

Psychological Violence and Its Relation to Academic Achievement of Middle School Students

Wissam Jabbar Qassim¹, Mohammed Rowdhan Al-Sabawy²

¹Professor, Community Health Nursing, College of Nursing, University of Baghdad, ²Bachelor in Science of Nursing, Community Health Nursing, Iraqi Ministry of Health
dr.wissamjk@conursing.uobaghdad.edu.iq
mohamed.rudhman2106m@conursing.uobaghdad.edu.iq

*Correspondence Author

Mohammed Rowdhan Al-Sabawy

Bachelor of Nursing Science Community Health Nursing, Iraqi Ministry of Health
mohammed.rudhan2106m@conursing.uobaghdad.edu.iq
memetrothan4@gmail.com
Phone N. 00964770064065

Abstract

Introduction: Psychological violence is a serious challenge with wide-ranging consequences for individuals. Many communities presently experience psychological violence, which has become a common occurrence. The study aims to identify the most prevalent forms of psychological violence and their impact on middle school students' academic achievement.

Methods: A cross-sectional study design has been used through a questionnaire that was distributed among 64 students who are subjected to psychological violence from middle schools in Kirkuk, Iraq, conducted between November 2022 and March 2023. Excellent internal consistency reliability was shown by the instrument (Cronbach's alpha = 0.90). The researchers applied the stratified random sampling technique.

Results: The results illustrate that (25%) of battered students suffered psychological violence. The females were more exposed to psychological violence at (64.1%) and males at (35.9%), also more than 60% of the parent's educational level of students was less than primary education. The majority of the family income of battered students was not enough (43.8%) and (42.2%) almost enough. 65% of psychologically battered have low grades and more than 70% do not participate and do not listen with interest and focus on the discussion during the lesson. The results showed that 78% of abused students' academic achievements were failed. **Conclusion:** The results of the current study revealed that the prevalence of psychological violence among students is moderate. Psychological violence significantly affects students' academic achievement (p=0.001).

Keywords: Domestic violence, Academic achievement, Psychological violence, Physical violence, Verbal violence

Introduction

Violence by a parent toward his sons can cause worry, tension, and depression. Children's sense of security and increased everyday stress can cause psychiatric problems and mentalities that may override their logical and mental elements, which can result in low self-esteem and anxiety and give rise to illogical beliefs (1). Childhood maltreatment and violence are frequent factors that increase the likelihood of individuals with severe personality abnormalities and mental health issues (2). Psychological violence defines as verbal and emotional abuse, rejection, ignoring, insults, spreading stories, making up falsehoods, calling names, embarrassment, and threats are all forms of abuse. Psychological punishment also involves non-physical acts that degrade, threaten, scare, or humiliate a young person or teenager (3).

A child's personality development, psychological and cognitive disorders, as well as behaviors, are all impacted by violence, which produces illnesses. The effects of domestic violence on children as violence witnesses or victims are one of the worst characteristics of a family system (4). Many of the behavioral and psychological issues that children who are personally mistreated experience also arise in youngsters who watch violence between their parents (5, 32). The Department of Communities and Justice oversees the statutory system (DCJ). Over 300,000 complaints regarding children at risk each year, with an increasing number of those reports relating to children who experience domestic abuse (6).

The ongoing pressure that comes with learning harms students' ability to learn, school achievements, achievement of education and

employment, the effects of substance misuse, physical and mental health, and rest extensiveness (7). This comparison shows that during the pandemic, 16–24% of people experienced anxiety and 14–22% had depressive symptoms, as opposed to 11 and 9.5%, respectively, in 2018. In June 2021, 10.5% of people reported having suicidal thoughts in the previous 12 months, up from just 4.3 in 2018 (8). discovered a history of any kind of violence the respondent had experienced—psychological, physical, or sexual—either before the COVID-19 pandemic or during the first wave (9). According to multiple studies from various cities, states, and nations throughout the world, domestic violence incidents rose in reaction to stay-at-home/lockdown orders (10).

Children's- health and well-being, in addition to that of their families, groups, and societies, are adversely affected by violence against children. Children who experience violence and other difficulties are much more prone to smoke, misuse substances such as alcohol and drugs, and participate in hazardous sexual conduct. Also, they have greater incidences of suicide, stress, depression, and other mental health issues. Homicide is one of the top four causes of death for adolescents (11).

According to a previous study, children who have suffered domestic violence may develop cognitive, emotional, and behavioral issues that will affect how well they do academically in the future (12, 31). Therefore, the current research aimed to identify psychological violence and it is related to the academic achievement of middle school students.

Materials And Methods

A descriptive correlational study used a cross-sectional study design has been used through a questionnaire that was distributed among middle school students from various schools in Kirkuk, including public schools. This was adopted to enable the study to gather relevant data on the influence of psychological violence on the academic achievement of middle school students in Kirkuk City. The sample for the research consisted of 256 subjects made up of male and female battered students who are in middle school. The questionnaire was distributed to 20 groups of students in 19 middle and secondary schools. Two groups were taken for the pilot study and excluded from the original study. The instrument of the influence of psychological violence on academic achievement among middle school students demonstrated excellent internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.90).

A research-administered questionnaire was used for the data collection on socio-demographic characteristics of psychological violence and academic achievement. The researcher use an

instrument that consists of three parts: **The first part** contains Socio-demographic Information Data and contains three questions, Are you exposed to family violence by your parents or a member of your family? If your answer is yes, what is the type of domestic violence? (physical, verbal, or psychological violence) and what is the source of domestic violence? Finally, are there issues or problems between parents or family members? **Part 2:** psychological violence rating scale among middle school students, this part is only for battered students and contains ten questions related to psychological violence. The Likert score is (never, sometimes, and always), (1,2, and 3, respectively). The self-assessment tool deals with mean of score values from (1.00 -1.66) is classified as low, the score ranges between (1.67-2.33) is classified as moderate, the score ranges between (2.34-3.00) is classified as high. **Part 3:** the scale evaluating the academic achievement of battered student, The scale contain 15 questions related to the direct teacher (the supervisor of the class) and score for the abused student during the first semester and mid-year scores.

Chapter Four

Results of the Study

Table (I): Prevalence of Psychological Violence among the students

Type of domestic violence	f	%
Domestic violence	256	100.0
Psychological violence	64	25.0

f= frequency, %= percentage

Results showed that 256 students had experienced some form of domestic violence throughout their life while 25% of them had suffered psychological violence Table (I).

Table (II): the distribution of the socio-demographic characteristics data of the students who were exposed to psychological violence

Socio-demographic characteristics of victims		F.	%
Age Years	12- Less than 14	19	29.7%
	14-Less than 16	27	42.2%
	16-18	18	28.1%
Gender	Male	23	35.9%
	Female	41	64.1%
Class	1 st	22	34.4%
	2 nd	20	31.2%
	3 rd	22	34.4%
Family income	Enough	9	14.1%
	Almost enough	27	42.2%
	Not enough	28	43.7%
Social status of parents	Married	48	75.0%
	Divorced	3	4.7%
	Single parents dead	12	18.8%
	Two parents dead	1	1.5%
Institution	Private	37	57.8%
	Public	27	42.2%
Level of mother education	Illiterate	3	4.8%
	Read &write	15	24.2%
	Primary	20	32.3%
	Secondary	16	25.8%
	Diploma↑	8	12.9%
Level of father education	Illiterate	0	
	Read &write	16	29.6%
	Primary	11	20.4%
	Secondary	17	31.5%
	Diploma↑	10	18.5%

f= frequency, %= percentage

the results show the demographic data of the student participants in the study. the females were more exposed to psychological violence at (64.1%) and males at (35.9%) in middle school. The results illustrate more than 60% of the

parent's educational level of students was less than primary education. The study found the majority of the family income of student victims was not enough (43.7%) and (42.2%) almost enough (Table II).

Table (III): Distribution of students according to their answers related to Psychological violence

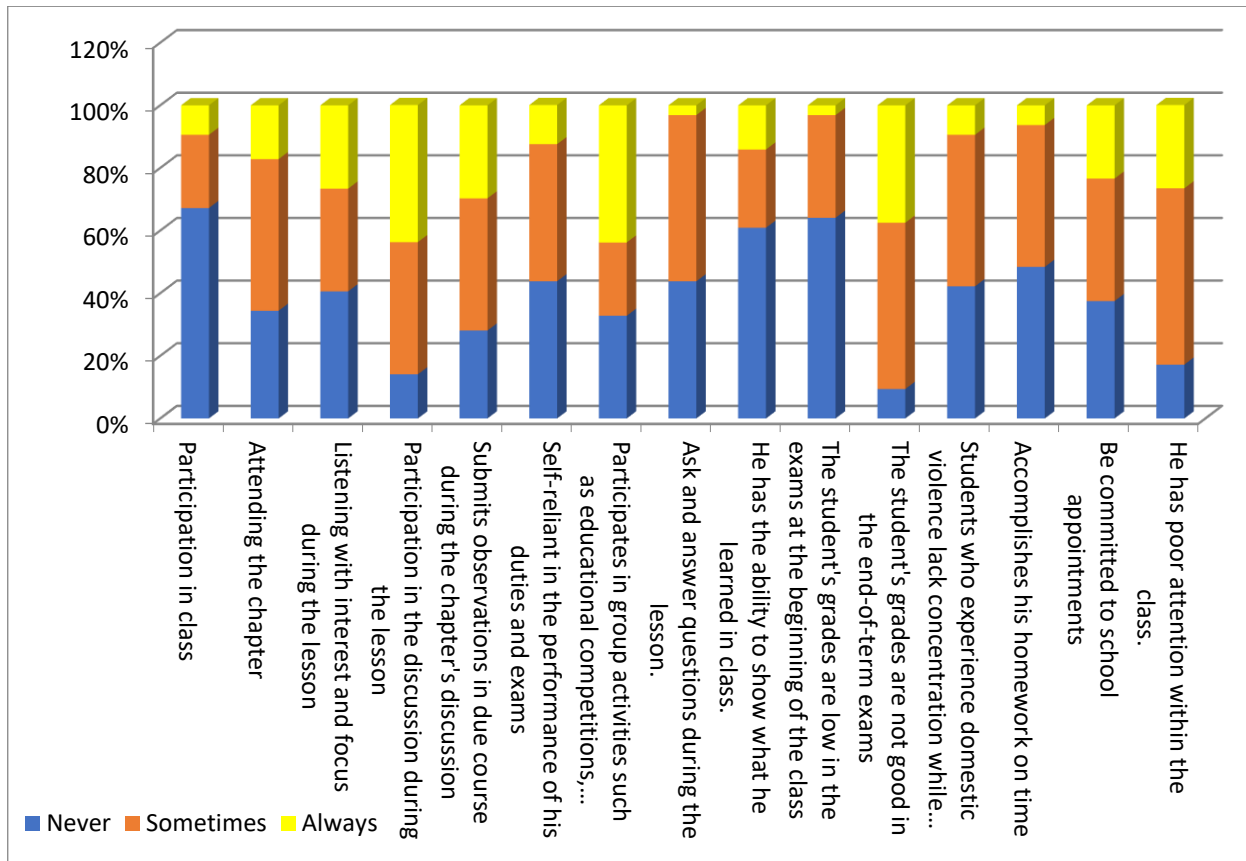
NO	ITEMS	RESPONSES	F.	%	MEAN	SD	ASS
1	My parents and family deprive me of food.	Never	16	25.0%	1.81	0.531	M
		Sometimes	44	68.8%			
		Always	4	6.2%			
2	I'm getting kicked out of the house.	Never	20	31.2%	1.78	0.603	M
		Sometimes	38	59.4%			
		Always	6	9.4%			
3	I'm being spat at.	Never	7	10.9%	1.45	0.688	M
		Sometimes	21	32.8%			
		Always	36	56.3%			
4	My parents deprive me of playing as my punishment.	Never	6	9.4%	2.47	0.666	H
		Sometimes	22	34.4%			
		Always	36	56.2%			
5	I'm being imprisoned.	Never	17	26.6%	2.06	0.774	M
		Sometimes	26	40.6%			
		Always	21	32.8%			
6	Deprive of expense	Never	9	14.1%	2.17	0.656	M
		Sometimes	35	54.7%			
		Always	20	31.2%			
7	My parents or family members don't care about my school needs.	Never	4	6.3%	2.44	0.614	H
		Sometimes	28	43.7%			
		Always	32	50.0%			
8	My parents or a family member prevent me from leaving the house as a punishment.	Never	3	4.7%	2.30	0.554	M
		Sometimes	39	60.9%			
		Always	22	34.4%			
9	My parents and my family feel like I'm an insignificant person.	Never	7	10.9%	2.44	0.687	H
		Sometimes	22	34.4%			
		Always	35	54.7%			
10	My parents and family prevent me from exercising my favorite hobbies I love.	Never	0	0	2.64	0.484	H
		Sometimes	23	35.9%			
		Always	41	64.1%			
	Total	Never	89	14%	2.25	0.625	M
		Sometimes	298	47%			
		Always	253	39%			

f= frequency, *%*= percentage: *M*=mean score, *SD*= standard deviation, *M*= (1. 67- 2.33) *H*= (2.34 – 3)

According to the findings, Psychological violence can be observed with a mean score of 2.25 and the prevalence of psychological violence among students is moderate. It was found that most forms of psychological violence

by parents or family members are in the form of (they prevented me from playing as a punishment, don't take care of my school needs, feeling me like a worthless person, stopping me from doing my favorite hobbies that I love (Table III).

Figure (I): Distribution of students related to the Class Supervisor's Answers on Evaluating the Academic Achievement of the victims



The results show that most of the class supervisor's responses to the evaluation of the academic achievement of the psychologically abused were found to be more than 70% who do not participate and do not listen with interest and focus in the discussion during the lesson. The

majority of the psychologically abused students are unable to rely on themselves in performing homework and cannot show what they learned during the lesson. 65% of psychologically battered students have low grades (Figure I).

Table (V); Distribution of samples related to Student's academic achievement with an estimate of the overall rate of curriculum lessons by the class instructor

Academic Achievement of Victims	Frequency	Percent
Fail	50	78.1
Acceptable	6	9.3
Moderate	2	3.1
Good	5	7.8
Very good	1	1.6
Total	64	100.0

The results showed that 78% of students' academic achievement of those who have been subjected to psychological violence failed.

Table(IV): Explains the source behind the students who were exposed to psychological violence related to the gender

Source of violence	Male		Female		Total	
	f	%	F	%	f	%
Father	10	43.5%	5	12.2%	15	23.4%
Mother	6	26.1%	22	53.7%	28	43.8%
Father's wife or mother's husband	0	0	4	9.8%	4	6.3%
Brother	2	8.7%	5	12.2%	7	10.9%
Sister	0	0	1	2.3%	1	1.6%
Father, mother & brother	2	8.7%	0	0	2	3.1%
Father & mother	3	13.0%	4	9.8%	7	10.9%
Total	23	100.0%	41	100.0%	64	100.0%

f= frequency, percentage=%,

the results illustrate that the individuals who perpetrate psychological violence against family members are the parents, whether one or both of

them. Mothers are more likely to use psychological violence against a female at 53.7 percent than fathers are to perpetrate violence against a male at 43.5 percent (Table IV).

Table (VII): shows the impact of Psychological violence on the academic achievement of the students

Academic Achievement	Type of DV	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P. value	Sig.
Academic Achievement	Psychological Violence	1.883	4	0.471	21.219	0.001	H.S
		1.309	59	0.022			
		3.192	63				

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level, H.S= High Significant

Table (VII); The results demonstrate that there is a very high association between psychological violence and academic achievement, which is shown by the F-value (21.21) and P-value (0.001).

Discussion

This study has been carried out on middle students in Kirkuk, Iraq to look at the prevalence of psychological violence, and the characteristics of the victims, and to identify the effect of psychological violence on academic achievement. According to the study's findings, psychological violence comprised 25% (n=64) of the total 256 students who have experienced domestic violence during their lives. The findings attribute this to a lack of religious conviction, the failure to meet the financial needs, the family's financial poverty, the destruction of the family as a result of a divorce or the death of one of the parents, addiction or substance misuse, as well as some issues and disputes. The prevalence of psychological violence among students is moderate. The current study's findings are consistent with previous studies (13: 14: 15: 16). The study findings disagree with previous studies that show a low level of emotional violence (30).

The demographic data of the battered students, according to the findings females 64.1% are more likely than males 35.9% to experience psychological violence. The majority age of the battered students was between (14-15). The study's findings support those of (17), who found that the age group (less-15 years). The study's findings were in line with the United States survey, which found that more than half of the victims were female (54.1%), while 45.9% were male (18: 19). Also, many previous studies have proven this (20, 21, 22). Parents frequently reject these behaviors by psychologically and physically assaulting their children because of the psychological, physical, and social changes that adolescents go through as well as their

emotional instability and desire for independence and uniqueness.

The results demonstrated that 43.8% of psychologically battered students do not have enough of the family's monthly income, also more than 60 percent of their mothers and 50 percent of their fathers had an educational level less than primary education. The current study's findings are consistent with previous studies (23: 13).

The level of psychological violence among students is moderate in the mean score (2.25). Psychologically battered Students frequently complain that their parents "deprive me of playing as my punishment," "deprive me of expense," "my parents or family members don't care about my school needs," or "my parents and family feel like I'm an insignificant person." They also complain that they "prevent me from exercising my favorite hobbies I love". This may be due to parental mental health issues, family instability brought on by divorce or the death of one parent, or the lack of a job and a sense of emptiness that causes feelings of boredom and irritability. Adolescents are commonly the victims of low-level psychological violence, however, our data contradict that statement (25).

The academic achievement of the psychologically battered was found to be more than 70% who do not participate and do not listen with interest and focus in the discussion during the lesson and the majority of the psychologically battered students are unable to rely on themselves in performing homework and cannot show what they learned during the lesson. 65% of psychologically abused people have low grades. The study demonstrates the majority of students who experienced psychological violence have poor academic

achievement. This result is consistent with the previous studies (26).

Mothers are more likely to use psychological violence against a female at 53.7 percent than fathers are to perpetrate violence against a male at 43.5 percent. The parent's exposure to life's challenges and desire to consistently meet the needs of the family led to his abuse of the students and the socialization he received from his parents. The parents' tight and brutal parenting approach resulted in the father assaulting his students as they rebelled or wanted independence from them. This finding is in line with a study by (27).

Child abuse affects a student's academic performance in a variety of ways, including decreased cognitive function, sleep disturbance (which results in poor attention), memory problems, language delays, comprehension problems, and expressive problems (28). The findings demonstrate there is a very high association between psychological violence and academic achievement. The results of the study agree with many previous studies that showed that psychological violence is the most common type of violence that affects academic achievement. The victim's academic success in future university life is affected by her exposure to domestic violence (29, 30).

Conclusion

The results of the current study revealed that psychological violence is a common occurrence and that most of the students experienced many forms of family violence, including verbal, physical, and psychological violence, and most of the psychologically battered do not participate or listen with interest and concentration in the discussion during the lesson. Psychological

violence high significantly affects students' academic achievement ($p=0.001$).

Reference

1. Adeeb, A. J., & Al-Mawala, A. (2020). Parental abuse as perceived by children and its relation to irrational thoughts of preparatory school students. *Journal of Tikrit University for Humanities*-375-401 ,(6)27 .
2. Vu, nl., jouriles, en., mcdonald, r., & rosenfield, d. (2016). Children's exposure to intimate partner violence: A meta-analysis of longitudinal associations with child adjustment problems. *Clinical psychology review*, 46, pp.25-33
3. Murillo, J., & Román, M. (2011). Latin America: school bullying and academic achievement. *Cepal Review*.
4. Van Der Kolk, Ba. (2017). "This issue: child abuse & victimization", in: *Psychiatric Annals*, 35(5), pp.374- 378
5. Tony, J. (2010). *Gender Series: Violence and Abuse of Women and Girls in Kenya*. Population Communication Africa. Volume II. Nairobi
6. Department of Communities and Justice. (2020). *Communities & justice*. <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au>
7. Michaela C. Pascoe, Sarah E. Hetrick & Alexandra G. Parker .(2020). The impact of stress on students in secondary school and higher education, *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 25:1, 104-112, DOI: 10.1080/02673843.2019.1596823
8. Sciensano. (2021). *Zevende COVID-19-Gezondheidsenquête. Eerste resultaten*. Brussel, België; Depot nummer: D/2021/14.440/51. Beschikbaar op. <https://doi.org/10.25608/4e6z-qa15>.

9. Fomenko, E., De Schrijver, L., Vandeviver, C. et al. (2022). Locked up at home: a cross-sectional study into the effects of COVID-19 lockdowns on domestic violence in households with children in Belgium. *BMC Public Health* 22, 1719. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-14135-3>
10. Piquero AR, Jennings WG, Jemison E, Kaukinen C, & Knaul FM. (2021). Domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic - Evidence from a systematic review and meta-analysis. *J Crim Just.* 74:101806.
11. World Health Organization. (2022). Violence against children. <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/violence-against-children>
12. Tambawal M U. Effect of Violence in the Home , Society, and Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Sokoto Metropolis. Presented at the 36th Annual International Conference of the Counselling Association of Nigeria (Casson), Obafemi Awolowo University. 2012
13. Hussein H, Sachit K, Alwan I. Psychological distress among Prisoners in Bagdad city, Iraq. (2020). *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24,(06), 2020. DOI:10.37200/IJPR/V24I6/PR261302
14. Hamoo S, Hossien A. Impact of Behavioral, Psychological and Social Dimensions upon Juvenile Delinquency. *INJNS [Internet]*. 2018 Nov. 10 [cited 2023 Mar. 26];27(2):84-90. Available from: <https://injns.uobaghdad.edu.iq/index.php/INJNS/article/view/212>
15. Khairi suhad, Abbas E. Assessment Types of Domestic Violence Among Iraqi Pregnant Women. *INJNS [Internet]*. 2018 Nov. 3 [cited 2023 Apr. 2];20(1). Available from: <https://injns.uobaghdad.edu.iq/index.php/INJNS/article/view/49>
16. Sajem Kareem, Khalifa Mohammed. Assessment of Types of Violence among Adolescents. *INJNS [Internet]*. 2018 Nov. 7 [cited 2023 Apr. 2];24(1):20-5. Available from: <https://injns.uobaghdad.edu.iq/index.php/INJNS/article/view/91>
17. Saiwan MJ, Al-Ameri MH. Assessing Levels of Domestic Violence among Secondary-School Students in Al-Nasiriya City/Iraq. *Journal of Global Pharma Technology*, 2019. 11(7). P.58-67
18. Norman R E, Byambaa M, Rumna De, Butchart3 A, Scott J. The long-term health consequences of child physical abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect: A systematic review and meta-analysis: *PLOS Medicine | 2012 9(11):1-31.* www.plosmedicine. Org
19. Ali A, Mecheser A. Suggested Index for studying violent by Environment and Psychology components among Collegian students at a sample in Baghdad City. *INJNS [Internet]*. 2018 Dec. 11 [cited 2023 Apr. 2];28(2):24-38. Available from: <https://injns.uobaghdad.edu.iq/index.php/INJNS/article/view/227>
20. Ahmed A. Anti-Children Domestic Violence and Geo-Proliferation in Iraq in 2020: A Human Geography Study. *Journal of Basic Science.* Vol. 7 No. 11 (2022). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31185/bsj.Vol7.Iss11.345>
21. Salih H. Evaluation of quality of life for secondary school students in Kirkuk city. *Iraqi National Journal of Nursing Specialties, INJNS [Internet]*. 2018 Dec. 12 [cited 2023 Mar. 25];29(1):1-10. Available

- from:
<https://injns.uobaghdad.edu.iq/index.php/INJNS/article/view/237>
22. Ghyadh A, Abdul-Wahid H. Evaluation of secondary schools students' exposure to risk factors in Al-Najaf city, INJNS [Internet]. 2018 Dec. 12 [cited 2023 Mar. 25];29(2):58-73. Available from: <https://injns.uobaghdad.edu.iq/index.php/INJNS/article/view/255> .
 23. Al-Ghurairi S, Al-Khafaf, E. Prevalence of Child Physical Abuse among School Children in Mosul City\North of Iraq. Medico-legal update, 2021. 21(1 .(
 24. Al-Shamiri A. Family violence against children in Yemen and its relationship with some variables. Scientific Journals of Education and Health Sciences Al-Rifai. 2022. 1(4). DOI: 10.21608/GFSC.2022.115669.1041
 25. Kanchiputu, P. G., & Mwale, M. (2016). Effects of Domestic Violence on Children's Education: The Case Study of Mpemba. Blantyre District [Malawi]. Journal of Psychological Abnormalities, 2016. 5(2), 1-5.
 26. Knight L, Hester M. (2016). Domestic violence and mental health in older adults. International Review of Psychiatry. 28 (5), 464 – 474.
 27. Coloney, J. C. Evaluation report: Behavioral Skills Program. Technical report written for the Lincoln (NE) Public Schools, Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders. 2005. University of Nebraska: Lincoln, NE
 28. Attalla S, Rome, A. Effects of domestic violence on academic achievement among university students in Selangor, Malaysia. Malay, 2019. 46(46), 7.
 29. Lloyd, M. Domestic violence and education: Examining the impact of domestic violence on young children, children, and young people and the potential role of schools. Frontiers in Psychology, 2018. 9, 2094.
 30. Abed-Ali, H. K., & Qassim, W. J. (2018). Violence among High School Female Students in Baghdad City. *Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development*, 9(10).
 31. Hende, R. A. K., & Qassim, W. J. (2021). Influence of Work-Family Conflict on the Level of Self-Efficacy of Female Nurses at Teaching Hospitals in Al-Nasiriyah City. *Annals of the Romanian Society for Cell Biology*, 25(6), 6123-6129.
 32. Jasim, A. R., & Naji, A. B. (2021). Effectiveness of an Educational Program Directing toward the Domestic Violence among Secondary School Students. *Mosul Journal of Nursing*, 9(1), 23-29.