divides into 2 major parts:
The first part concerns the socio-demographic data of the teachers such as age, gender, marital status, educational level, years of employment.
The second part includes questions about barriers that prevent teachers from report suspected cases of child maltreatment in elementary schools and consist of (7) causes items with answer by (Yes or No).
- **Validity of the study:** The investigator consulted local (12) scientific experts in different specialties related to the field of the present study to decide whether or not the enlisted questions are appropriate to be retained, dropped or reformatted.
- **Reliability of the study:** A pilot study was carried out on a group of (10) teachers who was excluded from the study samples.
- **Method of data collection :** Prior to the collection of data, a formal administrative approval to conduct this study was obtained from Nineveh General Education directorate and also agreement obtained from

each teachers through direct interviews and informed that their participation is voluntary

and the data will be treated confidentially and used for the study purposes only.

RESULTS

Table (1): Distribution of elementary school teachers according to their socio-demographical variables (n = 60).

Socio-demographical Characteristics	Total (n = 60)	
Variables	F	%
Age(Years)		
(25-30)	2	3.3
(31-35)	12	20.0
(36-40)	11	18.3
(41-45)	13	21.7
(46-50)	6	10.0
(51 and more)	16	26.7
Gender		
Male	30	50.0
Female	30	50.0
Marital status		
Single	4	6.7
Married	50	83.3
Widowed	6	10.0
Educational levels		
Secondary school graduate	9	15.0
Institute	20	33.3
University	31	51.7
Years of employment		
1-5 Years	3	5.0
6-10 Years	8	13.3
11-15 Years	27	45.0
16-20 Years	9	15.0
21-25 Years	5	8.3
26 Years and more	8	13.3

F: Frequency, %: Percent

Table 1 shows that the highest percentage of the sample (26.7%) at age (51 and more) and the equal gender between male and female (50%). Regarding marital status 83.3% of the sample are married. approximately (50.0%) of the samples are having university degree certificate. (45.0 %) of the sample at (11-15) years of general employments period.

Table (2): Distribution of Elementary School Teachers According to Barriers that Prevent from Reporting Suspected Cases of Child Maltreatment in the Schools

Barriers	Answers	Total (n = 60)	
		F	%
Unwillingness to intervene by the teachers	YES	33	55.0

	NO	27	45.0
Lack of knowledge and training on this subject	YES	46	76.7
	NO	14	23.3
It is not the responsibility of teachers	YES	14	23.3
	NO	46	76.7
Fear for the student of the consequences of reporting	YES	15	25.0
	NO	45	75.0
Teacher's fear of clans pursuits	YES	30	50
	NO	30	50
Normal behavior by parents in raising children	YES	14	23.3
	NO	46	76.7
Religious or social beliefs	YES	13	21.7
	NO	47	78.3

F: Frequency, %: Percent

Table 2 shows the participants' barriers to reporting suspected cases of child maltreatment in schools. (55.0%) of the study sample stated, 'Unwillingness to intervene by the teachers'. The most common barriers are lack of knowledge and training on child maltreatment by (76.7) of the study sample.

DISCUSSION

After data collection and analysis the findings displayed that the age group between (51 and more) have highest percentage of the sample (26.7%), while the age group between (25 - 30) have lowest percentage of the sample (3.3%), This present study results agrees with Dhahir and Mohammed study (2020) ⁽¹⁰⁾. Regarding the teachers gender. The results showed gender equality, This finding is similar to many study such as study Dhahir and Mohammed (2020) in Mosul city where the study showed equivalence of both males and females in the study samples (10) and with study done by (Salih,2015) in Kirkuk city ⁽¹¹⁾. The present study, point out (83.3%) of studied samples were married and this finding is similar to the finding of (Salih, 2015) (82%) in Kirkuk city (10) and (Saja and Fatima, 2019) (78%) in Najaf City ⁽¹²⁾. Table (1) demonstrates that about (51 %) of the study sample having a university degree certificate .This result agree with (Abd EL-Aziz etal, 2018) that they found (80%) of teachers have university degree certificates ⁽¹³⁾. Also consistent with a study conducted in India that they found (46.6%) of teachers have university degree certificate ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Table (1) also show that (45%) of the total samples were having years of employment ranged between (11-15 years) this finding consistent with (Dhahir and Mohammed, 2020) that they finding (35.0%) of teachers having work experience in teaching ranged between (11-15) ⁽¹⁰⁾.

Table (2) shows the participants' barriers to reporting suspected cases of child maltreatment in schools. (55.0%) of the study sample stated, 'Unwillingness to intervene by the teachers'. The most common barriers are lack of knowledge and training on child maltreatment by (76.7) of the study sample.

This result agrees with (1, 9, 15, 16 and 17) all these researches explain the reasons teachers fail to report child maltreatment they found that teachers who are not reporting their suspicions tend to have limited knowledge and self-confidence regarding reporting procedures. They also tend to lack knowledge about the signs and symptoms of various types maltreatment.

"It is not the responsibility of teachers" was reported by (23.3%) of the study and this result agrees with the study of (Kenny, 2001) ⁽¹⁸⁾ and (Elarousy et al, 2018) ⁽¹⁹⁾.

"Fear for the student of the consequences of reporting " was reported by (25 %) of the study and agree with the study done by (Bazon & Faleiros., 2013) their findings indicated that (33%) of teachers report "Fear of consequences for the child" ⁽²⁰⁾. in addition with the study done by (Elarousy et al, 2018) their findings indicated that (32.60 %) of teachers report "I'm afraid from consequences on the children" ⁽¹⁹⁾.

Regarding the teacher's fear of clans pursuits (50%) of the study sample was reported that the teacher's fear of clans pursuits. This result disagrees with the study that findings (8.10 %) of teachers report "I'm afraid of consequences on me" ⁽¹⁹⁾. regarding the question of "normal parenting behavior in raising children" (23.3%) of the study sample reported yes. This result agree with study of (Elarousy et al, 2018) their findings that (18.60 %) of

teachers report "It's normal for parents to abuse their children" ⁽¹⁹⁾. regarding the question "Religious or social beliefs" (21.7%) of the study reported yes. This finding gives us another evidence for the need of training and public awareness for child maltreatment and its preventions.

CONCLUSION

Need for enhancing teacher's knowledge because the most common barrier to report child maltreatment is lack of knowledge and training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Further training on child maltreatment might increase knowledge in detecting and reporting suspected cases of child maltreatment and such training should be made mandatory.

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