



The Palestinian Center for Democracy & Conflict Resolution

Information Department

Impact of Israeli Practices on Development of Children's Aggressive Behaviour

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Credits

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Mohammed Abu El-Khair | Researcher |
| 2. Saeed Al-Maqadmah | General review |
| 3. Mahmoud Al-Dwahidi | Statistics consultant |
| 4. Jehan Breka | Field researcher |
| 5. Abeer Al-Saqa | Field researcher |
| 6. Hana'e Bsiso | Field researcher |
| 7. Iman Al-Qedra | Field researcher |
| 8. Huda Al-Shami | Data entry |
| 9. Ghada Habeeb | Data entry |
| 10. Maysara Al-Shaer | Data entry |
| 11. Samira Abu Aisha | Translation |
| 12. Ramez Jaber | Editing |
| 13. Abdallah Al Salmi | Proofreading |

Introduction:

The Palestinian society suffered inconsiderably due to living many years under the Israeli occupation and its inhumane practices. This was accompanied by the continuous hike in unemployment rates along with the increasing number of families living under the poverty line.

Violence is one aspect of the repressed and sadist soul of an individual. It is one of the reflections of the ego and selfishness; even in state of defense (Kabange 2003:4).

Violence is a primitive, uncivilized approach that is characterized with some criminal manifestation that is reflected negatively on the society. Because it is characterized by using physical force against the individuals and public properties, it is an anti-social and going against the recognized norms of behavior. (Al-Gonde 1999:294).

In this critical era of its history, the Palestinian society undergoes an intensified and continuous Israeli violence that reflects on the daily life of the Palestinian people especially children who represent about 53% of society.

Children are influenced with this violence directly and indirectly, either by the Israeli violent practices such as killing, physical torture and the destruction of schools or by what is aired on TV (the Center of the Teacher's Creation 2002:102).

In the European Society's Twelfth Conference for the Child's and the Teenager's Psychology, *Lashal* pointed out that war leads to the destruction of the safe places such as homes and to a change in the social habits by showing violence and emotions control. (*Al-Quds* Local Newspaper, 8/10/2003).

The requirements of the present situation made children the most psychologically vulnerable category due to their exposure to the excessive Israeli violence. The appearance of the violence-driven psychological effects differs in intensity from one child to another according to the child's experience, his influence by the event and the way in which the surrounding deals with him in regard to the event.

El Rae case study pointed out that the Israeli violence affected children by the increased ratios of violence, tension and anxiety (the National Workshop of Children's Psychosocial Health: 2003).

In a poll carried out by Development Studies Programme, 84.9% of Palestinians feel that the Israeli violence caused children's psychological disorders amidst their families (the Central Census Bureau 2003).

Research showed that the violent delinquents have witnessed different types of brutality, which, in some occasions, included use of sharp tools; or they witnessed their family members being tortured, or even saw their relatives carrying guns and sharp tools. (Al-Esawe: 81-82)

There are many elements that contribute to the emergence of children violence such as; the environment pressure (Al-Samry 2001:199). The social compulsion is also considered among the most important constituents of violence, not only in the individual but also in the society. Scorn, sarcasm and mockery are sufficient to stimulate a hyper-secretion of the

nervousness and aggression hormones in the body. These hormones arouse individual's violence, hatred and malice feelings (Alqabange2003:4).

The reason of violence, in its general form, lays in someone's experience of violent incidents or upon whom violence is practiced, or due to feeling of frustration and being incapable in life. Violence takes many types, physical, psychological, sexual or domestic (Shakor 1997:110-111).

When studying Violence in the Palestinian society under occupation we can find two main forms; direct and indirect. Direct violence has various sub-types such as killing, beating, injuring, arrest, expulsion, maltreatment and movement restrictions. These actions have a painful psychological effect on the individual. A case study has shown that (bonamake: 1989), 85% of Palestinian children have been exposed to violent actions. At least 45% of population was exposed to violence before the age of 17, in addition to the large number of children who became homeless due to the Israeli demolition of their houses.

The indirect violence has terrifying forms such as watching violent scenes, violent practices against a family member or public properties. It has a long term impact that are unrealized for the moment which render it more dangerous than other forms of direct violence.

These forms might be seen as being directed at adults, yet its psychological impact on children is more dangerous. However, its real hazard result from representing oriented policies that aim to create a kind of imbalance for the children by the aggressor.

It is possible to say that the Israeli policies aim to create such imbalance especially for the children who are the heirs to the Palestinian issue. This imbalance takes many forms such as: expelling civilians, marginalizing, dispossession, creating facts on the ground and economic recession. (Al-Nashashibi and Amr: 2003)

The difference between aggression and violence:

Violence and aggression is a subject of great controversy among specialists who are interested in these two concepts regarding the relation between them. Violence is considered as one of the aggression forms. Logically, any violence is aggression but not the contrary. (khader 1998:66).

Violence is material while aggression takes in the material and the emotional aspects. (shawaqe 1993:33) defined violence as being " the direct corporeal side depending on aggression. So aggression becomes more generalized than violence "(26-25). Violent behaviour is characterized by being impulsive, and it can be an expression of injustice, inequity, and indignation (Al esawi: 77).

The problem and the importance of the study:

Recently, we witness a kind of development not only in the quantity of violence but in the ways and the methods the children use while practicing such violent behaviour and which has been acquired from the systematic Israeli violence against them directly and indirectly.

The importance attached to violence is a result of a complete awareness of the dangers lying beneath. This will lead to physical and psychological effects and risks on children.

Objective:

The study aims to identify the degree of the Israeli practices' effects on children's behaviour. It answers the following main question:

"Is there any effect of the Israeli practices on the children violent behaviour from the parents' point of view?"

The main question leads to the following sub questions:

- Are there any differences, with a statistical significance, of the Israeli practices on the children violent behavior due to gender?
- Are there any differences, with a statistical significance, of the Israeli practices on the children violent behavior due to the residence location?
- What are the most prominent behaviors resulted from the Israeli violent practices from the parents' point of view?

The Study Location:

The study is restricted to the borderline areas and those adjacent to Israeli settlements in Gaza Strip.

Glossary of Terms:

Violence:

As a term, it has many definitions. However, only those which have a basic relation to the subject of this study will be referred to:

According to *Denestine*, violence means using force, compulsion, or threat to harm people and properties for achieving illegal or socially disapproved aims.

While *Isnard* defined it as being the same as other forms of behavior, it is a result of a relational problem in which destruction affects not only the person himself, but also the other party; consequently, aggression will constitute a way to go in a relation with the other. However, some *behavioural scientists* defined it as one of the behavior types that arise from a state of frustration, accompanied by tension symptoms, and it has a bad intention to harm humans or properties.

Hanafi (1995) defined violence as "an obvious behaviour that aims to cause damage to people and properties.

Al-Mugrabi (1993) defined violence as a behavioural response characterized by excessive emotional nature which might have a diminution of the insight and thinking levels.

Previous Studies:

- The outcomes of Hami study (1995), Qoota and Banamaki (1993), and Al-Najar (1998) asserted that the political shocking political incidents; such as, violence, injury, or the loss of a family member increases the psychological suffering and the violent behaviour of children.
- Nather (2000) carried out a study entitled "Wars and the Behavioural Disorders for Children and the Way of Dealing with Crisis in Kuwait". The targeted group of the

study was 1289 school students ranging between 8-15 years. Results showed that children still suffer from exhausting reactions due to being exposed to war shocks, although Kuwait crisis came to an end many years ago. At the same time, the study did show no differences with respect to gender.

- Oya (2000) made a study entitled “The relation between the appearance of violence and the behavioral troubles”. The targeted group of the study was 270 female and male students aged 4-18 years. Results showed that the facultative experience of children is related to violence level.
- Elra'i (2003) conducted a study titled “The Impact of the Israeli Violence on the Behavioral and Psychological aspects among Palestinian Children between 3-17 years”. Results showed that the Israeli violence had a three sided impact on children; the behavioral one is among them. The study showed no difference with respect to gender.

Method and Procedures:

* The study approach:

This study uses the Analytical Descriptive Approach.

* Study population:

It consists of the areas adjacent to the Israeli settlements and borders with Israel. The study sample has been chosen from schools in those areas. Two schools have been chosen from each area on international bases. The society of the study consists of 13300 female and male students. *The selected schools are the following:*

| No. | School Name | Area |
|-----|---|---------------|
| 1. | Khawla co-ed school (A) | Rafah |
| 2. | Rafah male elementary school (A) | |
| 3. | Khanyonis elementary school (D) | Khan-Younis |
| 4. | Mustafa Hafez male school (A) | |
| 5. | Dair Albalah elementary school (G) | Dair- Elbalah |
| 6. | Dair Albalah co-ed school (D) | |
| 7. | Alshegaeia elementary joined school (A) | Gaza city |
| 8. | Alshegaeia elementary school (B) | |
| 9. | Beit Hanoon male preparatory school | Beit- Hanoon |
| 10. | Beit Hanoon female preparatory school | |

The study sample has been selected by the simple random method. The sample's size reaches 1330 with the percentage of 10% of the study society distributed to the governorates of Gaza Strip. After that, 820 questionnaires were collected including 24 invalid ones, so they were excluded, while the valid ones were 796. The following tables show the distribution of the sample:

Table (1): a distribution of the study sample according to Gender

| Gender | Total | Percent |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Male | 483 | 60.7% |
| Female | 313 | 39.3% |
| Total | 796 | 1005 |

Table (2): a distribution of the study sample according to the variable of governorate

| Governorate | Total | Percent |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| South Gaza | 111 | 13.9% |
| Gaza City | 146 | 1.3% |
| Middle Camps | 201 | 2.3% |
| Khan Younis | 197 | 24.8% |
| Rafah | 141 | 17.7% |
| Total | 796 | 100% |

The Study Tool:

The sample's tool has been developed particularly by measuring the violent behavior of children through revising the pedagogical literature and previous related studies.

The study tool consists of 23 items divided into 3 directions:

1. Violence against self and consists of 9 items.
2. Violence against other and consists 6 items.
3. Violence against properties and consists of 8 items.

Credibility of Questionnaire:

1) Credibility of Arbitrators:

The study has been presented to a number of arbitrators at the Islamic University, Al-Azhar University, Al-Aqsa University and Al-Quds Open University. Their comments have been taken into consideration when producing the tool into its final version.

2) Credibility of Internal Consistency:

Table (3): Internal Consistency between the sub dimensions and the total degree of the questionnaire

| Dimension | Violence against self | Violence against others | Violence against properties | Total degree |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Violence against one's self | 1.000 | | | |
| Violence against others | 0.645** | 1.000 | | |
| Violence | 0.670** | 0.768** | 1.000 | |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| against properties | | | | |
| Total degree | 0.871** | 0.887** | 0.917 | 1.000 |

The previous table shows that there is strong and intrinsic connection between the sub dimension of the questionnaire and the total degree. The level of statistical significance is 0.01 which means that these dimensions belong to the subject of the questionnaire.

The Firmness of the Questionnaire:

1) Firmness by Split Half Method (SHM):

- The search team tested the firmness of the questionnaire by using the SHM for the items of the questionnaire which reached to 0.7776.
- Spare man- brown equation is being used to modify the length of the test and it is 0.8749.
- The value is good and refers to a satisfactory level of firmness.

2) Firmness by Alfa Kronobakh method:

- Alfa Kronobakh equation is used to measure the firmness of the questionnaire.
- The value of Alfa is 0.9360 and this is good and refers to a good level of firmness.

The Statistical Analysis:

The search team used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to test the firmness and the internal consistency, and then used it in analyzing the results of the study. This was done by using the following statistical methods:

1. Pearsons correlation factors.
2. Means and percentages.
3. Independent sample T-Test.
4. One way ANOVA.
5. Scheffe Test for comparing dimensions.

Results of the study:

1) Results of the first query's discussions and text: "Are there any differences, with a statistical significance, of the Israeli practices on the violent behavior of children due to gender from the parents' points of view?"

Table No. (4)

| Dimension | Males (N=483) | | Females (N=313) | | Value (T) | Significance Level |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|
| | Mean | deviation | Mean | Deviation | | |
| Violence against self | 21.0497 | 9.0461 | 18.5304 | 6.8906 | 4.20** | 0.01 |
| Violence against others | 16.1884 | 7.1906 | 12.9297 | 5.9140 | 6.685** | 0.01 |
| Violence against properties | 18.1760 | 9.2054 | 15.0096 | 7.6189 | 5.064** | 0.01 |
| Total degree | 55.4141 | 22.9223 | 46.4696 | 17.5749 | 5.874** | 0.01 |

Results of test (t) show that there are differences with a statistical significance of (0.01) between males and females in the degree of the violent behavior under the influence of the Israeli practices. This indicates that males have a higher degree of violent behavior when compared to females. This can be due to the more effective involvement of males in the circumstances the Palestinian Society live, in addition to being outdoors more than females.

This study contradicts the study of (*Elrae 2003*) and (*Nather 2000*) in having no differences between males and females in being influenced by the violence directed against them; taking into consideration that the used tool, the method of selecting the sample, and the area of the study are different.

2) Results of the second query's discussion and text "Are there any differences that have a statistical significant of the Israeli practices on the violent behavior of children due to the residence?"

The search team carried out One Way ANOVA to examine the truth of the query.

Table No. (5) Shows the results of One Way ANOVA:

| Dimension | Variant level | Squares sum | Degree of Freedom | Average of squares | Value (f) | significance |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Violence against self | Among groups | 3635.840 | 4 | 908.960 | 13.873 | 0.01 |
| | Inside groups | 51826.384 | 791 | 65.520 | | |
| | Total | 55462.225 | 795 | | | |
| Violence | Among | 1207 | 4 | 301.961 | 6.518 | 0.01 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------|------------|----------|--------|------|
| against others | groups | | | | | |
| | Inside groups | 36643.278 | 791 | 46.352 | | |
| | Total | 37851.121 | 795 | | | |
| Violence against properties | Among groups | 2097.235 | 4 | 524.309 | 7.058 | 0.01 |
| | Inside groups | 58761.965 | 791 | 74.288 | | |
| | Total | 60859.200 | 795 | | | |
| Total degree | Among groups | 19504.47 | 4 | 4876.120 | 11.169 | 0.01 |
| | Inside groups | 345319.073 | 791 | 436.560 | 13.873 | 0.01 |
| | Total | 368423.553 | 795 | | | |

From the above table, it becomes clear that there are differences with a statistical significance among areas in the significance level 0.01. This reflects that the areas of Gaza Strip were not equally exposed to the Israeli violent practices. This is reflected on the differences in the violent behavior of children according to residence. And also to know the most violent children, due to being greatly influenced by the Israeli practices, due to residence.

The researcher used Shefeh's test, as it is clear in Table No. (6):

Table No.6

| Residence | North Gaza | Gaza | Middle Camps | Khan-Younis | Rafah |
|---------------------|------------|--------|--------------|-------------|----------|
| North Gaza | | 5.5649 | -4.0551 | -6.6979 | 4.8721 |
| Gaza | | *** | -9.6200* | -12.2627* | -0.6927 |
| Middle Camps | | | *** | -2.6427 | 8.9273* |
| Khan-Younis | | | | *** | 11.5700* |
| Rafah | | | | | *** |

This table shows that the children of Khanyounis governorate are the most affected by the Israeli practices, which is clearly reflected on their behavior. This led to increase their violent behavior when compared to children of other governorates. The Children's violent behavior becomes lesser as we go north in the middle governorate and the northern governorate. Still, Rafah is lesser. Gaza governorate is the least affected one. The children of Khanyounis and the Middle Camps are more affected than those of other areas, as their schools are continuously exposed to the Israeli bombing, and students were evacuated to more secure places. The evacuated schools in Khanyounis are Khanyounis Primary School (D), named also as Khaledia School. While the evacuated schools in the Middle Camps exist in Dair Elbalah and named: Dair Elbalah Joint Primary School (G) and Dair Elbalah Joint School (D). These schools were included in the society of the study. Having the children of Rafah governorate among the least affected children is either due to the fact that they have developed ways for coping with the hard conditions they are living; therefore, such results appeared, or that the effects of the Israeli practices upon their

children were not recognized by parents. This explanation will lead us to conduct deeper studies in this regard, in which the used tool will be directed toward children.

It is worth mentioning that the difference in averages between governorates is not big, which means that the effect of the Israeli practices upon the violent behavior of children in all governorates of Gaza Strip was not realized or noticeable. However, there is still a relative difference among the governorates, even though it is little.

3) Results of the third query: "What is the most prominent behavior for children due to the Israeli practices as being viewed by parents?"

To discuss such query, a relative evaluation for all the items available in the questionnaire had been made to know the most prominent problems the children have. This led us to find out:

First: in the dimension of violence against the self:

The most prominent behaviours answered by parents range between intermediate and up, are the following arranged according to its degree of prominence:

1. The child believes in his low value. 404 answered this item with the percentage of 50.7% of the study sample.
2. Avoids making friendships, 341 answered this item constituting 42.8% of the study sample.
3. Does not participate in the collective games, 329 answered this item constituting 41.315% of the study sample.
4. Intends to blame himself/herself, 425 answered this item constituting 40.8% of the study sample.

Second: in the dimension of violence against others:

The most prominent behaviors, answered by parents, range between intermediate and up are the following arranged according to the most prominent:

1. Tries to impose his/her opinion by force on his brothers, sisters and friends; 452 constituting 56.7% of the study sample answered this item.
2. Starts fighting for trivial reasons; 433 constituting 54.4% answered this item.
3. Tends to control children especially the youngsters; 395, constituting 49.6% answered this item.
4. Intends to harm others; 303 ones answered this item constituting 38%.

Third: in the phase of violence against properties:

1. Writes on the house's walls, 362, constituting 45.4%, answered this item.
2. Spoils his toys, 319 constituting 40%, answered item.
3. Has no respect to others' possessions, 310, constituting 39%, answered this item.
4. Breaks the possessions of his brothers, 304 constituting 38.25 of the sample size answered this it.

Recommendations:

1. Much care should be paid for the male children due to being more affected and widely exposed to the Israeli violent practices than females.
2. Design more programs of psychosocial support in the middle and south of Gaza Strip than before.
3. The programs of psychosocial support should focus on the most negative behaviours.
4. Develop programs specialized in counselling families about their main roles to help in changing the violent behaviours of their children.
5. Conduct an in-depth study about the children of Rafah governorate regarding the subject of the study, in which the tool should be directed towards children, the targeted group of the study.

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