

Parental abuse and its relationship to the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan

Omar Soud AlKhamaiseh^{a*}, Al-Balqa Applied Universit, Salt, and 00962, Jordan <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2914-6647>

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify Parental abuse and its relationship to the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan. The study has used the descriptive-analytical approach. The population of the study consisted of a random sample from (390) adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan. The results showed that the degree of Parental Abuse of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan was moderated. Furthermore, the degree of ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan was moderated as well. The results also showed that there is a correlation relationship between parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan. The study recommended the need to combat violence and all forms of abuse and treatment of children through the various media, develop teaching methods, and include in school curricula the rights that children should enjoy.

Keywords: Parental abuse; Ethical Conduct; Adolescents, Jordan.

* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Omar Soud AlKhamaiseh, Al-Balqa Applied Universit, Salt, and 00962, Jordan
E-mail address: dr-omarsoud@bau.edu.jo

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a critical period for developing social and emotional habits that contribute to long-term psychological well-being (Ahn, 2011). This includes following healthy sleep patterns, getting regular exercise, developing coping skills, problem-solving, interpersonal skills, and learning to manage emotions. Supportive environments within the family, school, and broader community are also important. Archer (2014) states that, it is estimated that 10 to 20% of adolescents globally suffer from mental health conditions from parental abuse. However, the level of diagnosis and treatment of these disorders remains low (Jung et al., 2017).

Child abuse is the abuse and neglect suffered by children under the age of 18. This phenomenon includes all forms of physical, sexual abuse, neglect and disparagement, and other types of exploitation (Zeanah & Humphreys, 2018). Child abuse causes actual or potential harm to a child's health and threatens his survival. Violence by an intimate partner is included in the list of forms of child abuse (Schols et al., 2013).

According to Bywaters et al. (2016), child abuse has long-term consequences. This phenomenon causes stress that hinders brain development in the early stages. Extreme stress can also hamper the development of the nervous and immune systems (Young & Widom, 2014). As a result, children who have suffered abuse have an increased risk of developing behavioural, physical and psychological health problems as they grow up.

Physical child abuse by a parent is not necessarily intended to hurt the child, but the injury may result from severe discipline or unjustifiable physical punishment at a scale exceeding the age and condition of the child (Fortson et al., 2016). These parents believe that the form of punishment accorded is a way of disciplining their children so that they will learn good manners and become admirable role models in society. However, normally, when parents are overly aggressive towards a child, the result is counterproductive and the child lives in continuous fear. Additionally, the abuse that teenagers experience affect mainly ethical conduct (Romero-Martínez et al., 2016).

The ethical behaviour of children and adolescents has always been important, as no society, family, or particular social group can thrive if its members do not have the basic moral qualities necessary for interaction (Van der Graaff et al., 2018). (Hassan & Hatab, 2021) believe that Human ethics promote the well-being, prosperity and independence of each individual and the world in which they all live.

The development of ethical conduct is of particular importance in the life of an adolescent, as it is related to his self-interest and his relationships with those around him. The social education of the child is inseparable from his ethical education because ethics are the individual's way of dealing with people in social life (Khuziakmetov et al., 2015). Hiriscau, Stingelin-Giles et al., (2016) mentioned that the ethical behaviour of the adolescent aims to provide him with the prevailing values in society that help him in the proper adaptation to the social and physical environment, and acceptance of others and their appreciation during work and play. Ethical values also help the teenager balance between his sense of dependence and his sense of independence. While he learns to make decisions appropriate to his age, he also learns to share and cooperate with others and understand alternative means to obtain demands (Modi et al., 2014).

In some cases, when adolescents are emotionally anxious, they face improper treatment by parents, which increases their anxiety and emotional distress, and makes them feel hopeless and frustrated at the possibility of finding someone to rely on to relieve their emotional turmoil (Hiriscau et al., 2014). Emotional instability naturally limits a teenager's ability to make healthy and decisive

decisions in his affairs, so that he is bewildered and hesitant in dealing with things. Some psychologists have described this period of life as a period of "contradictory tendencies," sometimes noting "soft emotional" feelings, and in others "violent hostility" (Micklesfield et al., 2014). The adolescent at this age is excited by a love of knowledge and a strong desire to decipher mysteries and learn their secrets. However, it is naturally characterized in some cases by indifference and indifference to matters as well (Romero-Martínez et al., 2016).

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. The next section reviews the pertinent literature and summarizes the studies on parental abuse and ethical conduct. The study then discusses the method used for collecting and analysing data. The findings of the study are then presented. The paper will be concluded with a discussion of the results, the study's limitations, and suggested directions for future research.

This article tries to find answers to the following questions:

Question 1: 'What is the degree of Parental Abuse of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan?'

Question 2: 'What is the degree of ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan?'

Question 3: Is there a correlation relationship between parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan?'

1. Theoretical Framework and Related Research

1.1 Parental Abuse

Child abuse in all its forms (physical, verbal, emotional, psychological and even sexual) is one of the most prominent global problems that all societies suffer from. In addition, Child abuse is considered as one of the most dangerous phenomena that continue to exacerbate and grow so great that it seems impossible to control it (Afifi, MacMillan et al., 2016). Studies have confirmed that one of the most dangerous and painful forms of child abuse is the one that comes from The way parents deal with children, as parents are the main pillars in building the child's personality and enhancing his self-confidence (Kleinman, 2015). Whereas the methods of treatment that parents follow in dealing with their children are among the most important factors that affect the child's psychological, physical and emotional well-being (Nemeroff, 2016).

Child abuse is a widespread phenomenon in all social classes, countries and continents, and it is considered very dangerous not only because it violates international and humanitarian conventions, but also because of the harmful effects it causes that affect the physical and psychological health of children and adolescents (Afifi et al., 2016). Child abuse includes all forms of physical or emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, disregard, commercial or other types of exploitation. Child abuse causes suffering for children and can have long-term consequences as it can cause stress that impedes brain development and affects the nervous and immune systems. As a result, children who have suffered from Parental abuse have an increased risk of developing behavioural, physical and psychological health problems during adolescence, such as depression, smoking, drug addiction, and obesity (Wright, 2017).

Child abuse is caused by a complex combination of individual, family and social factors; being alone, poor, or having problems related to substance abuse, alcohol abuse, or psychological problems (such as a personality disorder or low self-esteem) can lead the parents to be more inclined to abuse their

children. Although physical and emotional abuse of children is associated with poverty and the inferior socio-economic status of parents, all types of abuse, including sexual abuse, occur in all societies and all social levels (Bywaters et al., 2016).

Parental Abuse types

Identifying the types of parental abuse comes with several difficulties, which include the change in the criteria used to define those basic patterns of abuse, and also the different legal, governmental and research definitions of child abuse. There are four main types of abuse that research often focuses on, which are physical abuse, Psycho-emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. These types differ from each other, but they often occur together, and one pattern may be the beginning of another pattern of abuse (Turner, 2020).

- **Physical abuse:** Physical abuse is an action that a parent commits to cause physical harm, including hitting with the hand or with any other tool, kicking, throwing, burning, biting, or pulling hair, or exposing the child to dangerous situations that harm him physically, such as the cold Or starvation, or forcing children to do strenuous work. Physical abuse directly affects the personality of the child, reduces his self-confidence, and creates a withdrawn, introverted personality disturbed socially and behaviorally (Ruiz-Casares et al., 2019).
- **Psycho-emotional abuse:** Psycho-emotional abuse can be defined as a behavioural pattern that negatively affects a child's emotional development and mental health. Psycho-emotional abuse goes beyond mere verbal abuse and is a sweeping attack on the emotional and social development of a child, reduces his self-confidence and destroys his personality (Cui-ping, 2017).
- **Neglect:** It is that type of abuse that expresses the parents 'failure to provide care that is proportional to the child's age, or the inability to secure his basic needs, such as housing, clothing, food, education, guidance, medical care, good supervision and supervision, and other basic needs Necessary to develop the child's physical, mental and emotional capabilities (Fortson et al., 2016). Neglect is represented in leaving the child alone and for long periods because of travel, work, or leaving the house as a result of marital and discouraging children or not caring for them (Levey et al., 2017). Neglect is also considered one of the most important psychological pressures on the child. whereas Failure to satisfy his needs of security, stability, love and acceptance and prevent him from practising various hobbies increases the child's feeling of insecurity and loneliness, which causes hostile behaviour and rebellion, and also the inability to express feelings and deal with others (Widom et al., 2015).
- **Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse is one of the tragic problems that affect children and adolescents, regardless of their age. Sexual abuse can be defined as any sexual act or attempt to perform a sexual act or unwanted sexual comments or caresses (Wright et al., 2017).

1.2 Teens Ethical Conduct

Adolescence is a stage of discovery in the first place, where the teenager discovers the world around him from a new perspective, coinciding with the major physical and psychological changes that he is exposed to, as the teenager is affected by many factors that affect his social and moral behavior (Farooq et al., 2018). The internal environment in which the teenager lives and the relationship between the family members directly affect his personality, as the teenager who lives in a calm and loving family environment grows smoothly away from and deviation, unlike the teenager who lives in a family environment full of problems, screams and insults (White, Cooley, 2018).

Teens Ethical Conduct is closely related to the family environment in which he lives, where the presence of some positive factors, such as cooperation, understanding and mutual respect among family members helps to achieve the teenager moral and emotional balance (O'Connell & Fricke, 2018). In this case, the personality of the teenager is characterized by calm, emotional and psychological balance, social and positive relationships with others, and self-confidence, and realizing his great value in society (Mézerville López, 2019).

On the other hand, several factors negatively affect the Teens Ethical Conduct, such as parents' ignorance of proper parenting methods, frequent family problems and disputes between the parents, lack of trust and respect between family members, absence of parental control, the poor economic situation of the family, and the general moral deterioration of society (Crone & Steinbeis, 2017). Where the above-mentioned factors help to encourage Teens to practice many negative behaviours and ethics, such as isolation, drug use, bullying, lack of respect for others and unjustified anger Staying away from friends and relatives, shyness, and excessive anxiety about any potential danger.

The teenagers are not ready to accept the prevailing moral concepts without discussion, as was the case in childhood, so the teenager's tries to develop their moral system based on the moral principles that were formed during childhood after modifying them, to suit their level of maturity. Where the teenager discovers that there is a great contradiction in some ethics, especially between the words and the actions of the parents, which causes him a kind of psychological disorder (Pfeifer & Berkman, 2018).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Research Method

The current research is based on the quantitative approach as it fits the purpose of the study. A quantitative approach is concerned with the gathering and examination of information in numeric shape from the chosen sample.

Model of the study



Figure 1. Model of the study

Study Participants

The population of the study consisted of a random sample from (390) adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan, as it is classified into its demographic characteristics in the tables below:

Table (1): Demographic characteristics for the study sample (Gender)

| Gender | Sample | |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage |
| Male | 154 | 40.4 |
| Female | 227 | 59.6 |
| Total | 381 | 100% |

Table (1) shows that the males' per cent in the Sample was (40.4%) meanwhile it was for females (59.6%).

Table (2): Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (Educational Level)

| Educational Level | Sample | |
|-------------------|------------|---------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage % |
| Eighth grade | 146 | 38.3 |
| Ninth grade | 108 | 28.3 |
| Tenth grade | 28 | 7.4 |
| First secondary | 99 | 26.0 |
| Total | 381 | 100.0% |

For the variable (Educational Level) it seems that the (Eighth grade) rank achieved (38.3 %) and (Ninth grade) rank achieved (28.3 %) and (Tenth grade) rank achieved (7.4 %) and (First secondary) rank achieved (26.0 %).

The Research Instrument

The instrument contains (25) items measuring parental abuse and its relationship to the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan.

The questionnaire contains (2) demographic variables and (25) questions represent study variables as the following:

Parental Abuse: it is formulated into benchmarks or objectives to reach, into (3) fields with a total of (15) questions:

- **Verbal abuse:** contains (5) questions.
- **Physical abuse:** contains (5) questions.
- **Emotional Abuse:** contains (5) questions.

Ethical Conduct: it is formulated into benchmarks with a total of (10) questions:

Data Analysis and Interpretation

To examine the hypotheses to examine parental abuse and its relationship to the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) will be in data analysis:

1. **Reliability Test**
2. **Frequencies and percentages**
3. **Descriptive Statistical Techniques**
4. **Pearson Correlations Coefficients**
 - So it is divided into three stages as (1.33 is the length of each stage):
 - High: For means (1-2.33)
 - Moderate: For means (2.34-3.67)
 - Low: For means (3.68-5)

Validity of the instruments

The test gave to experts to judge the extent to which the test is valid and reliable. For this reason, the test would be designed to meet such requirements of the validity of the test. To explore parental abuse and its relationship to the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan, experts will be chosen according to their broad experiences in the field.

Tool reliability

To reach a degree of reliability of the test, the researcher used to test and retest to a different group of students. The test and retest had the same characteristics, to compare if the students achieve stability.

Table (3): Cronbach's alpha for the study fields

| Field number | Field | Value of (α) |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Verbal abuse | 0.977 |
| 2 | Physical abuse | 0.980 |
| 3 | Emotional Abuse | 0.992 |
| Parental Abuse | | |
| 1 | Ethical Conduct | 0.871 |

the table above shows that the total Cronbach's alpha For the study fields was above (0.60) which will lead to the stability of the results for this study

Study Results

To analyse the data and answer questions, to explore the parental abuse and its relationship to the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan, tests performed used as shown as follow:

Question 1: 'What is the degree of Parental Abuse of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan?'

Table (4) shows the results for Means and standard deviation:

Table (4): Descriptive Statistics for parental Abuse of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan

| field number | Field | Mean | Std. Deviation | Level |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------|----------------|----------|
| F1-1 | Verbal abuse | 2.93 | 1.12 | Moderate |
| F1-2 | Physical abuse | 2.98 | 1.08 | Moderate |
| F1-3 | Emotional Abuse | 2.46 | 0.60 | Moderate |
| Parental Abuse | | 2.79 | 1.07 | Moderate |

As seen from the above table the Verbal abuse field achieved a mean (2.93) and a standard deviation (1.12), and Physical abuse field achieved a mean (2.98) and a standard deviation (1.08), and the Emotional Abuse field achieved a mean (2.46), and a standard deviation (0.60) so parental Abuse variables achieved a mean (2.79), and a standard deviation (1.07).

Verbal abuse

Table (5) shows the results for Means and standard deviation:

Table (5): Descriptive Statistics for verbal abuse

| Question number | Question | Mean | Std. Deviation | Rank |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|------|----------------|------|
| 1 | Threatening me of bodily harm | 2.93 | 1.48 | 3 |
| 2 | Insult me in ugly terms publicly | 3.10 | 1.59 | 1 |
| 3 | They frequently yell at me | 2.98 | 1.52 | 2 |
| 4 | Make fun of me | 2.91 | 1.45 | 4 |
| 5 | Called me inappropriate names | 2.71 | 1.38 | 5 |
| Verbal abuse | | 2.93 | 1.12 | |

The table above shows that the total mean for Verbal abuse was (2.93), the standard deviation (1.12), the question (2) "Insult me in ugly terms public." ranked first with a mean (3.10) and standard deviation (1.59) where the question (5) "Called me of inappropriate names " with a mean (2.71) and standard deviation (1.38) came in the last rank.

Physical abuse

Table (6) shows the results for Means and standard deviation:

Table (6): Descriptive Statistics for physical abuse

| Question number | Question | Mean | Std. Deviation | Rank |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|------|----------------|------|
| 6 | Slap me in the face | 2.83 | 1.42 | 4 |
| 7 | Tie me with a rope | 2.82 | 0.44 | 5 |
| 8 | Burn me with fire and cigarettes | 3.06 | 0.55 | 2 |
| 9 | Pinch me from my body and face | 3.05 | 1.56 | 3 |
| 10 | Kick me with their legs | 3.14 | 0.71 | 1 |
| | Physical abuse | 2.98 | 1.08 | |

The table above shows that the total means for Physical abuse (2.98) and with a standard deviation (1.08), where a question (10) "Kick me with their legs" ranked first with a mean (3.14) and standard deviation (1.71) and question (7) "C Tie me with a rope" with a mean (2.82) and standard deviation (0.44) came in the last rank.

Emotional Abuse

table (7) shows the results for Means and standard deviation:

Table (7): Descriptive Statistics for emotional abuse

| Question number | Question | Mean | Std. Deviation | Rank |
|-----------------|---|------|----------------|------|
| 11 | Deprive me of their love and tenderness | 2.35 | 0.51 | 5 |
| 12 | Hate being close to them | 2.41 | 0.57 | 4 |
| 13 | Prevent me from talking to them | 2.47 | 0.63 | 3 |
| 14 | Forbidden moral encouragement | 2.51 | 0.66 | 2 |
| 15 | Abandoned me to others without taking care of my needs. | 2.56 | 0.74 | 1 |
| | Emotional abuse | 2.46 | 0.60 | |

The table above shows that the total mean for Emotional abuse was (2.46) and with a standard deviation (1.60), where a question (15) "Abandoned me to others without taking care of my needs." ranked first with a mean (2.56) and standard deviation was (0.74) and the question (11) "Deprive me of their love and tenderness" with a mean (2.35) and standard deviation (0.51) came in the last rank.

Question 2: 'What is the degree of ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan?

Means and standard deviation were calculated for each item in the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan and table (8) shows the results:

Table (8): Descriptive Statistics for the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan

| Question number | Question | Mean | Std. Deviation | Rank |
|---|--|-------------|----------------|------|
| 25 | I show my respect to my parents when I deal with them. | 4.21 | 0.48 | 1 |
| 22 | I tolerate different points of view in all situations | 4.19 | 0.4 | 2 |
| 24 | I help others who are going through a crisis | 4.19 | 0.4 | 3 |
| 21 | I apologize for who I missed | 3.92 | 0.45 | 4 |
| 23 | I reject racial intolerance in dealing with others | 3.92 | 0.45 | 5 |
| 18 | I help people with a disability across the road | 2.48 | 1.64 | 6 |
| 19 | I avoid harm to animals | 2.48 | 1.66 | 7 |
| 16 | I donate some of my money to poor people | 2.43 | 1.58 | 8 |
| 17 | I leave my seat on the bus for the elderly or women to sit in my place | 2.42 | 1.57 | 9 |
| 20 | I maintain the safety and cleanliness of public facilities | 2.42 | 1.61 | 10 |
| ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan | | 3.26 | 0.80 | |

The table above shows that the total mean for this field was (3.26) and with a standard deviation (0.80), where the question (25) "I show my respect to my parents when I deal with them." ranked first with a mean (4.21) and standard deviation (0.48) and the question (20) "I maintain the safety and cleanliness of public facilities" with a mean (2.42) and standard deviation (1.61) came in the last rank.

Question 3: Is there a correlation relationship between parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan?

To determine if there is any relation between parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan, Pearson Correlation Test was used, which aims to find

the strength of the relationship between two variables. The relationship between two variables come between (+1 and -1), the more the degree of correlation close to 1, it means a positive correlation, and the more the degree of correlation close to -1, it means a negative correlation. To determine the relationship between parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan is shown in the table (9):

Table (9): Pearson Correlations Coefficients parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan

| Fields | Coefficients | Ethical conduct of adolescents |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Verbal abuse | Pearson Correlation | .629** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 380 |
| Physical abuse | Pearson Correlation | .621** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 381 |
| Emotional Abuse | Pearson Correlation | .972** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 381 |
| Parental abuse | Pearson Correlation | .819** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 381 |

As shown from the table (10), there is a significant relationship between parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan, the value of Pearson Correlation are shown in the table and the sig-value was less than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$).

For the correlation between parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan, it's strong with the significance level less than ($\alpha = 0.05$), with a Pearson Correlation value of (0.819**) which means significance relation between parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan.

Discussion

The current study intended to measure parental abuse and its relationship to the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan. This paper focuses on the verbal, physical and emotional abuse that adolescents experienced and its consequences on ethical behaviour, and their dealings with other individuals.

The results showed that the degree of Parental Abuse of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan was moderated. This may be attributed to the parents' exposure to stress from work and daily life so that they resort to violence against their children to get rid of these stresses. Parents' beliefs and social environment as well influence teen abuse. Some people still using corporal punishment, such as spanking, as a way to discipline their children. The difficult living conditions experienced by families, which are due to the increase in poverty and unemployment rates, family

disintegration, marital disputes and family conflict, the large size of families, and polygamy also affect the rate of abuse of adolescents (Hiriscau et al., 2016).

It was found that the degree of ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan was moderated as well. This may be attributed to the adolescent's attempt to achieve independence at home, to prove himself, and to take the sole decision-making, and does not accept the opinion of others easily, and this is accompanied by certain emotions. This may be attributed to poor parental guidance for their children, and failure to inculcate moral concepts and positive behaviours in them, as it contributes to creating a deficiency in the level of social or mental maturity of the adolescents (Afifi et al., 2016).

The study also revealed that there is a correlation relationship between parental abuse and the ethical conduct of adolescents in public schools in the central region of Jordan. This may be attributed to the fact that abuse of adolescents and their exposure to physical, verbal, sexual or other violence contribute to the creation of individuals who have psychological problems, deviant behaviours, and resort to abuse of others, or suicide or self-injury attempts, social skills and limited relationships.

Conclusion

It is recognized in international human rights law that children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence, including corporal punishment, at home, school, and anywhere else. Some societies around the world still tolerate and accept even some forms of violence against children, particularly violence that occurs in the home.

This study found that various factors cause adolescents abuse in Jordan. These factors include low income, low level of education of parents, and the social environment. The abused Children suffer more emotional damage. Where the child who has experienced severe abuse or abuse may experience depression, suicidal behaviour, introversion or violence.

Child abuse may result from physical, verbal or sexual harm. While child abuse often takes the form of physical harm (violence), also the non-physical harm can cause harm, such as neglect. Families in which one person suffers from substance abuse (such as drugs and alcohol) or anger show a higher incidence of child abuse compared to other families. The consequences of child abuse can lead to injuries or death. Many children are unaware that they are victims of Child abuse.

It can be difficult to identify abuse or neglect. It takes a careful assessment of the situation, including checking for physical and behavioural signs. Agencies, such as relevant state or state authorities, may also be involved in investigating cases of suspected abuse.

Recommendations

The study recommends that parents and family members seek advice from specialists so that they can support their children. The study also recommended the need to combat violence and all forms of abuse and treatment of children through the various media, develop teaching methods, and include in school curricula the rights that children should enjoy

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