

Spare the rod, spoil the child? Prevalence of violent and non-violent disciplinary methods among Malaysian parents

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Child discipline is necessary to teach the child self-control and acceptable behaviour. Maltreatment and violence may affect the child's development and learning abilities, leading to poor self-esteem, emotional disturbances and even depression. This study aims to determine the prevalence of violent and non-violent disciplinary methods among Malaysian parents towards children aged 1 to 5 years. **Methods:** Data were obtained from the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2016. Two stage stratified random sampling method was used to select a sample of 13,674 Malaysian primary care-givers of children between 12 to 59 months of age. Respondents were asked a series of questions on the methods of discipline used by the respondent or any family member in the past one month on the child. **Results:** 70.8 % of children aged 12-59 months received some form of violent disciplinary methods from their parents or caregivers. Male children were more likely to receive violent disciplinary methods at 74.1 % compared to females at 67.4 %. Parents who were single were more prevalent in using only non-violent disciplinary methods at 42.7%. In terms of education level of the mother and the father, only non-violent punishments were highest among those with higher education, at 29.7% and 29.6% respectively. There appears to be no large difference in the use of violent and only non-violent discipline among household income groups. **Discussion:** Violent disciplinary methods are highly prevalent among Malaysian parents. Non-violent methods are practiced more among single and educated parents. Society needs to be educated to positively engage and discipline a child without affecting their wellbeing or retarding their physical and psychological growth. Negative experiences and environmental influences early in life have been shown to adversely affect the learning, behaviour, physical and mental well-being of a child.

KEY WORDS:

Child discipline, violent punishment, NHMS

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Status of drinking water quality in Malaysia: a systematic review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Access to safe drinking water is fundamental to health and is a basic human right. The increasing population escalates water demand, leads to higher discharge of waste water hence deteriorating water quality and affects human health. **Objectives:** This systematic review aims to assess the status of drinking water quality in Malaysia. **Methodology:** Four notable databases (Science Direct, PubMed, Scopus and Google Scholar) were searched for articles using pertinent keywords. Only peer-reviewed cross-sectional articles published in English from January 2000 until September 2015 focusing on treated water (filtered, bottled, tap water) and groundwater (bottled mineral water, well water) in Malaysia were included in this review. **Results:** Based on the inclusion criteria, 23 articles were selected which measures water quality parameters (physical parameters, chemical and trace elements) in drinking water. Trace element concentrations from reviewed studies ranged between 0.0006 mg/L (nickel) to 513.7 mg/L (magnesium). Overall pooled mean for physical parameters (pH, turbidity, total suspended solids, total dissolved solids, temperature and conductivity) were within the reference levels established by the Malaysian National Drinking Water Quality Standard (NDWQS). **DISCUSSION:** In this review, the generally low number of available studies which fulfil the inclusion criteria means that interpretation of results must be exercised with caution. Nevertheless, extensive effort in searching databases safeguards against missing relevant studies. **Conclusion:** This review will provide policy makers with reliable scientific evidences for better management practice and it is hoped that the findings will support the planning of future researches in this field.