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Understanding Physical Punishment as a Method of Disciplining Children in Libya:

The Perspectives of Parents, Children and Professionals

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(1) Index of Contents

Contents	Page Number
Chapter (1) Overview of Thesis	
Chapter (2) Literature Review **'What is Physical Punishment?'**	
Chapter (3) Literature Review **The Use of Physical Punishment and Personal Factors Influencing its Use**	
Chapter (4) Literature Review **External factors that influence the use of physical Discipline**	

Chapter (5) Literature Review
Parenting and Children Discipline within an Islamic Arabic Context

Chapter (6) Research Methodology, Procedures and Ethical Issues

Chapter (7) Data Analysis and Discussion
Study Participants, Perceptions and Reported Use of Physical Punishment

Chapter (8) Data Analysis and Discussion

Personal Factors that appear to Influence Parental Use of Physical Punishment

Chapter (9) Data Analysis and Discussion
External Factors That Influence Parental Use of Physical Punishment

Chapter (10) Conclusion and Implications
Looking Back and Looking Forward

(2) Index of Tables

(3) Index of Appendices

Dedication

To both:

- > *Dr. Hassan Hassam* for being right behind me when I needed…

- > *Dr. Ibrahim Al.Sherif* for his great belief in what I can achieve in my career.

I am so grateful to both of you, for your unlimited support and belief, which will never be forgotten for the whole of my life.

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Abstract

International research has previously been carried out on child discipline methods, and has particularly focused on the use of physical punishment (Twum-Danso Imoh 2013; Andrade et al 2011). However, there has been little research into this area in Libya. This study explored child-rearing methods in Libya, in particular, the use of physical punishment by parents and its key influential factor. The data collection methods consisted of a closed-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. 108 Libyan professionals, fathers, mothers and children aged 6-17 years filled in the questionnaire, 38 of these participants took part in interviews. A purposive snowballing sampling method was used to obtain a gender-balanced sample drawn from different social places in 10 areas. The study explored various factors related to parents and children, family structure, community, professionals, traditions, religion and law which seem to be influential in the use of physical punishment. By exploring all of these factors, this study adds a significant contribution to the limited knowledge about the perceptions, experiences and practices of physical and non-physical methods in Libya. This knowledge should be of value not only within Libya itself, but for other Arabic countries and institutions and international organisations concerned with child welfare issues. Further, the study provides a unique deep understanding of the social construction of Muslim families within Arab Libyan culture, and highlights the tension between some Islamic values, traditional norms and law. For example, parents make a clear distinction between Islam, traditions and law through using words such as (Aeab;عيب), (حرام; Haram) and (crime; جريمة). They indicate that traditions have more power over parents' approach to child-rearing methods than anything else. Furthermore, this study offers valuable data about parents', children's and professionals' views on the use of physical punishment at home, school and Islamic centres and how children's experience in one setting is influenced by others. It explores some of the negative changes associated with the role of teachers and schools, which appeared to increase the use of physical punishment of children both at home and within school. In addition, this study explains some of the political and practical challenges in doing research in a war zone context. It offers exceptional data regarding the influence of Libyan war (2011) on children, parenting styles and the choices of child discipline methods. The study suggests that the Libyan war (2011) did not increase the use of physical punishment by parents. In fact, about half of the participants who used physical punishment reported that the high level of violence outside the home led to a reduction in their use of physical punishment. Finally, the study provides data on the challenges of trying to encourage more child-centred methods of upbringing in a Libyan context. Many parents believed that a lack of understanding of Islamic values, the lack of knowledge about alternative, healthier, methods of disciplining children, and the absence of governmental action to raise awareness about this topic were among the main reasons for parents continuing to use methods of physical punishment when disciplining their children.

Chapter (1) Overview of Thesis

1.1 Introduction

Many studies around the world have focused on parenting/child discipline methods in relation to the use of physical punishment (Binghalib 2011; Andrade et al 2011; Twum-Danso Imoh 2013 and 2010). They have found that parental use of physical punishment as a method of disciplining children is commonly practised across cultures, but for different reasons. For example, research shows that various factors can influence parents to use physical methods with their children, some of which relate to the parents themselves and others to their children, such as their age and sex (Guttmann et al 2009; Straus and Stewart 1999). Further, family structure, community, religion, traditions and legislation appear also to have an impact on parents' use of physical methods (Vaaler et al 2008; Owusu-Bempah 1999; Wiehe 1990).

The literature also seems to suggest that legislation on child protection within the family varies around the globe. For instance, Sweden, in 1979, Finland, in 1983, Norway, in 1987, Cyprus in 1994, New Zealand in 2007, and Venezuela, in 2007, banned all forms of physical punishment of children, considering parental use of physical punishment as a form of abuse (Gershoff 2008). Meanwhile, other countries, such as England and Wales (Cousins and Watkins 2005), Canada (Watkinson 2006) and Australia (Holzer and Lamont 2010), still tolerate parental use of physical punishment to some degree within the scope of 'reasonable chastisement'. However, in countries such as Iran (Oveisi et al 2010), Kuwait (Qasem et al 1998) and Palestine (Haj-Yahia and Abdo- Kaloti 2003), any issue related to family life, including child discipline, is considered a private matter, which means that in those countries parents are considered to have the right to use physical punishment.

In the case of Libya, there appears to be an absence of published literature, in either Arabic or English, on parental use of physical punishment as a method of disciplining children, based on the perspectives of those involved (parents, children or professionals). Further, it seems from previous research in Libya that children's voices on matters related to them are largely ignored (The United Nations Report 1998). Hence, this study could make a valuable contribution to filling this gap in the literature and gaining insight into the practice of this method within Muslim Arabic culture, based on the perceptions of parents, children and professionals.

Chapter 1

This research stems from my personal and professional interests. Regarding my personal experience, despite the fact that I had never been abroad before coming to the UK, I always questioned child discipline methods and children's position in Libyan society. I have commonly seen parents use physical punishment to deal with their children's misbehaviour. Moreover, I, along with many of my young relatives, experienced this method of punishment by parents. Although traditions give our parents this right, we used to share our feelings of anger, sadness and frustration. I personally have never considered this an effective discipline method as it made me more resistant to my parents' orders and more disobedient towards them. My negative views about the use of physical punishment were not only based on my experience with my family, but also on my witnessing and dealing with cases where I considered parents crossed the line between disciplining and injuring and damaging their children. For example, I still remember a mother who used to deny her daughters food and beat them with her hands and/or objects such as a stick, a hose or a shoe, anywhere on their bodies, under the name of discipline. From a young age, I witnessed similar cases and struggled to understand why parents use such methods and why they should have the right to do so, especially as we were taught (socially and at school) that parents should care for and love their children unconditionally and that Islam emphasises respecting and caring for children. I found it hard to view the use of such physical methods as an act of love, respect and care. My confusion about this contributed to my decision to study social work, in an effort to gain greater understanding of my people and culture.

At a professional level, I chose 'child abuse' as my specialist area when I studied for my Master's degree; it was the only year that this topic was taught at the university. By studying child abuse, I thought I would gain the opportunity to break the silence regarding the cycle of violence within the family. However, unfortunately, our lecturer taught us that parental use of physical punishment is family business and child abuse does not exist in Libya: either because it is a Muslim country, where 'parents do not abuse their children', or because the Libyan Government provides sufficient protection to ensure that Libyan children do not suffer. Despite my attempts to raise my concerns about certain examples of violent methods used under the name of disciplining children and women, the lecturer always denied the reality.

Through working as a lecturer in the Social Work Department at Tripoli University and as the Head of the Social Work Department in the Health Sector in Tripoli, I came across several cases of young people suffering physical and emotional abuse from their families. Being an open-minded and well-educated woman, females and male children found me a more approachable and trustworthy person to come to with their problems within the family, to the extent that some even talked to me about running away from home and/or committing

suicide. In fact, some young people in hospitals were there because they had tried to commit suicide and some had tried a number of times. As my social worker training had taught me that parental use of physical punishment is not abuse and child abuse 'does not exist' in Libya, it was very challenging to deal with these cases. For instance, physical abuse of children within the family is not clearly a criminal offence under Libyan law and there are no agencies to deal with such cases. Another challenge that faced me as the Head of the Social Work Department was that other professionals, hospital doctors in particular, were not very cooperative with social workers. Some doctors, believing that they were the keystones of hospitals, would not allow social workers to meet with possible abuse victims without their permission, even in cases of patients who had tried to commit suicide. If social workers failed to comply with this requirement, they would be insulted, kicked out in front of patients and staff, and warned that they would lose their job. Sadly, some medical doctors, overwhelmed by the large number of young people who tried to commit suicide, would even tell such children off and make them ashamed of indulging in such behaviour. This made the situation worse, not only for the children but also for social workers.

However, I always made every possible attempt to help young people, even when that involved personal risk. I had a passionate need to do something to help others, especially children and women, which was mainly because of the pain of my own experiences, backed up by my background of being a moderate Sunni Muslim, brought up (by my grandmother) to know that Islam opposes such harmful Arabic traditional practices as violence and discrimination against women and children. This led me, unlike the majority of Libyan society, to look at the phenomenon of parental use of physical punishment in Libya as a problem rather than parents' right. Indeed, my personal and professional experiences confirm my view that we have a hidden problem in that, under the name of discipline, many of our children experience physical punishment by their parents that equates to abuse. However, as it is not acknowledged as abuse, children have to suffer in silence and parents carry on using this method. This inspired me to attempt to break the cycle of use and abuse of physical methods within the family in Libya by addressing this topic through research in the UK, as I knew no academic staff in Libya who shared my views.

1.2 The Aim of the Study

This study aims to gain insight into child rearing methods in Libyan society, in particular the use of physical punishment by parents. This study will explore this topic from four perspectives: fathers, mothers, children and professionals who work with, or for, children. The goal of this study is, by means of qualitative and quantitative data using questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, to explore perspectives of parents, children and

professionals on physical punishment of children and to determine the key factors behinds the use of this method by parents in Libya.

In order to achieve this aim, the research sets out to answer the following questions:

1) What disciplinary methods do Libyan parents use?

2) What are:

A) Libyan fathers' and mothers' beliefs, practices and understanding of physical punishment as a method of disciplining children?

B) Libyan children's experiences and perspectives on parental/family practices of physical punishment?

C) Libyan professionals' perspectives on physical punishment as a means of disciplining children?

3) What are the factors that appear to influence parental use of physical punishment in Libya, in terms of:

A) Parental factors such as gender, age, past experience, level of education, parents' issues.

B) Child-related factors such as gender, age, child's birth order and child misbehaviour.

C) Family and community factors such as family type and size, place of residence, isolation and social support, community exposure to violence (Libyan war 2011).

D) Societal and cultural influences such as traditions, Islam, knowledge and laws.

1.3 Significance of the Study (Contribution)

This study contributes to knowledge in many ways. First, it contributes to the literature field of child discipline methods in Libya, where there are very few existing studies on family matters, in either Arabic or English (Abdul Razzak, 2014; UNICEF 2014; UN 1998). More specifically, there is a shortage of research involving children and parents in Libya, particularly with regard to issues relevant to children's interests (Gadour 2008; United Nations 1998). Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap and focus not only on parents and children but also on professionals who work with, and for, children. The study uses mixed methods and addresses all level factors (individuals, family, community and culture) that appear to influence parental use of physical punishment in Libya, in order to provide a broader understanding of this topic. Hence, this study could be valuable, for example, to Libyan policy makers in terms of identifying factors and obstacles which the Government

should take into account in order to target efforts at reducing parental use of physical punishment. For instance, the findings of this study indicate that factors such as age, gender and positive social attitudes towards the use of physical methods seem to influence parental use of physical punishment. In addition, this study indicates that there are holes in Libyan legislation regarding protection of children within the family and therefore it makes suggestions for reducing these legal gaps.

The findings of this thesis could be helpful not only to the Libyan government but also to Arab and international organisations that are concerned with the wellbeing of children. For example, this study could provide a particularly useful information resource for the Department for Family and Childhood (DFC) in the League of Arab States (LAS), which reported in 2010 on the lack of research on children's experiences of violence within the family in the Arab region generally and in Libya particularly. In addition, this study could also be a useful resource for UNICEF and the UN. UNICEF, for instance, at the beginning of 2015 still had no data regarding the use of (violent) discipline methods in Libya (UNICEF 2015). Therefore, this study will help such organisations to gain an insight into child-rearing practices in Libyan society, in particular regarding parental use of physical methods and factors that influence this practice.

This study also adds to the limited knowledge about the construction of Muslim families within Arab culture as it highlights the influence of both Islam and Arab traditions on parenting. Although some studies in Muslim countries (Davidov and Khoury-Kassabri 2013; Sulimani-Aidan and Benbenishty 2013; Ben-Arieh and Haj-Yahia 2006) have explored the influence of certain Arab traditions, none have explored the influence of Islam. The study explores perceptions of child discipline values and practices among Arab Sunni Muslims and indicates that tension exists between Islam and local traditions, further suggesting that Muslim parents are influenced more by traditions than Islam. This finding represents a valuable contribution to the literature. This thesis also contributes to knowledge by being one of the few studies to address the important research area of the influence of war on the choice of child discipline methods at home. Although some literature has highlighted the influence of such extreme life events on children's and parents' wellbeing (Jawad et al 2009; Al-Turkait and Ohaeri 2008; Thabet et al 2004), there is a lack of research on how these experiences (war) affect parental use of physical punishment.

1.4 The Main Terms Used in This Thesis

Child: There has been a huge debate in the literature about how to define a 'child' (Pasura et al 2013; James et al 1998). However, in this study, a child is deemed to be a person

under the age of 18. The choice of this definition is based on my own experience as it is the one most commonly used in Libya, not only by professionals, but also by the general public.

Physical punishment: because in Libya there is no clear distinction between physical punishment and child abuse, for the purpose of this study I have adopted the following definition of physical punishment from the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child:

> Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Most involves hitting -smacking, slapping, spanking- children, with the hand or with an implement -whip, stick, belt, shoe and/or wooden spoon. But it can also involve, for example, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, burning, scalding or forced ingestion, for example, washing children's mouths out with soap or forcing them to swallow hot spices (Committee on the Rights of the Child 2006).

This definition was chosen because of its broadness in including both light physical punishment, such as slapping a child's hand, and severe physical punishment, such as hitting a child with an object such as a belt and/or a stick. It also not only refers to hitting a child but includes other practices that cause a child physical discomfort, such as washing the mouth out with soap.

Shariah law: an Arabic word 'الشريعة الإسلامية' meaning 'path or way'. Shariah law refers to the collection of Islamic regulations that deal with all aspect of Muslim lives, such as politics, crime, marriage, as well as personal matters like hygiene, praying and fasting (Anwar 1985).

Sheik: an Arabic word 'شيخ' meaning in this study an Islamic leader who teaches Islamic values to the public. In the Christian faith, it corresponds to the term 'clergy'.

Haram: an Arabic word 'حرام' meaning forbidden that refers to anything/act that is prohibited by Islam.

Halal: an Arabic word 'حلال' meaning permitted that refers to anything/any act that is allowed by Islam.

Aeab: an Arabic word 'عيب' referring to any act that is not acceptable in terms of tradition.

Fatwa: an Arabic word 'فتوى' referring to opinion/advice on Islamic law given by Islamic leaders with recognised authority.

Mufti: an Arabic word 'مفتي' referring to an Islamic scholar who is empowered to give fatwas on Islamic matters.

The Sunnah: an Arabic word 'السنه النبوية' referring to the Prophet Muhammad's way of life, including practices, habits and deeds. The deeds referred to in the Sunnah are commendable but not obligatory.

The Al.Hadith: an Arabic word 'الحديث الشريف' that literally means 'talk or statement' and refers to what the Prophet Muhammad said.

Al Jahiliyya Era: an Arabic word 'عصرالجاهلية' indicating the period before the prophethood of Muhammad which lasted about two hundred years (Shamsuddin 2014). The literal meaning of Al Jahiliyya in Arabic is ignorance (Shamsuddin 2014). However, that does not mean that Arabs at that time were ignorant. In contrast, during that time there were many Arab scientists in different areas, various successful Arab businesses and a lot of interest in poetry using fluent Arabic language; until today in modern Arab society, there are many famous poets (Shamsuddin 2014; Azzam and Gouverneur n.d). So, why was that era referred to as the era of ignorance? Al Jahiliyya actually reflects how far Arabs were at that time from the faith of Abraham. Arabs used to worship idols made of wood, clay and stones and sometimes even from dates, and called them God. The most well-known Arab idols were Hubble, Lat and Uzza (Shamsuddin 2014; Azzam and Gouverneur n.d).

1.5 The Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into 10 chapters:

Chapter (1) introduces the research topic and describes my motivations. I explain the main aim of the thesis and the research questions. It also discusses the importance of this study, mainly in relation to its potential contribution to the Libyan people as well as to other Arabic countries and international organisations.

Chapter (2) summarises relevant literature regarding various definitions of physical punishment worldwide and distinctions between physical punishment and abuse made in different countries. This chapter also introduces the main theoretical frameworks that explain the etiology of parental use of physical punishment. It justifies the adoption by this study of ecological theory, which is informed by social construction theory.

Chapter (3) explores child discipline methods across countries, focusing mainly on parental use of physical punishment. There is literature evidence that this method is commonly used by parents in Western and non-Western countries. This chapter also explores factors such

as age, gender and perceptions that relate to parents and children as individuals, and how these factors influence parents to use physical methods. This chapter also discusses the negative effects of physical methods on children's wellbeing.

Chapter (4) reviews literature about external factors that seem to influence parental use of physical punishment, including factors related to family, professionals, community and culture (traditions, laws, religion and knowledge). It also explores international legislation that aims to protect children from abuse within the family. The chapter indicates that there is a lack of studies relating to childhood and parenthood conducted in Muslim countries. This leads on to the exploration of parenting within Islamic Arab culture conducted in the following chapter.

Chapter (5) aims to explore the social construction of Islam within the Arab Sunni culture. It discusses the importance of Shariah law as the fundamental basis for Islam, which shapes Arab children and parents' lives, as well as the preceding Arab traditions that still seem to have an impact on Modern Arab Muslim families. Chapter 5 includes discussion of Islamic perceptions regarding the rights of children and parents in terms of child discipline methods. This chapter also considers child protection policies in Modern Arab countries and concludes with an examination of family life and the position of children in Muslim Arab Libyan society.

Chapter (6) considers the research methodology, procedures and ethical issues. The chapter includes discussion about philosophical issues (ontological and epistemological) that inform my research and the theoretical philosophy behind it. The chapter provides justification of the choices of particular methodology and data collection methods. Chapter 6 also explains the exceptional circumstances in which this research was carried out (in a war zone area) and how it affected the research and the researcher. Overall, I managed to administer 100 questionnaires and carry out 38 interviews in 10 urban and rural areas. This chapter also outlines the method used for recording the interviews, the process of data analysis and translation from Arabic into English and finally explores some of the key ethical issues.

Chapter (7) offers an overview of the profiles of participants in the questionnaires and interviews. For the questionnaire, the children's sample consisted of 34 male and female children while the parents' sample consisted of 33 fathers and 33 mothers. For the interviews, each group (children, fathers and mothers) comprised 10 participants. Further, eight Libyan professionals who work with or for children were interviewed. Chapter 7 discusses the findings about child disciplining methods in Libya (physical and non-physical methods) and participants' related perceptions and experiences. The findings indicate that parents commonly use physical punishment as a method of disciplining children. Furthermore, the majority of participants failed to see it as an act of violence. This chapter

also discusses the distinction that participants made between 'light' and 'severe' physical punishment and physical abuse.

Chapter (8) explores the main findings about individual factors related to parents and children that appear to influence parents to use physical punishment. The findings suggest that certain key factors appear to influence parents to use this method. For example, older parents and parents who work as professionals seem to be less likely to use this method, while parental issues such as anger and bad moods seem to not only increase the chance of use of physical punishment but also increase its severity. In addition, boys, first-born children and children considered as disrespectful and/or disobedient seem to be more likely to experience parental use of physical punishment.

Chapter (9) explores the remaining factors that appear to influence parental use of physical punishment, which relate to family, community, professionals and culture. According to participants, within local Arab tradition, using physical methods is both acceptable and expected, whilst Islam has no influence over use of such methods. They expressed that lack of understanding of Islam and failure to adhere to its values and lack of knowledge about alternative, healthy discipline methods are influential factors that lead parents to use and believe in physical methods. Indeed, this chapter indicates that the Government's role of raising awareness about child disciplining methods seems to be absent and there is real disconnection between the Government, professionals and parents, whilst there also seems to be disconnection between what the Government claims and the reality.

Chapter (10), the final chapter of this thesis, looks both back and forward. It considers the study's main limitations and strengths and offers reflection on the study. Chapter 10 also summarises the key findings of the thesis, makes recommendations to policy makers in Libya and highlights new areas of study that opened up during this research process. Suggested recommendations for enhancing child protection services in Libya include opening offices to deal with child abuse, defining child abuse, establishing machinery for receipt of children complaints by well-trained professionals, and raising educational levels and Islamic awareness among parents, children and professionals.

The following chapter explores literature that provides definitions of physical punishment.

Chapter (2) Literature Review

'What is Physical Punishment?'

2.1 Introduction

The use of physical punishment of children by parents appears to be commonly practised across the world (Andrade et al 2011; Grogan-Kaylor and Otis 2007; Alyahri and Goodman 2008; Youssef et al 1998). Many studies suggest that this method of disciplining children is rooted in culture (Kyei-Gyamfi 2011; Keshavarz and Baharudin 2009; Twum-Danso Imoh 2010). Save the Children (1999), for example, reports that most Spanish people see physical punishment as an acceptable method, therefore, it does not need to be questioned. Flynn (1996) also claims that there is strong normative support for American parents to use this method. However, the term 'physical punishment' can be understood in many different ways. Therefore, the question here is: How is the physical punishment of children defined?

2.2 Definitions of Physical Punishment

There are several definitions of physical punishment of children, ranging from those that focus on children feeling pain or discomfort, to those that define physical punishment relative to the physical harm caused to children. However, whether the use of this method in particular, by parents, leads a child to experience pain or physical injury is interpreted differently across the world. For example, in Sweden, all forms of parental use of physical punishment are called abuse (Gershoff 2008), while in the UK (NSPCC 2010) and USA (Whipple and Richey 1997) it is called physical punishment as long as it does not leave marks on the child's body, and in other countries, such as Kuwait (Qasem et al 1998) and Iran (Oveisi et al 2010), parental use of physical methods is considered as the parents' right.

Increasingly, there is an ongoing debate among policy-makers, researchers and academics across the world regarding the difference between physical punishment of children and physical abuse. Halpenny and Nixon (2010) and Cawson et al (2000) argue that it is impossible to draw a line between physical punishment and abuse; when physical punishment ends abuse begins. On the other hand, Saunders and Goddard (2010) divide physical punishment into 'normative' physical punishment, such as a painful slap on a child's backside, and more severe physical punishment termed 'abuse'.

In the next section, I will explore some definitions of physical punishment and abuse provided by various international organisations, policy makers, and researchers around the world. Discussion about these definitions will then follow.

Save the Children (2003, pp1), for example, define physical punishment of children as:

> The use of physical force intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort for disciplining, correction, control and changing behaviour or in the belief of educating/bringing up the child. Physical pain can be caused by different means such as hitting the child with a hand or other object, kicking, shaking or throwing the child, pinching or pulling the hair, caning or whipping

The NSPCC, in the UK (2009, pp1), defines physical punishment as:

> The use of force inflicted on a child, usually as a corrective measure for dangerous or bad behaviour. This includes actions such as slapping on the leg, arm, or hand with a bare hand, smacking on the bottom with a bare hand, slapping on the face, head or ears or pinching.

Furthermore, physical punishment is defined by Straus (1994) as "the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain but not injury for the purposes of correction or control of the child's behaviour" (cited by Zespy 2003, pp5). It seems that all the definitions of physical punishment given above share the view that physical punishment aims to make the child experience pain for disciplining/educating purposes. However, Straus makes a clear distinction between physical punishment and abuse.

With regard to physical abuse, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2007, pp8) defines it as:

> Any intentional use of physical action against a child that causes or is likely to cause harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity, including beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangulation, scalding, burning, deliberate poisoning and suffocation, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.

Department for Education and Skills in UK (2006) defines physical abuse as:

> It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Moreover, physical abuse is also defined by the Scottish Government (2010, pp13) as:

> Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after.

NCANDS in USA (2005) define physical abuse as "a type of maltreatment that refers to physical acts that caused or could have caused physical injury to the child" (cited by ChildONEurope, n.d., pp37). Asmussen (2010) also defines physical abuse as:

> The use of physical force against a child, which includes a range of violent behaviours such as hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning, and suffocating. It is also child abuse if a carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

In addition, some Arabic researchers have drawn a line between physical punishment and abuse. For example, Al.Mohammad (n.d., n.p) defines physical abuse as:

> A pattern of behaviour that leads to non-accidental injuries to children and it can be as a result of the intention to over-discipline, administer corporal punishment, or release a fit of anger.

Meanwhile, Al. Mallah (2014, n.p) thinks that "physical abuse does not mean beating that is intended to educate and discipline a child but it is severe beating either by using the hand or an object". It seems that all the above physical abuse definitions agree that physical abuse is the use of physical punishment that leads to harm to a child's body. However, The WHO clarify that physical abuse should not be understood only as physical harm but also as potential damage to a child's health and dignity.

In general, and based on these definitions, it appears that there are two factors to be taken into consideration when distinguishing between physical punishment and physical abuse: first, the consequences, which can be either 'pain or injuries', and second, the intention behind using a physical method 'to discipline/inflict pain but not to harm the child'. However, it is very difficult to establish parents' intentions as some can use their "good intention to discipline a child" to justify their use of this method. In addition, some of the definitions of child abuse claim that physical punishment is abuse even when it does not injure a child. For instance, the WHO argue that the harm is not necessarily visible (injuries) but can leave a deeper impact on a child's wellbeing, including psychological and mental damage. Indeed, parental use of physical punishment has been associated with increases in a wide range of negative effects on children's well-being. This is discussed in more detail in the section on children's perceptions of physical punishment in the next chapter.

Parton (1985) argues that differentiating physical punishment from abuse not only depends on whether it leads to injury to a child but how it is perceived by the public. Whether the act is regarded as 'abuse' depends on how cultural values define what is and is not acceptable. However, the question here is what culture means? Literature shows that the concept of 'culture' is varied in meaning and practice across and within countries. According to Diller (1999, pp48) culture has been described as 'a complex concept to grasp', and by Hays

(2001, pp10) 'the most inclusive term'. In addition, its meanings change over time, place and context[1] (Eisenhart 2001). Connolly et al (2006) believes that culture was connected with the cultivation of crops and with agriculture. It was also associated with spiritual worship and this component of its use led to the development of the term 'cult' (Smith 2001). Elements of the original definition remain, and when people today speak of their 'culture' they often refer to their land of origin (O'Hagan 2001). William (1976) proposes that 'culture' in modern times reflects the historical changes in its definition. Therefore, 'culture' has generally three meanings, first, culture as the process of intellectual and aesthetic development. Second, as artistic activity (for example, art, film, theatre) and finally, as a way of life of people (including values and norms). It is the last definition of culture that is the most common one used in defining culture generally (O'Hagan 2001) and the most of interest to researchers and professionals in child protection (Connolly et al 2006).

Essentially, culture is seen as shared perceptions, attitudes and behaviours about the world which influence people experiences, how decisions are made and by whom, and shape what is perceived appropriate behaviour and what not within any given society (Connolly et al 2006; Kim 2001). According to O'Hagan (2001) culture has also been determined by the idea, values and meanings which have developed over time. These values and meanings shaped people's understanding and knowledge of the world in which they live (O'Hagan 2001) and even regarded by members of that community as significant in defining that community identity (Duncan 1998). Traditional values have contributed to and are strengthened by the establishment of important elements of culture, such as religion, customs, myth, morality, language, arts, knowledge, law and education (O'Hagan 2001; Duncan 1998). Culture embraces all of these components, and an individual might regard each, some of all of them as significant components of their own culture (O'Hagan 2001). Indeed, as in this study, traditions, religion, laws and knowledge considered to be important to understand child-rearing methods in particular, the use of physical punishment[2]. Our perceptions and behaviour towards parent-child relationship, family life, and child-rearing methods and children's rights are all strongly influenced by our cultures values; they are influenced differently in different cultures[3] (O'Hagan 2001) and even within various social groups in the same country[4] (Eisenhart 2001; Duncan 1998; An-Naim 1992). Duncan (1998) emphasises that even cultural practice can vary also with one country as a result of many differences based on variables such as social class, education and gender. Indeed, the literature shows for example that the level of parents' education and employment status

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[1] Will be explored later in detail.
[2] See section 4.5.
[3] See section 4.5
[4] See section 3.3.

within one country has different influence on parents' understanding and choices of child discipline methods[5]. Also, these values can be subjected to change over time even within the same country, as the case for example in America and the UK regarding child-rearing methods, where parenting styles changed over decades from authoritarian to authoritative[6] and where public views about the use of corporal punishment have changed significantly since 1945 (Parton 1985). According to Tisdall (2012), this variation can be seen in parts of local law. A good example can be seen among Arabic countries. Although they share some broad values and norms regarding children's rights and protection, there will be some variation at the level of policy and law between individual Arabic countries. Additionally, within a given Arabic country there may be significant variation in family practices between different families, and even individuals, within the same family[7].

This lead many researchers believe that the concept of 'child abuse' cannot automatically be recognised everywhere, as it is socially constructed and arises from the values and norms of the dominant social group (Taylor 1989; Freeman 1983; Gelles 1975). Ochen et al (2012), for example, point out that such terms are internal –based on the local traditions– rather than external. They reported that, for instance, in many traditional African norms, the use of terms such as 'protection of children from abuse' may not exist although there are some norms already embedded within the practice of the family and community to protect children. This means that thresholds of what is and is not acceptable vary across cultures and even within cultures and will influence parents and how they perceive what is appropriate with regard to child discipline. Parton (2006; 1991; 1985) and Reder et al. (1993) point out that serious attention should be given to the social context of parental use of physical punishment/abuse by addressing the structural factors that relate to children, parents, professionals and environment in every culture, to understand the context of parents' behaviours. Parton (2006), for example, argues that social factors have a direct impact on parents' abilities to bring up and care for their children. He thinks that for parents to carry out their role with their children effectively, a wide range of environmental factors should be looked at, such as family history of abuse, family income, parents' employment, family social integration and community support. In addition, professionals' experiences and their attitudes to physical punishment/abuse are important to recognising the signs of children in need of protection (Parton 1991; 1996).

Reder et al (1993) propose what they call 'the social construction of child abuse', which acknowledges that 'child abuse' as a problem requires societies to respond to it in order for it

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[5] See sections 3.3.1.1 and 4.4.
[6] See the section on changes in cultural values under section 4.6.
[7] Will be explored in detail in section 5.5.

to change over time. They explain that there are many integral factors that continuously feed into each other over time. For example, as society gradually modifies its attitudes to children and their welfare, expectations of parents and standards of care are subjected to reconsideration. Professionals themselves tend to be influenced by social beliefs and are also guided by modern theories and knowledge. Over time, social attitudes can be consolidated through legislation. Further, at other times, the raising of social concern about the state's role can lead to public inquiries which can result in modification of practice and even lead to the passing of new laws. Therefore, the concept of 'child abuse' is constantly subjected to change as its construction arises from a range of social and historical contexts.

Kempe (1979) suggests that society's recognition of 'child abuse' goes through many stages over time. In the first stage, society denies that child abuse can happen in the family and believe that only mentally ill or bad parents or non-biological parents or strangers would commit such an act. The second stage occurs when society starts to recognise severe physical punishment as abuse. Stage three happens when society draws attention to child neglect as abuse. In the final stage, society begins to pay attention to sexual child abuse.

Clearly, it seems that social factors can either help or hinder parental functions, which can influence the use of physical punishment[8]. Because social and cultural factors are very important elements in understanding the use of physical punishment/abuse by parents, I will explore the social constructionist approach, which considers all of these factors, rather than using models such as the psychological model that do not take account of the broader context.

2.3 Social Construction Theory

Berger and Luckmann (1966) suggest that all knowledge comes from, and is maintained through, social interaction. Social Construction theory was described by Derry (1999) as an approach that emphasises the importance of social factors within a culture in informing understanding of the events that occur in a society, and the knowledge constructs based on this. The central theme of the social construction approach is that people interact with culture over time, and thereby they learn concepts and mental representations of acceptable and unacceptable actions that eventually become habits and roles played out in relation to each other (Lupton and Barclay1997; Burr 1995; Berger and Luckmann 1966).

In the case of parenting, in every society there are a set of expectations regarding fathers' and mothers' behaviours towards their children; this is what is called "the social construction

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[8] Will be discussed in detail in chapters 3 and 4.

of parenting". Apple and Golden (1997), for example, refer to the social construction of parenting as a process whereby mothering and fathering are socially defined based on economic, social and historical forces which are influenced by the time, place and social location in which parents live and interact. According to constructionist theory (Lupton and Barclay1997; Berger and Luckmann 1966), parents receive cultural codes in a visual, oral, or written form, regarding their roles and how these roles can be fulfilled. Examples explored in the section on traditions in chapter 4 will demonstrate that parents actually learn from their culture the roles they have to play and the expectations that they have to meet to be considered a good parent. Coltrane (1998, pp3) states that "only by looking at the structural constraints people face, can we understand how cultural definitions and practices governing gender and families have developed". Social construction theorists argue that the values in any society help us to understand the manner in which parents will perceive and react to a phenomenon. The values and traditions of a culture are transmitted from one generation to another through child rearing practices (Keshavarz and Baharudin 2009). Thus, the meaning that parents give to child discipline methods is dependent upon the discourses portrayed within the culture. Therefore, to make a sense of child discipline methods, it is very important to explore the cultural context of parents (Luke 1994; Sprott 1994; Thurer 1994; Glenn 1994; Phoenix et al 1991).

According to Cicchetti and Cohen (2006) and Belsky and Vondra (1989) the social construction approach looks for explanations of social phenomena based on inquiring into the social practices engaged in by people and their interaction with each other; this is contrary to traditional approaches such as the psychology approach, which explains social phenomena as resulting from factors related to the person's cognitions and motivations, and the sociological approach that focuses on outside factors affecting a person (economy, marriage and family-type). I will explore how these theories explain the phenomena of parental use of physical punishment/child abuse, which constitutes the main focus of this study.

Awareness of 'child abuse' as an issue started in the early 1970s in the UK (Parton 1985). Initially, this phenomenon was viewed as a medical social problem; there was an assumption that child abuse was an illness, thus a medical approach was the best way of diagnosing, explaining and treating the cause of the disease, namely 'abusive parents' (Otway 1996). This approach was developed by Henry Kempe and his colleagues (1962) in terms of the 'battered child syndrome' (Parton 1996), which is defined as "a clinical condition in young children who have received serious physical abuse, from a parent or foster parent which is a frequent cause of permanent injury or death" (Kempe et al 1985, pp143). Studies at that time

were frequently influenced by the psychological model or "the disease model of child abuse", as Parton (1985) calls it, which focuses on identifying the personality and characteristics of abusive parents (Gelles 1992; Zigler and Hall 1989). Using this approach, parents were offered treatment and therapy focusing on the psychiatric/psychological factors seen as causing their abusive behaviour (Myers et al 2002; Belsky and Vondra 1989).

The psychological model has been criticised for blaming parents who were considered to be victims of their own social factors and for not giving enough attention to social factors such as family structure, size, income, and local norms and practice that encourage the use of physical and violent methods within the family (Parton 2006;1996; 1985; 1991; Belsky and Vondra 1989; Belsky 1978), nor to children's own experiences of the social environment (Woodhead 1997; James and Prout 1997; 1990), which may create pressure that influences parents and their functioning. As more cases of less severe parental use of physical punishment were reported and investigated in the USA, the focus on parents decreased and the influence of culture increased (Belsky and Vondra 1989). Over time, the literature reflects a shift among social researchers towards another theory which considers multiple social dimensions that influence physical punishment of children, namely the sociological model (Myers et al 2002; Belsky and Vondra 1989; Belsky 1978).

The sociological model focuses more on factors beyond parents; it links the etiology of parental use of physical punishment to social factors, such as lack of social support, isolation, unemployment, job dissatisfaction, single parenthood, economic and financial difficulties (Zigler and Hall 2000; Belsky and Vondra 1989; Crittenden and Ainsworth 1989). Belsky and Vondra (1989) argue that the fundamental principle of the sociological model of parental use of physical punishment is that in a society where the use of violent methods is acceptable and encouraged as a technique to resolve disputes: in which a child is considered to be the property of their parents and in which religious beliefs like "spare the rod and spoil the child" are widespread, it will be prevalent. Therefore, within this approach, addressing parental use of physical punishment/child abuse is based on offering supportive programmes to families at risk of child abuse in order to reduce parental feelings of stress and isolation (Zigler and Hall 2000). This approach has been also criticised for failing to consider the impact of parent- and child-related factors on the etiology of parental use of physical punishment (Corsaro 2005; Woodhead 1997; Belsky and Vondra 1989; Danziger 1970).

The use of physical punishment by parents in both the psychological and sociological models is linked to parental factors and related social factors. They assume that the parent-child relationship is unidirectional, with only parents and their culture having influence on the

use of physical punishment (Belsky and Vondra 1989) and regard children as passive beings, excluded from the social processes surrounding them (see Corsaro 2005; Christensen and James 2000; James and Prout 1997; Lupton and Barclay 1997; Jenks 1982; Hardman 1973). Over the years, and within the sociological approach, academics developed a model called "the effect-of-child-caregiver" that shifted the focus from parents alone to also include children **(**Myers et al 2002). The effect-of-child-caregiver model underscores the role of child behaviour in determining the child-parents relationship, which means that children can be responsible for the use of physical punishment by parents (Belsky and Vondra 1989). However, and according to this model, whilst children can play a role in parental use of physical punishment, they do not cause it. For instance, when children misbehave that may lead a parent who cannot handle the child's misbehaviour to use and misuse this method. However, it is the adult's responsibility to deal with their children without harming them, and it is not the child's fault when a parent is unable or unwilling to do so (Scannapieco and Connell-Carrick 2005; Juby 2005; Belsky and Vondra 1989). This model has been also criticised for paying a lot of attention to the role of children in their maltreatment but neglecting other factors (Belsky 1980).

In the 1970s, criticism of the traditional theories led to the emergence in the UK of the social constructionist approach, which views both childhood and parenthood as social constructions (Corsaro 2005; Christensen and James 2000; Apple and Golden 1997; James and Prout 1997; Lupton and Barclay1997; Jenks, 1982; Hardman 1973; Berger and Luckmann 1966). Children within this theory were considered to be active social agents who are involved in construction and reconstruction of their social lives. This new understanding brought fundamental changes to childhood studies, emphasising the need to take children seriously by listening to them, and the recognition of children's agency and rights (Tisdall 2012; Corsaro 2005; James and Prout 1997; Hardman 1973). According to this perspective, any understanding of children's agency and rights needs to also explore social, cultural and historical factors related to these factors (Corsaro 2005; Woodhead 1997; Danziger 1970). Mayall (2000) thinks that proper understanding of the social condition of childhood requires consideration of all members and social groups within the given society, which then can provide a firm basis of knowledge for working towards implementation (through policy) of children's rights.

It must be emphasised that the concept of children's rights is derived from professionals who depend on child development theory -mainly in Western countries- as a basis for their work with children (Mayall 2000). This raises one very important danger which Boyden (1990) calls 'the globalisation of development' which refers to assumptions derived from Western ideas about what children rights are. These universal and free-standing rights are assumed

to fit all social and cultural contexts. Further, it has been argued that 'children's rights' are, to some extent, changeable over time in response to the changes in cultural values (Merry, 2001). As many researchers such as (Twun-Danso Imoh 2012; De Waal 2002; Boyden 1997; Stephens 1995) noted that the UN Convention on the Right of the Child[9](UNCRC) is dominated by Western concepts which cannot be applied to other cultures all the time. The UNCRC, for example, implies that biological-based relations between children and their parents are more natural and fundamental than other relationships of family, relatives and/or community members. This may not always be true in cultures where wider, community, based networks of caring for children are the norm. Additionally, in aiming to limit and regulate child abuse[10], it does not consider the values of other some social worlds, such as in some Arabic countries and African countries, where some people think parents' use of physical punishment is their right and should not considered to be a violent method of discipline[11]. Indeed, An-Naim (1992) claims that the traditional values and cultural practice of any society or social group should be a significant consideration, as they are an important determinant of compliance with children rights standards. It needs to be recognised that there is a tension here: the balance to be struck between a framework of children's rights which applies across cultures, and sensitivity to applying children's rights in a way that is consistent with particular cultures is not an easy or unproblematic one. However, while the balance may be a difficult one, as Ncube (1998) has argued, it is necessary to strike one by both accepting that children's rights standards are universal, and that their actual application must take cognisance of cultural diversity (Ncube 1998).

Influenced by the social construction approach which emphasis on understanding the cultural context of any given society, many academics attempted to develop a comprehensive framework, in particular, to explain and understand parental use of physical punishment/child abuse; this led to the emergence of the ecological approach (Parton 2006; 1996; 1991; 1985).

2.4 The Ecological Approach

The ecological approach provides a bridge between the psychological, sociological, and effect-of-child-caregiver approaches, by focusing on parents, children and environmental factors with a view to understanding the etiology of parental use of physical punishment/child abuse. In 1980 Belsky integrated all three of the abovementioned models and offered an ecological model using a modified version of Bronfenbrenner's theory (1977). Ecological

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[9] Explored on the section Libya and International Conventions on the Rights of the Child under section 5.6.
[10] See Article 19.
[11] See the section 3.2, 3.3.11 and a critique of Libyan child policy under section 5.6.

theory -which is informed by the social construction approach- is considered to be the most popular theory for explaining factors influencing parental use of physical punishment (Zielinski and Bradshaw 2013; Hong et al 2011; Grogan-Kaylor and Otis 2007; Day et al 1998; Parton 1985), as this theory emphasises the interplay between parents, children, extended family and the social context (Kolko 2002; Brower 1988).

The ecological approach explains the etiology of parental use of physical punishment as a multifaceted process. In order to understand an individual's behaviour, this theory focuses on the personality and developmental history of parents, in the context of the environment in which they live. The ecological approach examines many factors that influence a child, including the family setting, friends, community and the wider society. In addition, this approach examines how factors impact on each other over time, which may lead to occurrence of physical punishment by parents (Leon et al 2008; Zimmerer 2004; Jack 2001; Belsky and Vondra 1989; Belsky 1980). This means that this model gives consideration to the interaction, over time, of three main domains: parents, children and environmental, which include factors such as parents' age and sex, child's age and sex and family type and social norms and support. It also takes into account a number of risk and protective factors that affect parents' continuity of the use of physical methods into the second generation (Belsky and Vondra 1989). The use of this theory is important to this study as it provides a framework for factors that influence Libyan parents' use of physical punishment in the context of Islamic and Arabic culture. Belsky's ecological theory (1980) has six levels, as summarised in Table 2.1.

Table (2.1) Summary of Ecological Theory Levels

Level	Definition	Characteristics
1. Ontogenic System	Focuses on personal and historical factors of individuals (parents and children)	Parents' Characteristics: parents' perceptions of physical punishment and children, parents' age, sex, past experiences of physical punishment, level of education, parenting styles and issues. Children's Characteristics: children's perceptions of physical punishment, child's age and age group, child's sex, child's misbehaviour, child's birth order.
2. Micro-System	Refers to activities and interpersonal relations experienced by the individual in the immediate environment that have the most impact on a child's development, namely the family	Family Type and size

3. Meso-System	Refers to interrelationships between two or more micro-systems in which the individual is situated, such as home, school, and religious organisations	Children experiences at Teaching Centres and Professionals' Perceptions of Physical Punishment
4. Exo-system	Involves links between social settings within the community, one of which does not directly affect children	Place of Residence (neighbourhood), Parents Social Support network and Parents' Work Experience
5. Macro-System	Refers to a culture in which individuals and family live and interact.	Culture, which includes Traditions, Knowledge, Religious Beliefs and Laws.
6. Chrono-system	Comprises changes that happen in the environment over the life course, such as historical or life events.	Changes in the Family Structure Exposure to War

The ecological theory is unique as it conceptualises parental use of physical punishment/child abuse as a social-psychological phenomenon that is determined by multiple factors (Parton 1985; Belsky 1980). According to this theory, physical punishment/child abuse results not only from issues in person-environment exchanges but also from outside the immediate environment of a child and family through difficulties occurring across support systems and resources which exert influence on the development and learning of a child (Odom and Wolery 2003; Thurman 1997). This reflects that the ecological model has recognised the importance of the culture of children, families, and communities (Odom and Wolery 2003). Therefore, this theory considers children as active agents who influence their family and community and, similarly, they are influenced by their environments (Bronfenbrenner 1977; 1979).

In addition, the ecological theory emphasises the significant interplay that occurs over time among individuals, families, community, and culture (Leon et al 2008; Belsky 1980). This model provides a systemic approach to understanding people's behaviour and the way they function, and how all levels of the ecological system interact with each other over time in shaping human development. It offers an explanation on how interaction between individuals, their family, community and social culture can determine the etiology of child abuse (Ben-Arieh and Attar-Schwartz 2013; Tudge and Hogan 2005; Scannapieco and Connell-Carrick 2005; Juby 2005). Therefore, this theory is considered to be a valuable tool for child welfare workers. Indeed, it is extensively recognised that in order to understand and improve child welfare systems, social workers need a multi perspective approach to identify, assess and address challenges within the child welfare system, to start to intervene to

protect children at risk. Consequently, many researchers suggest that the ecological model is the best approach for achieving that aim (Leon et al 2008; Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998; Parton 1985). The World Health Organization (2006) has unambiguously confirmed that the phenomenon of child abuse can be ended and prevented, while its causes indeed are multipart issues that require a multidisciplinary perspective.

Indeed, many researchers acknowledge that it is important to understand that parental use of physical punishment/child abuse occurs not as a result of a single factor but it is associated with various factors (Sidebotham et al 2001; Jack 2000; Loril 1998; Parton1985). Sidebotham and the ALSPAC Study Team (2006) stated that child abuse is associated with a range of factors, with the strongest risks stemming from socio-economic factors and parental background. Others have linked community factors to child abuse, including lack of social support and place of residence (Mikaeili et al 2013; Davis 1999). Moreover, social variables such as the belief that using physical methods to discipline children is for the children's own good, contribute to child abuse (Fakunmoju and Bammeke 2013; Khoury-Kassabri and Straus 2011; Oveisi et al 2010). Studies also suggest that social norms that approve using violence with children are associated with the use of physical punishment (Davidov and Khoury-Kassabri 2013; Dietz 2000), and this factor has also been associated with increases in cases of physical abuse (Crouch and Behl 2001; Juby 2009). Therefore, evidence shows that addressing risk and protective factors at each ecological level via public strategies is more likely to reduce not only the amount of abuse that occurs but also reduce its severity (Reading et al 2009).

However, the ecological approach has been criticised as lacking support from empirical studies and is therefore considered to be a perspective rather than a formal theory (Wakefield 1996). However, as is shown in chapters 3 and 4, parental use of physical punishment/child abuse is a "multifaceted phenomenon". This is well documented and grounded in many empirical studies of risk and protective factors related to parents, children, family, community and culture that lead to the use of physical punishment by parents. Moreover, although the ecological framework cannot yet identify the essential and sufficient circumstances that cause child abuse to take place (Belsky 1980), it can be a very helpful tool to guide future empirical examination and to direct efforts that aim at reducing the occurrence of physical punishment of children (Leon et al 2008; Belsky 1980).

Overall, the ecological theory is considered to be the prevailing model in many fields as a way to understand people and their environment in order to understand their behaviour (Campbell 2014; Brower 1988). This is very important for social work and social policy

research that aims at addressing and reducing a social problem such as parental use of physical punishment/abuse (Campbell 2014; Brower 1988).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter summarises views on what physical punishment means across the world and the main theoretical frameworks that explain the etiology of parental use of physical punishment. It demonstrates that the culture in which parents live and interact with others shapes their beliefs and behaviours. As a result of the prevalence of different cultures around the world, parental use of physical punishment is defined differently. For example, what is considered to be physical punishment in the UK is considered to be abuse in Sweden, and what is considered to be abuse in the UK is considered to be physical punishment in Turkey. Consequently, there is an ongoing debate among many academics and researchers about what constitutes physical punishment and abuse. Cultural differences are inherent in this debate. The ecological theory, which is informed by the social construction approach, places emphasis on the importance of integration between different factors within a culture to understand parenting and child-rearing practice. Therefore, this theory was adopted in this study to understand parental use of physical punishment within Libyan society and culture.

Chapter (3) Literature Review

The Use of Physical Punishment and Personal Factors Influencing its Use

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an international review of literature on parenting and child discipline methods. Hart (1998) argues that a review of the literature is significant, because it helps to inform understanding of the topic, what has been researched, how it has been done and what are the key issues. My literature review focuses first on exploring child discipline methods that are used by parents in Western and non-Western countries, in particular the use of the most common discipline techniques, namely physical punishment. Second, this chapter explores personal factors related to parents and children that have been shown to influence parents to use physical punishment of children.

3.2 The Use of Physical Punishment throughout the World

Physical punishment is a method of disciplining children that many parents practise throughout the world (Grogan-Kaylor and Otis 2007; Andrade et al 2011). A comprehensive review of the literature shows that this method is widespread practice across Western and non-Western societies. However, it is mostly used as an adjunct to other non-physical methods (Twum-Danso Imoh 2013; Usta et al 2013; Hadiif 2012; Andrade et al 2011; Binghalib 2011; Halpenny et al 2010; Abolfotouh et al 2009; Grogan-Kaylor and Otis 2007; Anderson et al 2002; Straus and Stewart 1999).

Literature on non-Western countries, in particular in the Arabic region, shows that beating is the most common method of disciplining children and is used with other non-physical methods. Studies in Egypt (Abolfotouh et al 2009, N=400; Youssef et al 1998, N=2,170), in Yemen (Alyahri and Goodman 2008, N=1,196), in Algeria (Hadiif 2012, national survey) and in Lebanon (Usta et al 2013, N=1028) show that parental use of physical punishment as a means of disciplining children is more widespread than non-physical punishment. Abolfotouh et al (2009) identified that verbal methods children experience in addition to physical methods include yelling, insulting, taking away a toy or privilege, discussing, explaining and time out. With regard to physical methods, Youssef et al (1998) reported that parents often beat their children using bare hands, either open or set in a clenched fist, followed by whipping using a belt or a hose, a stick, a shoe, a slipper, or a metal chain. Alyahri and

Goodman (2008) also found that Yemeni parents use various objects to hit their children with, such as a belt, stick or other objects. Further, studies show that some Arabic parents may use severe forms of physical punishment with their children. Abolfotouh et al (2009), for example, revealed that 20% out of 400 children stated that parental use of physical methods left marks on their bodies. Youssef et al (1998) found that 4.18% out of 2,170 children were burned by skin contact with a hot metallic object such as a bar, spoon, cigarette, or scalded by putting their hands in hot water. In addition, a quarter of children reported physical injuries amounting to fractures, loss of consciousness and a permanent disability. However, the most common injuries were bumps, contusions and wounds, and 22.80% of these injuries required medical consultation.

Studies in African countries also show that the use of physical discipline of children is common in Kenya (LeVine and LeVine 1963) and in Ghana (Kyei-Gyamfi 2011; Twum-Danso Imoh 2010). Twum-Danso Imoh (2010) carried out research on 158 school children, aged 10-16, in rural and urban areas and found the majority (61.4%) experienced physical punishment by parents or primary caregivers. All the studies that were reviewed in Sub-Sahara Africa identified caning as the most common form of physical punishment of children. Kyei-Gyamfi (2011) reported that it was common for Ghanaian children to experience caning daily in order to correct their misbehaviour. However, the most common verbal method was insulting a child (Twum-Danso Imoh 2010) and food deprivation, banishment and referral to the father (LeVine and LeVine 1963). It also appears that some African children experience severe parental punishment. LeVine and LeVine (1963), for example, reported that children were sometimes chased out of the house at night, when it was chilly and frightening for them, and they had to sleep without blankets in the children's house or in the house of a nearby relative. In addition, some mothers punished their children in the early morning by withholding their clothes, forcing them to suffer the cold and shame of nakedness outside or in the house, or tied a child to a post in the house for a few hours.

Based on these studies, it appears that in many non-Western countries, parental use of physical methods as means of disciplining children is widespread and is used as an adjunct to verbal methods. However, is this the case in Western countries? Studies in the UK show similar results; that British parents use physical forms (smacking) to discipline their children alongside verbal methods. Anderson et al (2002, N=692) found that more than half of Scottish parents (51%) admitted using physical punishment with their children. Ghate et al (2004) conducted a survey in England, with a sample of 1250 parents and they found that 58% of parents smack their children. Halpenny et al (2010) conducted a study on 1353 Irish parents and found that 25% of parents used physical methods to control their children, such

as smacking on the bottom, hand, arm or leg. It appears that physical punishment (smacking) as a method of disciplining children is the most common form used in the UK. However, it seems that within the UK, England has the highest rate, followed by Scotland and then Northern Ireland. However, Anderson et al (2002) stated that 90% of parents spank their children only at home. This would seem to indicate that parents' behaviour is influenced by public attitudes. On the other hand, cases have been reported where parents abuse the use of physical punishment in British society. For example, Halpenny et al (2010) found that a few parents kicked or knocked down a child. Anderson et al (2002) found that some Scottish parents washed a child's mouth with soap or pulled their ears or hair. With regard to non-physical methods used by British parents, it seems that many parents use non-aggressive methods such as rewarding good behaviour, talking with a child calmly, time out, stopping a child from going out or taking away treats, sending a child to their room and telling them that they make their parent(s) upset. Few British parents appear to use psychologically aggressive strategies such as shouting and swearing (Halpenny et al 2010; Anderson et al 2002).

In general, it seems that the use of physical punishment of children in different forms - beating, caning and smacking- with different levels of severity occur in both Western and non-Western societies, although in Western societies the practice is more controlled through legislation[12].The question here is what makes parents use physical punishemnt to control their children's misbehaviour in the first place?

3.3 Factors Influencing Parental Use of Physical Punishment

There appear to be many factors that influence parental use of physical punishment, such as factors associated with parents' age and sex and others related to the child's age and sex (Labbe et al 2012; Clement and Chamberland 2009). In addition, there are factors related to family, community and culture (Davidov and Khoury-Kassabri, 2013; Vaaler et al 2008; Dietz 2000; Wiehe 1990). Durrant et al (2003) believe that the more these factors are present, the greater the likelihood that parents will use physical punishment. Informed by ecological theory, these factors will be presented within the light of this theory's levels. In this chapter, the focus will be on the first level, the ontogeny system.

3.3.1 Ontogenic System

The ontogeny system is the first level of ecological theory that focuses on personal and historical factors (Juby 2005; Myers et al 2002; Zigler and Hall 2000). Bronfenbrenner

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[12] Will be explored in detail in the section on laws under section 4.5.

divided personal characteristics into three categories: 1. Demand characteristics, which are obvious to other people, such as age, gender and physical appearance. 2. Resource characteristics, which are related to personal history and skills, such as past experiences and level of education. In addition, are social and material resources such as caring parents and educational chances. 3. Force characteristics are those that have to do with differences in motivation and persistence (Tudge 2008). According to this theory, parents' personal characteristics shape their personality, which, in turn, shapes their parenting function. In addition, child characteristics such as gender and age can be factors that determine the use of physical punishment by parents. Therefore, in the next section, the focus will be on the factors most frequently cited in the literature in relation to parents' and children's characteristics.

3.3.1.1 Parents' Characteristics

This section explores parental factors influencing the use of physical punishment, which include parents' perceptions of physical punishment and children, parents' age, gender, past experiences of physical punishment, level of education, parenting styles and issues.

Parents' Perceptions of Physical Punishment and Children

Several studies that have been carried out on parents' perceptions of physical punishment found that many parents believe in physical punishment as an educational method (Oveisi et al 2010; Lansford 2010b; Orhon et al 2006; Qasem et al 1998). Clement and Chamberland (2009), who investigated maternal attitudes towards physical discipline among a sample of 3148 Canadian women, found that the majority of mothers (80%) seemed to believe that it is necessary to set limits for children and 55% thought that parents who slap their children have the right to do so, and it is not wrong for parents to slap their children. Kyei-Gyamfi (2011) reported that Ghanaians believe that children need discipline when they get out of line and they consider punishing the child severely as the best way to teach them a good lesson, which is for their own good. In Iran, Oveisi et al (2010, N=42) found that 80% of the mothers in their sample believed that educating a child should involve punishment, and most of them questioned whether children will learn, if they do not punish them physically. Furthermore, they found that more than half of the participants thought that parental use of physical methods is not abuse and abuse only occurs when physical punishment leads to severe harm and hospitalization of a child. It seems that parents who use physical methods share common beliefs such as: physical punishment is an effective educational method, it is for children's own good, it is not abuse and parents have the right to use it. However, to what extent do these perceptions affect parents' use of this method?

Chapter 3

It has been shown that parents' perceptions of physical punishment are associated with the use of this method (Khoury-Kassabri and Straus 2011; Oveisi et al 2010; Guttmann et al 2009; Alyahri and Goodman 2008; Frias-Armenta et al 2004). Juby (2009) examined the mediating effect of parents' attitudes on beliefs in physical punishment, with a sample of 969 participants in the USA. They found that there is a strong connection between parents' perceptions and the use of physical punishment. Parents who believe in physical punishment as a method of disciplining children use this form more often than parents who do not support its use. Mothers who believe in physical methods appear to use it even with infants. For example, Vittrup et al (2006) surveyed 132 American mothers and concluded that mothers who believe in physical disciplinary methods spanked their children even when they were just six months old. Fakunmoju and Bammeke (2013, N= 304) claimed that Nigerians who think that the use of physical punishment is normal and not an abusive method, are more likely to perpetrate it. Anderson et al (2002) found that Scottish parents who used smacking considered smacking as a normal part of parenting and felt that children sometimes need to be smacked in order to prevent them from misbehaving. However, Layard and Dunn (2009) argue that children behave better when their parents are consistent in how they interact with each other, with children and discussing the feelings of their children. It appears that the majority of the studies agree that there is a correlation between beliefs and practice of physical methods, which could prove that physical punishment often has an instrumental basis, and adults already have formed specific attitudes towards physical disciplinary methods early in parenthood or from their own childhood[13].

In addition, studies revealed that among parents with positive perceptions of physical punishment there is an increased chance of physical child abuse. Crouch and Behl (2001) carried out a study in the USA with a sample of 41 parents and found that regardless of parenting stress, parents who strongly believed in the value of physical punishment were more likely to abuse their children compared to parents with little belief in this method. Juby (2009) and (Belsky and Vondra 1989) suggested that devalued attitudes towards children (regarding children as difficult and not sweet) were associated with positive parents' perceptions of the use of more negative and harmful forms of physical disciplining methods. This type of parent is considered to be the riskiest, according to Thompson et al 1999[14]. Based on the literature, it seems that parents who use physical punishment are more likely to have strong belief in the benefits of the use of physical methods and/or devalued perceptions of children, which leads some to reach the stage of abuse.

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[13] Will be explained later in the section on parents' past experiences of physical punishment in this chapter.
[14] See the section on parenting styles in this chapter.

Chapter 3

Parents' Age

Many studies indicate that younger parents use physical punishment with their children more often than older parents (Lee et al 2011a; Tajima 2000; Straus and Stewart 1999; Day et al 1998). Straus and Stewart (1999) conducted an analysis of data from a survey obtained from the Gallup Organization, with a sample of 991 American parents, and found that younger parents use physical punishment more than older parents. They explained these findings as due to a lack of parenting experience among younger parents. Barness et al (2006) and Belsky and Vondra (1989) considered parents' age as an indicator that can reflect parental capability to control children's behaviour. For example, they argued that young parents tend to be more likely to have high and unrealistic expectations of their children, which means that they are more likely to use physical punishment compared to older parents. Parents who have high expectations of their children are associated with an authoritarian parenting style that is not very warm but very controlling and they are more likely to use physical punishment[15]. On the other hand, a quantitative study in Kuwait by Qasem et al (1998, N=337) reported higher rates of using physical punishment among older parents than younger parents. Meanwhile, Grogan-Kaylor and Otis (2007), who conducted an analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth with a sample of 800 American parents, found no relationship between parental age and the use of physical punishment. The differences in the findings of these studies could be because of differences in sample characteristics, methodology and the areas where the studies were conducted.

Parents' Gender

Further, it appears that parents' gender has an impact on the use of physical punishment. In some studies that asked parents to describe their child-rearing practices, mothers reported using physical punishment more frequently than fathers (Kyei-Gyamfi 2011; Sanapo and Nakamura 2011; Lansford 2010b; Tang 2006; Day et al 1998). Guttmann et al (2009) looked at parents' gender and the actual use of physical punishment in 50 Christian Arab families in Israel. They found that fathers, mothers and children reported that mothers use physical punishment much more than fathers, although it was the fathers whom the children feared most. Tang (2006, N=1,662) suggested that the main reason behind Chinese mothers using physical methods more frequently than fathers is that they spend more time with children at home. However, there are some studies that show a small difference/near-parity between fathers' and mothers' frequency of using physical disciplinary methods (Straus and Stewart, 1999; Nobes and Smith, 1997). Nobes et al (1999) examined the extent British fathers and mothers use physical punishment, based on a sample of 465 parents. They suggested that

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[15] Will be discussed later in more detail in section on parenting styles in this chapter.

overall there was no difference between fathers' and mothers' frequency of administration of physical punishment. A total of 26.8% of mothers compared to 26.2% of fathers reported slapping, spanking, or hitting the child at least as often as weekly. The contrast between the findings in those studies could be as a result of cultural differences. Fathers in the UK take equal responsibility in looking after children and spend as much time with their children as mothers do (Nobes et al 1999), while among Arab families, for instance, fathers have a more traditional role whereby they spend less time taking care of children compared to mothers[16]. The literature also provides evidence of differences in the choice of disciplining methods among mothers and fathers. Anderson et al (2002) found that fathers were more likely to use harsher methods with their children than mothers. Mothers used lighter physical and verbal methods, such as shouting, threatening a child and telling a child that they have made them upset, while fathers were more likely to use harsher physical methods, such as shaking the child, slapping the face, head and/or cuffing the ear. These differences between fathers and mothers could be a result of biological and emotional differences between the two sexes.

Parents' Past Experiences of Physical Punishment

Regarding the role played by past experiences of physical punishment during childhood, numerous studies have shown that parents who experienced physical punishment in their childhood are more likely to use and develop an approving attitude towards this method than those who have never been physically punished in their childhood (Clement and Chamberland 2009; Orhon et al 2006; Anderson et al 2002; Thompson et al 1999; Murphy-Cowan and Stringer 1999). A study on Kuwaiti parents' attitudes towards physical punishment of children by Qasem et al (1998, N=337) showed that parents who had experienced physical punishment at the hands of their own parents expressed notably higher approval of using the same method to discipline their children. Meanwhile, other studies that examined past experiences of parents and the actual use of this method found that parents who have experienced physical punishment in their childhood are more likely to use it with their children compared to parents who do not have the same history (Fakunmoju and Bammeke 2013; Gage and Silvestre 2010; Chung et al 2009; Abolfotouh et al 2009; Bordin et al 2006; Ferraria 2002). Gage and Silvestre (2010, N=12,601) reported that mothers in Peru who were physically punished during childhood were twice as likely as mothers who did not have the same history to use physical punishment with their children.

It has been also suggested that differences in levels of physical punishment received in childhood (low, medium and high) impact significantly on parents' use of physical punishment. Murphy-Cowan and Stringer (1999) examined intergenerational transmission of

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[16] Will be explored in section 5.4.

physical punishment among 371 parents in Northern Ireland. They found that parents who experienced low or medium levels of parental physical methods appeared to use and believe in this method more than parents who received higher levels of phyical punishment. Clayton (2011, N=12) also found that Chinese parents with a bad memory of physical punishment did not use this method with their children. A survey by Anderson et al (2002) reported that Scottish parents who believed that their past experience of physical methods kept them on the right track and never did any harm were more likely to believe that their use of physical methods was fair, not over-used and would not harm the child. Clearly, parents' perceptions of their history of physical punishment as either fair or abusive have a great influence on their beliefs and use of this method.

Parents' Level of Education

Numerous studies have revealed that parents with lower levels of education reported not only considerable use of physical punishment but also positive attitudes towards it (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Guttmann et al 2009; Alyahri and Goodman 2008; Bordin et al 2006; Hunter et al 2000; Dietz 2000). Youssef et al (1998) carried out a survey that targeted school pupils who were enrolled in government schools in Alexandria, Egypt. They found that the risk of children being subjected to physical punishment was higher among children whose parents had a low level of education. The use of physical punishment was nearly three times more likely among parents with a primary certificates and nearly one and half times that of those holding a secondary school certificate. In addition, Khoury-Kassabri and Straus (2011) carried out research on 234 Israeli mothers and concluded that mothers' education was positively associated with the use of physical methods and psychological aggression. This reflects the significant influence of education on parents' use of disciplining methods.

Parenting Styles

Selin (2013) defines parenting style as a combination of attitudes towards a child that create an emotional climate in which parents act. Baumrind classifies three parenting styles (1967). According to Baumrind, parenting styles can be described according to two dimensions: warmth and control. Parenting styles can be identified based on a parent's position with respect to these dimensions. First, an authoritarian style is not very warm but very controlling. Authoritarian parents set very strict rules and expect children to follow them without any explanation about why those rules are set. They believe that a child has to follow their rules, otherwise a child will be punished. Further, parents using this style may have high and unrealistic expectations of their children (Cherry 2014; Baumrind 1967). The second style is authoritative, which is very warm and firm. Parents using this style also

establish rules for their children to follow, however, authoritative parents are more flexible. Authoritative parents give their children more space and are willing to listen to their questions. Those parents are more likely to forgive than punish children when they do not meet their expectations. They use supportive disciplinary methods rather than punitive methods (Cherry 2014; Baumrind 1967). The third style is permissive, which is very warm and not very controlling. Permissive parents are referred to as tolerant parents. They do not make high demands or have high expectations of their children and rarely discipline their children. This style of parenting is considered as more responsive than demanding and often taking the position of being a friend rather than a parent to a child (Cherry 2014; Baumrind 1967). Maccoby and Martin (1983) suggest a fourth type of parenting: uninvolved parenting that is neither very warm nor very controlling. Uninvolved parents make fewer demands, are not responsive and have little interaction with their children. Parents of this type are more likely to neglect the basic needs of their children.

A number of studies mainly focusing on Western contexts suggest that different parenting styles have different effects on a child's developmental outcomes (Layard and Dunn 2009; Maccoby 1992; Maccoby and Martin 1983; Baumrind 1967). It has been shown that among the four parenting styles the most effective outcomes are achieved by the authoritative style. Children of authoritative parents appear to be both happy and successful in self-controlling as they learn rules in a warm and loving relationship which is not based on fear. Cherry (2014) states that children of authoritative parents believe that their parents' demands are reasonable and fair. This makes them more likely to obey their requests and accept the reason for behaving in certain way as their own, which leads to achieve self-regulation. However, whilst children of authoritarian parents are more likely to be obedient and skilful, they rank very low on feeling happy and on self-esteem. On the other hand, children of permissive parents often rank low on self-control and happiness. These children seem to have problems with authority and are more likely not to perform well in school. Children of uninvolved parents appear to have the lowest ranking across all life domains. They are more likely to have a lack of self-regulation and lower self-esteem than their peers (Cherry 2014; Layard and Dunn 2009). This means that authoritative parenting styles tend to improve a child's self-esteem by achieving a mixture of love and discipline while the other parenting styles instead lead to damage to a child's self-esteem.

Researchers have also associated parenting styles with attitudes towards children and choice of disciplining methods. Thompson et al (1999) carried out a study on 1000 American parents of children under 17 and identified three parenting styles/groups that were associated with abusive disciplinary techniques. They found that the riskiest type scored

highly on the use of physical punishment, verbal abuse, and had devalued attitudes towards children. The moderate risk style used both physical and non-physical methods but with a more positive attitude towards children. The lowest risk style seldom used verbal and physical methods and demonstrated a positive attitude towards children.

Parenting Issues

There is a large volume of published research that associates parenting issues with the use of physical punishment of children. For instance, many studies have reported that children are at high risk of physical punishment when domestic violence, in particular wife abuse, occurs in the home (Mustaine and Tewksbury 2015; Xavier da Rocha and Moraes 2011; Lee et al 2011b; Gage and Silvestre 2010; Silverstein et al 2009; Hunter et al 2000; Muller 1996).Tajima (2000, N=2,733) suggests that American mothers who experience abuse by their husbands use physical punishment with their children over two and half times more than mothers who do not have the same experience. This could be because abused wives feel frustrated at being mistreated and may redirect violence towards their children as they may be unable to fight back against their husbands. Not only does wife abuse predict parental use of physical punishment but also wives' feelings of dissatisfaction with their marriage. Numerous studies have found that mothers who rated their marriage as poor used severe and moderate physical methods with their children more than those who rated it as good (Margolin et al 2004; Nobes and Smith 2002; Tajima 2000; McGuigan and Pratt 2001). Abolfotouh et al (2009) showed that mothers who stated that they had a poor relationship with their husbands used physical punishment towards their children more than those who did not have the same type of relationship with their husbands. Tang (2006) explains that parents who are dissatisfied with their marriage may be in a state of frustration which can affect their parenting capacity and they might use physical methods towards their children to displace their anger towards their spouses onto their children.

Angry or stressed parents, in general, are associated with approval for both moderate and severe use of physical methods of children (Kyei-Gyamfi 2011; Tang 2006; Crouch and Behl 2001). Lee et al (2011a) carried out a study on 2,309 fathers in America and found the more parenting stress, the more likely physical punishment of children would occur. It has also been shown that parents' use of smoking as a way to escape from stress is associated with parental use of physical punishment. Youssef et al (1998) claimed that physical punishment as a form of disciplining children is more likely to be used by Egyptian fathers who smoke as they are under greater social and economic stress than fathers who do not smoke. It will be really interesting to find out whether this also applies in Libya. Studies show that parents admitted applying physical methods when they were in a bad mood. Anderson et al (2002)

claimed that parents confessed that they were feeling stressed, angry, frustrated, hassled or worried about something at the moment of using physical punishment. However, controlling their own anger seems to be a challenging task for parents. Oveisi et al (2010) found that Iranian mothers questioned how they could control their anger and not punish their children when they were upset. On the other hand, LeVine and LeVine (1963) indicate that Kenyan children are aware that punishment depends on the mood of their parents, which enables them to learn how to avoid their parents' anger. Children know if they succeed in avoiding their mothers during the first flush of their anger, they may comfortably escape punishment. This can reflect the fact that parental use of physical methods is not for the child's own good but, in fact, they may use this method to release their anger. Parents feeling guilty after physically punishing their children was also reported. Oveisi et al (2010) showed that 10 per cent of Iranian mothers expressed that they became upset, felt a pang of conscience, and would even apologize to their children. Anderson et al (2002) explained that this is because parental use of physical punshment is immediate and emotionally charged rather than a deliberate and distanced act for the benefit of a child.

Some literature indicates that the use of physical punishment is also associated with parents' mental health status. Depressed parents are shown to resort to use of physical punishment frequently (Lee et al 2011a; Frias-Armenta et al 2004; Hunter et al 2000). Silverstein et al (2009, N=12,764) found that depressed mothers demonstrated higher rates of smacking compared to mothers who were not depressed. Further, it was found that depressed parents were not only associated with the use of physical punishment but also used negative verbal methods. Davidov and Khoury-Kassabri (2013, N=365) identified that Jewish and Arab parents who suffer from depression, regardless of culture and gender, are more likely to use negative verbal punishments, such as calling a child harsh names in order to make the child feel ashamed or guilty. Eamon and Zuehl (2001, N= 878) explained that American mothers who suffer from depression tend to have unrealistic expectations regarding their children and feel overwhelmed by their childcare responsibilities. Therefore, they are more likely to deal with their children's misbehaviour harshly. Mikaeili et al (2013, N= 2,100) confirmed that in Iran, depressed mothers are often incapable of positive interactions with their children. The more the mother suffers from depression, the greater the chance of her using physical and verbal punishment. Studies also show that children of mothers who have suffered infertility issues appear to be less likely to experience physical methods than other children. Balen (1996) carried out a study to compare child discipline methods among 45 infertile parents, 35 formerly infertile parents and 35 fertile parents and found that mothers who were infertile or previously had infertility issues were more likely to report high involvement with their children, express positive feelings and attitudes towards children, showed efficient parenting

skills and were more protective towards their children than mothers who did not have these issues. This could be because they have positive value attitudes towards their children. Indeed, as it was explained earlier in the preceding section, parents who have devalued attitudes towards children were associated with more frequent use of physical methods.

3.3.1.2 Children's Characteristics

This section summarises the characteristics of children that have been most frequently associated in the literature with parental use of physical punishment.

Children's Perceptions of Physical Punishment

Asking children about their perceptions of parental use of physical punishment appears to be rare in the published literature, particularly in Arabic countries. Gadour (2006) posits that Arabic researchers tend to neglect children's voices as a result of the low position of children in Arabic countries. However, in Ghana, Twum-Danso Imoh (2013) carried out a study involving 158 children to find out about their perceptions of physical punishment. She reported that 73% considered physical punishment as an important method of disciplining children. In addition, 76.6% rejected the idea of banning this method within the family. Despite the fact that children who were interviewed in her study reported that they felt pain, many still thought it was the parents' right to use such methods. Twum-Danso Imoh thinks that this reflects children regarding themselves as foolish and stubborn, thus in need of correction. It seems that children's acceptance of parental use of physical punishment is associated with how they perceive it and this, in turn, can reflect cultural beliefs. Indeed, culture seems to play a pivotal role in shaping how children think of this method. Lansford et al (2005, N=336), in a comparison study of children and their mothers from China, India, Italy, Kenya, Philippines and Thailand, argue that in a culture where people believe that parents have the right to use physical punishment and consider this method as normal disciplinary practices, children appear to be more likely to accept this method as a form of disciplining. Further, Vittrup and Holden (2010, N=216) identify child's age as another factor which influences children's perceptions of parental use of physical punishment. They found that younger American children (6-8) rated spanking as fairer compared to older children (9-10), while older children rated a withdrawal of privileges as fairer compared to younger children. However, acceptance of this method by children does not mean that it has no negative impact on them.

Many studies from different social and cultural contexts indicate that parental use of physical punishment is associated with short and long-term negative effects on children's well-being, such as increases in externalizing behaviour problems, especially aggression towards peers

and siblings (Mackenzie et al 2015; Berzenski and Yates 2013; Mulvaney and Mebert 2007; Smith 2006; Gershoff 2002); internalizing problems such as depression and low self-esteem (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Mulvaney and Mebert 2007; Smith 2006); antisocial behaviours (Smith 2006; Gershoff 2002); poor quality of parent-child relationships (Smith 2006; Ulman and Straus 2003; Gershoff 2002); increased risk of being a victim of physical abuse (Fréchette et al 2015; Save the Children 2005; Gershoff 2002); street children and prostitution (Save the Children 2005); and decreased cognitive skills (Mulvaney and Mebert 2007; Smith 2006). Simons and Wurtele (2010), for instance, carried out a study on 102 families -parents and children ages 3-7 years old- in the USA, and found that children who are smacked by parents are more likely to develop attitudes in support of an aggressive strategy for resolving interpersonal conflict with siblings and peers beyond parental acceptance. They believe that children learn from their parents that hitting others is acceptable, even within the family, as they found that both parents and children had the same views regarding recommending the use of physical methods in relation to the same child's misbehaviour, such as disobedience to parents and hitting siblings. Deater-Deckard et al (2003) and Holden et al (1991) found that children who received high levels of physical punishment were more supportive of this method than children who had not experienced the same. This implies that children develop positive attitudes towards this form of disciplining which can increase the risk of them disciplining or abusing their own children or spouses in the future (Gershoff 2002; Thompson et al 1999). Indeed, Thornberry and Henry (2013) argue that American people who experience physical punishment at some point in their childhood or adolescence are more likely to use it with their children than those who were have never experienced it. This demonstrates that the cycle of using physical punishment will continue from one generation to another.

Child's Age and Age Group

In addition, child's age seems to be a key factor in influencing parental use of physical punishment. Younger children tend to receive physical punishment from parents more frequently than older children (Grogan-Kaylorand and Otis 2007; Anderson et al 2002; Dietz 2000; Hunter et al 2000; Nobes and Smith 1997). Reich et al (2012) found that mothers use physical punishment with younger children, including infants. Youssef et al (1998) believe this is because younger children are defenceless. Particular age groups are also strongly associated with the use of severe and moderate physical punishment on children. Hunter et al (2000), using a sample of 10,000 mothers and one of each mother's children in rural India, found that children between the age of 6-11 were 2.6 times more likely than both younger and older children to experience severe physical discipline. Meanwhile, Dietz (2000), who carried out a study in the USA using secondary data from a national sample conducted by

the Gallup Organizations (N=1000) that included parents and one of each parent's children under the age of 18, found, with the exception of children aged one year old or less, that most children under the age of 8 were not only more likely to be physically punished but also experienced it more frequently. This could explain Gershoff's (2008) finding that middle school children appear to experience negative effects more than preschool or high school-aged children. Parental use of physical methods with young rather than older children seems to be associated with parents' perceptions of the appropriateness of a child's age. Studies show that parents think that physical punishment is appropriate for preschool and early school age children more than for older children aged 11 years or more (Akmatov 2011; Tang 2006; Caughy et al 2003; Tajima 2000; Straus and Stewart 1999; Flynn 1998; LeVine and LeVine 1963). Anderson et al (2002) found that 80% of Scottish parents reported that they believed that the use of physical methods with children should depend on the child's age. The majority expressed that very young children (less than one year) and older children (eight or above) should not be smacked. They stated three reasons for not beating children above eight. First, a child at this age should be capable of reasoning; therefore alternative methods should be possible. Second, a child should be capable of understanding the meaning of violence; therefore, they would interpret smacking very differently. Third, some parents argue that smacking older children would be embarrassing or humiliating. Meanwhile, the most common reason for not smacking children aged less than one year is that the child would not understand.

Child's Gender

Further, child's gender was also identified as a factor that can predict the use of physical punishment by parents. Data from several studies from different cultural contexts have indicated that boys experience parental use of physical punishment more frequently than girls (Lee et al 2011a; Lansford 2010b; Alyahri and Abolfotouh et al 2009; Goodman 2008; Tang 2006; Kerr et al 2004; Tajima 2000; Winch and Gross1962) and they are also more negatively affected compared to girls by parental use of physical punishment (Berzenski and Yates 2013; Gershoff 2008). Russell et al (1998) examined sex-based differences in parenting styles with a sample of 305 parents with a preschool child in South Australia and found that authoritarian styles were more likely to be used when parenting boys and an authoritative style of reasoning was more likely to be used when parenting girls. Straus and Stewart (1999) explain that parenting styles differ according to the child's gender, as boys tend to misbehave more and are less obedient than girls, which leads to greater use of physical punishment. However, a cultural belief about how boys and girls should be treated was also another reason for parents to adopt different styles. For example, Sanapo and

Nakamura, (2011, N=270) show that among Filipino parents there is a social tendency to use harsher discipline methods with boys in order to prepare them to be strong and tough in the future. Furthermore, due to cultural beliefs in some countries fathers seem to avoid using physical methods with girls. For example, Lansford (2010a, N=195) found that in Colombian and Kenyan cultures, fathers were less likely to use physical punishment with girls compared to boys, whilst Alyahri and Goodman (2008) report that Yemeni fathers think bringing up daughters is the mother's duty.

Child's Misbehaviour

There is a growing body of literature on the type of child misbehaviour which can influence parental use of physical punishment. Children's external behaviour has been linked to parental use of physical punishment in many studies across the world (Khoury-Kassabri and Straus 2011; Lee et al 2011a; Kim et al 2010; Silverstein et al 2009; Grogan-Kaylor and Otis 2007; Tang 2006; Kerr et al 2004; Tajima 2000). For instance, Hunter et al (2000) found that disobedience was significantly associated with harsh physical discipline in India. Moreover, studies in Egypt found that children were more likely to be beaten for disobedience, stubbornness, telling lies, destroying others' belongings and hitting their siblings (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Youssef et al 1998). Anderson et al (2002) reported that children were smacked for different types of misbehaviour according to their age. Children under 3 were smacked when they had done something dangerous or naughty, especially in the case of the child's persistence. Children aged 3-5 and 6-10 were smacked for disobedience, while children aged 11-15 were smacked for being cheeky and answering back.

Child's Birth Order

Child's birth order has been shown to have a significant influence on the choice of methods that parents use to discipline their children. A quantitative study by Khoury-Kassabri and Straus (2011) showed that Israeli mothers used physical punishment more towards middle children than the oldest, while youngest children and only children appeared to be less subjected to physical punishment than older and middle children. Asdigian and Straus (1997), using data from the national family violence survey 1985, found that American parents with one child were less likely to use physical punishment than those who had two or more children. However, physical punishment did not continue to increase after two children. On the other hand, Youssef et al (1998) indicated that parental use of physical punishment in Egypt increased significantly with the increase in birth order. Whereas all the above mentioned studies agree that first-born children and the youngest children are less likely to be subjected to parental use of physical punishment, in Egypt, it seems that younger children are more likely to experience physical punishment. This could be because younger

children in Egypt seem to stay at home more than older children who usually spend most of their time working outside home. According to UNICEF (2010), children in Egypt are considered as a major part of the Egyptian work force, and many of them engage in paid work outside the home, as a result of poverty.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter explores parental use of physical punishment as a method of disciplining children across countries. The literature indicates that this method, in various forms -beating, caning and smacking- is commonly used by parents in Western and non-Western countries. In addition, the misuse of this method was also reported in all countries, although such cases seem to be controlled more in Western countries through their legislation which will be explored in the next chapter. However, what influences parents to use this method with their children? The literature also indicates that there are multi-factors that can influence parents to use this method, such as factors related to parents, children, family, community and culture. In this chapter, the focus was on factors relating to parents and children. Among parents, it was shown that certain personal characteristics such as past experience, low level of education and positive perceptions of physical methods can influence some parents to use this method more than others. Further, some child characteristics can influence parents to use this method, such as younger children and boys appear to experience physical punishment most. Although it was shown that some children in some countries accept the use of this method by parents for cultural reasons, the negative effects on children's well-being was acknowledged. Children who are subjected to a physical method are more likely to suffer externalizing, internalizing behaviour problems and use this method on their children and wives in the future which could mean that the cycle of its use could be passed to the next generation.

Chapter (4) Literature Review

External Factors that Influence the Use of Physical Discipline

4.1 Introduction

Following on from the discussion in the preceding chapter, the focus in this chapter will be on the other factors that influence parents to use physical methods. These factors are presented within the remaining five levels of the ecological theory.

4.2 Micro-System

This is the second level of the ecological theory and refers to activities and interpersonal relations experienced by the individual in the immediate environment that have the most impact on a child's development, which is the family (Juby 2005; Bronfenbrenner 1994). Bronfenbrenner (2005) explains that parents and children at this level interact directly and indirectly with the other systems which affect the choice of child disciplining method. According to this theory, family factors such as family structure and family size are associated with parental use of physical punishment (Zigler and Hall 2000).

Family Type

Studies on family type and the use of physical punishment by parents show mixed findings. Some found that children who live with both parents are more likely to be subjected to physical punishment than those who live in single families. Nobes and Smith (2002) set out research on 500 parents in the UK and found that children in two-parent families experience more frequent and severe physical punishment compared to children of lone parents, while a study by Turner et al (2013) on 4046 American children revealed the opposite, that is, there are higher rates of victimization among children in single parent families and step families compared to children who live with either biological or adoptive parents. They argue that this may reflect that stress of bringing up children in single families is higher, as the parent lacks a spouse's support. However, Straus and Stewart (1999) indicated that there was no significant difference between two-parent families and single parents in America. The differences between these findings could result from differences in time and/or countries where the studies were carried out.

Family Size

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the influence of family size on parental use of physical punishment in diverse cultural and social contexts. Studies indicate that physical punishment of children increases with increase in family size (Khoury-Kassabri and Straus 2011; Gage and Silvestre 2010; Nobes and Smith 2002; Qasem et al 1998; Youssef et al 1998; Day et al 1998; Asdigian and Straus 1997). Alyahri and Goodman (2008) found that large family size is strongly associated with the use of harsh physical punishment in Yemen. They argue that parents in these types of families are more likely to have less resources and energy, which piles more stress on them than parents in small families.

4.3 Meso-System

This is the third level of the ecological theory and refers to a broader system than the micro-system, including direct interrelationships between two or more micro-systems in which the individual is situated, such as home, school and religious organisations (Jack 2001; Bronfenbrenner 1994; Belsky 1980). Experiences in a particular micro-system setting, such as a school, may influence the activities and experiences in the family. In this study, I will focus on children's experiences at schools, Islamic centres, and professionals' perceptions.

Children's Experiences at Teaching Centres (School and Religious Organisations)

Research found that children's experiences at school affect their experiences at home. Alyahri and Goodman (2008) found that poor school performance was strongly associated with severe physical punishment in Yemeni homes. Li (2005), cited from Liao et al (2011), reported that Chinese children who do not do well at school are more likely to experience severe and moderate physical and emotional punishment in the family compared with children who achieve high academic performance. Other studies have reported that children experience physical punishment by religious teachers. Rajabi-Ardeshiri (2009, N=18) found that Muslim children in the UK experience physical punishment at the hands of religious (Muslim) teachers in "Madrassah". I find it very surprising that some Islamic teachers (sheiks) use this method with children, as they are supposed to reflect Islamic values that do not encourage using violent methods with children. Child discipline according to the Islamic manner will be explored in detail in the next chapter.

Professionals' Perceptions of Physical Punishment

Several studies report that some professionals who work, with or for, children have positive perceptions of physical methods. For instance, some teachers in schools seem to approve of this practice with children. Shin and Koh (2005) argue that the majority of Korean teachers believe in using physical punishment with children and they think that banning physical punishment would lead to a total lack of respect for adults. Kyei-Gyamfi (2011) reported that in Ghana, teachers believe that physical punishment is a beneficial method and does no harm. In addition, studies carried out on medical students and health professionals in Quebec by Labbe et al (2012), in Turkey by Orhon et al (2006) and in Kuwait by Al-Moosa et al (2003) have found that male and older doctors and those with past experience of this method appear to be more in favour of using physical punishment of children than female and young doctors. Labbe et al (2012) carried out research on 712 medical students and found that more male students (31%) than female (18%) were in favour of using this disciplinary practice and about a third of students (36%) who had experienced physical punishment were in favour of this practice. Orhon et al (2006, N=201) also found that Turkish medical students who considered their experiences of physical punishment as abusive seem to accept beating children as an appropriate method. Obviously, professionals' past experience and gender seem to be key factors that impact on their perceptions, as is also the case for parents[17]. Further, it appears that professionals' gender and age affect their recognition of child abuse. Al-Moosa et al (2003) conducted a cross-sectional survey on 117 Kuwaiti paediatricians and found that women and younger doctors are more likely than male and older doctors to recognise child abuse and to contact social workers about suspected cases.

Lack of reporting by professionals of suspected child physical abuse has been discussed by many studies. Laud et al (2013) in Greece found that only six of 368 dentists made an official report of a suspected case of child abuse. The published literature indicates four main reasons for professionals' failure to report cases of child abuse. First, traditions and moral principles seem to affect the willingness of professionals to report. Choo et al (2013) investigated the level of support for reporting child abuse among 668 teachers in Malaysia. They found that teachers of Indian ethnicity were more likely to support reporting child abuse than Chinese and traditional Malay teachers. This is because senior Malaysian teachers appeared to be more concerned about their reputation within the community, since they had more experience and long-standing relationships in the community. Andrade et al (2011,N=21) examined the experience of health professionals concerning domestic violence

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[17] Discussed previously in chapter 3.

against children and teenagers in the city of Embu, Brazil and found that doctors face difficulties in handling social traditions in which physical punishment is accepted as an educational practice. Thus, health professionals in Embu, in a way, reproduce the same values and perceptions as the community in relation to violence, conniving with the silence of the families, avoiding commitment to such cases and not trusting in institutions that are responsible for children's protection. Second, professionals seem to be unsure about whether there is a legal obligation to report or to which legal authorities they should report, and about how to define child abuse, whilst there is also a lack of dialogue with the institutions that are responsible for referring the cases and a lack of trust in the child protection system (Laud et al 2013; Choo et al 2013; Andrade et al 2011; Flaherty et al 2006; Al-Moosa et al 2003). Third, a lack of training and support from other professionals leads to most professionals seeming not to feel responsible or qualified for dealing with the problem (Choo et al 2013; Andrade et al 2011). Finally, there are personal reasons, such as fear of getting involved with criminal people and a lack of protection from formal bodies (Choo et al 2013; Andrade et al 2011; Flaherty et al 2006). Some studies suggest the need for educational programming about child abuse among professionals. Chen et al (2013) highlighted that knowledge and skills in child abuse are the most important competencies for health care professionals. Laud et al (2013) argued that there is a high demand for ongoing awareness training among dentists on child abuse. Furthermore, they reported that the majority of dentists (97% out of 368) believed child maltreatment should be part of undergraduate modules. I strongly agree with these views, as such education programmes would help professionals to identify and address this issue better.

4.4 Exo-system

This is the fourth level of the ecological theory and involves links between social settings within the community, which may not directly affect children. However, the occurrence of the event indirectly influences processes within the immediate setting in which the individuals live (Jack 2001; Bronfenbrenner 1994). For instance, a child's experience at home may be influenced by neighbourhood, parents' extended family, friendship network and parents' experiences at work.

Place of Residence

Research has indicated that Indian parents who live in rural areas use harsh physical methods with their children (Hunter et al 2000). Similar findings were found in other studies in Peru by Gage and Silvestre (2010) and in America by Ellison and Bradshaw (2009) that compared parents who live in rural and urban areas. Alyahri and Goodman (2008) found that Yemeni mothers who live in urban areas use verbal methods more frequently while mothers

in rural areas rely more on physical methods. In both areas, some mothers reported hitting a child with their hands. However, the use of physical punishment was more severe and nearly three times more common in rural areas compared to urban areas. Alyahri and Goodman explain this finding as resulting from the harsher conditions experienced by parents who live in rural areas compared to those in cities. Abolfotouh et al (2009) reported that Egyptian children whose fathers were from rural areas were significantly more exposed to physical punishment than their peers whose fathers were of urban origin.

Social Support

In addition, the lack of a supportive network as well as social isolation have been recognised as significant factors for predicting parental use of physical punishment (Mikaeili et al 2013; Davis 1999; Day et al 1998). The social support provided by an extended family, friends and neighbours was found to have an important impact on family life. Parents who had a close family, friends and a supportive community that they could count on for help were more likely to display affectionate behaviour towards their children and less likely to be hostile or reject their children (Barness et al 2006; Winch and Gross 1962). Youssef et al (1998) found that children who reported that their parents maintained regular relations with friends and extended family were less likely to be subjected to physical punishment than children whose parents did not maintain regular relations with relatives and friends. Clement and Chamberland (2009) pointed out that the level of social support from their partner and social networks have an effect on mothers' perceptions of using physical punishment, especially in the first year of a child's life. Some researchers have shown that the type of support that parents receive from friends and relatives can shape parents' behaviour (Kane 2014; Francis-Connolly 2003). Anderson et al (2002) reported that parents who smack their children indicate that their family members and friends use this method too. Walsh (2002) claims that parents who received positive messages from family and friends regarding use of physical punishment of children were more likely to use this method with their children. This implies that some parents smack their children as a result of family', friends' or colleagues' acceptance.

Parents' Work Experience

A large and growing body of literature has associated the employment status of parents with the use of physical punishment of children. For example, unemployed parents appear to be more likely to use physical methods than employed parents. Youssef et al (1998) found that children whose mothers were unemployed were more likely to experience physical punishment than children whose mothers were employed. Research by Tang (2006) in Hong

Kong, involving 1,662 Chinese parents, found that unemployed parents use physical punishment of children more frequently than employed parents. He suggests that parents who are unemployed might have more time at home to interact with their children. This increases opportunities for conflicts and the use of physical punishment. Studies also show that the stress of unemployment decreases the supportiveness of parenting and increases the arbitrariness and harshness of parents' behaviour, which takes a toll on children's development (Barness et al 2006; Belsky and Vondra 1989). In addition, several studies have revealed that parents who work in non-professional jobs are more likely to use physical methods with their children than professional parents (Gage and Silvestre 2010; Youssef et al 1998). Abolfotouh et al (2009) found that children whose fathers were professionals/semi-professionals were less likely to be subjected to physical disciplinary methods than children whose fathers were non-professionals. Parents' employment status reflects the influence of the level of education on parenting, which is associated with the use of physical methods, as explained in the preceding chapter. Further, parental work was shown to influence the use of physical punishment. For example, Belsky and Vondra (1989) explain that when parents are stressed or upset at work due to role conflict, overload and boredom they come home fatigued, irritable, worried; they therefore attempt to create 'personal space' between themselves and other family members, but when children do not maintain this distance, parents become angry and irritable, which can lead to the use of physical methods. Furthermore, it has been identified that parents who work in jobs which require compliance, such as military services, are more likely to be in favour of using physical punishment (Barness et al 2006; Cicchetti and Carlson 1989; Belsky and Vondra 1989).

4.5 Macro-System

This is the fifth level of the ecological theory and refers to the culture in which individuals and families live and interact. For the purpose of this study, culture is defined as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits required by man as a member of society" (Tyler 1870, cited by Spencer-Oatey, 2012, p 2). These cultural aspects can influence and be influenced by each other and this interaction can have profound influence on parents' perceptions and behaviour (Bronfenbrenner 1994; Belsky 1980). Owusu-Bempah (1999) argues that if we want to get an understanding of childhood and how parents treat their children, we should know about their culture. The key aspects of culture that I am going to focus on in this study are: traditions, knowledge, religious beliefs and laws, as it has been demonstrated empirically that these can inform parenting beliefs and use of physical punishment of children (Kyei-Gyamfi 2011; Binghalib 2011; Maybin and Woodhead 2003; Qvortrup 1991).

Chapter 4

Traditions

In all cultures, traditions are recognised as an important factor that influences parenting and children's experiences. For example, traditions in communities that support parental use of physical punishment were associated with approval and use of this practice (Dietz 2000; Hunter et al 2000). Davidov and Khoury-Kassabri (2013) carried out research on 365 university students in Israel, from different cultural backgrounds (Arab and Jewish). They found that in Arab society, the use of physical punishment appears to be high, especially with boys during childhood. However, Arab girls are viewed as weaker than boys and, therefore, requiring a gentler approach and the use of physical punishment is considered to be inappropriate. On the other hand, physical discipline is less acceptable and not used frequently among Jewish communities. According to Davidov and Khoury-Kassabri (ibid.), this is because Jewish values are considered to be largely influenced by Western culture. Belsky (1980) explains that if a society considers, for example, parental use of physical disciplinary methods as acceptable, these methods will be expected to occur more than in other countries that do not share the same values (Tudge 2008; Barness et al 2006). Parton (1985) also argues that parental use of physical punishment among some groups reflects the structural realities of seeing this method as normal and acceptable, particularly when a child misbehaves. O'Brian and Lau (1995) indicate that traditional Chinese values are the main factor behind Chinese people's use of physical methods with children. For instance, filial piety is used as a good reason for parents to use harsh and abusive methods with their children. Qiao and Xie (2015) and Zhu and Tang (2011) also reported that, in Chinese tradition, children have been considered as the private property of parents who are allowed to use any methods, including harsh physical methods, to address their misbehaviour. Therefore, some parents choose to use physical punishment frequently with their children as a method of disciplining, because of social expectations (Dietz 2000). Indeed, social acceptance and expectations towards the use of harsh discipline techniques of rearing children all contribute to parental use of physical punishment (Juby 2005). However, what about parents who do not follow social traditions that encourage aggression towards children? Carson (1986) described those parents in her study who did not spank their children in communities where people accepted the use of physical methods as "deviants" who were criticised for their choice to refrain from spanking their children and pressured by friends and family members to do so. Kyei-Gyamfi (2011) reported that parents who do not cane their children in the Ghanaian society are considered to be too soft as parents.

It has been suggested that parents who believe in physical methods can learn positive discipline methods through exposure to a different culture (Clayton 2011; Kim, et al 2010). Kim and Hong (2007) interviewed seven Korean-American parents who were born in Korea

and had lived in the USA, to find out about the disciplining methods that they used with their children. The study showed that immigrant Korean parents scored higher on positive and appropriate discipline methods than on harsh methods compared to traditional Koreans. In addition, they found that Korean-American parents have acquired different perceptions (against) regarding physical disciplinary methods as a result of adopting the American style of disciplining children. Clayton (2011) also suggests that many of Chinese parents who experienced Western culture were more likely to be against the use of physical methods with their children than traditional Chinese (strict) parents.

Knowledge

In addition, lack of knowledge among parents, the public and professionals about the negative effects of physical punishment on children and other more healthy methods has been associated with toleration of parental use of this method (Choo et al 2013; Kyei-Gyamfi 2011; Hughes et al 2008; Flaherty et al 2006; Day et al 1998). Oveisi et al (2010) found that 70% out of 42 Iranian mothers did not have enough information on positive methods of disciplining children and 80% did not know about the complications that can result from using physical punishment. Ateah and Durrant (2005) emphasised the importance of raising awareness among parents through educational programmes that aim to decrease the rates of physical punishment. Reich et al (2012) suggest that educational programmes using such as baby books that explain the fundamental stages of child development were found to change mothers' perceptions and the use of physical methods. Furthermore, the media have been shown to play a role in shaping parent's perceptions. Hesketh and Lynch (1996) carried out a content analysis on coverage of child abuse in a number of key newspapers for three months and found that there was a dearth of child abuse or neglect stories in these national papers. This is one of the reasons that parents may know little about the concept of child abuse. On the other hand, studies show that exposure to violent programmes via the media can lead people to normalise violence and increase levels of aggressive behaviour over time (Boxer et al 2009; Huesmann and Kirwil 2007; Hess et al 1999). This shows that actually the media is a double-edged weapon that can be useful or harmful to society.

Religious Beliefs

Religion is defined by Durkheim (1912/1976) as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden, beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community" (cited from Dillon, 2003, pp 31). The literature identifies two major philosophical Christian schools as being involved in discussions on perceptions of childhood. Jenks (1996) reported that the Puritans and Romantics were the

main religious schools in the West in terms of discussing the character of the new-born child. The Puritan discourse considered children as naturally evil and in need of correction and harsh discipline by adults while the Romantic discourse considered children as having inborn good and their innocence as being at risk through their interaction with society (James et al 1998). Within Roman Catholicism, it was believed that a child who died before being baptized would not reach final salvation, to achieve eternal happiness and joy, but would be waiting in limbo, a place between heaven and hell. However, with the development of new approaches towards children, this religious perception began to fade (James et al 1998). According to the two main discourses of childhood, the perceptions of children and how they should be disciplined – harshly or with affection – are very contradictory. This indicates how influential religious ideas about children can be in terms of affecting children's daily experiences.

A growing body of literature has shown that the Christian faith is strongly correlated with parental approval and use of physical punishment (Ellison and Bradshaw 2009; Rebecca et al 2008; Grogan-Kaylor and Otis 2007; Ellison et al 1996). Wiehe (1990) carried out a study on 881 people and found that there were significant differences between those who were members of churches subscribing to a literal belief in the Bible (devoted Christians), preferring the use of physical punishment over alternative methods of disciplining compared to their non-literal counterparts (nominal Christians), regardless of gender and level of education. However, differences in attitudes towards this method among Christians were found not only among ordinary people but also among religious leaders. Vaaler et al (2008) used data from a nationwide sample of 14,384 ministers to examine the attitudes of Presbyterian Church (USA) clergy members. They found that whilst the clergy supported parental use of physical punishment as a means of disciplining children, female clergy were dramatically less supportive of physical punishment than their male counterparts.

With regard to Islamic faith, even though some studies have been conducted in Muslim Arabic countries such as in Yemen (Alyahri and Goodman 2008) and in Egypt (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Youssef et al 1998), none of them considered the influence of Islam on parental use of physical punishment. However, Horwath and Lees (2010, N=55) and Irfan (2006, N=150) conducted studies on Muslim families in the UK and found that the concepts of honour and shame are significant for Muslim parents and they react harshly if their children engage in sexual relationships outside marriage. Although the perceptions that invoke these harsh reactions among Muslim parents in the UK appear to be associated with Islam, in fact, they are rooted in traditions[18]. Rajabi-Ardeshiri (2009) acknowledges that there is a lack of

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[18] Will be explained in the next chapter.

childhood and parenthood studies in Muslim culture as most of such studies have been done in Western societies which represent a Christian or a secular background. Therefore, in this study, I am going to address the construction of childhood and parenthood within Islamic Arabic culture separately in chapter 5, in order to provide more background detail on these factors.

Laws

James and James (2004) argue that the law in both secular and religious societies plays a significant role in enacting the boundaries between children and adults which can shape a child's agency with regard to parents. However, the question here is to what extent can states actually intervene in family life to protect children? According to Fox-Harding (1996), the state-family relationship is better understood based on four key areas: when should the state intervene? How can the state recognise poor quality child care? What, if weight is given to adverse personal circumstances of parents? Is action by the state always helpful? Millar and Warman (1996) argued that the obligations between family and state have to be understood at three levels: attitudes -what people believe is right for them-, behaviour -what they do-, and policy -what the law tells them to do-. Hardiker et al (1991), meanwhile, explored four levels of state intervention: preventing problems from arising, preventing them from getting worse, combating serious problems, and remedial action for those whom the state has taken over. It appears that the key determinant on how and when the state should intervene in the family is based on local legislation that defines parents' obligations and responsibilities towards children. Therefore, in the next paragraph, I will summarise some of the international legislations that deal with protecting children within the family, while corresponding Arabic legislations will be explored in detail in the section on Arab child protection policies in chapter 5.

Legislations on child protection can be divided into three groups: firstly, countries that consider parental use of physical punishment as abuse and have therefore banned all forms of physical punishment in every setting, including homes; for instance, Sweden, which in 1979 became the first country in the world to prohibit all forms of physical punishment of children. Sweden was followed by Finland in 1983 and Norway in 1987. It seems that many other countries have been influenced by the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and have banned physical punishment of children, such as Austria in 1989, Cyprus in 1994, Italy in 1996, Denmark in 1997, Latvia in 1998, Croatia in 1999, Israel in 1999, Bulgaria in 2000, Germany in 2000, Iceland in 2003, Romania in 2004, Hungary in 2004, Ukraine in 2004, Greece in 2006, Netherlands in 2007, New Zealand in 2007, Portugal in

2007, Uruguay in 2007, Venezuela in 2007, Spain in 2007, Chile in 2007, and Costa Rica in 2008 (Gershoff 2008).

Secondly, there are countries which still tolerate parental use of physical punishment to some degree under the defence of the use of "Reasonable Chastisement". This group has distinguished physical punishment from physical abuse, mainly in terms of occurrence of physical harm. For example, all 50 U.S. states (Whipple and Richey 1997), England and Wales (Zolotor and Puzia 2010; NSPCC 2010), Canada (Watkinson 2006) and Australia (Holzer and Lamont 2010) have outlawed physical child abuse, while none of them has banned parental use of physical punishment that falls within the determined bounds of Reasonable Chastisement. In the U.S.A, England and Wales (Jordan 2007; Cousins and Watkins 2005) Reasonable Chastisement is interpreted as physical punishment that does not lead to serious injuries or leave marks on the child's body. However, Scottish law, (The Scottish Executive Justice Department 2000) is more specific about what constitutes Reasonable Chastisement: it is not reasonable to use physical punishment with children under the age of three, or to use implements to hit children or shake children and administer blows to their head. In Canada (Watkinson 2006) it is not reasonable for parents to use physical punishment under the following circumstances: when the child is under the age of two, over the age of twelve or has a disability. Moreover, a child cannot be hit above the neck, slapped on the head while using an object, nor can anger be used to administer physical punishment. In Australia chastisement is deemed reasonable when physical punishment does not leave injury lasting longer than a 24-hour period, it is perceived as unreasonable if force is applied to the head or neck of a child or to any other part of a child's body, or if it leads to intervention by the police and/or child protection authorities (Holzer and Lamont 2010; NSPCC 2010).

Thirdly, in other parts of the world some countries do not recognise parental use of physical punishment as a form of abuse because they still look at it as a parental right, which leads to failure within their legislation to protect children. For instance, the laws in Turkey (Orhon et al 2006) and in Iran (Oveisi et al 2010) fail to recognise parental use of physical punishment as a form of child mistreatment. Although some professionals and individuals in those countries recognise this issue, the notion of physical punishment of children as abuse seems to be a new phenomenon in legislative terms.

The literature provides evidence of several attempts to investigate the extent to which legislation against parental use of physical punishment influences parents' perceptions of this method. Zolotor and Puzia (2010) carried out a systematic review of legislations which ban parental use of physical punishment and found that after the passing of such laws

parents seem to be less supportive of this method. Studies in Canada and Sweden showed that mothers' attitudes towards spanking children were negative after the introduction of new legislation to ban this method (Durrant et al 2003a). Clement and Chamberland (2009) believe that the public debate and meditations surrounding the issue of physical punishment in Canada have had a certain impact on maternal attitudes. Indeed, the law has had a demonstrable impact on parents' attitudes in some societies. For instance, the study by Anderson et al (2002) found that 45% of Scottish parents thought that children under three should not be smacked. This reflects the impact of limitations on the use of physical punishment that were imposed by Scottish law, as shown earlier.

On the other hand, studies in many developing countries show that parents consider using physical methods as a private matter and express different reasons for their unwillingness to report cases of parental use of physical punishment to the authorities. Oveisi et al (2010) found that Iranian mothers would not cooperate with the legal authority, as they were concerned about other parents getting annoyed with them, just as they would similarly get annoyed with people who attempted to interfere in their family life. A report in Israel by Benbenishty and Schmid (2013) found that although close to a fifth of 812 participants said they knew of or had witnessed some severe forms of child abuse, including physical abuse such as burning a child with a cigarette, only close to half of them reported it. Participants who did not report those cases explained that they were not fully sure whether the cases were considered abuse, they did not know how, and to whom, they should report them, and they stated personal concerns such as fear of being attacked by the abusive parent. Location, ethnic group and age were also factors affecting people's reporting of cases of child abuse. Ben-Arieh and Haj-Yahia (2006), using data from social services reports of child abuse cases during 2000 in Israel, found that the rate of reporting cases of child abuse in Israel in 2000 varied according to geographic area and between Arab and Jewish localities. It was lower in Arab areas (9 per 1,000 children) than in Jewish areas (20 per 1,000), and higher in large cities and in well-off localities (19 per 1,000). Sulimani-Aidan and Benbenishty (2013) also found that Jewish communities seemed to report child abuse more than Arab communities. However, in Jewish localities, economic, and educational factors were correlated with the reporting of child abuse, whereas in Arab localities, the only correlation was that young age of the local population was associated with a greater rate of reporting child abuse. The lack of reporting such cases among Arabs means that the current statistics in some Arab countries about this phenomenon do not necessarily reflect the actual size of this problem.

4.6 Chrono-System

This is the final level of the ecological system and covers change that happens in the environment over the life course, such as historical or life events, for example, changes in family structure or exposure to war (Bronfenbrenner 1994). Among the chrono-system level factors the following are most commonly cited as influencing parental use of physical punishment:

Changes in Cultural Values

It has been shown that cultural values about expectations of parents are subject to change over time, which leads to refinement within the culture of its attitudes towards children and their welfare (Parton 1985). For example, research shows that parenting styles in Western cultures such as those of Ireland (Halpenny et al 2010) and Scotland (Anderson et al 2002) have become less controlling compared to 20 years ago. Hays (1996) reported that American parents, in the 1930s, tended to focus on how to make a child listen to and obey them. Children's obedience was not only expected but also compulsory. However, in modern American society, parents focus more on supporting and encouraging children to find their own way. Cheal (2008) argues that the main change that Western countries have witnessed is the shift from the focus on group unity to individualization. This has had an impact on the lives of people and reshaped the nature of relationships between children and their parents.

Changes in Family Structure

A growing body of literature has found that parental use of physical punishment is more likely to be adopted in families disrupted by death, divorce or separation (UNICEF 2010; Abolfotouh et al 2009; Save the Children 2005; Youssef et al 1998). Nobes and Smith (2002) found that separated or divorced British mothers' use of severe physical punishment of their children was significantly higher than among single mothers, possibly reflecting the emotional stress that divorced parents go through. However, in cases of a parent going abroad, research shows that children in families separated for that reason were subjected less to physical punishment than children with divorced or separated parents (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Youssef et al 1998). Youssef et al (1998) found that physical discipline was more frequently used in Egyptian families disrupted by parental death or divorce compared to families in which the father was working abroad. They argue that the loss of a partner results in emotional distress which may lead a parent to use physical punishment towards the children. This situation is quite different from that where a parent takes a job outside the

country, since in the latter case the father will eventually return home and, in addition, the family's financial security will be enhanced.

Exposure to War

During the course of my study, there was a period of serious social unrest in Libya. A war erupted between two political groups which lasted for about nine months. This incident cannot be ignored in the current study as it has impacted on Libyan family life. Therefore, I decided to add this section to explore how the armed conflict may have affected parents, children and family life in general. According to Save the Children (2011) this type of violent experience has a great impact on individuals, families, communities and the whole country. This affects the social and financial domains of people's everyday life, ranging from lack of basic needs, losing a family member, to being exposed to violence as a normative life style.

Many studies have demonstrated the negative impacts of war on people and their lives. For example, Robertson and Duckett (2007, N=14) found that during the war in Bosnia, mothers had to move around looking for safe places and they faced food shortages and suffered from poor health, which had a massive impact on their well-being. Furthermore, the war affected various aspects of their lives, such as the family structure through losing the father or another member of the family, changing roles, employment, dramatic price increases, fuel shortages, emotional problems and loss of hope, which led to psychosocial problems, in particular, high rates of depression and anxiety disorders. Other research has explored the influence of political violence on children (Boxer et al 2013; Ochen et al 2012). Smyth et al (2004) carried out a study on 82 children, from nine areas in Northern Ireland. They found that during the violence in Northern Ireland children were physically attacked in the community and witnessed various forms of violence, which affected their well-being. In addition, Boxer et al (2013, N= 1,501) found that the political violence in Israel increased children's aggression. Indeed, during my fieldwork, I witnessed some incidents which showed that Libyan children developed positive attitudes towards using violence[19].

Some studies have indicated that being subjected to stressful life events causes an increase among parents and children of mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. Jawad et al (2009) found that Lebanese civilians who were exposed to a variety of war events suffered from depressive symptoms. Al-Turkait and Ohaeri (2008) also found that Kuwaiti women suffered from high levels of anxiety and depression during wartime. Thabet et al (2004) found that children who live in a war zone are at high risk of developing different

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[19] This will be explored in more detail in section 6.4.

types of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and health mental problems. Indeed, this finding also applies in Libya. Charlson et al (2012, N=1,236,606) reported cases of severe post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and severe depression after the Libyan conflict (2011) in the following six population groups who were considered to be exposed to a high level of political terror and traumatic events: people of Benghazi, Misrata, displaced people within Misrata, Zintan, displaced people within Tripoli/Zlitan and Ras Jdir camps. However, Jawad et al (2009, N=490) argue that a high level of social support, family cohesiveness and family communication can protect children from mediating the effects of traumatic events of wars. This finding was confirmed by Thabet et al (2009)in their study on 412 children aged 12-16 years and living in a war zone (The Gaza Strip), which identified a significant association between high parental support and low child post-traumatic stress disorder and poor mental health.

However, the literature indicates that not only does war in general have an impact on parents' behaviour but different types of violence, inside or outside the community, also have various effects on family life and the way that parents deal with their children's behaviour. For instance, some studies in Northern Ireland have distinguished between the influence of sectarian and non-sectarian community violence on family life. Cummings et al (2010, N=700) showed that sectarian community violence was linked to child adjustment problems through heightened family conflict and emotional insecurity about the community, while non-sectarian community violence increased prosocial behaviour and family cohesion. Cummings et al (ibid.) explained this as potentially reflecting a form of protective mechanism against external threats in the community. Merrillees et al (2011, N=773) found that non-sectarian community violence was associated with mothers' increased use of controlling behaviour and emotional control over their children, such as making the child ask for permission before leaving home and mothers wanting to know their children's plans. However, an extensive search of the published literature revealed no research studies that have explored the influence of political violence on parenting, especially in terms of using physical punishment of children. Therefore, there is a gap in this area of research knowledge which this study aims to fill.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the external factors that appear to influence parents to use physical punishment. Literature evidence indicates that family, community, cultural factors (traditions, laws, religion and knowledge) and cultural changes to some extent influence the use of physical methods within the family. Furthermore, based on the published literature, it is acknowledged that existing childhood and parenthood studies were carried out mainly in

Chapter 4

Western countries or countries that reflect Christian and/or secular cultures. Therefore, it is important to find out more about parenting and child discipline methods in Muslim culture, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter (5) Literature Review

Parenting and Children Discipline within an Islamic Arabic Context

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted that there are limited studies on Islamic childhood, parenthood and child protection in an Islamic context. This chapter explores Islamic values within Arab culture as I am interested in exploring parental discipline methods in Libya, which is a Muslim Arab society. This chapter provides an overview of the two main social factors that influence Muslim Arab society, namely, Arab traditions and Islam. I begin by reviewing Shariah law as it is the main base for Islam and shapes the lives of Arab children and parents. After that, the discussion shifts to compare Arab family construction pre and post Islam. In addition, I will explore Islamic perceptions of children, child-parent relationships, child-rearing and children discipline methods in Islam. Then I discuss the controversy amongst Muslim Arab scholars over the use of physical punishment. Furthermore, this chapter will consider Arab Muslim families in the Modern time with regard to their perceptions and behaviours towards children and how modern Arab policies work on protecting children within the family. Finally, this chapter explores the context of Muslim Arab Libyan society regarding family life and children.

5.2 The Construction of Islam

Shariah law, which is considered to be the fundamental base for the construction of Islam, has three main sources. The next section focuses on the discussion of Shariah and its sources.

Shariah law

Muslims consider Shariah law as a sacred law of Islam that must be followed (Anwar 1985). This is why it still determines most areas of Muslims' lives, in particular family matters, and it has the official status of being applied in the courts in most Muslim countries[20]. It should however be borne in mind that there are differences in the interpretation of Shariah Law

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[20] Will be discussed in section 5.5.

among Muslims because of different schools of interpretation[21]. There are three main sources for Shariah law which are as follows:

First, the Quran: Muslims consider the Quran to be the holy book of God (Allah;الله) that was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through the archangel Gabriel over a period of 23 years (Al.Bossafa 2014b). Muslims strongly believe that the Prophet Muhammad did not invent the Quran and there is no chance that he could do so, as he was an illiterate man who could not have used and linked the words in the Quran. This is considered as evidence of the Prophet Muhammad's prophecy and that the Quran is the sacred words of God. Therefore, Muslims are expected to treat the holy book, the 'Quran', with enormous respect. For instance, when the Quran is recited aloud, Muslims should not speak or make distracting noise. The Quran was originally written in Arabic. It has 114 chapters (referred to as suras;سور) within 30 parts (known as juz;جزء). According to the BBC (2011), despite the fact that the Quran has been translated into more than 40 languages, many Muslims consider translated versions of the holy book as new versions rather than as translations in the conventional sense. Therefore, Muslims are encouraged to learn and recite it in Arabic. Indeed, personally, I found it a bit uncomfortable to use the English version of the Quran in this study, because when I compare it with the Arabic version, it does not convey the same meanings articulated in the Arabic version. The Quran always was, and still is, one of the original sources for Islamic law. During The Prophet Muhammad's time and after his death, Muslim scholars have still depended on the Quran to interpret the Islamic scriptures.

The second sacred source for Shariah law is Sunnah and Al.Hadith of the Prophet. The Quran introduces the Prophet Muhammad as the perfect example (وانك لعلى خلق عظيم) (القلم; 4) for Muslims to follow and take his deeds as a guide to shape their personalities (Al.Bossafa 2014a). Therefore, for Muslims, what the Prophet said and did became the second source for Shariah law after the Quran. It should be mentioned that after the death of the Prophet, the Hadith and Sunnah were narrated by his fellows. Furthermore, over time, it became noticeable that some of the so-called 'Al.Hadiths' were spurious sayings that were made up for various motives. Therefore, Muslims acknowledged the importance of establishing a branch called 'Al.Hadith' to ensure the reliability of Al.Hadith; each Hadith has to go through a procedure to meet the modern standards of historical analysis. This means that Muslims can question the originality of the Hadith, which leaves room for different understandings, unlike the case with the Quran.

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[21] Will be explored in section 5.5.

Chapter 5

The third source is companions[22] understanding. Companions of the Prophet are people who met and/or lived with him and had first-hand experience of seeing, observing and hearing the Prophet's teachings. Among these are Abu Hurairah and Anas ibn Malik who are considered to be among the most prolific narrators of Al.Hadith. After the Prophet passed away, they worked on collecting, writing and explaining Al.Hadith and Sunnah of the Prophet (Al.Uthaymeen 2009; Philips, 2009). Their understanding of the habits and actions of the Prophet was considered by Muslims as the third source of Shariah law (Hesham 2012).

As the Sunnah (السنه النبوية) and Al.Hadith (الحديث الشريف) are based on the sayings and practice of the Prophet who is considered to be the role model for all Muslims, it may be useful to have a snapshot view of the Prophet Muhammad's life.

A Summary of the Life of the Prophet Muhammad

Muhammad (محمد) was born in an affluent Arab tribe, called 'Quraish', in Mecca (570 A.D) (Zahoor and Haq 1998; Azzam and Gouverneur n.d.). It was reported that Muhammad lost his father before he was born. According to Arab traditions, new born babies were sent to rural areas as the life there was considered as healthier for young children. Therefore, Muhammad was sent to a Bedouin family. He stayed with his foster-mother "Halima" and her husband until he reached two/three years, then he returned to his biological mother Amina (Azzam and Gouverneur n.d.). Muhammad lost his mother "Amina" to illness at the age of six, then his grandfather "Abd Al-Muttalib" took him under his care for two years. When Muhammad was eight, his grandfather also got ill and asked his son "Abu Talib" to adopt Muhammad after his death, which he did (Zahoor and Haq 1998; Azzam and Gouverneur n.d.). According to Muslim scholars, this type of childhood of the Prophet Muhammad, as an orphan, had a significant impact on his tenderness and affections, in particular towards children.

According to Islamic texts, Muhammad was well-known among people in Mecca for his virtuous manner and eagerness to help poor people and others who were in need. He was highly trusted and respected by everyone. Therefore, he was nicknamed (Al-Sadiq Al-Amin; الصادق الامين), Al-Sadiq means honest and Al-Amin means trustworthy. Al.Arifi (2010b) explains that Al Amana (الامانة; trust) in Arabic not only focuses on financial aspects, as many people think, but it applies to everything. For instance, being Al-Amin includes looking after others' secrets, your work and your child. All of these are considered as "Amanats" in Islam, which should not be misused or betrayed even if others do so. The Prophet says "Be trustful

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[22] In Christian faith, companions are referred to as disciples.

towards people who trust you and do not betray the one who betrays you" (Al.Arifi 2010b,n.p).

By the time Muhammad was twenty-five, he was married to Khadijah and had six children: two boys and four girls. However, his boys passed away when they were infants (Abdul-Kafi, 2012a; Zahoor and Haq, 1998; Azzam and Gouverneur n.d.). After the death of Khadijah, the Prophet remarried and had a male child. However, he died as well when he was eighteen months old (Maghamsi 2011).

It has been narrated by Muslim historians that when Muhammad was forty years of age, he left 'Mecca' to spend the traditional month of retreat, 'Ramadan', in Hira. The Archangel Gabriel came down to Muhammad in the second half of Ramadan, and commanded him to 'Read'. Gabriel was sent by God (Allah; الله) to reveal God's message for the people; later on, these messages were collected and written down and are known today as the holy book, the 'Quran' (Azzam and Gouverneur n.d). The main theme in the new religion (Islam) was to worship just one God and not to accept anything else as a creator, as Arabs at that time were worshipping idols and statues[23]. In addition, Mohammad rejected class, family privileges and bad treatment of children and women, characteristics which were very strong among Arabs before Islam[24]. The Prophet encouraged people to enter Islam peacefully without using force. He considered use of power as an extreme way that should not be used with people. The Prophet said "Being amicable towards people is half of faith, and being gentle and kind to them is half of life" (The World Federation 2014). I should also add that Muhammad was not only successful as a Prophet and a teacher but also was a strong political leader. Lewis (2001) stated that the Prophet Muhammad was not only the founder of Islam but he also was the head of a nation, a community, a ruler and a soldier. The Prophet managed to build Islamic society based on Shariah law that included personal and social affairs such as marriage, divorce cooperation, and foreign affairs with non-Muslims. Progressively, the Prophet Muhammad and his companions gained in strength and managed to spread Islam to all parts of the Arab Peninsula, and this continued even after his death in 632 A.D (Azzam and Gouverneur n.d).

5.3 Historical Social Background of Arab Childhood and Parenting

As this study is rooted in Muslim Arab culture, it is important to have an idea about the historical social background of Arab family in order to understand the Arabic mentality towards family. Therefore, in this section, the discussion will focus on Arab family before and

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[23] See the next section.
[24] See the next section.

after Islam, with particular focus on the position of children and parents within an Islamic context.

Islam arrived to correct Arabs' path of life, including matters related to children and the family in general. Muslim scholars argue that Islam strongly promoted children's rights, by comparing children's position in the period before and after Islam. To gain a deeper understanding of this debate, it is important to explore the position of children in the pre-Islamic era (Al Jahiliyya Era; عصرالجاهلية) and after Islam took hold in Arab society.

With regard to Arab children and family in Al Jahiliyya time, Arabs placed high emphasis on family privileges, social class, and displayed negative attitudes and cruel behaviour towards children and women. For instance, infanticide and/or burying new-born babies alive, in particular girls, was a common practice among Arabs before Islam (Behrmann and Safwat 2013; Shehadeh and Maaita n.d.; Gendercide 2006). Arabs in Al Jahiliyya time used to kill their children for many reasons. According to Behrmann and Safwat (2013) and Shehadeh and Maaita (n.d.), some Arabs used to bury new infants alive when their colour was blue, or when their bodies had a lot of spots, hair, or they were physically disabled, as they regarded them as bad omens. Others killed new babies for fear of poverty and not being able to sustain their children, while the majority used to kill female children as a result of a fear of being shamed. As part of Bedouin Arabs' lives, they were subjected to attacks by other tribes and children and women were the main booties of battle, and as such would be sold, raped or kept as slaves.

Based on this background, Arabs seemed to develop discriminating attitudes towards girls and women. Men had a superior position in society and they dominated and controlled everything, which led Arab society to be seen as a male society. Therefore, having sons was a matter of superiority in Arab families. In other words, boys, in Arab tradition, were regarded as sources of future power and wealth for the family while girls were considered as a potential source of shame and a burden on the family. Therefore, female children and women were looked down upon, mistreated, humiliated and oppressed by men (Behrmann and Safwat 2013). As a result of that attitude, Arab women did not have any rights within the family. For instance, only men could inherit, while women and children had no share, also men controlled all aspects of women's lives, such as they could prevent them from getting married and choose to whom they would get married (Behrmann and Safwat 2013; Abdul-Rahman 2003). In general, the most distinctive features of Al Jahiliyya era were mistreatment and discrimination against children and women. However, Islam challenged these perceptions and behaviour patterns among Arabs.

Chapter 5

Islam and its Impact on Arab Families

The Quran and the Prophet Muhammad's work on reshaping Arab society included the construction of childhood and parenthood. Islam changed the negative perceptions of children and entitled them to some rights over their parents which did not exist before. For example, the Quran and Sunni consider children as a 'Gift from God' (هبيه الله) (Karraa 2011) and 'Angels of God' (ملائكة الرحمن) (Al.Nabulsi, 2013b).Therefore, loving children is considered as a good deed which draws people close to God and caring for them is an Islamic duty ' محبة الاطفال قربى لله' (Al.Nabulsi 2013b). This means that having a child is a blessing from God to parents who need to look after this gift well and thank God for it. In addition, as children are the angels of God on the earth, this means that people have to treat those angels well. Contrary to the Christian perceptions of limbo[25], Islam clarifies that children who pass away before they reach the age of puberty or even before birth will go to heaven. For instance, the Quran mentioned that infants who died in the pre Islamic era would go to heaven (Al.Nabulsi 2013b). This is why, in Islam, Muslims have to bury and perform the full necessary religious ceremonies for young dead children, just as the Prophet did with his three infant children when they passed away (Maghamsi 2011).

Children's Rights in Islam

Islam promotes children's rights even before their parents get married (Al.Nabulsi 2014; El.Masry 2013). Islam demands parents choose the right partner in order to ensure a good family environment (Ezzat 2010; Kalil 2004). Muslims are recommended to choose partners who are the best followers of their religion (virtuous). For instance, it was narrated that The Prophet said, "a woman may be married for four reasons: for her money, her social status, her beauty and her religion (piety), so marry the one who is best in the religion" (Hussaini 2010, n.p). Based on this context, a Muslim child has the right to be born through a legitimate union with full knowledge of their parentage, which will provide the source for a stable family (Kalil 2004; Gatrad and Sheikh 2000).

One of the significant Islamic rights for children after birth is to be named a good name (Kalil 2004). In the Sunna, it was reported that the Prophet always chose names with beautiful meanings, and even encouraged people to change their names if they had unpleasant meanings. Ibn Umar (cited from Mission Islam, n.d., n.p) reported that "The Prophet Mohammed changed the name of a woman who was called Aasiyah (عاصية), which means disobedient, and said "you are Jameelah (جميلة), which means beautiful". Naming a Muslim child with a beautiful and honourable name is very important right, as Islam recognises the

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[25] See the section on religious beliefs under section 4.5.

effects of the child's name on its life and personality in the future, such as avoiding the child being bullied by others.

Islam also guarantees children will be protected from any damage. Ghaneim (2012) stated that one form of protecting young Muslim children is that Islam permits pregnant women and others who are breast-feeding not to fast during Ramadan -the holy month for Muslims- when they should fast from sunrise to sunset. In addition, Islam bans the killing of anyone, including children, for any reason, including "honour killing"[26]. Breast-feeding the child is also considered to be the right of the child in Islam. Muslim mothers were encouraged to continue ideally for two years (Kalil 2004). In addition, Islam requires parents to spend moderately on their children's welfare. Al.Uthaymeen (n.d.) pointed out that Islam acknowledges that any neglect of spending or over-spending on children's wellbeing leads to negative impact on their development. He added that if parents for any reason refuse to spend on their children, Shariah law forces them to sustain their children.

Fairness towards their children, regardless of sex and age, is a significant requirement from parents within the Islamic context (Kalil 2004). Al.Uthaymeen (n.d.), for example, explains that an act of preference by parents to one child over others is considered as an unjust act by Islam. He states that treating children unequally and unfairly will definitely lead children to feel angry, which will result in animosity amongst siblings, and this will have a negative impact on the whole family environment. It is narrated by Abu Bakr that the Prophet Muhammad was approached by one of his companions, al-N'uman bin Basheer, who said:

> O Prophet of Allah! I have granted a servant to one of my children -asking him to testify to that gift- but the Prophet asked him: "Did you grant the same to each and every child of yours?" He replied: No. The Prophet said "Fear Allah, the Almighty, and be fair and just to all your children. Seek the testimony of another person, other than me. I will not testify an act of injustice (Al.Uthaymeen n.d, n.p).

Al.Nabulsi (2013b) and Shubaily (2011b) explain that parents' fairness according to Islam essentially comprises three parts. First, there should be fairness in kisses, smiles and hugging all children equally. Some parents prefer one child over the rest because of his/her beauty or abilities. Islam points that this act will destroy other children and can last the whole life. Second, there should be fairness also in giving gifts for all children, whether it is money or other material things. Third, there should be fairness in the demands and orders given by parents. Parents should ask all their children to do tasks equally and not focus on one child rather than another. The idea of fairness among children in Islam challenges the perceptions

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[26] See section 5.4.

of preferring boys over girls, as they should be treated as children and not according to their gender[27].

Islam also underlined children's right to education. Al.Uthaymeen (n.d.) argues that Muslim parents have a responsibility towards their children which is greater than only meeting their physical needs. They have to offer the child proper knowledge and guidance. He explained that clothes and food do not indicate good care of the child. Good guidance and education are far more important than food and clothes. Elsergany (2010) emphasises that for all Muslims seeking knowledge is very important in Islam as this was the first word (Read; اقرأ) that came down to the Prophet[28]. Elsergany (ibid.) added that the world of knowledge with its synonyms is mentioned 779 times in the Quran. Therefore, Muslim parents are responsible for teaching their children moral, ethical and essential values as they will be judged by God for their duties (Ezzat 2010). I should mention that the common understanding of education among many Muslims relates to religious education, as religion, in a Muslim society, is considered to be the only source for learning the correct behaviour, in contrast to in secular cultures. However, that does not mean that Muslim children have to learn only religious studies as there are many Al.Hadiths of the Prophet that encourage Muslims to seek knowledge in general. The Prophet says "seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every male and female Muslim" (Ahmad n.d., n.p). The Islamic Arabic scholar Abdul-Kafi (2012a) explains that in Islam, the debate is not about learning religious or non-religious knowledge but it is about useful or non-useful knowledge. He clarifies that Muslims need to learn what is moral and ethical in terms of Islamic behaviour and then they should pursue different good knowledge that improves them and their society.

Above all, Islam does not neglect the emotional needs of a child. Muslim children have the right to have a loving and caring environment (Shubaily 2011b; Kalil 2004). Islam recognises the importance of love and affection to children. The Prophet Muhammad said: "respect your children, love them, kiss them, have mercy on them, improve their behaviour and be forgiven" (Kalil 2004, n.p). Shubaily (2011b) stated that one of the most important rights of Muslim children is to have a home full of love and care that will prevent children from going outside looking for affection. In Islam, it is mentioned that some parents, when they interact with their children, do not show them affection or respect. One incident in Al.Hadith stated that:

> Once a Bedouin saw the Prophet Mohammed kissing a small kid, out of wonder he said, I have eight children, but I never kiss them. The Prophet remarked, What

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[27] See the preceding section.
[28] See the section on a summary of the life of the Prophet Muhammad under section 5.2.

can I do if Allah (God) has taken away love and compassion from your heart (Arshed 2011, n.p).

Kalil (2004) states those parents are considered as harsh parents and they must know that using this method, which is considered as inhumane and not related to Islam, will deprive them of God's Mercy. In addition, Islam demands that parents treat their children with tenderness. "Anyone who does not respect our elders nor show mercy to our children is not one of us" (Sunnah.com 2012,n.p). Kindness towards children in Islam has different sides; for instance, respecting a child's age and needs. Parents are encouraged to play with their children and pay attention to their needs, in particular if they have special needs. Al.Nabulsi (2013b,n.p) emphasises that parents should play with their children and get down to their level of understanding, as the Prophet Muhammad used to play with and run after children and share their games. The Prophet says "whosoever has a child, needs to be childish with him/her" (ibid.). Al.Nabulsi also pointed that Muslim parents are expected to respect and accept their children as they are, physically, mentally and emotionally, and care for their needs. In addition, parents are expected to respect their children's personalities and listen to their thoughts and involve them in making decisions related to their lives. Al.Nabulsi (2013b) stated that Muslim parents should consult their children and this will make children feel good about themselves and strengthen the attachment between children and parents.

Based on this context, Islam considers that it is essential for Muslim parents to look after a child physically, emotionally, mentally, socially and any neglect of their needs is considered as a huge religious failure. Children who are neglected and not well-looked after will take their parents to hell (Al.Nabulsi 2013b). The Prophet says "every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock" (Elias 2011,n.p), which means that any leaders of people, such as a father, a mother or a leader at work, are responsible for people under their care and control and will be judged on whatever they do. On the other hand, in Islam, the discussion is not only about children's rights in relation to their parents, but it is also about parent's rights. The next section summarises theses rights.

Parents' Rights in Islam

Al.Nabulsi (2013b) highlights that Muslim children are expected to be polite with their parents (بر الوالدين). This means that children should be respectful and kind in words and behaviour towards their parents. In general, respecting parents includes behaviours such as: not raising their voice to their parents, not insulting or treating them violently, as well as obeying them and looking after them when they get older. Muslim scholars explain that being respectful to parents is an important value in Islam that children have to follow in all circumstances, even in cases when their parents are not good or non-Muslims (Al.Nabulsi

2013b; Ahmed 2011). However, obedience to parents has limitations in Islam. Al.Nabulsi (2013b) states that Muslim children are encouraged to obey their parents unless there is disobedience to God which can harm children or others. Indeed, many Arabic Muslim leaders explain that while Muslim children should respect their parents that does not mean total obedience to them. Shaarawy (n.d.) issued a fatwa (فتوى) that children do not need to obey their parents when they stop them from getting married, for instance. Al-Qarni (2013) said that total obedience is only for God. If parents ask children to do or prevent them from doing something which is against God's orders, children do not have to obey their parents, but they still have to respect them. He said that there is no obedience to a creature (parents) in disobedience to the creator (God); (لا طاعة لمخلوق في معصية الخالق) Al-Qarni (ibid.) explains that disobedience to God includes doing harm to others such as treating people unfairly.

Obeying parents as a duty for children seems to be misunderstood among many Muslims. The most common understanding in the modern Muslim world is that children have to obey their parents totally unless they ask them to leave Islam. Indeed, Rajabi-Ardeshiri (2009) reports that children's disobedience to their parents is regarded as a huge sin and Muslim children have to obey their parents even if they ask them to abandon their family, and the only reason for Muslim children not obeying their parents is if they are asked to leave Islam. However, I would argue that this understanding of total obedience to parents can be affected by many reasons apart from Islam. To prove my point, I use the following incident as an example of how a disobedient child in the early Islamic society was treated. When a father came to Umer Ibn al-Khattab (the second Caliph of Islam) complaining that his boy disobeyed him, Umer Ibn al-Khattab's first reaction was to ask the child about his father's complaints. When he had heard from the child, al-Khattab decided that it was the father's fault, so he had no rights over his child. The question here is what can we learn from this incident? This example illustrates three key points. First, Islam does not demand total obedience to parents. Otherwise, the child would have been punished immediately without the need to listen to him. However, sadly, in Muslim countries today parents beat their children when they disobey them (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Youssef et al 1998) and consider the act of disobeying parents as a big sin (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2009). This example also demonstrates that Islam acknowledges the importance of listening to a child even if the person who complains is a parent, which is not the case in many Muslim countries today where children have no voice or opinions with their parents. Finally, this example helps to show that Islam acknowledges that children are not always at fault and it is possible that parents can actually abuse their children by neglecting their parental duties.

Chapter 5

In disregard of Islamic principles, many parents in modern Muslim societies do not appear to embrace the idea that parents can mistreat their children[29]. This is why Al.Nabulsi (2013b) pointed out that parents in Muslim society today need to learn how to earn love from their children, which is more important than respect. He said that parents in Muslim countries automatically earn respect from their children but not every parent is loved by their children. Therefore, good parents know how to make their children love them.

Islam treasures the role of the mother more than the father. This is because mothers face many difficulties during pregnancy, labour, breast-feeding and the care of the child day and night (Ahmed 2011). Reem (2012, n.p) refers to various incidents where the Prophet Muhammad ordered Muslims to respect and honour their mothers. For instance,

> A man once consulted the Prophet Muhammad about taking part in a military campaign. The Prophet asked the man if his mother was still living. When told that she was alive, the Prophet said: (Then) stay with her, for Paradise is at her feet.

However, this does not mean that Islam neglects a father's role. Actually, Islam recognises the importance of the role of the father in a child's well-being. Shubaily (2011b) argues that despite the fact that fathers are busy working outside the home, they should not leave their home for a long period of time, and in particular not during special occasions such as Eid, children's school holidays and examination periods, because this causes very serious damage to children's development. Despite all of the rights that were granted to Muslim parents, I should emphasise that in Islam parents have to fulfil their duties first, before they claim their rights from children. This means parents should look after their children and give them all their rights in order to gain their own rights. For instance, there is a well-known incident in Islam which reflects that parents have to fulfil their responsibilities first. Sheikh and Gatrad (2000, n.p) state that:

> A man came to Umer Ibn al-Khattab (the second Caliph of Islam) complaining of his son's disobedience. Umer called for the boy, and asked him about his father's complaint and his neglect of his duties towards his father. The boy replied: Caliph, Does a child have no rights over his father? Certainly: replied Umer. What are they then? enquired the boy. Umer answers that he should choose his children's mother with care, preferring a righteous woman. When Allah blesses him with a child, he should give him a good name and teach him the Quran. The boy said, Oh Caliph! My father did none of these. My mother was a fire-worshipper. He gave me the name Ju'lann (meaning dung beetle) and did not teach me a single letter of the Quran. Umer turned to the father and said: you have come to me to complain about the disobedience of your son. You have failed in your duty to him before he has failed in his duty to you; you have done wrong to him before he has wronged you.

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[29] See section 5.4.

Chapter 5

The important question is why do Muslim children have duties towards their parents in the first place? One Muslim Arab leader, Al.Nabulsi (2013b), argues that the love of parents towards a child is a natural habit, while respecting one's parents is a duty from God. Children are more likely to forget about their parents when they get older and focus only on their own family. This is why children have a reward 'Ajer;أجر' from God when they respect and look after their parents, while parents receive no reward for the love they show to their children. Therefore, children need a reminder about their parents, to repay them, as they looked after them when they were young. This could reflect the reason why some religious leaders focus more on parents' rights and parents' ungratefulness compared to children's rights. It could also explain why some Arab parents take it for granted that children should listen to them completely, which consequently has an influence on Arab Muslim children.

However, these unbalanced views about children's and parents' rights may reflect the different understandings among Islamic leaders. It can be argued that, indeed, Islam grants parents some rights, however, parents are asked to do their duty by their children first in order to gain their rights from their children (Ezzat 2010), which implies recognition in Islam that some parents are not naturally loving and caring. This reflects the need to care and protect a vulnerable group: 'children'. On the other hand, when children are encouraged in Islam to look after their parents when they get old, this also represents a way to look after another vulnerable group in the society: the elderly, and to teach people to give and take. Therefore, Islam manages to achieve a balance between parents' and children's rights, while many Muslims fail to do so.

The responsibility of parents towards their children for rearing them in an Islamic manner is important and considered as a religious duty for which parents will be rewarded or punished by God in the afterlife. Therefore, the Quran and Sunnah emphasise good child-rearing practices. The next section outlines the Islamic ways of rearing Muslim children.

Child-Rearing in Islam

Al.Nabulsi (2013a) explains that there is a particular process of child-rearing in Islam, one which is divided into three parts. The first stage covers the first seven years of a child's life, as stated in the Hadith below. This stage is very important in a child's life. Muslim parents should leave their children to play and enjoy their early childhood as it is meaningless for parents to attempt to discipline or punish them because their understanding is still not fully developed. The second stage covers the ages 7-14, when parents should teach their children good manners by directing and advising them. The third stage starts after 14, when parents should observe and keep an eye on their children's behaviour and get to know their

friends. Parents with children of this age are expected to treat their children as friends, talking to them with respect so they feel able to tell them about their secrets and problems. This reflects the need for respect and equality in the parent-child relationship rather than looking at it from hierarchical point of view. The Prophet Muhammad said:

> Let your children be free to play until they reach the age of seven, and for the next seven years, keep a really watchful eye on them and teach them good manners, and for the next seven years be their friend (Ezzat 2010, n.p).

Based on this Al.Hadith, teaching a child good manners (discipline) in Islam should take place during the ages 7-14. Younger children cannot fully understand orders from parents, whilst older children should be treated with respect and as the parents' friend. Therefore, disciplining a child should not start too soon or too late. There are some expectations of Muslim parents when rearing their children. For instance, parents are expected to teach their children to fear God not people. The Prophet Muhammad said: "do not lift your stick against your wife and children and urge them to fear God" (Al.Aakhir 2011, n.p). This means that the motive behind doing what is right should be an inner feeling, not as a result of fear of others or physical punishment. Muslim parents are also expected to rear their children based on their children's time, not on their times; the Prophet Muhammad says "rear your children for their time not for yours" Al.Nabulsi (2013a, n.p). Al.Nabulsi (ibid.) explains that, for instance, parents should allow their children to learn and use new technology such as computers as this is a feature of their time which was not there in their parents' times. This implies that Islam recognises social change across generations and accepts new life demands. In addition, Muslim parents are not expected to let their children witness any form of violence within the family. Shubaily (2011b) states that one of the great principles of child rearing in Islam is that parents are not allowed to discuss their problems or shout in the presence of children as it has a lasting negative effect on children's development. However, how can Muslim parents control their children's misbehaviour? Islam clarifies some methods that help parents to deal with their children's misbehaviour. The next section focuses on child discipline methods based on the Quran and the Sunnah.

Child Discipline Methods in Islam

In Islam, methods of disciplining children are reward-oriented. I should mention before talking about Islamic disciplining methods that there are three main rules that Muslim parents need to be aware of in order to gain the expected results from disciplining a child. Shubaily (2011a) explains that in the first place, a child needs to be clear about what is right, wrong, the types of punishments for each incident of misbehaviour and when s/he will be punished. Secondly, parents have to be fair in applying the punishment, which means that it will be

applied to every child and whenever they misbehave. Thirdly, parents have to be firm, which means that whenever a child misbehaves, s/he will be punished, and parents have to be firm regardless of their mood.

The first and most significant method that Muslim parents should use to control their children is to be a good role model for their children (Al.Nabulsi 2013b; Shubaily 2011b; Kalil 2004). This means that parents should practise what they ask the children to do. They should pray before asking their children to pray and should not lie before telling their children not to tell lies. Moreover, Muslim parents have to motivate and reward good behaviour and, most importantly, the reward has to be immediate in order to establish the good behaviour as a habit in a child's soul (Shubaily 2011a; 2011b). Ignoring small acts of misbehaviour is also one of the methods that Muslim parents should use. Al.Sufi (2013) reports that ignoring some misbehaviour and focusing only on the great issues when dealing with children is an effective method, as our Prophet used to focus only on big issues and ignored the small things. In addition, observation, advice, discussion and explanation to children are also some methods that Muslim parents are expected to use (Al.Nabulsi 2013b; Shubaily 2011a; 2011b). Interestingly, all these positive verbal methods should be used in a specific order. Al.Sufi (2013) stated that parents need to point out the mistake and if that is enough, there is no need to talk about it. In cases where talk is needed, there is no need to use insults. Parents are encouraged to warn their children first before punishing them. This is well articulated by Shubaily (2011a; 2011b) who states that Muslim parents should warn a child first, for example, three times, then they can withhold a child's privileges according to their age. He mentions the very important point that withholding something that a child likes to do or have should be done in a particular order. According to him, parents should make a list of things that a child likes most and then start from the least favoured thing, because if parents start with the child's favourite thing, the child will not bother about the rest. Clearly, child disciplining method in Islam is based on positive non-physical methods. However, some Arab Muslims leaders argue that physical punishment as a last resort was mentioned once in Al.Hadith -the Prophet's sayings-, despite the fact that the Sunnah, -practices of the Prophet Muhammad-, and the holy Quran do not mention the use of physical punishment with children[30]. Therefore, the next section explores this one Hadith by the Prophet and the surrounding debate among Arab Muslim scholars.

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[30] See the next section.

Chapter 5

Controversy over the Use of Physical Punishment, as a Last Resort, among Arab Muslim Leaders

The discussion among Islamic leaders about parental use of physical punishment of children as a last resort is related to one Hadith (Al.Sufi 2013; Al.Arifi 2010a) but not to the Quran or the Sunna (Habib 2012). Al.Hadith says "teach a child to pray when s/he is seven years old, and hit them lightly if they do not at ten" (Ezzat 2010, n.p).

It seems that the main root of the dispute about this Hadith is the different understanding of it. Islamic Arab leaders fall into two groups in the way they interpret this Hadith. Both groups appear to agree on the importance of prayer in Islam and that parents should use verbal positive methods with their children for a period of three years, ages 7-10 years, to teach their children to pray. However, the grey area is about using physical methods with children as a last resort or not at all. One group appears to focus on the second part of Al.Hadith which indicates that children from the age of 10 need to be beaten lightly if they refuse to pray. However, they give parents the right to use physical methods after failure of non-physical methods. Therefore, they set some rules, based on Al.Hadith as mentioned above and other Islamic texts that are not related to children, to control parental use of physical punishment. These rules can be summarised as the following: Beating children should be used as a last resort after failure of non-physical methods. Children younger than 10 years old should not be beaten. The use of physical punishment should be appropriate to the misdeed and not over-used, such as when it is used daily or as reaction to every misbehaviour. Parents should not apply physical punishment when they are angry as this is considered as a form of revenge which does not lead to a healthy relationship. Parents should not misuse this method, as this is considered as abuse. It is abusive if it is severe, harms and hurts a child either psychologically or physically, uses objects, is applied to delicate places on a child's body such as the face, head, and private areas, leaves marks, leads to bleeding or breaks bones. In this case, physical punishment is not effective and it means that there is something wrong in the parents' personality (Al.Sufi 2013; Al-Qurayshi, cited in Al.Aakhir 2011; Al.Arifi 2010a).

By contrast the second group, which represents the majority, seems to interpret this Hadith by focusing on the first part of it which indicates that children at a young age need to learn religious duties. This group does not accept parental use of physical punishment under the name of teaching a child Islamic duties. They argue that the Prophet Muhammad set a good example for all Muslims to follow and he never used physical punishment. Shubaily (2011a) reports that Muslim parents cannot shout, swear, insult or beat their children. Habib (2012) also stated that Muslim parents are not permitted to beat their children at all. He thinks if any

parent(s) hit their children, their hands should be cut off as the Prophet never raised his hands to any one, including children. This group believes that if Muslim parents follow positive verbal methods such as those the Prophet used with children, they would never need to use physical punishment. With regard to religious duties, they argue that teaching children Islamic duties should be done at an early stage (from the age of 7) and not be left until it is too late (after 10). Al.Nabulsi (2013b) argues if Muslim parents have not taught their children to pray at an early stage, they cannot not beat them when they get to 10, because they will have failed in their duty.

My own analysis and understanding of Al.Hadith is that the Prophet first used the word "Teach", as it was assumed that parents would pray themselves to set a good example, but what if parents do not pray, and want to use physical punishment to force a child to pray? Many parents use this Hadith to give themselves the right to use physical methods when children do not pray and they ignore the fact that they are supposed to be teachers. If they do not teach, they should not expect their children to learn, and then any punishment will be unfair. Furthermore, the period of teaching, based on Al.Hadith, is three years. During the ages 7-10, parents should encourage their children to pray by only using positive verbal methods. Using positive methods for three years is supposed to confirm good behaviour in children's souls. Further, based on Al.Hadith, the only reason for using light physical punishment is when a child resists praying after 3 years of failure of non-physical methods. This means that the use of physical punishment of children in Islam is just an 'intimidatory' method which would not be used if Muslim parents followed what they are expected to do. However, the literature on modern Arab Muslim family life indicates that families are far from practising Islam.

5.4 Family and Children in Modern Arab Muslim Countries

Behrmann and Safwat (2013) report that the mindset of Arabs in the era before Islam with regard to aggressive treatment towards women and children, in particular girls, is still affecting Modern Arab societies. Indeed, the Arabic Islamic leader Abdul-Kafi (2012b) expresses that modern Arab Muslim societies reflect Al Jahiliyya time in many respects. I will now summarise some of behaviours that exist in modern Arab Muslim societies that reflect the time of Al Jahiliyya.

Family privilege and reputation are as important in Muslim Arab societies today as they were in the Jahiliyya era. Therefore, children are taught from a young age that their actions are a reflection upon the family as a whole and shame and honour are greatly stressed (Al-Krenawi and Graham 2000; Hammad et al 1999; Shabbas 1979). As part of family privilege,

individuals are always expected to have total loyalty to their family and tribe. Hammad et al (1999) stated that in Arab societies, the individual's loyalty and duty to their family are greater than any other social obligations. Arab communities are tight-knit groups made up of even tighter family groups and, most often, part of a tribe which is the centre of all loyalty, obligation and status of its members. Keeping the good name of the Arab family is a very important value to the extent that it measures the quality of parenting – whether it is good, not good enough or bad. Studies on Arabic societies show that parents' capability to rear children in a good manner reflects on the family's name in the community and it is also considered to be an indicator of their ability as parents (Binghalib 2011; Al-Krenawi and Graham 2000; Shabbas 1979). Therefore, Arab children are expected to behave in a certain manner which is called in Arabic "Adab, أدب" whereby a child can earn the approval of being "Muadib, مؤدب", which means "well-mannered" and which will lead to his/her parents getting credit for their good parenting (Hammad et al 1999). This shows that Arab families, by emphasising the family name, fear people rather than God, which is in contrast to the teachings of Islam[31].

Based on my experience, family name and reputation are important to the extent that when people want to get married, for example, they have to consider the family name of the partner, which in many cases leads to discrimination or unfair treatment. For instance, men will commonly avoid getting married to women whose father/brothers drink or have drunk alcohol, or taken on drugs, and neither would their family allow them to do so. This is in contrast to Islamic values that encourage Muslims to choose their partner based on their virtues not on the family name, which is beyond her/his control[32].

Unsurprisingly, Binghalib (2011) claims that according to modern Arabic standards, keeping family life private and seeking help outside the family realm is seen as unacceptable and a shameful act as it is considered important to keep the family name pure. However, it seems that not only do Arabic traditions have this characteristic but also in Chinese culture parents tend not to seek help from outside, in order to avoid feeling ashamed, through fear of losing their image, and to protect family privacy (Zhu and Tang 2011). This mindset can result in parents believing that family life, including children and any matter related to children, is the sole responsibility of parents. Indeed, many Arabic studies show that Arabic parents believe that family life is a private matter which is not to be discussed with others (Alyahri and Goodman 2008; Habasch 2005; Haj-Yahia and Abdo- Kaloti 2003; Qasem et al 1998). This

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[31] See an earlier section on child-rearing in Islam under section 5.3.
[32] See an earlier section on children's rights in Islam under section 5.3.

is in contrast to Islamic values that encourage parents to ask for advice when they struggle with their children's misbehaviour. The story that was mentioned earlier on in the section on parents' rights in Islam shows that parents in early Islamic society were more open to asking for advice and learning the Islamic way to deal with their children. Moreover, Taylor et al (2012) and Walsh (2002) found that American parents who sought advice from paediatricians, religious leaders (Christian) and mental health professionals were less likely to use physical punishment than parents who did not.

Another characteristic of Arab societies today that seems to have its root in the pre Islamic era is discrimination against females that reinforces males' total dominance (Azban 2012; Binghalib 2011; Hammad et al 1999). The mentality of considering female children/women as a potential source of shame still exists in modern Arab Muslim countries. Binghalib (2011) reports that in Arab traditions, any misbehaviour by women is seen as doing more damage to family honour than misbehaviour by men. Thus, many Arab girls are not allowed to leave the house without a male relative; the virginity of unmarried girls is of utmost importance to family honour, and preserving it is thought to be the responsibility of all family members. Although after the advent of Islam, Arab parents stopped killing their new-born female children to avoid being shamed, they still control and manipulate girls as a result of a fear of the potential damage to the family's reputation. Sadly, it was also reported recently that some Muslim Arabs in Iraq had killed young children in the name of "honour killing" although this type of behaviour is considered as a crime by civil and Islamic laws in all Arab Muslim countries (Home News 2013). Further, in Islam, a person who kills others is considered to be a non-believer. The Prophet said "abusing a Muslim is a sin, and killing is disbelief" (Muttaqun n.d., n.p; Zaatari n.d., n.p).

With regard to the role of the father, in the pre Islamic period, the father's role was mainly to protect the family and provide financial support. Arab societies today still seem to be affected by these views. Many Arab fathers do not usually take part in children rearing, especially in the early stages, and they consider child-rearing as the mother's duty, besides taking care of their husband and home (Binghalib 2011; Azban 2012; Moughrabi 1978). However, Islam recognises the critical role of the father in a child's development[33]. One of the fundamental principles in modern Arab norms is the absolute obedience that is expected from children towards their parents, older family and community members. Children are not encouraged to seek individuality or not supposed to question parental authority (Binghalib 2011; Hammad et al 1999; Shabbas 1979; Al-Krenawi and Graham 2000). Generally, if children disobey their parents in modern Arab societies, they face a social stigma and will be considered as

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[33] See the section on parents' rights in Islam under section 5.3.

disobedient and ungrateful children (Wei and Mayouf 2009). It seems that in modern Arab Muslim societies there is misunderstanding and confusion about obedience to parents[34].

Regarding how modern Muslim Arab societies perceive children, it appears that children are considered as unable to understand the world around them. Therefore, their voices are neglected, which means they are perceived 'to be seen and not heard' (Jones 2007; 2008). Gadour (2006) found that children in Libya, for instance, are considered as "Jahal; جاهل", which means ignorant. Consequently their faith is shaped by the attitudes and views of others, such as parents, relatives and teachers. These views are different from Islamic values that encourage people, in particular parents, to respect children as people by consulting and involving them in decision-making [35]. In addition, contemporary Arab standards tend to advocate harsh methods to discipline children. They seem to rely on a punishment-oriented approach rather than the reward-oriented methods that Islam encourages[36]. Parenting in many Arab families is based on deterrence and includes creating fear and use of physical punishment. For instance, Hammad et al (1999) claimed that Arab parents most often use shaming and comparing with others as a way of disciplining and stress conformity to social norms as a reason to modify behaviour. In addition, physical punishment of children in Arabic societies ranges from spanking to beating with hands, fists and objects, slapping the face or hitting other body parts (Binghalib 2007). Binghalib (ibid.) states that according to Arab norms, light physical discipline and strong verbal reprimands of a child or even screaming at a child are considered proper parenting and viewed as correcting a child's etiquette (Adib Al-walad) rather than being seen as violence, and these methods contradict Islamic values. However, it must be emphasised that hurting a child by inflicting serious bruising or wounds is not acceptable in terms of Arabic norms (Binghalib 2011). This raises the question: Why do modern Arab Muslim parents rely more on physical methods as a way of disciplining children?

Habib (2012) thinks that modern Arab Muslim parents use physical punishment of children not because of Islam but, conversely, as a result of being far from Islam in the first place. This means that a distinction should be made between traditions and Islam in modern Muslim countries. For instance, although some Arab parents use harsh methods to discipline their children, these methods are not related to Islam, rather they are rooted in Arab traditions. Youssef (2014) expresses that in order to learn about Islam, it is necessary to read Islamic books rather than to look at the lives and practices of modern Muslim people. The use of Islam as a cover for such violent behaviour leads to misrepresentation of the

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[34] See section on parents' rights in Islam under section 5.3.
[35] See the section on children's rights in Islam under section 5.3.
[36] See the section on child discipline methods in Islam under section 5.3.

image of Islam, in particular in other cultures where they know nothing about Islam. Indeed, Abdul-Kafi (2012b), an Arabic Muslim scholar, argues that Muslims have failed their religion (Islam) twice. Ordinary people have done so by failing to practise it and Islamic scholars have done so by failing to transmit and show it to the world in the right way. Furthermore, there is another issue related to Muslim people, in particular males, with regard to their practising of Islam, which is that they pick from Islam what fits with their interests. Habib (2012) argues that Arab people, in particular men, tend to choose what fits with their manhood, even from their religion. Picking and choosing aspects from religion was also found among Christians in Australia, in that they tended to choose what suited them as individuals (Hughes et al 2008). However, the question remains as to why many Muslim parents are so far removed from Islam. This could be because of the historical changes that Islamic society has gone through. Early Islamic civilisation was powerful during the time of Prophet Muhammad and his companions[37]. However, by the 19th century, it had started to decline and as a result many Muslim countries were subjected to colonisation by the West[38]. This led some of them to adopt colonial values and laws which to some extent weakened Islamic values. Further, Mansour (2014) thinks that one of the reasons of using harsh methods by modern Muslim Arab parents is the lack of knowledge about Islamic values. She believes that Islamic leaders in modern societies are too busy talking about other issues rather than focusing on children's rights and children disciplining methods.

However, Habib (2012) argues that it is not only being far from Islam that makes parents in modern Muslim societies use physical punishment more than they should; also their lack of knowledge about children's developmental needs leads parents to have unreasonably high expectations of their children. Habib (ibid.) encourages Arab countries to introduce policies to educate parents. He believes that it is a major crime against children for their fathers and mothers to be unaware of their children's psychological and developmental stages. Habib argues that in modern countries we have laws that ban driving a car without a licence, but we allow parents to drive family life without a licence. He strongly believes that parents, in particular new parents, must be given adequate training to enable them to understand what type of children's behaviour is normal and abnormal, how to deal with them and what expectations they should have from children according to their age. Based on such context, the question now is: How do modern Arab policies protect children within the family?

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[37] See an earlier section on a summary of the life of the Prophet Muhammad under section 5.2.
[38] See the next section.

5.5 Modern Arab Muslim legislation

Just as Islam has influence over Muslim people's social life, it should also have impact on laws in Muslim countries. Therefore, before exploring child protection policies in modern Arab Muslim countries, I will outline the level of influence of Islamic law on Muslim legislation systems.

Influence of Shariah Law on Modern Muslim Legislation Systems

As I highlighted earlier, in early Islamic societies Shariah law determined all aspects of Muslims' lives, as discussed in section (Shariah law). However, in the modern Muslim world, Arab and non-Arab, Shariah is applied differently from one country to another, and in some countries it does not apply at all. The question here is, why is Shariah law not applied in all modern Muslim societies as it was before? It is argued that Islamic civilisation had declined by the 19th century, with the beginning of modernisation, while industrial Europe flourished. As a result, many Muslim countries were subjected to colonisation by the West and consequently adopted colonial laws (Langman 2006). Hessini (2007) argues that most modern Muslim countries have a double system of law: secular and religious. In contrast, it appears, based on the present literature, that the legal systems of Muslim countries can be divided into three groups. First, some countries have a dual legal system. In these countries, Shariah applies only to family matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance and child custody. Examples of these countries are Libya, Morocco, Egypt and Algeria. Second, some countries have a pure Shariah system, meaning that Shariah covers all aspects of people's lives – personal and criminal matters. Examples of such countries are Iran, Saudi Arabia and Sudan. The third group consists of countries where they have a secular system and Shariah does not apply at all, such as Tunisia and Turkey (Otto 2008; Hessini 2007; Gulalp 2003; Marcotte 2003). Clearly, except in Tunisia, in all Arabic countries, the family life system is influenced by Islamic contexts. Tunisia is the only state in the Arab world that has a secular legal system, which is the result of the significant influence of French colonial laws (Encyclopedia Britannica 2014).

Modern Muslims were divided into two groups, namely Sunnis and Shiites, after the Prophet passed away. The split emerged as a result of disputes on how Muslims were to be led after the death of the Prophet (Philosophy of Religion n.d.). Both groups agree on the basic values of Islam that come from the Quran and the Sunnah. However, they have different thoughts and methods on interpretation (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2009). I should also mention that among Sunni Muslims there are a few differences, as a result of different traditions, which led to the development of four Sunni schools of interpretation: Hanafi, Shafi'i, Hanbali and

Maliki (Hessini 2007; Philosophy of Religion n.d). Hence, it is to be expected that there will be differences from one country to another in understanding and applying Shariah law. Furthermore, differences exist also among Islamic scholars (mufti مفتي) who have different understandings and therefore give fatwas (فتاوى) to express their views to guide Muslims; meanwhile, Muslims are free to choose whom to follow (Hessini 2007; Marcotte 2003). For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on Arab Sunni understandings of Islamic Shariah, as the great majority of Arab countries, including Libya, follow this branch of Islam (Abou-Alsamh 2013).

As it was mentioned previously that Shariah has a huge impact on all Arabic legal systems, except for that of Tunisia, in matters related to family and children, in the next section I will focus on Arab Muslim legal systems with regard to protecting children against violence within the family.

Arab Child Protection Policies

Arab legal policies that deal with protecting children against violence within the family seem to be various. According to the League of Arab States (2010), Arab States are increasingly incorporating protection against violence into their legal systems and are mainstreaming children's basic needs in legislation. However, in most Arab states, national mechanisms for child protection lack a clear legal framework, neglecting many forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination against some categories of children and some settings where children interact. To address this shortcoming, the League of Arab States (ibid.) proposed various mechanisms and means of child protection at local and national levels, such as child protection lines and committees, social workers, judicial delegation and specialised police.

Indeed, the published literature reveals that legislation regarding the use of physical disciplinary methods by parents appears to be at different stages of development in Arabic countries. However, I divide the Arab states into three groups according to their legislative practice. The first group, which reflects the majority of Arabic countries, includes those such as Kuwait (Qasem et al 1998), Palestine (Haj-Yahia and Abdo- Kaloti 2003), Yemen (Alyahri and Goodman 2008; Habasch 2005) and Egypt (Youssef et al 1998), where the laws do not criminalise the use of physical methods by parents. Meanwhile, the second group consists of just a few Arabic countries, where a crime is only committed when parents misuse physical punishment of children. For instance, Jordan, in a report that was submitted to the Arab Human Rights Committee/ League of Arab States (The Arab Human Rights Committee 2011) claimed regarding Article (33;178) on family protection that physical punishment is

considered as a disciplinary method used by parents to educate their children unless it leads to injury.

The final group consists only of Tunisia, which in 2010 passed a law banning parental use of physical punishment and making it a penal offence (The Sydney Morning Herald 2010). It seems from the published literature that Tunisia has comprehensive legislation regarding protection of children from abuse, including within the family. More importantly, the law seems to be enforced in practice. A report by the Ministry of Family and Women's Affairs (2012) claims that Tunisia has so called 'child protection offices' which have been recognised as law enforcement offices that work on shortening legal proceedings and ensuring early protection for children. These offices are located across the country and children themselves or others can report abuse by going to the offices in person, sending emails or via the phone (child help-lines), with full protection given to people who report these cases. Family judges also ensure child protection, with a clearly defined mandate to implement legal and social measures. The same report suggests that 'child protection officers' in Tunisia have the responsibility to intervene in order to protect children everywhere, including within the family, and they also have the right to remove a child from the family to a foster family or other organisations, especially in cases of homelessness, neglect, or where the child is in danger. It appears that Tunisian law has a clear definition of violence against children and its various forms, including physical, sexual, neglect and emotional abuse. Physical Assaults is defined as:

> A physical act applied towards children by another person or children themselves. It includes smacking, hitting, kicking, pushing, slap, burning and leaving bruises, twisting ears, pulling the hair, stabbing, strangling, tying up and shaking the child (Republic of Tunisia; The Ministry of Family and Women's Affairs, 2012, pp20).

In addition, according to the League of Arab States (2010, pp69), Tunisia organises a 'child protection month' each year in order to change attitudes, and promote good parenting practice. The question here is why is Tunisia different from all other Arab Muslim countries? This could be as a result of the deep influence of French culture, in particular on Tunisian law (Encyclopedia Britannica 2014).

In modern Arab Muslim countries, in particular those that follow the Sunni branch of Islam, severe forms of physical punishment towards children are not acceptable legally from anyone, including parents. In all Arabic countries, Islamic law is applied with regard to family life, except in Tunisia, and none of them accept severe harm to a child in the name of parents' rights. For instance, a Saudi father was sentenced to eight years in jail and 600 lashes after he tortured his five-year-old daughter and beat her to death (Usher 2013).

However, this contrasts with Rajabi-Ardeshiri (2009) who claimed that within Muslim countries, Islamic law tolerates parental use of physical punishment even if it leads to the death of a child. I would argue strongly that understanding and interpretation differ from one Muslim country to another and across different ethnic groups. Murat (2006), meanwhile, argues that differences in the occurrence and spread of different crimes in Muslim Arab countries arise because governments do not follow Islamic law.

5.6 Arab Muslim Libyan Context

Libya is a North African country which faces the Mediterranean to the north, with a coastline extending close to 2000 kilometres and had a population of 6.4 million before the start of the war (Tamtama et al 2011). However, as a result of the armed conflict that Libya faced in 2011, the number fell to approximately 5.6 million (Internet World Stats 2012). Tripoli is the capital of the country and has just under 2 million residents (Temehe 2013), which means that about half of all Libyans live in Tripoli.

Libya is an Arab Muslim country that shares values, language and religion with other Arab countries (Abubaker 2008). The official language in Libya is Arabic and most Libyans resident in Libya do not speak or speak only a little of foreign languages and therefore they find it difficult to communicate with foreigners (Rhema and Miliszewska 2010; Abubaker 2008). Wei and Mayouf (2009) reported that although almost all Libyans are Arab, there are a few minority groups, such as Berber and Tebo people. However, they are all culturally homogeneous, as all Libyans are regarded as Bedouin or semi-Bedouin, although not nomadic Bedouin. Wei and Mayouf, in the same study, found that most Libyans are still in touch with their Bedouin traditions and customs. Indeed, this is the case for other Arab countries[39].

For instance, Elbendak (2008) asserts that contemporary Libya's social structure is still influenced by tribalism which can be described as the sense of loyalty that a person feels towards a particular group. He states that individuals' loyalty has to be always to their family, which means that individuality does not exist; instead, people are defined by family unity. Furthermore, Elbendak (ibid.) reports that tribalism places great value on honour. In this respect, all members of the tribe are responsible for the actions of other members and each one is a representative of the tribe. However, as Elbendak states, tribalism in Libya can be seen more in rural areas than in urban areas. This shows that in modern Libyan society, there is no place for individualism, and the value of maintaining the family/tribe's name and

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[39] See section 5.4.

honour is very important. This custom reflects Arab life in the pre Islamic era[40]. In their study on Libya, Wei and Mayouf (2009) also report that within the family, according to Bedouin tradition, power and authority are in the hands of the father or oldest male, such as the grandfather or son. Violation of this authority by any family members can be considered as rebellion, and they will find little or no support among agnates. Disobedient children may face neglect, shame, gossip within their society and may be called ungrateful children. This indicates that Libya is considered as a male-dominated society in which men's authority cannot be challenged, as was the case in Arab nations before Islam[41].

However, Wei and Mayouf (2009) state that Islam also has an impact on the social structure in Libya. They report that all Libyans follow Islam, which provides a spiritual guide for individuals and government; consequently, the Libyan Government considers the 'Quran' as guidance on all policies. Libyans follow the Sunni branch of Islam (Metz 1987), in particular the Maliki School. Therefore, Muslim culture, alongside an Arab social structure, remains effective and valued among Libyans.

Furthermore, the social structure in Libya has gone through many changes. For instance, during the Italian colonisation of Libya, the Italians attempted to alter the bases of social distinction but the change was shallow. Local people resisted and held on to their Islamic and Arabic values, with the most famous leader of the Libyan resistance against Italy being sheik Omar Mukhtar;عمر المختار (Al.Salaabi, 2010). Wei and Mayouf (2009) reported that Libya did not receive a heavy infusion of European culture during the Italian colonisation. In fact, Libya was the country in North Africa least affected by Western culture during the colonial period, and by the end of this period, Italian culture had declined rapidly and Arab Muslim traditions were beginning to be reasserted (Libya-The Society 1999). However, although Wei and Mayouf (2009) argue that the Libyan Government refers to Islam as the cornerstone for all local policies, Libya does show some influence from the colonial period in terms of its mixed system of law, and only the family system is influenced by Islamic values[42]. Indeed, based on my experience, although the Libyan Government always states that all its laws are based on Islam, the reality seems to be different. Hence, there may be a contradiction between what the Government says and the reality.

After the ending of the colonial period and the gaining of Libyan independence in 1951, the social structure was impacted profoundly by the discovery of oil and the arrival of a large number of foreigners into the country (Libya-The Society 1999). The discovery of oil in Libya

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[40] See section 5.4.
[41] See section 5.3.
[42] See the section on influence of Shariah law on modern Muslim legislation systems under section 5.5.

provided more opportunity for work and education and as a result many people migrated from rural areas to Tripoli (the capital), and in the cities many traditions were replaced by new values (Libya-The Society 1999). These social changes were associated with shifts in behaviour, habits, beliefs and customs of individuals (Elbendak 2008). According to Elbendak, this means that social ties towards tribes and family among people who come to live in cities, in particular, Tripoli have become rational and secondary in nature. However, despite all these changes, generally, Libyans still have a strong hold on their national culture (Rhema and Miliszewska 2010; Elbendak 2008). Therefore, the pace of social change in Libya is considered to be slow, which makes it one of the most conservative countries in the Arab word (Libya-The Society 1999).

Libya and International Conventions on the Rights of the Child

Libya has ratified major conventions with regard to children's rights and protection. For instance, at the international level, the Libyan Government signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1993, making no reservations (International Child Abduction Centre 2005). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) is the first international instrument to set rights for children and requires protection of children and prohibition of all forms of physical punishment, including inside the family setting [43]. Furthermore, it requires all states to do everything possible in order to protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, and to offer the necessary help for children who are hurt by any type of abuse. Consequently, it appears that some countries have witnessed a growth in the importance of parental responsibilities over parents' rights/authority. For instance, the Parents and Children's Act in Norway no longer uses the term 'parental authority', but has replaced it with 'parental responsibilities'. Parental responsibility does not mean that a child is property to be owned by any person; rather, parental responsibility was described as all duties, powers and responsibilities which by law a parent has in relation to a child (Fitches 1995). In addition, in the UK, the Children Act,1989, introduced parental responsibilities which are defined as "the rights, duties, power and responsibilities which by the law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property" (section 3). However, some countries still use the term 'parental authority' in their laws, such as Mexico (Begne 2005) and Libya (section 11) in General People's Committee for Social Affairs/Department of Child Welfare 2012). The use of such terms in Libyan law may give a hint as to the nature of local policy with regard to protecting children within the family, which I will explore later in section a critique of Libyan child policy.

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[43] See Article 19.

Indeed, the committee on the Rights of the Child (1998) raised some concerns regarding protecting Libyan children within the family, such as: there is an absence of data on child abuse and violence within the family and insufficient and unsystematic training on children's rights provided to professionals working with and for children. Based on my experience, I completely agree with this claim. Therefore, the UN Committee suggested that the Libyan Government should ban physical punishment in homes and provide special support services to children who have been ill-treated to help them to recover. In addition, they recommended carrying out further studies and follow-up surveys on Libyan children. However, the Libyan Government did not take these recommendations seriously, even though this could have helped to improve the welfare of Libya's children.

At continental level, Libya ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) 10 years after it came into existence[44]. The charter consists of four main parts containing 48 articles that seek to promote child welfare. Article 16, 'Protection Against Child Abuse and Torture', addresses the need for each state to set legislation and social education programmes to protect children from abuse, especially physical, mental, sexual abuse and neglect. In addition, governments should work on developing a system for prevention, identification, investigation and follow-up of cases of child abuse. Furthermore, states should offer the necessary support for children and their families in need. They also need to provide social and educational programmes to raise awareness about this matter in the community[45]. Despite ratifying the African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child, the situation in Libya remains a cause of concern as children still face a lot of unfair treatment.

The Libyan General People's Committee (2012) failed to embrace all the important issues in their national report to the African Charter about protecting children, in particular within the family. In the section (16) of their report which addressed issues of protection and prevention of child torture and mistreatment in Libya, it was clear that violence against children was defined as subjecting children to trafficking, pornography and sexual assault. Considering trafficking and sexual assult as forms of child abuse is a reflection of the Arab culture, as both local Arab traditions and Islam forbid such behaviour. However, nothing was mentioned in this definition regarding physical abuse or other forms of abuse that can happen inside the family. This could reflect local traditions that consider children as the property of their parents; thus, parents have absolute rights over them[46].

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[44] See Ratification Table: African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990.

[45] See African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990.

[46] Will be discussed in the sections on 7.3.2 and section on traditional Arab views on parents' rights to use physical punishment under section 9.5.

Chapter 5

Despite the fact that the Government claims that efforts are being made to address violence towards children in Libya, their work does not consider violence within the family. For instance, in the Libyan General People's Committee (2012) report, they gave an example of a symposium that was held in Bengasi in 2005 about violence against children, to demonstrate their commmitment to children's welfare. This symposium made certain recommendations, including that there should be preparations to introduce a special law to protect children in case they are subjected to violence, with emphasis on applying the law to the abusers, establishment of a centre to deal with complaints regarding children's maltreatment and raise awareness about the categories of children' rights among professionals who work for children, or with children. However, this symposium did not consider any form of violence towards children within the family. It can be argued that the Libyan Goverment neglected to apply any improvements in the area of protecting children for about seven years after the UN report (1998). In addition, in sections 19 and 20 from the same report (2012), there was reference to many articles in the Libyan laws that protect children from mistreatment, but actually they failed to address how these laws were enforced in the reality. This point is very fundamental as it was acknowledged by the Libyan professionals who attended the above mentioned symposium (2005) that in reality there is a gap between the law and its enforcement. This is in contrast to the situation in our neighbouring Arabic and Muslim country, Tunisia, where the law seems to be well-enforced in practice.

At the Arabic level, Libya also ratified the Arab Charter on Arab Children's Rights (1984). The Charter includes fifty-one articles relating to the protection, promotion of children's rights and partnership work among Arab States. Article (13) in this Charter ensures the right of the child to be protected from neglect and physical and emotional exploitation, including within the family. In addition, Libya signed the Arab Charter on Arab Human Rights (2004). The Arab Charter includes fifty-three articles relating to the protection and promotion of human rights in the member states, of which Libya is one. Th Charter protects principles and fundamental rights for Arab people. It includes the right to life and physical integrity, fighting against slavery and trafficking of people, freedom of opinion and expression, protection within the family, especially for women and children, the right to development of resources, the right for people with mental and physical disabilities to have a decent life, the right to education. Article 8 focuses on protection from physical or psychological violence or any humiliating treatment. It states that each Arab state should protect every individual subject from those types of practices and must take effective measures to prevent them. In addition, each state should treat those violence acts as crimes that are punishable by law and not

subject to any statute of limitations. Each country should adopt within its legal system rehabilitation and compensation measures for any victim of violence.

Despite signing up to all these conventions which clearly articulate what needs to be done, the situation in Libya depicts that a lot more work still has to be done in order to achieve meaningful changes in the management of children protection, especially in the home.

A Critique of Libyan Child Policy

As a result of ratifying many charters on child welfare, the Libyan Government promulgated a 'Child Protection Law' in 1997 in order to bring the law into line with relevant international standards. However, Libyan Child Protection Law (1997) does not seem to be up to the level of the expected standards reflected in the conventions. For instance, parental use of physical punishment is not clearly criminalised and there is an absence of detail on how and where children can complain. The law just states that child abuse cases can be reported by others, but it is not clear how the law will protect people who might report cases of child mistreatment, or even where they can go to do so[47].

It was stated in Article 6 in the Child Protection Law (1997) that children (orphans or others) need to be protected from any mistreatment committed by their kin or others. The word 'others' as used here does not state exactly who is included – whether it includes disabled children or children within the family, also the word 'kin' does not indicate clearly whether parents are included or not. Article 6 also states that officers have responsibility for following up organisations and individuals who are in charge of orphans. Officers have to check the nature of treatment and care that is provided to children. Officers are defined in the same law, in Article 14, as social workers chosen to become 'Judicial officers'. It can be argued that Libyan Child Protection Law (1997) to some extent is very "conservative and shy", which may reflect local traditions that cannot look at parents as abusers, as analysis of this law seems to indicate that it is actually about protecting children in 'orphanage care' rather than within the family. Based on my professional experience, officers mentioned in the law as being responsible for protecting children from mistreatment are situated in the court, investigating and intervening only in suspicious cases in orphanage care, after being reported by social workers, but not dealing with cases within the family.

Sentences for child ill-treatment are not mentioned in Article 6, while in Article 5 and Article 9 of the same law, sentences are mentioned clearly in cases of failure to provide vaccinations

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[47] See a copy of Libyan child protection law in appendix 6.

for children and when children are prevented from going to school. It is worth saying that in the last decades in Libya, the Government has been focusing on raising awareness on the right of children to be sent to school, via media means and seminars. In addition, they have made schools and vaccination free of charge and obligatory. However, it seems that the Government has done nothing about protecting children from abuse inside the family setting. I think there are a number of reasons behind this, including difficulties of confronting strong local traditional beliefs, or the Government's belief that child-rearing is a private family matter and parents cannot abuse their children in line with the local traditions, or the Libyan Government and other professionals actually misunderstood the UN Convention on The Right of the Child. After reviewing the Arabic version of the UN Convention Article 19 that emphasises that children have the right to be protected from all forms of physical violence, it was clear to me that it has not considered cultural differences in defining violence or the abusers. So what Libyan people define as a violent act[48] or who the abusers[49] are is not the same for Western people. Indeed, throughout my professional experience, we never learnt that the UN considers parental use of physical punishment as a form of abuse; instead, it is considered as a parental right.

The lack of clarity in child protection law (1997) has led many Libyan law professionals to work on the old 'Penal Code' (1953) regarding dealing with physical assault. The Penal Code (1953) is considered to be general law and not designed specifically for children. It has a section which covers crimes against people. It provides definition of physical assault, level or degree, circumstances and sentences, in separate articles; for instance, (Article 378) Hitting, (Article 379) Simple Harm, (Article 380) Serious Harm, (Article 381) Dangerous Harm, (Article 382) Aggravating Circumstances, (Article 384) Unintentional Harm. In addition, this law has a section which covers crimes against the family, set out in various articles. (Article 397) covers Abuse of the Use of Disciplining Methods. This article identifies people who can be responsible for childcare and in cases where they fail in their duties, the article explains how they are to be punished. In addition, (Article 398) on Ill-Treatment of Family Members and Children states that anyone mistreating any family member, children younger than 14 or any others, who is responsible for their up-bringing or teaching, will be jailed. However, these articles only refer to physical injuries as proof of misuse of disciplinary methods. Another point I would like to raise is that there is mismatch in definition of a child in Libyan legislation. (Article 398) refers to a child as a person under 14, but in article (3) in the Minors law number (17) in 1992, a child was defined as a person who has not reached the age of majority, which is defined in article (9) as 18 years, while in article (1) in Child

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[48] See section 7.3.1
[49] See section 7.3.2.

Protection law (1997), a child is defined as someone who has not reached the age of 16. These differences in defining a child in Libyan laws can be very confusing to professionals who work in the field of child protection.

Articles of Libyan law are not contained within one document and it took me a long time to find them. Further, the way Libyan laws are communicated to the people appears to be ineffective. It is possible that many people are not aware of the existing laws and hence remain disadvantaged. For instance, the Government uses its website to publish new laws, yet many people do not have access to the internet at home or at their work places. Twati and Gammack (2006) reported that Libya has a low number of internet users compared to the rest of the Arab region. Internet World Stats (2012) estimated internet users in Libya by mid-year 2012 as making up only 17% of the Libyan population. It appears that the Libyan Government is under pressure from international organisations and they just pass laws to appease those organisations, but without doing enough for the Libyan public. Furthermore, it took me a long time to understand the wording of the Libya legislations as they use words that are too general and vague, which could be too confusing for ordinary people in the country. For instance, I asked some native Arabic speakers to read the law and how they understood its words, and they came up with different responses. For example, some interpreted the word 'kin' that used in the law as it do not include parents while others were not sure, while I include them. The sentence construction in Libyan law also seems to be too complicated and too challenging to understand or translate. Law should be designed to be understood by ordinary people and different professionals, not only by law professionals.

Despite the fact that Libyan policies are based on Shariah law (Wei and Mayouf 2009), in particular matters related to family life[50], it can be argued that Libyan legislations with regard to protecting children from abuse by parents are far from Islamic values. If the Government does not want to ban this method, as one team of Islamic Arabic leaders argue, at least, the policy should include limitations that were set by other Islamic leaders[51].

Overall, I found it very difficult to position Libyan legislations regarding child protection within the family at both international and Arabic levels. The Libyan Child Protection Law (1997) does not directly mention parents as possibly abusing their children. I believe that this law is being used by the Government as window dressing, to prove to the international community that there is adherence to international standards, yet in practice things are being done differently and ineffectively at local level. This is why I find Libya to be somewhere in the

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[50] See the section on influence of Shariah law on modern Muslim legislation systems under section 5.5.

[51] See the section on controversy over the use of physical punishment -as a last resort- among Arab Muslim leaders under section 5.3.

middle between the first group and second group among Arabic countries[52] and between the second and the third groups internationally[53]. However, to find out more about the influence of Libyan legislations on people's everyday lives, the next section focuses on Libyan parents' use of physical punishment.

Parental Use of Physical Punishment in Libya

Although in theory Libyan legislations seem to address a wide range of children's rights as stipulated in the child welfare conventions, the situation on the ground reflects a different picture. In practice, enforcement of the obligations of the various treaties and the legislative declarations remains questionable, as the Libyan professionals who attended the symposium in Bengasi in 2005 about violence against children argued, and as explored in the section on Libya and international conventions on the rights of the child. However, information on parental use of physical punishment of children is missing from the Arabic and English literature. Indeed, the General People's Committee for Social Affairs, Department of Child Welfare (2012) admitted in their reports to the African Charter that there is no comprehensive study on violence (in general) towards children in Libya. Furthermore, data about children's experiences of violence, in particular within the family, is lacking not only among Libyans but also within international organisations. UNICEF, for instance, does not have any data regarding child protection in Libya nor regarding the use of violent disciplinary methods in the home (UNICEF 2015). Therefore, this study aims to find out more about the use of violent methods towards Libyan children, in particular physical forms used in the home.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explored childhood and parenthood in Islam within Arab societies. Shariah law is the fundamental base for Islam and it has three main sources: the Quran, the Sunnah and Al.Hadith and companions' understanding. The Quran is considered among Muslims as God's words which cannot be questioned. However, understanding of the Sunnah and Al.Hadith is affected by the branch of Islam that people follow – Sunni or Shiite – which also impacts differently on the practice of Islam. Islam came to reorganise Arab ways of life. Arab children, in particular girls, in the pre Islamic era experienced various forms of abuse from their parents, such as they did not have the right to inherit from their parents, and they would also be killed just because of illness, disability, or fear of poverty and potential shame. However, Islam bans all of these forms of behaviour and considers children as a gift and

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[52] See section Arab child protection policies under section 5.5.
[53] See the section on Laws under section 4.5.

angels of God that need to be well-looked after physically, mentally and socially. Furthermore, Islam now grants Arab children rights over their parents which were not provided for Arab children before Islam. Islam values child-rearing practices and considers child-rearing as a religious duty which parents have to conduct appropriately, as they will be rewarded or punished by God in the afterlife. However, modern Arab Muslim families seem to be affected by Arabic norms more than by their religion. For instance, child discipline methods in Islam are reward-oriented while modern Arab family use deterrents, including fear and the use of physical punishment. Parental use of physical punishment in modern Muslim Arab society is a debatable topic among Modern Arab Muslim leaders as a result of different understandings of what the Prophet Muhammad means by: "teach the child to pray when s/he is seven years old, and hit them lightly if they do not at ten". Therefore, one group gives parents the right to use physical methods if other non-physical methods fail, while the other group argues that teaching a child religious duties is the responsibility of parents and they should do it at an early stage of the child's development. These different understandings of Islamic texts are reflected also in Arab Muslim child policy, which ranges from banning parental use of physical punishment to considering it as a family matter related to parents. For the purpose of this study, the focus is on Libyan society as an Arab and Muslim society that shares the same values, norms and language with other Arab countries. Libya has ratified many international conventions with regard to protecting children's rights, in particular in the home. Those conventions influenced the Libyan Government to pass the Child Protection Law in 1997. However, it seems that the law suffers from many shortcomings in terms of meeting the requirements of those conventions. Furthermore, it seems that there is a lack of studies on children's experiences of violence in Libyan homes, locally and internationally. Therefore, this study aims to explore this area that has been considered for a long time to be parents' business.

Chapter (6)

Research Methodology, Procedures and Ethical Issues

6.1 Introduction

As mentioned in chapter 2, social constructionist theory marked the beginning of a new era in parenthood and childhood studies by providing a methodology for conducting research with parents and/or children within their context. Following such developments, methodology in researching parental use of physical punishment/child abuse changed fundamentally, from using psychological methods that focus on personal characteristics of abusive parents, using medical criteria, to a more interpretive approach that involves the influence of social factors and children in understanding this phenomenon.

In the light of these developments, this chapter focuses on the most important methodological issues in conducting such research, for example, philosophical issues relating to the ontological and epistemological elements of social research, the theoretical philosophy informing it, and the researcher's standpoint in this research. Next, the discussion shifts towards more practical issues related to the fieldwork, in particular the time when this study was carried out -during the Libyan war-; I added a section to explore these circumstances and how they affect the research and the researcher. This chapter also discusses the research procedures, such as the pilot study, methods of collecting data, sampling, translation, and data analysis, and this chapter concludes with a discussion on ethical issues involved in doing this research.

6.2 Considerations regarding Research Methodology

Wellington et al (2005, pp97) argue that "methodology refers to the theory of (generating) knowledge and the activity of considering, reflecting upon and justifying the best methods". Clough and Nutbrown (2002, pp27) support this view in claiming that "one of the tasks for a methodology is to explain and justify the particular methods used in a given study". Sikes (2004, pp16) states that

> Methodology is concerned with the description and analysis of research methods rather than with the actual, practical use of those methods. Methodological work is, therefore, philosophical, thinking work.

Chapter 6

Based on these views, the aim of methodology is clearly defined as to describe, justify and analyse the methods used in the study. I am aware that there are different philosophical stances around methodology and theories of how social researchers should proceed with inquiries into social phenomena, taking on issues of ontology and epistemology (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). I will discuss these ontological (nature of reality) and epistemological (nature of knowledge) aspects and the researcher's personal beliefs, feelings (values) and assumptions that underpinned the conducting of this study.

Creswell (2009) and Dawson (2009) argue that the types of beliefs held by individual researchers often influence their choice of research methodology, and the use of a qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods approach. According to Bryman (2012), the choice of a particular research methodology reflects the researcher's ontological (what we believe about the world) and epistemological (how we can come to know what we know) assumptions and the researcher's personal beliefs and feelings (values). Epistemology explores the relations between the researcher's stance and the social phenomena (Glaser 2005; Mason 2002). Bryman (2012) states that epistemological issues concern what is considered as acceptable knowledge within the discipline. Ontology, meanwhile, refers to how the researcher looks at and reflects on the social reality of the phenomena (Glaser 2005; Mason 2002). The researcher's values include their beliefs and feelings regarding their research (Bryman 2012); and their choice of a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research approach is often guided by their set of beliefs in terms of ontological and epistemological assumptions (Creswell 2009). These sets of beliefs are referred to by some authors as 'worldviews' (Creswell 2009; Rossman and Rallis 2003; Schwandt 1989) and 'paradigms' by others (Lincoln and Guba 2003; Mertens 1998), or, more broadly, 'research methodologies' (Neuman 2000). According to Schwandt (1989), a worldview represents the researcher's set of beliefs that contains the nature of reality (ontological), the nature of knowledge (epistemological) and values which lead the researcher's actions. Creswell (2009) states that these worldviews are influenced by the researcher's area of discipline, their supervisors, faculty and past experience, which therefore will influence their choice of methodology.

Creswell (2009; 2014) identified four different philosophical approaches to 'worldviews' in social science which may influence the choice of research methodology: post-positivist, participatory, pragmatism and social constructivism. He states that the post-positive approach represents a traditional form of research which is associated more with quantitative analysis and often called 'scientific' research. Ryan (2006) argues that traditionally it was thought that there was a single way of investigating any phenomenon and

presenting findings, using a scientific method. Positivist researchers seek to identify, assess and explain the causes of outcomes of the problems studied, via experiments; therefore, the knowledge that develops through a post-positivist study is based on measurement and observation (Creswell 2009; Ryan 2006). This approach is based on the belief that there are laws/theories that govern the human world; therefore, researchers have to begin with a theory and then collect data that either support or refute that theory (Creswell 2009; 2014). Thus, when carrying out research about human experience using the scientific method, the researcher is supposed to put aside personal values, passions and ideology (Ryan 2006). The participatory position, on the other hand, is based on the belief that post-positivist assumptions impose theories that do not always fit with marginalised groups in the society (Creswell 2009). Participatory researchers consequently take the view that research needs to contain an action agenda for reform and change and they argue that post-positivists researchers do not give sufficient consideration to marginalised people (Creswell 2009). Participatory research involves an explicit intention to co-produce change and may be referred to as participatory action research (PAR). Participatory Action Research is defined by Pain et al (2011, pp2) as follows:

> Collaborative research, education and action used to gather information to use for change on social or environmental issues. It involves people who are concerned about or affected by an issue taking a leading role in producing and using knowledge about it.

This approach has been seen as challenging traditional methods in three ways: first, there are no universal laws/theories for managing human behaviour which can be measured and manipulated (Lincoln 2001). Second, research is driven by participants and they are no longer seen as recipients (Pain et al 2011). Third, it intends to understand the phenomenon in order to change the issue being researched (Pain et al 2011; Creswell 2009). Lincoln (2001, pp126) argues that:

> The shift in relationship between researcher and researched ... is so pronounced as to make 'researcher' and 'researched' nearly archaic terminology ... a blurring of boundaries between the two ... ruptures the old hierarchy.

Pragmatism takes an opposite stance to the post-positivist position, by focusing on using all available methods and approaches to understand the problem itself rather than the conditions, theories and cause (Creswell 2009). Moreover, Goldkuhl (2012) argues that the pragmatic approach is not restricted to explaining the problem but works also on offering understanding, giving guidelines, exhibiting values and suggesting possibilities to solve the problem. Another key aspect of this approach is the use of different methods. Pragmatism allows individual researchers to choose research techniques and methods that meet their aim and the current empirical situation, as the external world of social, political and historical

contexts is considered to influence the research (Goldkuhl, 2012; Creswell 2009). Finally, the social constructivism approach holds assumptions that truth and knowledge are created by interactions of individuals within a culture, not discovered by the mind (Schwandt 2003). Similarly, Berger and Luckmann (1991) argue that reality is socially constructed through individuals' experiences, values and their interaction with others which shape their understanding of the world around them, rather than being connected to the objective reality of the natural world. Phillips (2000) argues that social constructivism takes in many different forms of knowledge which are determined by many different factors, such as ideologies, self-interest, politics, the exertion of power, and economic and religious beliefs. Therefore, the aim of research, according to this approach, is to explore the complexity of the situation by obtaining participants' perspectives and focusing on the participants' specific context to understand the phenomenon being studied (Hennink et al 2011; Creswell 2009; Spencer 2003). In addition, researchers who choose the social constructivist approach recognise that their personal beliefs, experience, background and culture can influence their interpretations and the choice of research methodology (Bryman 2014 and 2012; Creswell 2009; Sikes 2004).

In line with my choice to base this study on social construction theory[54], I have adopted a social constructivist methodological approach that focuses on seeking participants' views about the topic being studied. Therefore, it is important to discuss the main criteria that are used within social constructivist research to judge the quality of research and also to clarify my position in this study.

Quality Criteria for an Inquiry within Social Constructivist Research

Traditionally, the criteria used to judge the quality of research include validity, reliability and objectivity (Bryman 2014; 2012). Bryman (2012) identified two categories within validity: internal and external validity. First, internal validity focuses mainly on the issues related to causality. Trochim (2008) defined internal validity as focusing on cause-effect relationships among variations. Internal validity is relevant in studies that try to establish a causal relationship but is not relevant in interpretative studies (Trochim 2008). Meanwhile, external validity concerns the possibility of generalising the findings of the research to different people and settings. The second criterion, reliability, refers to the extent to which the research instruments can give consistent and stable results (Bryman 2012; Lincoln and Guba 1989). The third criterion is objectivity, which opposes subjectivity and requires the researcher to be free of bias, prejudice or values (Guba and Lincoln 1985). However, I would

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[54] See section 2.3.

support Guba and Lincoln's (1989; 1985) argument that these traditional criteria are not appropriate for conducting research. For example, reliability involves assessment of the stability of the phenomena being studied. This means that it is assumed that phenomena are unchanging, whilst change is central to the development of constructions, and therefore reliability is a useless criterion (ibid.). Guba and Lincoln (1985) consequently developed a set of criteria parallel to the traditional criteria but adjusted them to allow for change, whilst staying as close as possible to the traditional concepts. The current study is profoundly influenced by these criteria as a basis for a sound inquiry, one of which is the criterion of 'trustworthiness'.

Trustworthiness involves four concepts: credibility, transferability, consistency, and neutrality. Credibility parallels internal validity in terms of examining to what extent the outcomes of the research are believable. The credibility criterion replaces the idea of linkage between an objective and findings with isomorphism between constructed realities of respondents and the reconstructions attributed to them (Guba and Lincoln 1989). Several different methods can be used to achieve credible results in a study, such as using mixed methods in a single study (Guba and Lincoln 1989). According to Sturman (1999), credibility is considered as an important indicator of goodness of the study (cited by Guba and Lincoln, 1989, pp236-237), therefore, credibility was a particularly useful criterion to the researcher. The second criterion is transferability, which parallels external validity: Can the outcomes of the research be generalised to other contexts? External validity was replaced by an empirical process for checking the degree of similarity between the external and research settings, rather than relying solely on the number of participants in the sample to represent the rest of population. In addition, the responsibility for proving claimed generalisability is on the researcher, while the burden of proving transferability is on the participants. The third criterion, consistency, parallels reliability: Can the findings be applied at different times and in different contexts? In conventional studies, changing the methodology of the study would render the reliability doubtful, if not totally meaningless. However, methodological changes in construction studies are far from being threats to dependability. The last criterion is neutrality, which parallels objectivity of the researcher: Has the researcher allowed personal values to intrude into the findings? Unlike the traditional paradigm which emphasises that objectivity can be obtained by choosing an unbiased method, following the process correctly and ensuring outcomes are divorced from the personal values and political persuasions of the researcher, the constructivist paradigm maintains that the assurances of objectivity are rooted in the integrity of the data.

Chapter 6

The Researcher's Standpoint

As mentioned earlier, within the social constructivism approach, there are many factors that can influence the researcher's position in the research, such as their class, sex, experiences and culture. Wellington et al (2005), for example, argue that the selected research methodology and methods are influenced by personal factors that include the interests and disciplinary background of the researcher. Bearing this in mind, I needed to consider my personal and professional experiences and knowledge as an Arab Muslim woman from Libya, and how that[55] could influence my choice of research methodology. To give a rough idea about my background, I am from Libya, a country that gained independence from Italy in 1951. Colonel Gaddafi took power in 1969 and ran the country for about 42 years, until 2011, when he was murdered. During his time, the government focused on strengthening Arab culture along with Islamic values. For instance, Arabic is the formal language for all Libyans and Islam is the religion for all (Rhema and Miliszewska 2010; Wei and Mayouf 2009; Abubaker 2008). Therefore, the structure of Libyan family life is greatly influenced by both Islamic and Arab traditions. My background as an Arab (Libyan) Muslim (Sunni) woman with some professional and personal knowledge of doing research in Libya enabled me to understand the context of my participants, how they would look at the topic of my study, what, how and when to ask questions and what areas of family life would be considered sensitive. All of these factors to some extent influenced my views about what would be the appropriate method of collecting and recording data in this research. This will be explained in detail in following sections (triangulation and interviews).

6.3 Research Methodology

Various researchers use different terms to refer to research methodology. Bryman (2012) uses the term research 'design' to refer to the research approach. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) use the term 'strategy', while Sikes (2004) uses the term 'methodology' to reflect the overall strategy that a particular research adopts. For the purposes of this study [56] and considering the special circumstances under which this research was carried out[57], I adopted sequential explanatory strategy. Creswell (2009; 2014) states that sequential explanatory strategy is widely used in mixed methods studies that first collect quantitative data and then qualitative data. This enables the researcher to follow up the quantitative data and gain a deeper understanding about the topic by using qualitative methods. Indeed, in this study, I used questionnaires in the first phase of the research, followed by interviews.

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[55] See section 1.1.
[56] See section 1.2.
[57] See section 6.4.

Furthermore, this study has a preliminary/exploratory element. It appears from the Arabic and English published literature that no previous study has explored parental disciplining methods in Libya. Kumar (2005) considers exploratory research to be a type of research conducted to examine a phenomenon that has not been clearly defined, little is known about it or no information is available about it. Some researchers distinguish between exploratory and investigatory research. Dawson (2009) argues that exploratory research seeks primary research from firsthand experience while investigation studies are conducted after an exploratory study, to make further investigation and gain deeper understanding of pre-existing knowledge, and such research heavily relies on secondary research. Dawson (ibid.) also claims that an exploratory study is similar to an investigatory project. However, whilst exploratory studies do not have pre-existing information to rely on, they can operate on old and common knowledge but pursue a new or little known direction for investigation. Therefore, this study is considered to be exploratory research that intends to address child discipline methods in the home within the Libyan context by building on other studies completed on this topic in other countries.

Triangulation

In my research, I adopted a mixed methods approach for the reasons stated in the next paragraph. This type of approach to social science research is called 'triangulation', which Olsen (2004) defines as using combined methods in a single study. Many researchers have highlighted the advantages of using triangulation in social research. Bryman (2004), for example, suggests that social research findings are more likely to be reliable if they have been derived from more than one method. Furthermore, Gorard (2004) argues that using mixed methods in one study helps the researcher to overcome the disadvantages of each approach. According to Bryman (2014; 2006), mixed methods research has various potential benefits, for example, completeness, which means that use of both quantitative and qualitative methods can provide a more comprehensive account; enhancement, which enables researchers to add to the set of findings by gathering further data; and explanation, whereby one finding helps to explain findings not uncovered by the other method. Creswell (2014) adds that the research field, topic, questions, personal experience of the researcher, and practical considerations influence the choice of mixed methods approach; for instance, a researcher who is familiar with using both methods and has the required time and resources is more likely to use mixed methods.

Indeed, although this study is mainly a qualitative study, for various reasons I decided to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. First, for cultural reasons, based on my professional experience, there is a tendency for ordinary people to be more familiar with

filling in questionnaires, especially those containing closed-ended questions, rather than being interviewed. Therefore, it was difficult to challenge Creswell's (2014) argument in this respect. Furthermore, as it was stated in chapter 5, social construction of Arab Muslim society considers all family life matters, including disciplining children, as private issues, which may lead many people to be unwilling to talk about it face to face, preferring questionnaires. Secondly, the sensitivity of the topic could also make some people feel uncomfortable in speaking about it through interviews. Thirdly, I was not sure, as a result of the Libyan armed conflict, that people would be able to be interviewed. Finally, however, as I wanted to identify people's perceptions, behaviour and develop a good understanding of them in order to increase the credibility and reliability of the data, I needed to use both methods. For example, using a questionnaire provided this study with some important general indications (statistics) which were relevant to the topic within its social context. Meanwhile, using qualitative data in this study helped me to follow up and corroborate issues raised while administering the questionnaire, and thereby to obtain richer and deeper insight into the subject.

Before I explore how the present research was conducted and which tools were used to collect my data, it would be helpful to give an idea first about the exceptional circumstances in which this study was carried out, during the armed conflict in Libya. Therefore, the following section summarises the impact of the Libyan war on the study and the researcher.

6.4 Impact of the War Zone Context on the Research and Researcher

In 2011, Libya was affected by a civil war as a result of the conflict between two political groups: one pro-government and the other anti-government. The conflict, which started as a national problem, subsequently attracted foreign intervention and lasted for about nine months. This type of violent experience was new to all Libyan people, who had never experienced such a destructive conflict before.

As a Libyan student in the UK, funded by the Libyan Government through their Embassy in London, I was expected to continue with my research studies. This meant that I was supposed to carry on with my research as if everything was normal, regardless of the conflict. On the other hand, the conflict led to delay and/or freezing of our grants by the British government. Further, the uncertainty about prospects of future funding by the Libyan Embassy was also a concern for all Libyan students, whatever their political views. However, despite this background, I carried on with my study as "normal" for about seven months, but when I reached the point where I needed to start the fieldwork I had to inform the Embassy about my situation. I asked them about the feasibility of conducting fieldwork in Libya and

they replied positively. Therefore, I travelled first to Tunis – as there were no direct flights to Libya – to see whether I would be able to cross the border. The plan was that if I managed to enter Libya, I would go on a "scoping visit" to establish whether it would be feasible to do the fieldwork there as discussed with my supervisors. However, in the case where I could not enter Libya or I found it unsafe or not a good time to carry on this study, I would come back to the UK and conduct a study on Libyan parents and children in the UK. My decision to conduct a "scoping visit" was mainly based on my vulnerable position at that time. I felt caught in a dilemma over whether to spend another year as an international student and to change my research and start looking for new literature about the new area, with the added stress of looking for further funding or a job in the UK, which would have been very difficult, or to go back home and attempt to do the fieldwork there, a decision made especially difficult after receiving conflicting news from the media, friends and family about the real situation in Tripoli. Thus, I felt that I needed to see and judge the situation for myself and not rely on others' opinions.

Indeed, I went to Tunis and then managed to enter Tripoli in September 2011, just a month after the fighting had stopped in the city. Although at the beginning, I was shocked to realise that I had lost relatives and friends, the support I received from my friends and cousins enabled me to recover quickly and focus on my fieldwork. During my time there I noticed, despite the fact that the conflict was intense in some parts of the country, generally, people continued to live their daily lives with relatively little disruption. In particular, life in Tripoli and areas around the city was almost back to normal and it was possible to conduct a scoping exercise. Bearing in mind not just the issues regarding the conflict and my personal safety but also the sensitive nature of this topic, I decided to visit universities, libraries, social work centres, hospitals and schools to establish whether it was feasible to carry on with my research in Libya. Surprisingly, the outcome was positive and people welcomed the opportunity to discuss their everyday life activities such as a child-rearing, as they considered this as a good opportunity to try to return to 'normality'. They were very excited as they commented that they had forgotten and missed talking about normal life activities as they spent all their time talking at length about the political dispute. I was taken aback by this enthusiasm to speak about the topic among people living in a post-war zone.

However, at that stage, I was concerned about ensuring a good sample size, which is difficult to define because it depends on the type and purpose of the research, taking into account issues of non-response, and time and financial pressures (Dawson 2009). Bearing in mind all of these factors, I believed that, particularly in the circumstances of the war, a sample size of a minimum of 60 and maximum 75 participants would be sufficient for the

questionnaires, as originally advised by my primary supervisor. These numbers seemed to be quite ambitious during the time of the conflict. However, people I met during my scoping visit, parents and children, as a result of their desire to take part in this research, assured me that I could achieve the required number and they offered their help to introduce me to other potential respondents, such as their friends and cousins, in case I needed more participants. For me, that was a very reassuring step towards getting the number of participants that I had planned. Therefore, I decided to do the fieldwork in Libya. It is worth noting that although a general plan of action for conducting the fieldwork was agreed with my supervisors, I made the decisions about progression of the fieldwork in Libya during the conflict on my own, as I was unable to maintain contact with my supervisors to discuss any of my plans, the political conflict in Libya having disrupted important communication channels such as internet and telephone systems.

I should also mention that during the time of the conflict, there were acute cash problems in the country which were a threat to finishing the fieldwork. Despite the fact that I took some cash with me and I had some money in my bank account, the cost of living at that time was very high and I used up the cash that I had. Further, I could not access my money in the local bank account as there was no cash in the bank and international accounts were blocked by NATO. Therefore, I had no option except to sell some of my personal gold possessions to get the cash which would make it possible to finish my research.

Doing research in such circumstances influenced the way this study was carried out, including the choice of areas in which to conduct the research, the sample, and the time for collecting the data. Initially, the children's sample was to be chosen from schools, where it would have been easier to access a large number of children and to choose the age range of children. However, at that time, schools were disrupted and many were closed. In addition, for my own safety, it was important to choose specific areas which either were not affected by the combat or were near to my place of residence (Tripoli). Further, interviews were carried out mostly in the morning since during that period many criminals, gangs and looters were very active in the evening and at night. Although this does not mean it was completely safe during the mornings, the level of danger was less.

Moreover, such circumstances had a personal impact on the researcher's feelings and experiences. As a researcher in a war zone, I was always expecting the unexpected. It was a stressful and uneasy time. Although it seemed to be quiet and safe, fights could break out at any time between different armed groups. For example, one day in Tripoli, I went to collect some questionnaires from a few participants, and while I was waiting at traffic lights, suddenly, a fight broke out on the next road. All of the roads were blocked, and we just

heard the bang of bullets in the air. I could not leave the car -as if I had left I would have been shot- and staying in the car posed another danger of bullets coming at me through the air. Therefore, I had no choice except to pray and wait until the road reopened. This was a very frightening experience. Another incident occurred when I was in Gharyan city doing the fieldwork. Before I left the city, I heard that a girl and her brother had been kidnapped. As I had to use the same road back to Tripoli, I decided to stay at my aunt's until the next morning. In addition, I heard many stories about girls being robbed and raped, especially in rural parts of the road which linked the two cities. I left the next morning but the whole way back home I was very stressed and thinking about what would happen if a gang were to appear and stop me, which made me speed at some points, especially if there were people standing around or walking along the road.

However, on the personal level, being in my country after a long period of war left me shocked and confused about the many negative changes that the country had experienced. It was obvious to me that the armed conflict impacted on individuals, families, communities and the whole country and affected social and financial domains of people's everyday life. For example, emergent problems including forced internal migration and immigration to other countries, increased unemployment caused by the closure of all foreign companies, irregular payment of salaries for workers, lack of good health care services and loss of loved ones. However, the most shocking changes that I have seen in Libya since the war concern the damage to the local communities and children. People were divided mainly into two factions; each of which was aggressive and bullying towards the other. There were splits even within the same family, which means that many families were divided. Some people had to move away to new places to avoid offensive treatment by others in their neighbourhood. At work, many workers were also facing problems as a result of differing views within the work place about the conflict, which led some to leave work, the area or even the country. The other massive change was in relation to children who had been either victimised or had witnessed forms of violence. The short-term effects on their behaviour and attitudes to violence were readily apparent. The majority had developed good knowledge about different types of weapons. Interestingly, some challenged me and made fun of me because I was studying for a PhD in the UK and was unable to distinguish between different types of weapons, which really took me aback. In addition, some children wanted to carry or keep guns at home, which in some cases led to accidental killing of others, in many cases their siblings or relatives. Furthermore, many teenagers had left school to participate in the conflict by working at checkpoints or taking part in the actual combat. Indeed, the United Nations (2014) reported that they received allegations of the use of Libyan children during the conflict and that children had been observed carrying weapons. They reported that children in Kufra city

were manning checkpoints and securing buildings, carrying weapons with both the Zwaya and Tabu brigades. Moreover, they stated that at least 12 children, including both females and males, had been killed in crossfire or through the use of heavy weaponry. 10 children were registered at the Kufra General Hospital between the period of May and June 2012. The United Nations (2014) also reported that it is anticipated that the number of child casualties during the Libyan conflict remains underreported as a result of lack of access to the affected areas.

Researching in a war zone is a challenge for any researcher. However, undertaking such research in Libya during that time would have been even more difficult for a foreign researcher. For instance, attempting to speak to both groups, anti- and pro-government, was a huge challenge. Even for me, expressing my views about the political conflict was a very sensitive issue. However, I avoided entering into discussions about the political conflict as much as possible and instead adopted a neutral stance, that is, not supporting any group in particular, but expressing a caring attitude towards the whole country. This helped me a lot in engaging with people from different groups. For a foreign researcher the task would have been much harder, if not impossible, as people would have been thinking about where they were from in order to guess their agenda. For example, American, British and French researchers would be considered as anti-Gadhafi regardless of their views. In addition, it is very difficult for foreign researchers, especially if they are Non-Muslim, to ask about the influence of Islam on everyday life practice. I would assume that many Libyans would not be honest or would refuse to participate in such a study, suspecting the motives of a study carried out by a Non-Muslim researcher in Libya. Even for me, as an insider researcher, that question was rather sensitive and I had to prepare myself for different reactions. For example, at the beginning, when I asked fathers and mothers who took part in this study that question, almost all of them were very surprised to be asked about the impact of Islam on their use of physical punishment; they assumed that I should know the answer to that question without the need to ask. Meanwhile, some were very annoyed and thought it was an unacceptable question; they suspected my intentions, thinking that as I was studying in the UK, I may have been someone (intentionally or not) who wanted to confirm the negative image of Islam that Western countries already have which associates Islam with terrorism. However, after I had engaged in reasoned discussions with them, they were able to understand and accept the main goal behind the question, actually talking about it in considerable detail[58] which provided the study with exceptional data in this area.

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[58] For more detail about how I dealt with this discomfiture see the section on ethical issues in the next section.

6.5 Research Procedures

As this study focuses on both adults and children's perceptions, this may raise the question whether researching these two groups required the use of different methods. However, Christensen and James (2000) argue that conducting research with children does not necessarily entail using different methods from those used with adults. Punch (2002) also addressed this debate and stated that it is misleading to think of distinguishing between child and adult research methods, as the choice of a particular method depends on the research context. Based on the particular context, the same methodology may potentially be applicable in researching both children and adults. However, the researcher still has to determine the best methods for the specific context, and in this study, I decided that using mixed methods (questionnaires and interviews) with both parents and children was appropriate within the Libyan context. As I mentioned previously[59] those methods were chosen for cultural reasons and because of the particular research context. I should state here that another possible qualitative method, the focus group, was not an option for me, as the country at that time was in a post-war period and it would have been very challenging to attempt to gather people together.

Before I started to administer the questionnaires, I first distributed an information sheet[60] then, I conducted a pilot study to assess the reliability of my data collection method and what changes needed to be made to the questionnaires before doing the actual research.

The Pilot Study

Blessing and Chakrabarti (2009) argue that in order to obtain effective and efficient data, a pilot study needs to be conducted to identify any potential problems that could affect the quality and validity of the results and changes that may be required such as formulation and ambiguity of questions in the questionnaire, or finding better ways of gaining and recording feedback from the participants. Therefore, in this study, a pilot study was conducted to test the adequacy of the research instruments. Six fathers and mothers and six children were asked to read through the questionnaires individually and see if there were any ambiguities which the researcher had not noticed. They were also asked to comment about the length, structure and wording, especially regarding their interpretation of the questionnaire. Based on their feedback, the questions were altered accordingly.

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[59] See the section on Triangulation under section 6.3.
[60] See a copy of the information sheet is included in appendix 4.

In order to create a child-friendly version of the information document and the questionnaire, I asked the children who commented on the questionnaires whether we could meet together as a group to help me set the questions in the most suitable way for their age group. Fortunately, they were willing to do so, and with the approval of their parents I arranged to facilitate a focus group involving all of them (two males and four females, aged 10-14) in one of the children's homes, as they requested. Therefore, the questions in the children's questionnaire as well as the information document were created by the children themselves.

With regard to participants' feedback on the pilot study, they suggested changes such as cutting short the information sheet and changes to some of the questions in the questionnaires. For instance, the fathers and mothers distinguished between the terms 'religious reasons' and 'religious beliefs'. They expressed that religious reasons refer to why a religion discourages/bans certain behaviour, such as drinking alcohol, whereas religious belief refers to the religion's attitude and thinking towards people who commit such behaviour. They identified a clash between what Islam urges and what Muslims actually do. This can be seen clearly from their responses on the question about Islam and parental use of physical punishment, as discussed in chapter 9. In addition, initially, in the questionnaire, there was only one question about banning physical punishment in the home. However, parents expressed that there is a difference between simply banning physical punishment in the home by passing legislation and the Government intervening within the family directly. Whilst they expressed their objections to the Government intervening directly, they did not object to prohibition by law. Therefore, I added another question about Government intervention, to probe this issue further. This revealed a lot about the local culture, as is shown in chapter 9. Furthermore, parents expressed that teachers should not be included as professionals in the questionnaire as they are not as highly qualified or trained as others who are considered professionals in Libya. Therefore, I separated them in the questionnaires to find out whether there are clear differences between them and others professionals.

The parents added the option 'sometimes' to question N.9: whether 'physical punishment is a useful way of disciplining children' and question N.5 in section 1: 'Do you offer an explanation to your children about the reasons behind the use of physical punishment?' The parents also rearranged the children's age groups according to school age groups in Libya and added the choice of 'no difference' to the questions regarding whether physical punishment is used on boys more than girls and how the child's birth order influences the use of physical disciplinary methods. Further, they added the option of 'intervening by offering advice' to the question asking about their reaction if others were to use physical methods on other children. In question N.4 in section 1, regarding the benefits of using

physical methods, they added 'releases parents' anger' to the other choices. Parents who did not use physical methods added to the question on the reason behind not believing in physical methods the answer that it 'makes the child more stubborn'.

Meanwhile, the children suggested adding the option 'small city' to question N.7 about place of residence, to distinguish between living in a big city (Tripoli) and other cities. The children also chose to use the expression 'cannot read and write' rather than 'illiterate' in questions 6 and 7 which relate to their parents' educational level. They added the option 'I do not know/remember' for the questions: Did physical punishment leave marks on your body? When did you start to experience physical punishment by your parents? In addition, they added the option 'I do not know' to the following questions: Is there a difference between physical punishment and child abuse? Do you think parents have the right to use physical methods? What do you think of parents who use physical disciplinary methods? Furthermore, they added the question: Who uses physical punishment besides your parents? And they emphasised the option 'siblings'. In addition, I noticed that these children were not able to discuss religion in relation to parental use of physical punishment and therefore I left that question out.

In addition, both parents and children added some extra child misbehaviours which led to parental use of physical punishment, to question N.1 in section 1. They also added some physical methods that parents use with their children to question N.2 in section 1, and some non-physical methods used by parents in Libya. Moreover, both parents and children were unfamiliar with the concept of child abuse, asking about what this concept meant. Thus, I had to use other, alternative terms that they suggested, such as violation of a child's right and/or physical punishment is wrongdoing towards a child.

Data Collection Instruments

In this study, the data were collected as described above by using mixed methods: questionnaire and interviews. Bryman (2014) argues that it is important to integrate the quantitative and qualitative components within the mixed methods study. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) also emphasise that the researcher should think as much as possible about quantitative-qualitative integration from the early stages, which I indeed attempted to do. To this end, I linked quantitative questions to qualitative questions within the interviews, pursuing the study's main aim of gaining a deep understanding of the topic. Thus, closed questions were followed up with questions of why, exploring attitudes and perceptions and seeking examples of experiences. The questions were the same for both parents and

children, except that children were not asked about their religious beliefs and parental use of physical punishment, for reasons which were explained earlier. The themes included:

- child disciplining methods in Libya – physical and non-physical
- perceptions, experiences and the practice of non-physical methods and parental use of physical punishment
- factors influencing use of physical punishment of children
- influence of traditions, law, Islam and the Libyan war on parents' use of physical punishment
- distinguishing between physical punishment of children and child abuse.

Initially, in this study, I planned to distribute the questionnaires first and then interview the participants at a later stage. However, as a result of time pressure and the country's circumstances, I had to start interviewing willing participants immediately after collecting the first 40 questionnaires. The instruments (questionnaire and interviews) were administered in Arabic, the home language of the participants; discussion is included later in this chapter about the practical challenges faced in translating these into English.

The Closed-Ended Questionnaire

Bryman (2004) argues that a closed-ended questionnaire has the advantages of being an easier and quicker way to gain information and also it can be standardised and set up in a way that avoids revealing the identity of participants. In this study, I adopted a closed-ended questionnaire as a data collection tool, not only for those reasons but also for cultural reasons and because of the sensitivity of this topic. As was explained earlier in the section on triangulation, closed-ended questionnaire is a familiar method among Libyans and also it enabled me to check my participants' willingness to discuss my topic further. However, Bryman (2004) believes that a closed-ended questionnaire also has the disadvantage that respondents might think of answers that are not covered by the fixed answers provided. He suggests that to avoid this problem the researcher should add the extra category 'others'. Indeed, during the pilot study, many participants expressed the need for an extra general category such as others. Furthermore, Bryman (2004) states that respondents to closed-ended questionnaires may be able to tick two answers when the options overlap, such as the age groups 18-30, 30-40, 40-50. Indeed, this can cause confusion among respondents. However, in my study, I avoided these and other potential problems, as is explained below in the following paragraphs. Further, in the questionnaire, I asked similar questions in different ways to address the issue of different respondents understanding the same question in different ways. For example, Q.11 in the parents' questionnaire is about child's age and the

use of physical punishment, while Q.14 asks a similar question but in a different form. Further, Q.12 and Q.15 both ask about impact of a child's gender on the use of physical punishment.

First, I handed out an information sheet to participants to ensure that they fully understood the aim and objectives of the project before they gave their consent to participate in the study. Then I gave the participants the choice to either complete the questionnaire in my presence or in their homes, where I would collect them at an agreed time. It was made clear that it was within their right to choose to return the questionnaires or not. However, the questionnaire was administered mostly in my presence, which helped me to check whether all of the questions were answered. Further, this ensured that questionnaires were completed and filled in correctly by the required person. Despite the fact that the researcher had to be present at specific places and at agreed times, which could be time-consuming and required the researcher to travel extensively, this method was more accurate and helpful to the research as well as for the researcher in terms of avoiding the need to visit the respondent twice -to hand the questionnaire out and get it back- during the conflict. The questionnaires in this study, for both parents and children, were prepared by the researcher. The questions were drawn from the findings of the existing literature. In addition, the cultural background, level of education and age of participants were taken into account when preparing the questions.

With regard to the design of the questionnaire for the two respondent groups (parents and children), the parents' questionnaire consisted of 31 questions while the children' questionnaire contained 20 questions. The questionnaire was structured around four sections: (1) Socio-demographic characteristics. (2) General Perceptions of physical disciplinary methods and factors that can lead to use of this method with children. (3) Section for children/parents who used physical punishment methods. (4) Section for children/parents who used only non-physical methods[61]. Section (1), on socio-demographic characteristics, including for instance, sex (female and male) and age, which was divided into groups: for children, the groups were younger than 5, 6-9, 10-14, and 15-18, whilst parents' ages were grouped as: 18-30, 31-44, 45 or older. Meanwhile, number of children in the family was grouped as: 1, 2-4, 5 or more. Initially, in this study, there was a question about family income in the questionnaire, but the findings of the pilot study indicated that all people in Libya at that time (conflict) were suffering from economic difficulties; therefore, it was unreasonable to ask about their income. Instead, I simply used the question about parents' occupations, which provided an indication of a family's income.

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[61] Copies of the children and parents questionnaires are included in appendices 1 and 2.

Chapter 6

Section (2) General perceptions: the questionnaire for parents consisted of a question about the participant's perceptions of physical punishment as a method of disciplining children (useful, not used, or sometimes). Another question was about parents' perceptions of various physical disciplinary methods, such as hitting the hands, using objects, slapping the face, and deprivation of food. Parents responded to those methods via one of the following three categories: acceptable, not acceptable, and not acceptable and considered as a crime. Information was also collected on whether fathers and mothers had past experience of physical discipline methods and they were asked to answer (yes or no). In addition, parents and children were directly questioned about their views on differences between physical punishment and child abuse, the influence of Islam, traditions, Libyan legislations and armed conflict on parental use of physical discipline methods, which involved answering (yes or no/ sometimes). In addition, the influence of individual, family and community factors was explored. Although many studies across the world have identified that parental characteristics, children's characteristics, family factors, cultural and religion have impact on the use of this method, none of these studies has focused on the influence of Islam on parental use of physical punishment in Arab Muslim countries. Therefore, in aiming to fill this gap in the literature, a question relating to this issue was included in the present study. In addition, a study in Egypt by Youssef et al (1998) found that parents who smoke and who do not have a good relationship with the extended family are more likely to use physical discipline methods with their children. In order to test that finding on Libyan society, I added similar questions. However, I adjusted the question to fit with Libyan culture by asking only whether fathers smoked or not, since Libyan traditions forbid women from smoking, and even if they did smoke they would not admit it, fearing social stigma.

Section (3) of the questionnaire, for children/parents who experienced/used physical punishment, included some questions about child misbehaviour that is commonly associated with the use of a physical method, type of physical methods used by parents, the way this method was applied, the reasons for using this method, how the children felt about being subjected to physical punishment by their parents, and non- physical methods used besides physical disciplinary methods. These questions were multiple choice, requiring participants to choose the answer that best suited them. In Section (4), for children/parents who used/experienced only non-physical methods, the questions related to their use of non-physical methods and their reasons for not using physical methods. Those questions also had multiple choice answers.

Chapter 6

Semi-Structured Interviews

Wellington et al (2005) claim that interviews enable researchers to gain data which other methods cannot achieve. Interviews can access the reality that would otherwise remain difficult to reach, such as people's views and experiences (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Indeed, using interviews in this study gave me more freedom to follow up particular issues and ask additional questions which would enable me to appreciate the topic better. For instance, it not only helped to explore in depth participants' perceptions and experiences but also allowed me to find out about new themes which I had not captured in the questionnaire, such as the influence of age gap between siblings on parental use of physical punishment[62].

In this study, I used face to face semi-structured interviews. A face to face semi-structured interview is an opportunity for two-way interactions, in which participants can query the researcher. The questions in the interview were open-ended. The participants were asked questions to follow up the answers that they provided in the questionnaire[63]. Structured interviews were ruled out since they provide less opportunity for new points to emerge, while unstructured interviews were rejected because they use open-ended questions and therefore may veer from the main focus of the research, as although the researcher introduces the topic, what follows depends on the interviewee's thoughts (Dawson 2009). Because I already had a clear idea about what I wanted to explore, unstructured interviews were not considered suitable for this study.

The participants who were interviewed in this study were empowered to choose whether they wanted to be interviewed by way of an extra question in the closed-ended questionnaire. I started the interviews by introducing myself and my study. I also made it clear to them that they had the right to stop or withdraw at any point. All participants were interviewed by the researcher. The interview with each participant (fathers, mothers and children) lasted approximately 30-90 minutes, while interviews with professionals lasted 15-60 minutes and were also face to face except in the case of the judge, who was interviewed via the phone. Parents of children who were interviewed were given written information about the project and its purpose, and provided with contact details of the researcher for further information. Regarding consent for the children, I first gained permission from their parents and then asked the children for their approval.

Interviews with parents took place, as they requested, either at their homes or worksite while children's interviews were conducted individually in a private room in their home. To

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[62] Will be explored later in the section on data analysis in this chapter.

[63] A copy of the interview questions is included in appendix 3.

minimise pressure on the children, I did not interview parents of children who were participating in the study, as if parents and children from the same family had been interviewed, the parents might have tried to find out what their children had said or coached them to answer in a particular way. In addition, I reassured children who took part in this study that their parents would not have access to what they said, which encouraged them to speak more freely and in detail about their everyday life experiences. As I was interviewing some children who were under the age of 11, between ourselves, the children and I created a child-friendly version of the information sheet and questionnaire, as explained earlier.

Regarding methods of recording interviews, the pilot study showed that participants would be hesitant about taking part in interviews if their interviews were being recorded. This is because of the sensitivity of this topic and cultural differences in attitudes towards recording. For instance, some parents who had witnessed or heard about cases of child abuse which led to the death or disability of the child, talked about them in an informal way (without recording) but did not want their words to be recorded, due to fear of being reported to the authorities and/or being embarrassed to face the relatives/neighbours who had committed these crimes. Further, based on my own experience as a professional in Libya, recording interviews is still not common practice, especially among the less well-educated. Many Libyan people seem to be suspicious of this practice and consider academic reasons as insufficient justification. Therefore, they often refuse to take part in such studies and researchers are forced to use alternative methods. Bearing all these factors in mind, and following my aim to understand the topic in its context, as I needed to obtain data which could reflect the reality in Libya, I had to use a pen and paper to record the interviews. Dawson (2009) argues that using pen and paper may have certain advantages in that it can make participants feel that they are providing important information when they see the researcher take notes and they may therefore add more information, whilst it can also avoid technical issues such as failure of the recording equipment. However, this method also has some limitations; for instance, Dawson (2009) states that it can be tiring, especially in a long interview, and it is hard to for the researcher to maintain eye contact while writing.

To overcome these disadvantages I used the following technique. Firstly, I prepared on paper a list of the main questions which I planned to follow up, leaving enough blank space for the answers. Furthermore, I made a timetable of the interviews, scheduling one interview per day, but in a few cases two in a day if the participant was busy and requested to be interviewed on a particular date when I already had another interview, or for personal safety, where two participants lived in the same area near the city of Al. Zawiyah, which was affected by fighting and had a lot of military bases during that period. However, I made sure

that there was enough time between the two interviews to write down the full text of each interview. During the interviews, I took notes, using shorthand to capture long passages or repeated vocabulary. For example, I would use letters to refer to specific terms, such as 'PP' meaning physical punishment and 'PA' meaning physical abuse. Further, I would draw shapes, signs and pictures to refer to some words. For instance, an arrow meant 'leading to or then', where something led something else to happen. A picture of a happy face or a sad face referred to what they said regarding their feelings. However, when participants used specific expressions, I wrote them down as stated. In addition, I tried to maintain eye contact and would nod to show the participants that I was still following what they said. After they had answered each main question, I summarised their answers to make sure that what I wrote down was what they had said. However, that does not mean I did not interact with them while they were speaking, as I did whenever I felt it was necessary. By the end of the discussion, I had to make sure that my notes represented exactly what they had stated, so I went through their responses in summary, and I asked them whether they would like to add anything. After I had finished each interview, I immediately looked for a private place to sit and start writing down the text in full, to avoid things being forgotten.

The Sample

Bearing in mind, the sensitivity of the topic, the war context, and the lack of previous studies within the Libyan context, exploratory sampling was required in this study. Denscombe (2010) argues that with exploratory samples, the number of participants tends to be relatively small, reflecting the researcher's need to gain deeper insight into the topic. This means that the size of the exploratory sample is not governed by the number of participants (as is the case for probability sampling) but by how informative the sample is, with the researcher needing to feel that the number of participants is sufficient to enable them to understand the topic (Denscombe ibid). Denscombe (2010) also states that 'snowballing sampling' is often used in conjunction with qualitative research based on a small-scale exploratory study. Consistent with Denscombe's views, I chose the participants by 'snowballing sampling' rather than by probability sampling methods, as a means to overcome the disruption resulting from the Libyan armed conflict.

Denscombe (2010) states that with 'snowball sampling', the sample emerges through the process of one person nominating others, and it also can start with the researcher approaching one or more people who then nominate others. Indeed, in this study, I approached various fathers, mothers and children in different settings such as universities, libraries, hospitals and schools, and then they introduced me to others. Using this type of sampling was appropriate in this study given the circumstances of war and sensitivity of

cultural norms regarding keeping family life as private business, and it enabled me quickly to access a sufficient number of respondents. Indeed, Denscombe claims that one of the advantages of 'snowballing sampling' is that it helps the researcher to gain access to a sufficient number of participants rapidly. Further, it gives the researcher a chance to identify participants who will be appropriate because others have nominated them and to choose people who meet certain categories related to the research topic regarding such as sex, place of residence, level of qualification. Indeed, in this study, I was able, from among the people nominated, to achieve a gender balance among the three groups: fathers, mothers and male and female children, as I will discuss later.

I should mention that despite many parents nominating their friends and cousins, children were the most excited about taking part in this study and were eager to nominate other children. Therefore, I finished conducting the research on children first. After I had interviewed the first male child, he contacted many of his cousins and friends and told them about the study. Hence, children started to contact me, asking to participate in the study. In some cases, their parents themselves asked whether their children could take part in my study, since their children persistently asked them to talk with me about it. In addition, a few children, after we had finished the interviews, kept asking me to do another interview, claiming they wanted to add more, but when I asked what they would like to add, they added nothing. One particular female child, aged 7, said, "I have extra information I wanted to add", to which I replied, "Ok, what do you want to add". She answered, "You ask me. Let's just repeat the process of the interview". I could feel that the Libyan children in this study felt overwhelmed and happy to be asked about their views and feelings, just as, initially, all the children in this study were surprised at being asked to take part in research, express their thoughts, and to have their words taken into account. They revealed that it was the first time they had been asked to do so; therefore, it appeared to me that they were rarely asked about their perceptions and feelings. This is consistent with Gadour's (2006) comment that Libyan children are rarely asked to take part in studies that focus on family life.

In total, I distributed 140 questionnaires. However, due to non-response to the questionnaire or severe delay in response, the final sample size for the questionnaires was 100 (33 fathers, 33 mothers, 34 children; 17 female and 17 male children, aged 6-17). I mentioned previously[64] that my original target regarding sample size for the questionnaires was 60-75. However, many people were very keen to fill in the questionnaires, so I increased the size to 100. In addition, 30 participants engaged in the semi-structured interviews (10 fathers, 10 mothers, 10 children; 5 female and 5 male children). The reason for choosing 30 participants

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[64] See section 6.4.

as interviewees was mainly that beyond that number the participants started reporting similar responses and no more detail was added, which made me feel the data I had were sufficient, consistent with Denscombe's (2010) view as mentioned earlier. Generally, in this study, every effort was made to include participants from different regions across the country. The participants were drawn from the following 10 urban and rural areas in Libya, which were either near Tripoli or were safe to reach: Tripoli, Tajoura, Gharyan, Izlaytan, Zaharah, Soany Ben-Adem, Tarhunah, Shiad, Janzour and Al. Aziziyah.

Furthermore, I managed to interview eight professionals in Tripoli, including a lawyer, a judge, an Islamic scholar, social workers, a teacher, a paediatrician and a lecturer at a social work department at Tripoli University. Initially, and after the conflict started in Libya, it was considered too ambitious to interview professionals in this study. However, while I was doing the fieldwork, the opportunity to do so arose, so I decided to take up this opportunity, in order to gain a broad understanding of how Libyan professionals look at child discipline methods and, in particular, parental use of physical disciplinary methods and whether they are aware of the concept of child abuse.

Translation

The official language in Libya is Arabic and the vast majority of Libyan residents do not speak English (Rhema and Miliszewska 2010). Therefore, the fieldwork for this study had to be carried out in the participants' home language. I prepared an information sheet, questionnaires and participants' consent forms in English first, and then translated them into Arabic, which took about 2 weeks. After collecting the data in Arabic, I had to translate them back to English, a process that took about 6 weeks. However, I not only translated participants' data but also translated Libyan legislation as well as some Arabic literature.

Maher (2010) argues that one of the challenges facing students in the Gaza region when they translate English into Arabic is cultural differences. A badly translated piece of literature may give rise to misconceptions as a result of cultural differences in habits, expectations, norms and other behaviours. However, in this study, I avoided such difficulties in translation, possibly because I have a good knowledge of the two languages and am familiar with the subject of the research. In addition, I am not only familiar with the two languages involved but also with the cultures of the people who speak them, which made the process easier. Despite the fact that I was aware that some expressions would lose their strong cultural meaning during translation, I focused on translating the meaning of the words rather than literal translation and I provided some explanations or footnotes for non-Arabic readers. For example, in Libya, some people use the term 'my eyes', which if translated literally would lose its meaning, but to fit with an English expression, it was translated as 'my dear'. So

having knowledge about the culture is very significant in terms of overcoming such translation issues. However, personally, I found it quite demanding translating text, especially the Islamic texts, which required particularly great care and patience. Indeed, Bahameed (2008) argues that, in some cases, Arabic terms, especially those relating to Islam, have no equivalents in English, because they simply do not exist in English; for instance, 'قطيعة الأرحام; GaTiiat Al-arHaam', which means to be on bad terms with one's relatives, and 'حرام; Haram', which means not acceptable and in Islam refers to anything that is forbidden by Islamic law.

In order to make sure that the meaning of the words and expressions that I used in this study are accurate, I have used many techniques. For example, I used a dictionary and consulted friends by involving them in discussions about the use and meaning of certain words. Further, I tried to compare my translation to other versions, especially with Islamic texts. Indeed, Maher (2010) suggests that a translator needs to adopt strategies such as back translation, which involves looking for equivalent meaning, using a dictionary, or involving other people, to achieve good results when dealing with translation-related problems. With regard to the questions in the questionnaires in this study, I pre-tested using the pilot study to make them fit with the local culture. As Maher (2010) stated (citing Warwick and Osherson 1973), it is very important that participants are asked not only for their answers but also for their understanding within the context of the questions. Some researchers believe that the use of multiple techniques is the most efficient way to deal with translation-related problems. Brislin et al (1973) think that using a combination of some or all available methods to deal with translation issues gives greater strength to the text by offsetting the weakness of one method with the strengths of the others.

Data Analysis

Some researchers believe that it is very necessary to formulate a draft analysis plan as a step towards management of the data (Fink 2008). In this study, I had considered how the data could be analysed even before I started collecting the data. For instance, in order to meet the aims of this study, I decided to use frequency and percentages for analysing responses in the questionnaire for each group (fathers, mothers, male and female children), to identify the similarities and differences between them. In addition, I planned to use software programs for analysis of the data. SPSS (11.5) was used to analyse the questionnaire data while NVIVO (9) was used to analyse the interview data. The reasons for choosing data analysis software were that it can quickly integrate the data, form a big picture, provide detail, and uncover subtle connections. Graham (2013), for example, argues that using NVIVO to analyse data has the following advantages: it allows researchers to

store their data in a single location, it is an easy way to access the data and can analyse large amounts of data and provide consistency of analysis. After I had translated my data I started the analysis, using 'thematic analyses'. Braun and Clarke (2006, p.79) argue that "thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data". The phases of analysis of my data were as follows:

With regard to the process of analysing the quantitative data, firstly, I made sure that no data were missing, by checking the content of each questionnaire. And after collecting the 100 completed questionnaires, I divided them according to the two main groups of respondents: parents and children. The second step was to code the questionnaire questions and responses. I coded the questionnaires using numbers. The first, 1-33, were for fathers, 34-66 for mothers, while male children were coded 1-17 and female children 18-34, and I coded each question by name, for example, sex, age, or experience. In addition, I coded the respondents to each question using numbers. For instance, regarding the question: "Are you male or female", males took the number 1 and females took the number 2. The third step was to enter the coded responses directly into the SPSS. In order to make sure that I established 'clean data', I double checked the coding on the computer and checked the responses for each questionnaire at least twice after they had been entered into SPSS (11.5). Fink (2003, pp17) defines clean data as leading to the same results for the analysis, whoever runs the program. He argues that data can be 'dirty' for many reasons, including missing answers, miscoding and incorrect data entry.

Regarding analysing qualitative data, Ritchie and Spencer (2002) argue that analysing qualitative data within thematic analysis is a process involving four main steps: familiarisation with the data collected, then identifying and recording the range of themes, indexing to the code themed by defining and providing examples, and finally, mapping the themes in order to interpret the findings. Following this multi-step process of analysis, firstly, I divided the interview data into four groups (fathers, mothers, male and female children) and coded them using numbers and using different colours for the four profiles to distinguish between them, for instance, green colour profiles for fathers, red for mothers. I should mention that the data were entered directly as text into NVIVO. At an early stage, I became familiar with the data by reading through all the information to gain an overview of the data I had collected. Further, during this stage, I listed the key recurrent themes for each group (fathers, mothers, male and female children). Then, I started coding the responses to questions based on themes.

The primary analysis involved the use of thematic analysis which consists of coding by using words for specific characteristics relating to the list of themes drawn from the research

questions. However, I found that some other themes emerged which I had not thought about previously, such as age gap between children. So I ascribed another code and revisited the interview data to see if it had arisen and had been missed during the initial analysis.

Sub-themes for each main theme were identified; for instance, participants' perceptions of physical punishment as a method of disciplining children were coded under categories such as pro and against, whilst questions related to distinguishing between physical punishment and abuse were coded under physical punishment and child abuse. Influence of Islam, tradition, conflict and legislations was coded under 'strong', 'little' or 'no impact'. After all responses had been categorised into themes and sub-themes, I started mapping and interpreting them as a whole. Firstly, I described each category, for example, I dealt with the definition of child abuse and physical punishment, and the grey area where participants had arguments about how they distinguished between the two. Then, I provided several examples by identifying specific quotes by fathers, mothers and children to exemplify the relevance of each code. Finally, I tried to find associations between categories through mapping. For example, I found that parents who experienced physical punishment during their childhood were more approving of the use of physical disciplinary techniques with their children than parents who had never experienced this method when they were young.

Ethical Issues

Permission to carry out the study was achieved from the University of Sheffield through the Department of Sociological Studies ethical review committee[65]. All social research entails has major ethical concerns such as issues of confidentiality and security of data, particularly for those researching areas linked to child abuse (Walsh and Macmillan 2006). This study contained several sensitive aspects, not only because of the nature of the topic but also because it was carried out during the war in Libya. Whilst I have already addressed some of those issues previously in this chapter, others will be discussed in this section.

The main concern regarded carrying out the fieldwork in Libya during the time of the armed conflict. Both my supervisors actively discouraged me from doing so. However, I decided to go for a 'scoping visit' first to see whether it was possible to do the fieldwork in Libya. It might be seen as a risky or careless decision by many, but although I was in a very vulnerable position I felt I had no option except to go ahead. For example, personally, I was extremely shocked to see what had happened in the country. In addition, the shock of losing loved ones was there every minute, which increased my instability emotionally. Further, as Libyan students in the UK, we were also under great financial pressure as the British

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[65] A copy of ethical approval is included in appendix 7.

Government froze the Libyan Government's money, which led to freezing of Libyan students' grants. I also experienced pressure from the University of Sheffield to pay the fees after the Libyan embassy failed to do. Furthermore, the Libyan Embassy stressed we should carry on with our studies and were responsible for any time wasted. As I mentioned previously, changing the focus of my topic also meant that I would lose a year of funding, which I could not afford to do. Therefore, I carried on with my original plan with great hope to turn these circumstances to my favour. It was an overwhelming experience, but despite all of that, I managed to work on my project as normal and get to the stage of doing the fieldwork. I contacted the Libyan Embassy to ask about whether I could go back home, and they responded positively. However, what encouraged me to make the decision to go back home to carry out the fieldwork was that I had been closely monitoring the armed conflict in Libya since it began, using not only the BBC, CNN and Sky as sources of information, but also other sources such as Al-Jazeera and more local media outlets. From this, I gathered that while the battle was intense in some parts of the country, people in other parts of the country were carrying on with their everyday lives with relatively little disruption. In addition, I contacted my friends and relatives in Tripoli and they confirmed that life was relatively normal in their areas. As Dalacoura (2012) reported, Tripoli was the heart of the Gadhafi regime and did not experience significant protests until the very end of the civil war. Indeed, after I went back to Libya, I found that life there was almost back to normal, particularly in Tripoli and areas around the city. In addition, after I approached people there, they welcomed the opportunity to discuss their everyday life activities, such as a child-rearing, which made it manageable to do the field work there.

Another ethical concern related to dealing with cases of abuse during the fieldwork. I should mention that I think the ethical committee at the University of Sheffield were applying their concerns and rules to other cultures, which was not fair. For instance, they asked me to refer child abuse cases to policy or particular offices dealing with that. Despite my explaining to them that such offices did not exist in Libya and what constituted abuse to them did not mean abuse in terms of our society and law, they still asked me at least to contact international organisations such as UNICEF. Therefore, and before I started collecting the data, I went to meet with representatives of UNICEF and Save the Children in Tripoli to see if I could refer to them any cases of abuse I might come across during my field work. However, they had left the country and were not working in Tripoli at that time. In addition, I decided to go and see the childcare department in the Social Welfare Sector in Tripoli to find out whether I could refer any cases of a child disclosing serious injuries. Unsurprisingly, the secretary of that department said, "now, all our concern and programmes are directed

towards finding shelter for families who have lost their homes and helping families and children to get the health services that they need".

Furthermore, as Hennink et al (2011) argue, potential participants should be provided with comprehensive information about the research and make a voluntary decision to take part in the project. Therefore, I made sure that all my participants were informed about the nature and purpose of my study. I started the fieldwork by handing out an information sheet to ensure that my participants fully understood the purposes of the project before they gave their consent to participate in the study. I made sure that they understood that their participation in the study was entirely voluntary and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. However, the ethical committee at the University of Sheffield also asked for written consent, whilst I argued that this is also uncommon in our culture as we never ask participants to sign a form to take part in research. As I explained earlier in this chapter, culturally, people prefer to speak without recording or even signing anything as they think it then becomes formal. My view fits with Newby's (2010) argument that asking participants for their consent is actually more than getting a signature on a form. Most importantly, participants should understand in what they taking part. However, I failed to convince the ethical committee on this point of difference among cultures; therefore, I had to accept their rules. In practice, I spent a great deal of time explaining to my participants why they should sign the form and that it was not a legal form, as they had suspected. They were really surprised and although they did not understand the real motivation behind it they were kind enough to sign it just to help me fulfil one of the required rules. In addition, as Hennink et al (2011) argue, it is the researcher's responsibility to protect the data and maintain its confidentiality. I clarified to my participants that their real names were not going to be publicised in any part of the study. I also made sure that all notes and materials produced during the course of the study are kept in a locked cabinet and these will be destroyed after completion of my degree.

Meanwhile, research harm is recognised as another ethical issue. Israel and Hay (2006) argue that research harm in social sciences generally means that participants may face psychological distress, discomfort and invasion of privacy. During my research, I was aware that my participants could feel discomfort when talking about sensitive issues such as religion or abuse within the family. In order to minimise that, I made sure that my participants understood the aim of the study. For instance, as I mentioned previously in this chapter, almost all of the participants during the interviews and one who left notes on the questionnaire were surprised that there was a question associating Islam to parental use of physical punishment. Some were very annoyed to be asked that question as they thought

that would lead to association of Islam with violence[66]. However, I dealt with this discomfort as follows: I had face to face discussions with people who raised this matter, to clarify my intentions. I made it clear to all of them that basically I was just a researcher seeking to discover the reality; I was not judging them or criticising their religious beliefs. I also ensured them that I would present their views as they wished. In addition, I had a conversation with them about the importance of this type of question (relating to religious beliefs) in finding out where things are going wrong in society and working to fix them rather than suspecting people who want to do something about it. I asked them about their answer to that particular question, which was 'no, Islam has no influence on our use of this method and we are not supposed to use it'. I asked them why this should be the case. If we are Muslim and know that Islam does not encourage this form of disciplining children, why do we use it? I made it clear that I wanted to find out the root cause for the use of this method and carrying on such research with this question could help to produce answers which could contribute to helping the authorities and professionals to rethink local policy. Actually, this discussion made the participants more enthusiastic and more involved in talking about the impact of Islam on parental use of physical punishment. In addition, that conversation led to some participants asking to take part in the interviews, to express their views in depth.

In addition, during the interviews, two mothers were very emotional as they remembered their abusive childhood and how this had affected their relationships with their children. I asked them whether they wanted to stop the interview but they refused and insisted on talking about it as they expressed that they felt that they were suffering alone (no sympathy from others as traditionally it is considered shameful, especially, to speak about abuse by parents) and had never had the chance to speak about it. Therefore, they expressed that they would like to get it off their chest by speaking to me. During the interview, one mother admitted that she suffered from depression and did not know where to turn for help. I was very surprised that she was not aware of the social centres and professionals in her area, especially as she was working near to some of these centres. I told her where she could go to seek professional help and offered to take her there in my car if she could not manage to go by herself or needed accompanying.

In general, I believe that being a researcher conducting research on people from the same culture and country helped me to use and/or avoid words which were not acceptable and discuss matters in a way that would suit and comfort the participants. Dealing with culturally sensitive issues is a very important matter in social science research, as argued by Hennink et al (2011).

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[66] See section 6.4.

6.6 Conclusion

Critical review of the literature has highlighted the different research methodology and data collection methods used by researchers. Many studies use surveys to collect their data (Smyth and Scott 2000; Vittrup et al 2006; Youssef et al 1998), whilst others use interviews (Kim et al 2010; Oveisi et al 2010; Kim and Hong 2007). In addition, it seems that the majority of large scale studies use secondary data (Grogan-Kaylor and Otis 2007; Tajima 2000; Straus and Stewart 1999), whilst studies using primary data tend to be on a smaller scale (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Alyahri and Goodman, 2008; Qasem et al 1998). As a result of the Libyan cultural context and the political unrest in the country, this study uses mixed methods based on a small scale sample. With regard to participants, some studies have focused on fathers only (Lee et al 2011a), or mothers only (Oveisi et al 2010; Clement and Chamberland, 2009), others on both parents (Crouch and Behl 2001), some on mothers and one child (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Youssef et al 1998). Meanwhile, a few have focused on fathers, mother and children (Guttmann et al 2009), whereas others have focused on professionals (Choo et al 2013) or on parents and professionals (Justice for Children and Youth 2006). However, this study focuses on all of these four groups (fathers, mothers, children and professionals), to gain more insights from each side into use, effects, and how to deal with this matter.

Chapter (7): Data Analysis and Discussion

Study Participants, Perceptions and Reported
Use of Physical Punishment

7.1 Introduction

As I mentioned in chapter 6, integration between quantitative and qualitative data in this study was considered from the start. However, choosing the best design for presenting the findings was not an easy choice. Bryman (2013) identifies three main designs to consider when presenting research findings. First, convergent parallel design presents quantitative data then qualitative data followed by the discussion chapter. Second, explanatory sequential design presents qualitative data with the discussion, then quantitative data with the discussion or vice versa -quantitative then qualitative data-. Finally, embedded (nested) design mixes both quantitative and qualitative data with the discussion. Bryman (2013) thinks chapters presenting quantitative and qualitative data should not be separated. Despite the fact that, initially, I adopted convergent parallel design, I changed to an embedded design which combined presentation of the two sets of data and the discussion to avoid repetition, lengthy chapters, and to make it easier for the reader to follow the comparison between both sets of data. Stages of developing the design is explained in detail in section 10.3. Consistent with the social constructivist perspective that was adopted in this study[67], research findings were literally presented as the participants' perspectives and interpretations.

Because of the length of the data and discussion, I divided them into three chapters. The first chapter explores the profiles of the participants who took part in this study, their perceptions of child discipline methods and their actual use of physical punishment. The second chapter explores the personal factors that appear to influence parental use of physical punishment while the last one focuses on external factors.

7.2 Study Participants

This section outlines the profiles of both questionnaire and interview participants. In this study, 100 Libyan fathers, mothers, and children aged 6-17, from 10 rural and urban areas, filled in the questionnaire.

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[67] See section 6.2.

With regard to the children's questionnaire sample, as shown in table 7.2, 34 children filled in the questionnaire. Half of them were males and the other half were females. 10 of the female children were aged 10-14 while nine of the male children were 15-18. The majority of the children (26) reported having 1-3 siblings. Nine of the female children were middle children, while among the male children 7 were first-born and 7 were middle children. All the female children and 16 of the male children were living with both their parents; however, one male child lived with his father and step-mother. 11 of the female children lived in small cities (towns) while 9 of the male children lived in the capital (Tripoli). The fathers of 15 of the male children and all of the female children were non-smokers.

Table (7.2) Socio-demographic Characteristics of Child Respondents to the Questionnaire

Characteristics	Child's Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
1) Number of participants	17 50.0%	17 50.0%	34 100%
2) Age groups Under 5	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%
6-9	1 5.9%	5 29.4%	6 17.6%
10-14	7 41.2%	10 58.8%	17 50.0%
15-18	9 52.9%	2 11.8%	11 32.4%
3) Number of siblings None	1 5.9%	0 .0%	1 2.9%
1 to 3	12 70.6%	14 82.4%	26 76.5%
More than 4	4 23.5%	3 17.6%	7 20.6%
4) Child's birth order First-born child	7 41.2%	2 11.8%	9 26.5%
Middle child	7 41.2%	9 52.9%	16 47.1%
Youngest	3 17.6%	6 35.3%	9 26.5%
5) Living with both parents: Yes	16 94.1%	17 100.0%	33 97.1%
No	1 5.9%	0 .0%	1 2.9%
6) Place of residence: Big city (The Capital)	9 52.9%	6 35.3%	15 44.1%
Small cities (Towns)	8 47.1%	11 64.7%	19 55.9%
Rural areas	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%
7) Smoker father: Yes	2 11.8%	0 .0%	2 5.9%

No	15	17	32
	88.2%	100.0%	94.1%

Regarding the characteristics of the parents' questionnaire sample, 66 parents were surveyed in this study: 33 mothers and 33 fathers. 16 mothers were aged 31-44 while 18 of the fathers were aged 45 or over. All fathers and 29 mothers were married, while three mothers were widowed and one was divorced. More than half of the parents (39) had 2-4 children while more than a third (25) had more than 5 children. Under half of mothers (15) had high school certificates or lower while 14 fathers held postgraduate degrees. 16 mothers were teachers and a third (10) were housewives, while 12 fathers were employees and nine were professionals such as social workers, lawyers or doctors. Almost half of the fathers and mothers (32) lived in Tripoli, see Table 7.3.

Table (7.3) Socio-demographic Characteristics of Parents Respondents to the Questionnaire

Characteristics	Parents		Total
	Fathers	Mothers	
1) **Number of participants**	33	33	66
	50%	50%	100%
2) **Age groups**			
18-30	0	10	10
	.0%	30.3%	15.2%
31-44	15	16	31
	45.5%	48.5%	47.0%
45 or above	18	7	25
	54.5%	21.2%	37.9%
3) **Marital Status**			
Married	33	29	62
	100.0%	87.9%	93.9%
Divorced	0	1	1
	.0%	3.0%	1.5%
Widowed	0	3	3
	.0%	9.1%	4.5%
4) **Number of Children**			
1	0	2	2
	.0%	6.1%	3.0%
2 to 4	18	21	39
	54.5%	63.6%	59.1%
5 or above	15	10	25
	45.5%	30.3%	37.9%
5) **Level of Education**			
Illiterate	1	0	1
	3.0%	.0%	1.5%
Primary, secondary and high school	9	15	24
	27.3%	45.5%	36.4%
Undergraduate	9	12	21
	27.3%	36.4%	31.8%
Postgraduate	14	6	20
	42.4%	18.2%	30.3%
6) **Parents' Occupation:**	6	0	6
	18.2%	.0%	9.1%
Self-employed			
	4	16	20
Teacher	12.1%	48.5%	30.3%
	9	0	9
Professional such as lecturer, lawyer,	27.3%	.0%	13.6%

doctor, social worker			
Employee[68]	12 36.4%	3 9.1%	15 22.7%
Craft worker	0 .0%	1 3.0%	1 1.5%
Unemployed/ Housewife	0 .0%	10 30.3%	10 15.2%
Self-sufficient work[69]	0 .0%	2 6.1%	2 3.0%
Nurse	0 .0%	1 3.0%	1 1.5%
Military services	1 3.0%	0 .0%	1 1.5%
Others (Retired)	1 3.0%	0 .0%	1 1.5%
7) Place of residence Big city	17 51.5%	15 45.5%	32 48.5%
Towns	8 24.2%	12 36.4%	20 30.3%
Rural areas	8 24.2%	6 18.2%	14 21.2%

30 fathers, mothers and children were interviewed in this study. They had all ticked a box in the questionnaire to show their willingness to participate in the interviews. In addition, eight Libyan professionals who worked for, and with, children were interviewed.

With regard to the children's interview sample, 10 children voluntarily took part in the interviews of this study, five females and five males. They were aged 10-16, living with both parents in different areas in Libya and from families that had five or more members. The majority (7) were middle children, while two were first-born children and only one was the youngest in the family, as indicated in Table 7.4.

Table (7.4) Characteristics of the Children Interviewed

Participants	Sex	Age	Family size	Birth order	Father's level of education	Father's occupation	Mother's level of education	Mother's occupation	Place of residence
1	Male	12	5	The youngest	Lower than high school	Employee	Lower than high school	Housewife	Town
2	Female	11	6	Middle	Lower than high school	Teacher	Undergraduate Degree	Teacher	Town
3	Male	14	7	Middle	Postgraduate degree	Employee	Lower than high school	Housewife	Tripoli
4	Male	16	5	First born	Postgraduate degree	Employee	Lower than high school	Housewife	Town
5	Female	10	6	Middle	Lower than high school	A teacher	Undergraduate Degree	Teacher	Town
6	Female	12	5	First born	Lower than high school	Teacher	Lower than high school	Self-sufficient	Town
7	Male	15	7	Middle	Postgraduat	Employee	Lower than high	Housewife	Tripoli

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[68] Employee: refers to people who work in administration jobs.
[69] Self-sufficient work: refers to the work inside home without using outside resources, for instance, working on the farm or selling home cooked food.

					e degree		school		
8	Male	11	5	Middle	Lower than high school	Teacher	Lower than high school	Self-sufficient	Town
9	Female	15	5	Middle	Lower than high school	Employee	Lower than high school	Housewife	Town
10	Female	13	5	Middle	Lower than high school	Employee	Lower than high school	Housewife	Town

In addition, 10 fathers and 10 mothers were interviewed in this study. They were aged 19-62; half of them lived in Tripoli and the others in towns or rural areas. Almost all of them (19) were married except for one mother who was divorced. Family size ranged from 4 to10 members. Education levels of parents who took part in the interviews ranged from lower than high school to postgraduate degree level. Mothers were either housewives or teachers at primary schools while fathers were either working in professional jobs, such as social work, higher education, or administrative jobs, as summarised in Table 7.5.

Table (7.5) Characteristics of the Parents Interviewed

Participants	sex	Age	Family size	Occupation	Marital status	Level of Education	Place of residence
1	Male	48	8	Head of scout group /Tripoli	Married	Undergraduate Degree	Tripoli
2	Female	19	3	Housewife	Married	Lower than high school	Town
3	Female	44	8	Housewife	divorced	Lower than high school	Tripoli
4	Male	44	6	Lecturer	Married	Postgraduate degree	Tripoli
5	Male	35	4	Employee in library	Married	Undergraduate Degree	Tripoli
6	Female	44	6	Housewife	Married	Undergraduate Degree	Rural area
7	Female	43	5	Housewife	Married	Lower than high school	Town
8	Male	55	7	Social worker	Married	Undergraduate Degree	Tripoli
9	Male	60	8	Lecturer	Married	Postgraduate degree	Town
10	Male	62	10	Lecturer	Married	Postgraduate degree	Tripoli
11	Female	5	31	Housewife Self-sufficient	Married	Lower than high school	Town
12	Female	55	7	Housewife	Married	Lower than high school	Town
13	Male	46	6	Lecturer	Married	Postgraduate degree	Rural area
14	Female	30	5	Housewife	Married	Undergraduate Degree	Tripoli
15	Female	38	4	Teacher in primary school	Married	Undergraduate Degree	Tripoli
16	Male	44	6	Lecturer	Married	Postgraduate degree	Town
17	Male	53	9	Lecturer	Married	Postgraduate degree	Town
18	Male	40	9	Employee	Married	Postgraduate degree	Tripoli
19	Female	31	6	Secretary at	Married	Undergraduate	Tripoli

				primary school		Degree	
20	Female	45	8	Teacher in primary school	Married	Undergraduate Degree	Tripoli

During the fieldwork for this study in Libya, it was possible to interview eight different professionals who worked with, and for, children. They were an Islamic scholar (Sheik), a university lecturer, social workers at a school and a hospital, a teacher at a primary school, a paediatrician, a judge and a lawyer, see Table 7.6.

Table (7.6) Characteristics of Professionals in the Interview Sample

Participants	Sex	Occupation	Type of interview
1	Male	Lecturer at social work department at Tripoli University	Face to face
2	Female	Islamic scholar (Sheik)	Face to face
3	Female	Social worker at school	Face to face
4	Female	Teacher in primary school	Face to face
5	Male	Social worker at hospital	Face to face
6	Male	Paediatrician	Face to face
7	Female	Judge	Via telephone
8	Female	Lawyer	Face to face

7.3 Findings of the Study

This section presents the key findings of this study from both the questionnaires and interviews, consulting literature presented in chapters 2, 3 and 4. It conducts discussion about disciplining methods used by parents, and participants' perceptions and experiences of those methods.

7.3.1 Child Disciplining Methods

Consistent with many studies across the world that suggest parental use of physical punishment is widely practised and commonly used as an adjunct to other non-physical punishment (Twum-Danso Imoh 2013; Usta et al 2013; Hadiif 2012; Zhu and Tang 2011; Youssef et al 1998), the present study also found that the majority of parents who took part in this study used a mixture of physical and non-physical methods to discipline their children, while some just used non-physical methods.

Non-Physical Discipline Methods

This section explores non-physical methods that were used by parents who did not use physical punishment and also by parents who used physical punishment.

With regard to non-physical discipline methods used by parents who did not use physical methods, about a third of fathers and mothers (25 out of 66) who responded to the

questionnaire in this study reported that they use only non-physical discipline methods with their children, as shown in Table 7.6. It appears from the findings of the questionnaire that many more fathers than mothers in this sample use non-physical methods with children. This may be a result of their high level of education[70]. Two thirds of parents (16 out of 25) who responded to the questionnaire and use only non-physical methods indicated that they do not use physical methods with their children because it makes the child more stubborn. Some admitted that they had used physical methods with their children first but recognised that it did not lead to the required results, so they changed their method of disciplining; quotes will be explored below.

With regard to children who responded to the questionnaire in this study, who were not children of parents in this study, only six out of 34 reported that they experience only non-physical methods by their parents, as shown in Table 7.7. No differences were found regarding the children's age, sex or background in their parents' use of non-physical methods.

Table (7.7) Participants' Responses to Parental Methods of Disciplining

Methods of Disciplining Children	Parent's Sex			Child's Sex		
	Father	Mother	Total	Male	Female	Total
Non-physical methods only	17 51.5%	8 24.2%	25 37.9%	3 17.6%	3 17.6%	6 17.6%
Both	16 48.5%	25 75.8%	41 62.1%	14 82.4%	14 82.4%	28 82.4%
Total	33 100.0%	33 100.0%	66 100.0%	17 100.0%	17 100.0%	34 100.0%

Regarding the findings from the interviews, as illustrated by Table 7.8 below, three fathers and two mothers out of the 20 participants reported that they do not use physical punishment. A father who was a social worker (age 55) said, 'I do not use physical punishment with my children. My children are my friends and I am their friend, not just a father'. Another father who was a lecturer (age 53) said:

> Physical punishment is not a useful or effective method to discipline a child, because it does more harm than good. It sometimes leads a child to commit crimes, become unsociable, and breaks the relationship between parent and child and makes the child suffer from mental problems. This will affect children's social skills and their relationships in the future.

Regarding the reasons for not using physical punishment among those parents, some explained that it was because of their past, which was either violent or free of violence. A housewife (age 44) said:

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[70] Will be explored in detail later in the section on parents' level of education under section 8.2.

> My dad was too violent, like someone who lived in the Stone Age. He used to punish me physically a lot and excessively with my other siblings. Because of my experience, I hate this method and do not use it with my children.

The influence of parents' past experience will be explored in detail in the next chapter. Meanwhile, other parents reported that the influence of the experience that is gained by age is their reason for not using physical punishment with their children. A father who is a lecturer (age 60) said:

> If you had asked me before, 15 years ago, I would have said physical punishment is 100% an effective method. I used to beat my son a lot, especially when he did not study. However, after I got older, I realised that this method does not work at all. Thus, I changed my method, to motivate my children. Now, I say to my children, if you study and get good scores in exams, I will give you a gift.

This example describes how some parents used physical punishment at first and then they realised, based on their experience, that it had no benefit and so turned to verbal methods instead.

Among the children who were interviewed, only one male child (aged 12) reported that his parents only used non-physical methods. That, he explained, is because he is the youngest in the family, although his siblings experience parental use of physical methods. The influence of child's birth order on parental use of physical punishment will be explored in a later section on child's birth order in the next chapter.

Table (7.8) Characteristics of Interviewees who do not Use/Experience Physical Punishment

Participants	Sex	Age	Family size	Occupation	Marital status	Level of Education	Place of residence
1	Female	44	8	A housewife	divorced	Lower than high school	Tripoli
2	Male	55	7	A social worker	Married	Undergraduate Degree	Tripoli
3	Male	60	8	A lecturer	Married	Postgraduate degree	Town
4	Male	53	9	A lecturer	Married	Postgraduate degree	Town
5	Female	45	8	A teacher in primary school	Married	Undergraduate Degree	Tripoli
6	Male child	12	5 The youngest	His fathers is Employee and mother is a housewife	Married	Both his parent are Lower than high school	Town

With regard to non-physical methods used by parents who do not use physical methods, parents who were interviewed claimed that they tell off, stimulate and advise their children. However, parents who responded to the questionnaire reported that they use all of the non-physical methods listed in the questionnaire[71]. The most common methods are telling off (17

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[71] See appendix 1 and 2.

out of 25), intimidation (13 out of 25), staring at a child (9 out of 25) and verbal insults (5 out of 25), respectively. It is worth mentioning that the great majority of fathers, mothers and children in both the questionnaires and interviews found it difficult to distinguish between telling a child off, intimidation and verbal insults. Telling a child off, as they explained, includes shouting, intimidating, scolding, telling off and insulting a child by calling them animal names or comparing them with siblings or other children. They reported that all of that can happen at once. Further, one of the non-physical methods listed in the questionnaire is locking children up. Some participants explained it as involving a child staying in one place (can be anywhere), for no specific length of time, because it depends on the mood of the punisher; therefore, it can last a long time and include denying a child food and/or going to toilet. It appears that the great majority of non-physical methods used by these parents are negative methods, which can be abusive and, therefore, no better than using physical punishment. However, parents who used non-physical punishment did not realise that and believed that these methods do not damage children, as will be explored in the following paragraphs.

Regarding non-physical methods used by parents who also use physical methods, parents who responded to the questionnaire and use physical methods indicated that they also use all of the non-physical methods that were indicated in the questionnaire. However, some added other forms. A few fathers mentioned comparing a child with other children, insulting a child in front of friends or siblings, discriminating between the punished child and other siblings to make the child feel embarrassment, showing dissatisfaction, making children feel unloved, and denying them lunch. Meanwhile, some mothers reported that they show a child that they are upset or/and deny them affection and attention. It seems that some of the parents in the questionnaire sample who use physical punishment also use harsher non-physical methods compared to parents who use only non-physical methods. Parents who only use non-physical methods picked only methods that were stated in the questionnaire, while parents, especially fathers, who use physical methods added another list of non-physical methods which is more about comparing and shaming a child in front of others, as stated above.

With regard to parents' and children's perceptions of non-physical methods, parents in the questionnaire and interview samples who do not use physical methods thought that verbal methods, especially telling a child off (which includes shouting, intimidation and insulting a child), is an effective method. They thought it was better than the use of physical methods, because it does not damage or hurt the child, but only makes the child feel ashamed, which stops them misbehaving. Indeed, Davidov and Khoury-Kassabri (2103) indicate that parents

use verbal methods to attempt to make a child feel ashamed or/and guilty. In this study, parents who do not use physical methods seem to judge the effect of disciplining methods only by the physical aspects, without considering the emotional implications. This means that they did not recognise the negative effects of some of those non-physical methods on their children's wellbeing.

Parents who responded to the questionnaire and interviews and use both physical and non-physical methods stated that their choice of disciplining methods depends on their mood[72]. However, some mothers indicated that fathers more often use harsh verbal (insults) methods rather than physical punishment. This means that these fathers use verbal methods as alternatives to physical punishment. However, the mothers believed that the non-physical methods used by these fathers hurt and damage children more than the use of physical punishment. One mother, a teacher (age 38) said:

> My husband thinks that he advises our children. However, he actually is verbally insulting them by calling them an animal name, a daft and mad person. It makes my children cry and feel upset and makes me feel upset about them too.

There is an important point here, which is that while some fathers think that they are advising their children, instead they are insulting them, according to some mothers and children.

Indeed, some children who were interviewed in this study, in particular female children, said that they feel hurt and sad when their parents tell them off (insulting them verbally). A female child (age 11) said:

> My parents shout at me and call me by animals' names, such as a donkey or dog. It is not fair. I feel deeply hurt and sometimes cry when my parents do so.

In addition, a female child (age 13) said:

> The pain from physical punishment disappears after a few minutes but with verbal insults it sticks in the mind. In addition, I feel ashamed when my parents start shouting and insulting me in front of others. Other people start laughing at me and sometimes they tease me by saying the same insult that my parents say.

The children stated that the hurt that is caused by verbal methods lasts in their mind for a long time, and sometimes forever, and they cannot forget it as easily as physical punishment. Further, parents and children who use/experience physical and non-physical methods reported that parents avoid using physical punishment in the presence of others[73], while they use verbal punishment in front of anybody. This could be another factor that makes verbal (insults) methods more damaging to children's wellbeing and could also

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[72] Will be explored in a later section on parents' issues under section 8.2.
[73] Will be discussed further in the section on isolation and social support under section 9.4.

explain why the majority of mothers and children think that the use of verbal methods (insults) constitutes child abuse, as shown in the next section.

Physical Discipline Methods

Because of the lack of a definition of physical punishment in Libya, it was important to ask participants in this study about this issue. The majority of fathers and mothers (57 out of 66) and children (31 out of 34) who responded to the questionnaires thought that physical punishment can be divided into 'light' and 'severe'.

With regard to light physical punishment, participants in the questionnaires and interviews used the term 'normal' to refer to it, which means that they normalise this type of punishment. According to them, 'normal' physical punishment is a way to educate a child and is not considered as a violent method against children. Similarly, Hammad et al (1999) stated that the use of light physical punishment of children in Arab society is considered to be a technique to correct a child's misbehaviour rather than a violent act. However, how did the participants who took part in the interviews define light 'normal' physical punishment?

18 out of 20 parents and all of the children (10 out of 10) who were interviewed agreed that light physical punishment includes acts such as a light hit, hitting on the hands, hitting once, or/and leaving no marks on a child's body. A housewife (age 19) said, 'normal physical punishment is applied by hand or with an object but it does not leave marks on a child's body, such as beating a child on the hands, pinching, or twisting the ears'. Meanwhile, a male child (age 11) stated, 'normal physical punishment is a light hit that does not leave marks on the child's body'.

Regarding severe physical punishment, participants used the term 'unacceptable' to refer to it. The findings seem to suggest that the children in this study have different views from parents about what constitutes severe physical punishment.18 of the 20 parents who were interviewed agreed on the following: it is severe physical punishment if it leads to serious physical injuries, disability or the death of a child. On the other hand, some fathers and mothers argued that the severity of physical punishment can also depend on the part of the body where a child is beaten, such as the face, head or bottom, and the type of objects that parents use. A father who is a head of scout group (age 48) commented:

> There are some parts of the body where you cannot hit a child, such as the face and private areas. In addition, using an object such as iron pipe is excessive physical punishment and not acceptable at all.

Despite the fact that some parents were aware that some of those methods are not allowed

in Islam and not acceptable traditionally, they admitted that they use some of those methods that are banned in Islam, out of anger, but they avoid the ones that, traditionally, are not acceptable[74].

With regard to children's views about severe physical punishment, they agreed that severe physical punishment includes acts such as: a hard hit, lasting a long time, causing pain for a long time, beating anywhere on the body (mainly out of anger), leading to bleeding, and using objects such as a hose, a belt or a stone. A female child (age 15) stated 'severe physical punishment leaves marks on a child's body, leads to bleeding, a child feels pain for a while, use of an object such as a slipper, a stick, and a hose'.

However, a few older children (aged between 13 and 15) argued that severe physical punishment can depend on how strong the perpetrator's hands are, and the material of the instrument used (leather or rubber). A female child (age 13) said: 'normal physical punishment is a light hit with the hands. However, it can be severe if the hands are strong'. A male child (age 14) stated 'it depends on the material used, if it is rubber, it is light, but not leather'.

A number of fathers and mothers who were interviewed in this study reported that they had heard of and/or witnessed incidents where parental use of physical punishment led to serious injuries, such as broken bones, disabilities and even the death of a child. For instance, a mother who is a secretary in a primary school (aged 31) said:

> One day, one of my cousin's daughters said an impolite word. Her dad got annoyed and tied her up with an electric rope and left her, which cut off the circulation to the veins in her hands.

 A father who is a lecturer (aged 44) said:

> One of my neighbours, out of a fit of anger, hit his boy on the head with an iron pipe. The father was feeling frustrated because his son did not listen to him and came back home late. Sadly, the boy died that night. However, the father found a pathologist who knows one of his relatives, to get the cause of death of the child changed, but he fasted for 60 days (Islamic obligation).

It seems that parents' bad mood and anger can sometimes be behind the misuse of physical punishment. This study will provide further evidence on this in later sections[75].

However, when the parents who described such cases in the interviews were asked whether they informed the police about these incidents, they replied negatively, justifying this for

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[74] See section 9.2.5.

[75] See the section on parents' anger and mood under section 8.2.

traditional reasons[76]. The incident of the death of a child illustrates the key fact that there is a disconnection between the public who seem to be influenced by traditions, and Islam and the Government. On one side, some professionals and parents take part in hiding children's suffering at the hands of their parents by not reporting such cases. This is because there are social expectations to maintain good relationships with family and friends. On the other side, Islam and the law do not tolerate such behaviour. In Islam, killing any person is considered a huge sin[77], and if it happens unintentionally, the killer has to fast for 60 days, persistently without a break, which is what the father did. The fact that the father was told to fast means that a parent has no right to kill a child. Further, the attempt by the father to cover up what he did reflects that he was aware that it was a crime under Libyan law and he would be jailed for it, if the truth were known.

With regard to how participants in this study define child abuse, all fathers, mothers and children (in the questionnaires and interviews) reported that this was the first time they had heard about this concept. One mother, a teacher (aged 45) said, 'it is the first time I have heard of this concept. What does child abuse mean?' Moreover, a male child (age 15) said, 'child abuse. What does that mean?'. Although parents used the term 'unacceptable' to describe some physical methods when they defined severe physical punishment (explained earlier), they admitted that they were not aware that in Islam the use of such methods is termed 'child abuse'. This is why some thought child abuse was a Western not an Islamic concept. For example, a father, a lecturer (age 46) asked: 'what does child abuse mean? It could be a Western concept that you brought from the UK'. Therefore, it was important to use alternative terms, which they suggested, to explain this concept[78]. Thus, the great majority of mothers and children who were interviewed think that child abuse can mean verbally insulting a child. A female child, (age 13) said, 'I think child abuse means verbally insulting a child and calling us by animals' names'. The reason for considering verbal punishment as abuse was explored in an earlier section on non-physical discipline methods. However, many fathers and a few children and mothers who were interviewed think that child abuse can mean depriving a child of their basic needs (education and food), discrimination between siblings, spouses arguing in front of children, locking children up for a long time, clashes between parents' strategy on how to rear a child and a lack of affection towards one's children. One of the housewives (age 31) said, 'child abuse can mean depriving a child of basic needs such as food or clothes'. Meanwhile, a father who is a lecturer (age 44) commented:

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[76] Will be discussed later in the section on traditional Arab views on parents' rights to use physical punishment under section 9.5.

[77] See section 5.4.

[78] See the section on the pilot study under section 6.5.

> Child abuse for me means a lack of care and love. For example, I have a friend who is a well-known professor, whenever we discuss child care, he says 'you spoil your children by hugging them; I have never ever hugged or touched my children'. When I replied that he was wrong, he said, 'I am from a different generation to you'. I think this is abuse.

Indeed, Islam recognises that children need to be brought up based on their era not on their parents' era and to be shown love and affection[79]; hence, such neglectful behaviour could count as abuse towards Muslim children.

On the other hand, when participants were asked about parental use of physical punishment as a form of violation of children's rights, fewer than a third of parents (15 out of 66) and eight out of 34 children who responded to the questionnaire thought physical punishment can be a form of abuse; this was mainly, as some explained, as a result of their own experiences and the related level of severity[80]. While more than three quarters of the fathers and mothers (51 out of 66) and more than half of the children (18 out of 34) who responded to the questionnaire thought that physical punishment is not a form of child abuse. 18 out of 20 fathers and mothers and all children (10 out of 10) who were interviewed in this study expressed that parental use of physical punishment is a parent's right and not a form of child abuse. A male child (age 16) said, 'parents need to beat their children if they misbehave and that is not abuse, it is their right'. Meanwhile, a housewife (age 43) commented: 'parental use of physical punishment is not abuse; it is their right to discipline children'. When parents were asked whether severe physical punishment is abuse, they explained that although it is not acceptable, it is traditionally considered to be the parents' right. According to them, a parent cannot be an abuser, even though they consider some physical methods to be harsh and illegal[81]. Further, they mentioned that although it is not acceptable for a child to be harmed physically by use of physical methods, which can reach criminal levels, it is important to look at the type of misbehaviour that a child has committed. For example, they think that if a child commits serious misbehaviour which damages the family honour, such as stealing (for teenagers) or going out without permission, in particular, for girls, the use of such methods cannot be called abuse as a child deserves to be physically punished, although they know this is not how Islam would address such misbehaviour[82]. They express that traditionally, such misbehaviour is seen a shameful act that damages the honour of all members of the family/tribe and also reflects poor quality of parenting which damages the family name within the community. Indeed, protecting the family name is very important

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[79] See the section on child-rearing in Islam under section 5.3.
[80] Will be discussed in the section on parents' past experience of physical punishment under section 8.2.
[81] Will be explained more in the next section.
[82] See section 9.5.

value in Arabic culture[83]. Furthermore, all parents and children seemed not to associate the concept of child abuse with intervention; this is because the use of physical methods is believed to be the parents' business. This reflects how deeply parents and children believe in the local traditions that consider physical punishment as a parent's right[84].

7.3.2 Fathers' and Mothers' Perceptions of Physical Punishment

Despite the fact that 28 out of 66 fathers and mothers who responded to the questionnaires rejected the idea of physical punishment as an effective method, 38 out of the 66 considered it as a useful method of disciplining children and 35 of them felt that in some situations physical punishment is needed. It seems that mothers believe in this form of disciplining more than fathers, as indicated in Table 7.9. This could either be because, in Libya, mothers are more involved with child-rearing than fathers[85], or because the mothers in this sample are less educated than the fathers[86].

Table (7.9) Parents' Perceptions of Physical Punishment

Parents	Physical Punishment is a Useful Method			Total
	Yes	No	Sometimes	
Fathers	2 6.1%	16 48.5%	15 45.5%	33 100.0%
Mothers	1 3.0%	12 36.4%	20 60.6%	33 100.0%
Total	3 4.5%	28 42.4%	35 53.0%	66 100.0%

All 15 fathers and mothers interviewed who use physical punishment believed that (light) physical punishment was necessary to discipline children, and they questioned how they would teach a child without using this form. A housewife (age 19) said, 'physical punishment sometimes is a useful method to deal with a child's misbehaviour. How can we deal with our children without physical punishment?' A father who is head of a scout group (age 48) stated: 'I believe that physical punishment sometimes is a successful way to educate and discipline children but without excess'. Meanwhile, a housewife (age 44) stated, 'although it should not be excessive, physical punishment is necessary to control a child. Without physical punishment, children will live freely, and we will not be able to control them'. Although my study is on a small scale, the findings are similar to those of an Iranian study carried out by Oveisi et al (2010) which found that the majority of mothers believed in

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[83] See section 5.4.

[84] Will be discussed further in the section on traditional Arab views on parents' rights to use physical punishment under section 9.5.

[85] Will be discussed later in the section on parents' sex under section 8.2.

[86] Will be discussed further in the section on parents' level of education under section 8.2.

physical punishment as an essential way to manage a child's misbehaviour and did not see how a child can learn without the use of physical methods.

Nearly three quarters (70.7%) of fathers and mothers who use physical methods and responded to the questionnaires (29 out of 41) believed that the advantage of using physical punishment with their children is that a child will learn not to make the same mistake again. All 15 parents interviewed and who use physical punishment also indicated this and added that physical punishment makes a child obey them immediately. This is similar to Gershoff's (2002) finding that parental use of physical punishment was associated with a child's immediate compliance. On the other hand, in this study, when children who experience physical punishment and were interviewed (9 out of 9) were asked about what they learnt from parental use of physical punishment, all of them stated that they learn only to obey their parents, and then only out of fear. They do not however learn why they should not behave in a certain manner, mainly because of the lack of explanation[87]. A 15 year old female child said:

> When parents beat children, children learn nothing. We just avoid that same behaviour in the presence of our parents but we do not know why we should avoid it.

It appears that there is a contrast between parents' intention when they use physical punishment -to make a child learn- and the reality of what children actually learn -fearing their parents-. This demonstrates that use of physical discipline methods in the name of education is not necessarily effective.

Fathers and mothers in this study were asked in the questionnaire about their perceptions of some physical methods widely used with children in Libya. They were asked to rate each method on the basis of three options (acceptable, not acceptable or considered to be a crime)[88]. 50 out of 66 fathers and mothers considered administering physical punishment by hand as an acceptable method. However, more than half thought that using an object, slapping the face, hitting the head, shaking a child under three, physical punishment leaving marks on a child's body, biting a child, and denying a child food are not acceptable methods. According to many of them, even if these methods are not acceptable, traditionally, parents have the right to use any method that suits them[89].

Further, although a few parents who responded to the questionnaire considered some of the physical methods to be a crime, parents who were interviewed clarified that although the use

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[87] See section 7.3.3.
[88] See Table 7.10.
[89] Will be discussed further in the section on traditional Arab views on parents' rights to use physical punishment under section 9.5.

of some physical methods might be considered a crime, traditionally, parents who use such methods on their children cannot be called abusers or criminals, because they are their children[90]. In other words, parents own their children. This means that abuse is associated with "who" applies these methods. A father who is head of a scout group (age 48) said: 'some physical methods are crimes but if it is parents who apply them, you cannot call them criminals or ask for them to be jailed'. Two parents rejected the idea that parents can abuse their children. A father who is a lecturer in physical education (age 44) stated: 'this is impossible, for a father to mistreat his children. This could happen only in cases where the children are not his'. In addition, a housewife (age 19) said, 'parents never do things which are unfair to their children. So how can they abuse their children?' Not considering parents as potential perpetrators of abuse of their children, and even if they do abuse them, they could not be punished, is a reflection of the local traditions that look upon children as the property of their parents. Therefore, parents have absolute rights over their children[91].

Fathers and mothers in this study responded differently with regard to their perceptions of some physical methods[92]. For instance, none of the fathers think tying a child up with a cloth is an acceptable method, while seven mothers did. According to some mothers who were interviewed, they use this method in order to protect their children from danger when they are busy, but not as a way of punishment. For example, a housewife (age 19) stated:

> I sometimes tie my child up to prevent him from moving. He is so active and I am alone at home, busy doing things. My husband is always out and I cannot keep an eye on my child all the time.

This method also seems to be used in Egypt, as Youssef et al (1998) found. However, while in Libya it is restricted to toddlers and not used as a form of punishment, in Egypt, it seems to be used with school children as a form of punishment. In addition, more mothers than fathers in this study believe that physical punishment that leaves no marks on a child's body, such as twisting ears, is an acceptable method. Mothers seem to judge the acceptability of physical discipline methods in terms of physical marks. For instance, a housewife (age 31) said, 'it is fine to use physical methods as long as it does not leave marks on a child's body'.

In general, it seems that parents judge whether child discipline methods are acceptable or not based on the visible effects. Mothers who use physical punishment think physical methods are acceptable as long as they do not leave visible marks and fathers who use non-

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[90] See the preceding section.

[91] Will be explored in the section on traditional Arab views on parents' rights to use physical punishment under section 9.5.

[92] See Table 7.9.

physical methods believe that as they do not damage a child physically, they are therefore acceptable[93].

Table (7.10) Parents' Perceptions on Some Methods of Physical Punishment

Physical Methods	Acceptable			Not acceptable			Not acceptable and considered as a crime		
	Fathers (N=33)	Mothers (N=33)	Total (N=66)	Fathers (N=33)	Mothers (N=33)	Total (N=66)	Fathers (N=33)	Mothers (N=33)	Total (N=66)
Physical Punishment Using Hands	23 69.7%	27 81.8%	50 75.8%	9 27.3%	6 18.2%	15 22.7%	1 3.0%	0 .0%	1 1.5%
Physical Punishment Using Objects	4 12.1%	5 15.2%	9 13.6%	28 84.8%	27 81.8%	55 83.3%	1 3.0%	1 3.0%	2 3.0%
Slapping the Face	1 3.0%	1 3.0%	2 3.0%	30 90.9%	32 97.0%	62 93.9%	2 6.1%	0 .0%	2 3.0%
Hitting the Head	0 .0%	1 3.0%	1 1.5%	30 90.9%	31 93.9%	61 92.4%	3 9.1%	1 3.0%	4 6.1%
Shaking Child Under 3	1 3.0%	2 6.1%	3 4.5%	30 90.9%	30 90.9%	60 90.9%	2 6.1%	1 3.0%	3 4.5%
Physical Punishment Leaving Marks on Child's Body	1 3.0%	0 .0%	1 1.5%	28 84.8%	27 81.8%	55 83.3%	4 12.1%	6 18.2%	10 15.2%
Physical Punishment Leaving no Marks on Child's Body	9 27.3%	18 54.5%	27 40.9%	24 72.7%	15 45.5%	39 59.1%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%
Physical Punishment Leading to Broken Bones	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	22 66.7%	25 75.8%	47 71.2%	11 33.3%	8 24.2%	19 28.8%
Putting Pepper into Child's Mouth	2 6.1%	5 15.2%	7 10.6%	26 78.8%	28 84.8%	54 81.8%	5 15.2%	0 .0%	5 7.6%
Twisting Ears	10 30.3%	19 57.6%	29 43.9%	21 63.6%	13 39.4%	34 51.5%	2 6.1%	1 3.0%	3 4.5%
Denying a Child Food	4 12.1%	7 21.2%	11 16.7%	27 81.8%	25 75.8%	52 78.8%	2 6.1%	1 3.0%	3 4.5%
Cauterization of a Child with Hot Materials	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	25 75.8%	27 81.8%	52 78.8%	8 24.2%	6 18.2%	14 21.2%
Biting a Child	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	28 84.8%	30 90.9%	58 87.9%	5 15.2%	3 9.1%	8 12.1%
Tying a Child up with Cloth	0 .0%	7 21.2%	7 10.6%	29 87.9%	25 75.8%	54 81.8%	4 12.1%	1 3.0%	5 7.6%

The findings of this study show that parental use of physical punishment is associated with parents' beliefs regarding this method. Fathers and mothers who do not believe in physical punishment as a beneficial method of disciplining children do not use it with their children, while fathers and mothers who think that physical punishment is sometimes necessary in dealing with their children's misbehaviour use this form with their children. A housewife (age 44) stated, 'I beat my children with a hose. Using a hose is not going to do any harm to a

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[93] See an earlier section on non-physical discipline methods under section 7.3.1.

child'. Meanwhile, a father who is a social worker (age 55) commented, 'physical punishment is not the way to educate a child. I deal with my children by having a discussion about everything'. Other studies have been conducted in different countries, such as the USA (Straus and Stewart 1999), Kuwait (Qasem et al 1998), Egypt (Youssef et al 1998), Yemen (Alyahri and Goodman 2008), Turkey (Orhon et al 2006), Iran (Oveisi et al 2010), Israel (Guttmann et al 2009), China (Tang 2006), Mexico (Frias-Armenta et al 2004), which support this study's finding of a strong connection between parents' perceptions of physical punishment and the actual use of this practice. Parents who believe in physical punishment as a method of disciplining their children use this form more than parents who do not believe in it. However, this study seems to indicate that parents' beliefs about physical punishment are influenced by their past experience of this method[94].

On the other hand, Oveisi et al (2010) found that 10 per cent of Iranian mothers reported that after beating their children, they became upset, felt a pang of conscience and would even apologise to their children. This study also found that 14 out of 15 interviewed parents who use physical punishment reported that they regret the use of physical punishment of their children after a while. A father who is head of a scout group (age 48) said:

> I regret it and sometimes cry, because I feel that I was too angry and I could have corrected my children's misbehaviour by using another method that can give the same results. In addition, I sometimes discovered that I was not being fair, such as when I hit all of my children or the wrong child because they told me lies.

Moreover, a father who is a lecturer (age 46) said:

> I sometimes go back home feeling tired and find my children are doing something that I do not like, so I beat them and after a while I discover that I have beaten the wrong child or it did not merit using physical punishment, since I was too angry.

These feelings of guilt seem to be aroused when these parents use this method out of anger[95].

Two fathers in this study reported that they rarely use physical punishment, as a result of the influence of travelling abroad and education on their beliefs regarding this method. One of these fathers, a lecturer (age 62) said:

> I travelled a lot to many countries where physical punishment is banned totally or partly. I realised that they have a law to protect children, because they acknowledge the harm of this form on a child's health and behaviour, which made me think about it and turn against it.

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[94] Will be explored in the section on parents' past experience of physical punishment under section 8.2.

[95] Will be explored in detail in the section on parents' anger under section 8.2.

Indeed, studies show that when parents who are brought up in a culture where the use of physical method is supported as a disciplinary method have travelled to, and lived in, other cultures where parental use of physical punishment is not encouraged, they are more likely to adopt these new values and beliefs and therefore be less likely to use physical punishment with their children (Clayton 2011; Kim et al 2010; Kim and Hong 2007).

7.3.3 Children's Perceptions of Physical Punishment

During the interviews, only one child reported that he had never experienced physical punishment by his parents. The following comment shows that he regards this method as unhelpful:

> I think physical punishment is harsh and not a useful method to deal with children's misbehaviour. The best method to discipline children is to talk with them and explain. We just need to be patient.

On the other hand, all other children interviewed who had experienced physical punishment (9 out of 9), considered this method of disciplining children as necessary to make a child behave in a good manner. A male child (age 14) said, 'physical punishment is an effective method to discipline children. It helps to make them behave well'. Moreover, a female child (age 15) stated: 'I think some children are too stubborn and do not understand unless you use a stick with them to teach them the straight line'. This could possibly indicate the influence of the local traditions[96] and children's experiences of physical methods on their perceptions of this method[97]. Similar findings emerged in a study carried out in Ghana by Twum-Danso Imoh (2013), which reported that the majority of the Ghanaian children in the study believed in the use of physical punishment as a key method of child-rearing. Two male children who were interviewed in the current study brought up a comparison between child-rearing methods in Libya and the USA. They had lived in America for a year and expressed their satisfaction and happiness about child discipline methods in Libya. A 15 year-old male child said:

> Child-rearing methods in Libya are far better than in the USA. In Libya, parents are free to choose any method to control their children and they can stop their children from wrongdoing. While in the USA, parents cannot use physical punishment, because of legislation, which leads to spoiling children and letting them do whatever they want. American children so often learn to smoke, drink alcohol and stay too late outside the home from a young age and they do not show respect to their parents and older people. All of that is because of the lack of beating.

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[96] Will be discussed in the section on influence of Arab traditions under section 9.5.
[97] Will be explored in the section on parents' past experience of physical punishment under section 8.2.

It should be noted that many parents and children in this study expressed that the absence of beating children in Western societies makes children disrespectful to their parents and the elderly. They define respect according to Arabic culture, which includes behaviour such as: children should obey their parents and not raise their voice to their parents or the elderly.

Children in this study were also asked about their perceptions of parents who use physical punishment. More than half of the female children (10 out of 17) who responded to the questionnaires reported that parents who use physical punishment are good parents, while eight out of the 17 male children stated that they do not know how to classify them, as is indicated in Table 7.11. It appears that the boys were less likely to say what they think than the girls. This could be because the boys in this study were older than the girls, and hence found it rather uncomfortable (traditionally) to say how they feel about their own parents through fear of others' judgements. Wei and Mayouf (2009) claimed that in Libya children can be called ungrateful and subjected to gossip if they show any kind of disrespect to their parents. Criticising and talking about parents negatively is considered as being disrespectful of parents in Arab culture.

Table (7.11) Children's Perceptions of Parents Who Use Physical Punishment

Parents who use physical punishment are	Child's Sex		Total (N=34)
	Male (N=17)	Female (N=17)	
Good parents	5 29.4%	10 58.8%	15 44.1%
Bad parents	4 23.5%	2 11.8%	6 17.6%
I do not know	8 47.1%	3 17.6%	11 32.4%
Others (depends on method, not bothering)	0 .0%	2 11.8%	2 5.9%

However, all the 9 children interviewed in this study who experience physical punishment consider parents as good or bad based on the reasons behind the use of physical punishment and the severity of this method. They indicated that good parents are parents who use physical punishment in order to respond to a child's misbehaviour. However, bad parents use physical punishment excessively, without a reason or for trivial reasons, as indicated by a female child (age 15):

> If parents use physical punishment for no reason or not a good enough reason, they are bad parents. However, if they use it for a good reason, such as to stop a child swearing and using impolite words, they are good parents.

Meanwhile a male child (age 11) stated:

> If physical punishment leads to broken bones or disabilities, they are not good parents. However, if they use physical punishment to educate their children, they are good parents.

However, when children were asked about their views on their own parents, all of them expressed that their parents are good parents regardless of what they do. A male child (age 14) said, 'my parents are good parents; it does not matter what they do'. This could confirm the children's awareness of local traditions whereby speaking negatively about parents is a disrespectful act which can expose children to ostracism and gossip in the community, as Wei and Mayouf (2009) argue.

With regard to children's feelings on being subjected to physical punishment by their parents, in this study, 25 of the 28 respondents to the children's questionnaire who experienced physical punishment reported feeling sad and angry, while a number of children who participated in the interviews added that they feel frightened of their parents and confused because of a lack of explanation. For instance, a female child (age 15) said:

> When parents hit their children without giving reasons to their children, the children get confused. We do not know why we should not adopt some behaviour or adopt others. Therefore, parents should explain to their children not just beat them.

Further, a few children stated that they feel numb about parental use of physical punishment as it is used too often and for every instance of misbehaviour. A male child (age 16) said:

> My parents always use physical punishment to address every bit of misbehaviour. In time, I started feeling nothing about it and it has become a normal practice that does not scare me.

This means that in these cases, physical punishment has lost the deterrent characteristic that derives from the fear factor. Furthermore, a few parents in this study also reported that they use physical punishment for every instance of their children's misbehaviour. For example, a mother who is a secretary in a primary school (age 31) said, 'I was like a crazy woman who hit her children for everything, big or a small'. This use of physical punishment for both serious and trivial misbehaviour can affect children's well-being, as Islam acknowledges, and, furthermore, it does not consider it to be a parental right[98].

Despite many children in this study (questionnaire and interview) describing their negative emotions and/or being left with physical marks on their bodies[99], all these children accept

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[98]See the section on controversy over the use of physical punishment -as a last resort- among Arab Muslim leaders under section 5.3.

[99] See the next section.

use of physical punishment as a parent's right. This may reflect the deep influence of Arab traditions that give parents the right to use physical punishment[100].

7.3.4 Parental Use of Physical Punishment in Libya

This study shows that the use of physical methods by parents as a method of disciplining their children is widespread among my sample. 82% of children (28 out of 34) and 41 out of 66 fathers and mothers who responded to the questionnaires claimed that they experience/use physical punishment alongside non-physical methods. All the parents who were interviewed (20) in this study reported that even some severe physical methods are commonly used with children in Libya, such as burning young children with a hot object and putting pepper into a child's mouth, and some admitted using such methods themselves. A father who works as a librarian (age 35) said, 'I put pepper into my 5 year old daughter's mouth when she says an impolite word'. Meanwhile, a housewife (age 55) said:

> There are many types of physical punishment widely used within some families here, such as burning a child with a matchstick or hot material and putting pepper into a child's mouth.

In addition, a housewife (age 44) stated:

> Some of my neighbours advised me to cauterize (burn) my son with hot materials, such as a spoon, when he was young, because he was wetting his bed at night and they believed that was the solution to that problem from their own experience with their children.

Indeed, nearly a third of children (8 out of 28) who responded to the questionnaire and all children who were interviewed in this study and experience physical punishment (9 out of 10) reported that parental use of physical methods has led to bleeding or left marks or scars on their bodies. These findings are similar to Youssef et al (1998)'s finding that some children reported being subjected to severe physical methods such as being burned with a hot metal implement, such as a bar and/or spoon, which led them to experience serious injuries such as broken bones or a permanent disability.

The questionnaire in this study listed 15 different methods of physical punishment, some of which are harsh methods[101]. Interestingly, a few fathers and all children who had experienced physical punishment claimed that all of the methods listed in the questionnaire had been used by them/their parents. This highlights two main facts: firstly, the use of physical punishment of children in Libyan families is widespread. Secondly, parental use of physical punishment crosses over to abuse, according to Islamic teaching, which is

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[100] Will be discussed in the section on traditional Arab views on parents' rights to use physical punishment under section 9.5.

[101] See appendix 1 and 2.

explained in chapter 5. According to Islam, Muslim parents are not supposed to use harsh physical methods with their children, in particular, methods that leave marks on a child's body.

With regard to the most common physical methods and how parents apply physical punishment, the findings from the questionnaire show that children reported that the physical methods most commonly used on them are spanking the rear and legs and hitting anywhere. A further 21 children out of 28 stated that their parents use both hands and objects when they apply physical punishment. Similarly, Youssef et al (1998) found that the Egyptian children in their study claimed that their parents most often used bare hands either opened or set in a clenched fist followed by whipping using a belt or a hose, and battering with a stick, a shoe, a slipper, or a metal chain, when disciplining them. However, fathers and mothers who responded to the questionnaire in this study claimed that hitting a child on the hands is the most common method. 33 out of 41 reported that they used hands only, as indicated in Table 7.12. These differences between children's and parents' responses may be because the children are from different families to the parents' sampled. It may also be the case that the parents were embarrassed about it and tried to minimise the reality of their practice.

Table (7.12) Parental Ways of Applying Physical Punishment

Ways of Applying Physical Punishment	Parents		Total (N=41)	Child's Sex		Total (N=28)
	Fathers (N=16)	Mothers (N=25)		Male (N=14)	Female (N=14)	
By hand only	13 81.3%	20 80%	33 50.0%	5 35.7%	2 14.3%	7 25%
Using objects only	0 .0%	1 4%	1 1.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Both	3 18.7%	4 16%	7 10.6%	9 64.3%	12 85.7%	21 75%

Regarding the interview findings, seven out of 15 fathers and mothers who use physical punishment reported that they used their hands only, while eight claimed that they used both hands and objects. However, more mothers felt that using objects could help them to release their frustration and make a child feel pain, while some fathers said that they prefer using hands because they are aware that they are physically strong and hence using objects can cause more damage to a child's body. A housewife (age 43) said, 'punishing a child with a stick is much better, they can feel the pain'. However, a father who is head of a scout group (age 48) reported, 'I prefer using my hands. It is not harmful for either of us. Using hands does not hurt them and I give them a lesson'. All 9 children interviewed who experienced physical methods claimed that their parents applied physical punishment using both hands and objects such as a slipper, hose, stick, pencil, belt or stone. However, they stated that

their parents more often rely on using objects. A male child (age 14) stated, 'my parents often use a slipper or a hose, more than using their hands'.

Regarding frequency, all 15 parents and all 9 children interviewed who experience physical methods and 23 out of the 28 child questionnaire respondents who experience physical methods claimed that the use of physical punishment by parents is not associated with specific times; it depends on the children's misbehaviour. They reported that children may experience physical punishment whenever they misbehave, which can be once or many times a day or a week. A female child (age10) stated: 'my parents use physical punishment whenever we misbehave'. Meanwhile, a housewife (age 43) said, 'When I use it depends on their misbehaviour, it is not related to time'. More than half of the children, including teenagers, who responded to the questionnaires (19 out of 28) claimed that parental use of physical punishment never stops. This means that even teenagers experience physical punishment by their parents. Indeed, some parent and child interviewees admitted that teenagers, especially boys, are more likely to experience physical methods, for different reasons. They explained that teenagers, in particular boys, at this age start feeling that they are growing up, which makes them commit irresponsible acts; examples of such behaviours are given in a later section[102]. A father who is a lecturer (age 44) said:

> When children are closest to the adolescence stage, they feel that they have become old enough to do whatever they like, but they sometimes commit irresponsible behaviour and cannot see the consequences of their actions.

Another father, a lecturer (age 62) said:

> Adolescence is a very dangerous and difficult stage for parents to deal with. I see my children, especially the boys, at that age, making many silly mistakes, and they resist taking my advice, which leads me sometimes to use physical punishment.

Fathers in this study reported using this method with male teenagers more often than mothers. They explained that this reflects local traditions that consider fathers to be more involved than mothers in rearing older male children.

7.4 Conclusion

This is the first chapter to present the findings of this study. It starts with an overview of the profiles of participants in the questionnaires and interviews. The study was carried out on 108 Libyan fathers, mothers, professionals and children aged 6-17 from 10 rural and urban areas and different backgrounds. There were 100 respondents to the questionnaire (34 male or female children, 33 fathers and 33 mothers). Regarding the interviews, 38 people took part

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[102] See the section on child's gender under section 8.3.

in the semi-structured interviews (10 children, 10 fathers, 10 mothers and 8 professionals). The second part of this chapter focuses on discussing the findings regarding child disciplining methods in Libya. The study indicates that the majority of children experience a mixture of physical and non-physical methods, while a few are subjected only to verbal punishment. With regard to non-physical methods, it was indicated that the most common method is telling a child off, which includes shouting, intimidating and insulting the child by calling them animal names or comparing them with siblings or other children. Children stated that such methods are used by parents in the presence of others, which makes the punishment more humiliating and its effects last for longer in their minds. This is why the majority of children and mothers thought that the concept of child abuse could mean subjecting a child to verbal insults, although all participants reported that it was their first time of hearing about this concept. Regarding physical methods, this chapter explores parents' and children's definitions of physical punishment and abuse. The majority of parents and children agreed that there are two types of physical punishment, light and severe. However, parents seemed to differ from the children in their definition of severe physical punishment. Chapter 7 also includes discussion of parents' and children's perceptions of physical punishment as a method of disciplining children. The findings suggest that the majority of parents and children believe that physical punishment is an effective method of educating children and it is not a form of abuse. The concept of child abuse, according to the majority of participants, depends on "who" applies the physical method and "why". For example, the use of harsh physical methods by parents to address serious incidents of child misbehaviour that damage the family name is not considered abuse. Further, according to them, the concept of child abuse is not perceived as a matter for intervention by the Government or others. Participants admitted that, in reality, parental use of physical punishment is common in Libya, with varying degrees of severity.

Therefore, the question that needs to be raised here is: what make parents use physical punishment with their children? To answer this question, the discussion in the next two chapters focuses on understanding the main factors that appear to predict parental use of physical punishment among my sample.

Chapter (8): Data Analysis and Discussion

Personal Factors that appear to Influence Parental Use of Physical Punishment

8.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the main personal factors related to parents and children that appear to influence parents to use physical punishment. Other factors, related to family, professionals, community and culture, will be presented in the next chapter. The division of these factors is influenced by ecological theory levels[103].

8.2 Personal Factors Influencing Parental Use of Physical Punishment

The findings of this study indicate that parents' gender, age, level of education, past experience of physical punishment, anger and bad mood appear to have an impact on their use of physical punishment.

Parents' Gender

Both fathers and mothers use physical punishment. However, mothers are more likely to use this method. Indeed, as described previously in section (non-physical discipline methods in chapter 7) this study found that fathers are more likely to use verbal methods instead. 50% of parents (33 out of 66) and about half of the children (13 out 28) who responded to the questionnaire think that mothers use physical punishment more frequently than fathers. These results are similar to the findings in studies such as Sanapo and Nakamura (2011), Guttmann et al (2009), Tang (2006) and Day et al (1998). 13 out of 20 fathers and mothers and all the children (10 out of 10) who were interviewed in this study also believe that mothers use physical punishment more frequently than fathers. However, the children indicated that mothers use lighter physical punishment whereas fathers make more use of harsher physical methods but overall use physical punishment less frequently. They also reported that whilst mothers use a number of different physical methods, such as pinching, biting, pushing and twisting the ears, fathers often use beating. A female child (age 15) said, 'my father uses harsher physical methods, but not always, while my mother often twists ears and pinches'. Meanwhile, a male child (age 16) said 'my mother bites and pushes me more

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[103] See chapters 2, 3 and 4.

often than my father, who beats me'. This is similar to the finding by Anderson et al (2002) that fathers are more likely than mothers to use harsher methods with their children. Interestingly, this study found that mothers often use physical punishment even when their children are disabled. A father (age 55) reported: 'from my experience as a social worker doing IQ tests with children, mothers beat their disabled children in front of me much more often than fathers'.

Parents who were interviewed in this study explored the main reasons why mothers use physical punishment more than fathers. Firstly, mothers spend more time with children at home while fathers mostly work outside the home. Indeed, fathers admitted that they do not spend long periods of time at home. A father who is head of a scout group (age 48) said, 'most of my time I work outside the home. Children spend most of their time with their mother'. This could mean that fathers may use physical punishment equally to mothers, if we measured the time that fathers and mothers spend at home and compared it to the actual use of physical methods. Secondly, participants reported that Libyan mothers are expected to do all the housework and look after their husbands besides taking care of children. Fathers and mothers in this study thought that child-care is the duty of mothers, especially when children are at a young age, while fathers are responsible for supporting the family financially. Binghalib (2011) and Azban (2012) state that, according to Arab customs, the mother bears most of the burden of child-rearing besides taking care of her husband and home. Fathers and mothers who were interviewed (20 out of 20) in this study emphasised the important role of mothers in a child's life. However, none of them recognised the importance of the role of the father figure on a child's development, in contrast to Islamic teaching[104]. A housewife (age 44) stated:

> A mother is setting an example to her children, whatever she does, they will follow her. The father is not around and his role in rearing children is not as important as the mother's.

A father who is a lecturer (age 62) said:

> The mother's role in disciplining children is more important than the father's role. The duty of disciplining children is 90% on the shoulders of a mother because a father spends most of his time away.

Parental Age

The current study found that there is greater acceptability of the use of physical punishment among younger parents than older parents. Parents aged over 45 are three times less likely

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[104] See an earlier section on parents' rights in Islam under section 5.3.

to use physical methods than other parents. Other studies carried out around the world, in China (Tang 2006) and in the USA (Lee et al, 2011a; Tajima 2000; Straus and Stewart 1999), also provide evidence that older parents are less likely to use physical punishment with their children than younger parents. Straus and Stewart (1999) explain this finding as being due to younger parents' lack of experience and judgment. Indeed, some older fathers and mothers who were interviewed in this study reported that their lack of parental experience when they were younger was the reason for their using and believing in physical methods[105]. Meanwhile, younger mothers in this study still believe in physical punishment as a beneficial method of disciplining children.

Parents' Level of Education

In this study, questionnaire responses indicate that parents' use of physical disciplinary methods varies according to their level of education. Parents with postgraduate degrees are two times less likely to use physical punishment than parents with undergraduate degrees, and nearly two times less likely than parents who completed only basic education (primary, secondary, and high school). During the interviews, it emerged that parents with education lower than postgraduate level are more likely to approve of the use of physical punishment than fathers with postgraduate degrees (only fathers in the interview sample have higher degrees). This is because of their wider knowledge or/and as a result of travelling abroad, which gave them the opportunity to explore different views regarding child-rearing[106]. Similarly, other studies have also highlighted that parents with low levels of education tend to adopt physical punishment more than parents with a higher level of education (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Juby 2009; Alyahri and Goodman 2008; Dietz 2000; Hunter et al 2000; Youssef et al 1998). However, it seems from the children's sample in this study (questionnaires and interviews) that they experience parental use of physical punishment regardless of their parents' level of education. This could be because parents and children in this study are from different families.

Parents' Past Experience of Physical Punishment

Just less than two thirds of fathers and mothers (40 out of 66) who responded to the questionnaires reported that they had never been subjected to parental use of physical punishment in their childhood, as indicated in Table 8.13. However, more than half of the fathers and mothers (12 out of 20) who were interviewed in this study reported that they had experienced physical punishment by their parents when they were young.

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[105] See the section on non-physical discipline methods under section 7.3.1.
[106] See section 7.3.2.

Table (8.13) Parents' Past Experience of Physical Punishment in their Childhood

Did you experience physical punishment by your parents in your childhood?	Parents		Total (N=66)
	Fathers (N=33)	Mothers (N=33)	
Yes	12 36.4%	14 42.4%	26 39.4%
No	21 63.6%	19 57.6%	40 60.6%

The great majority of fathers and mothers who were interviewed in this study and who had experienced physical punishment in their childhood appeared to be more likely to approve of the use of physical punishment than those who had never been subjected to parental use of physical punishment in their childhood. A father who is head of a scout group (age 48) said: 'I was subjected to physical punishment by my parents. I discipline my children the same way that my parents did'. Meanwhile, a social worker father (age 55) reported:

> I never experienced physical punishment by my parents. My parents were my friends, not just parents. I believe that has an impact on how I treat my children now, I have followed their path.

This finding is consistent with previous studies in different countries, such as Turkey (Orhon et al 2006), Canada (Clement and Chamberland 2009), Brazil (Bordin et al 2006), the USA (Chung et al 2009), and Nigeria (Fakunmoju and Bammeke 2013), which found that fathers and mothers who have experienced physical punishment in their childhood are more likely to use it with their children compared to parents who do not have the same history. However, one mother who was interviewed in this study, a secretary in a primary school (age 31), admitted that although she had never experienced physical punishment by her parents she uses physical punishment with her children when she is angry or in a bad mood. She said 'my parents never beat me but sadly I use this method with my children out of anger and stress'. Indeed, this study also indicates that parents' anger and bad mood are one of the key factors behind the use of this method[107].

With regard to children's experience of parental use of physical punishment and their approval of this method, it seems that they are also affected by their experiences. Deater-Deckard et al (2003) and Holden et al (1991) argue that children who experience frequent physical punishment by their parents are more likely to recommend spanking compared to children less subjected to parental use of physical punishment. Indeed, children in this study who had never been subjected to physical punishment by their parents reported that they do not believe in this form as an effective method and are completely against the use of this practice, compared to children who experience parental use of physical punishment and who

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[107] See the next section.

indicated that they would use it with their children in the future, just as their parents do. A male child (age 15) said: 'I am going to use the same way as my parents. I will hit my children when they misbehave, especially when they repeat the same mistake or disobey me'. On the other hand, another male child (age 12) said: 'my parents never use physical punishment with me. So I am not going to use this method with my children in the future'. Meanwhile, a female child (age 12) stated:

> I will use physical punishment with my children as my parents do. For instance, if my children mess up the kitchen after I just cleaned it, I will beat them lightly on their hands, but if they go out without my permission, I will beat them harshly with a hose on their hands. This is just like my mother does. She asks me to stretch out my hands then beats me.

This means that the cycle of using physical punishment is likely to continue from generation to generation. Indeed, Thornberry and Henry (2013) found that American people who were subjected to physical punishment in their childhood are more likely to use it with their own children than those who were never been subjected to this method.

On the other hand, this study also shows that not only does parents' past experience of physical punishment have an impact on the use of physical punishment but also the level of that experience and how parents classified it. Similarly, other studies have found that parents with a bad memory of physical punishment tend not to use this practice with their children while parents who considered their past experience as fair and not harmful were more likely to believe in and use this method with their children (Fakunmoju and Bammeke 2013; Clayton 2011; Anderson et al 2002; Murphy-Cowan and Stringer 1999). Fathers, mothers and children in this study who considered their experiences of physical punishment as acceptable or 'normal' were in favour of using physical punishment with children and they could not see any harm in it, compared to those who considered their experiences as violent and 'excessive' and therefore were against the use of physical punishment and/or felt it had negative impact on both their well-being and that of their children. A housewife (age 31) stated:

> My father used to ask me to lean my head down and then he started beating me on my neck with his hands. It was normal. I always tell my children how my dad used to beat me and we laugh at it.

One mother, a teacher (age 45) said:

> My parents used to use physical punishment a lot. They were too strict and abusive. Love and care were not there. Even when I made a mistake, the punishment was bigger than my misbehaviour. I think this experience has left a huge impact on me and my children. My past experience left me with a feeling of

anger, anxiety and depression; I do not want to hug my children or even kiss them.

This could be a reflection of the negative effects of parental use of physical punishment on two generations. Indeed, research shows that the use of physical punishment by parents can lead to depression (Mulvaney and Mebert 2007; Abolfotouh et al 2009; Smith 2006), which often makes parents feel overwhelmed and incapable of positive interactions with their children (Mikaeili et al 2013; Eamon and Zuehl 2001). Further, although this mother admitted that she suffers from mental issues such as depression because of her experience of physical punishment by her parents, she revealed that she did not seek any support or help from the Government and was not even aware of any existing services[108]. This reflects the need for the Government to do more for women who have suffered abuse within the family and their children.

In addition, a housewife (age 44) said:

> My father used to beat me excessively so frequently. I still remember, when I was seven years old my father burnt me with a hot nail. Further, after my mum had passed away when I was 7, my dad split us up, put three of us into care, and the rest -four- stayed with him. None of the people we know intervened to help us. Even in care, I was physically punished. Furthermore, in the last five years, my husband -we are divorced now- used to beat me too. Regarding my dad, he was too abusive. He hit my brother on the head which led to a concussion in the brain. Until now, we do not know anything about him. Once, I met him in the street and took his number, but he does not recognise me, he just walks in the street and does not know what is happening around him. I still remember my tragic experiences which left a significant impact on my well-being and make me hate the use of physical methods.

This quote shows the real power of parents, in particular fathers, over their children. These children suffered serious physical harm in silence while other people who were aware of such behaviour by the father preferred not to intervene to protect the children. Further, a crucial point to note in this story is that even the Government did not intervene to protect these children. When some of those children were taken into the care there was no investigation about the reasons for the scars on the child's hand or even any following up of other children who stayed with the father. This could indicate that the Government promotes parents' power over children and this may explain why the Libyan Child Protection Law seems not to be designed for protecting children within the family[109]. Furthermore, this quotation also indicates that even children in care are subjected to the use of physical punishment which, based on my experience, is not permitted under Libyan law. Although the

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[108] See her quotation in the section on influence of lack of knowledge and the need for educational programmes under section 9.5.

[109] See the section on a critique of Libyan Child Policy under section 5.6.

mother's experience in care was in the past and the government can argue that it is not the case now, there is always a need for the government to take special precautions to ensure such methods are not used in care homes. Further, this quotation seems to indicate that some women experience violence at the hands of their husbands. Based on my experience, this is a very serious issue which many Libyan women normally do not speak about. This raises the need for the Government and professionals to tackle this issue and speak more openly about it in order to help women in such positions.

Parental Issues

Youssef et al (1998) found that parents who smoke are more likely to use physical punishment as a method of disciplining children than non-smoker parents. However, this study found smoking to have no association with parental use of physical punishment. Three quarters of fathers in this study were non-smokers and about 75% of them used physical punishment. Many people in Libya seem to look at smoking as a health issue, something they therefore try to avoid, rather than a way to escape social or economic stress, as Youssef et al (1998) argue is the case in Egypt.

When fathers and mothers were asked in the questionnaire about parental issues that could influence the use of physical punishment of children, they mentioned fits of anger, bad mood, stress, and domestic violence, respectively. Similarly, other studies have also found that anger, stress and domestic violence increase the risk of parents using physical punishment of their children (Rocha and Moraes 2011; Kyei-Gyamfi 2011; Lee et al 2011b; Kyei-Gyamfi 2011; Gage and Silvestre 2010; Tang 2006; Anderson et al 2002).

Further, in this study, all the parent interviewees who use physical punishment (15 out of 15) reported that being angry and in a bad mood influences greatly their use of physical punishment of their children, as indicated in various quotes in the previous chapter. However, a few of them added other issues, including a poor relationship between spouses or between the wife and parents-in-law living nearby, stress during pregnancy and stress due to the husband's unemployment. One mother, a teacher (age 38) said:

> My husband does not work and I am supposed to look after him, the children, the house and do shopping. All this stress makes me get angry so quickly and use physical punishment often with my daughters.

Another mother, a secretary in a primary school (age 31) said:

> Sadly, I used to beat my oldest daughter when she was two years old, because of stress during my pregnancy and stress from not having a good relationship with my husband's family. They live above us.

Chapter 8

Based on the context that all parents in this study admitted that anger and being in a bad mood contribute to their use of physical punishment, the next section explores these factors in more detail.

Parents' Anger

As mentioned earlier in this chapter and in chapter 7, parents' anger seems to be a major factor behind their use of physical punishment of their children, even with infants, as will be explored later in this chapter. In this study, many parents who use physical punishment (interviews and questionnaires) stated that they find it very difficult to control their anger and they actually blame the children for their anger. One father, head of a scout group (age 48) stated: 'children sometimes make you mad. When I lose my temper, I cannot control myself and carry on beating my children'. Meanwhile, a mother who is a secretary at a primary school (age 31) said:

> Despite the fact I know physical punishment does not work with my children, it is most important for me to release my anger. How can you control anger when they make you crazy with their misbehaviour?

Although Islam prescribes some strategies to control anger, such as having a cool shower and counting to 10 before reacting, parents seem not to be aware of them, as they questioned how they could control their anger. Parents may thus need religious education on this matter.

Some older children (age10 and above) in this study reported that they were aware that their parents use this physical method out of anger. A male child (age 14) stated: 'when my father is angry, he cannot see where he beats; he beats anywhere on my body'. Children stated that they learn to adopt certain strategies to minimise the harm and/or avoid being physically punished. For instance, some reported that they cover their faces so they cannot be injured, run to a different room or to a grandparent/elderly person if they live with them, and/or try to hold the hands of their parents or the objects that they use to beat them. Others reported that they run away outside the home and hide from their parents until they calm down. LeVine and LeVine (1963) also found that children are aware that if they manage to avoid their parents' anger, they will escape the punishment.

This study found that parents' anger not only affects the use of physical punishment but it also influences the type of methods that they use, the way parents apply this method and whether they offer explanations to their children. Although all fathers and mothers who were interviewed in this study think it is not acceptable to slap children on the face or shake a child under three, some of them reported that they use these methods with their children as a result of anger. One mother, a teacher (age 38) said: 'when I am angry, I slap my

daughters on the face, although I know I should not do so'. Further, some fathers and mothers reported that when they are angry they use their hands just because they do not have time to look for an object and they want to release their anger as soon as possible. A housewife (age 43) stated: 'you do not have time to look for an object when a child misbehaves. I use my hands to release my anger. What is the benefit of my hands if I do not use them?' In addition, some fathers, mothers and children who were interviewed in this study reported that they do not always offer explanations, especially when they are angry. For example, a housewife (age 43) said, 'I sometimes explain to my children but when I am angry I do not. I do not have time for that'. Moreover, a father who works as a librarian (age 35) said, 'when I am angry, there is no time to explain the reason behind physical punishment'.

Children reported that when their parents are angry, they often use physical punishment excessively and for a long period of time as a reaction to a trivial act of child misbehaviour. They also reported that their parents are careless about choosing objects when they are angry, often just using/throwing any object in front of them. This is considered to be misuse of physical punishment. A male child (age 16) reported, 'when my parents are angry, they use any object in front of them. You name it; it can go from a slipper, a stick, a belt, to a stone'. Meanwhile, a female child (age 13) said:

> My parents use hands and anything in front of them, especially my mother. When she gets angry, she throws at us anything in front of her, such as a stick, a hose, a book, a notebook, a slipper or a pencil.

Some children express that they feel confused when their parents beat them for certain misbehaviour when they are angry, but when they are not angry they do not beat them for the same misbehaviour. This indeed is confusing for the child, who learns nothing. Physical punishment, in this case, is clearly used by parents as a release for their own anger and not to educate the child as parents claimed previously. Similarly, Anderson et al (2002) found that parents use this method to release their emotional feelings immediately. This means that parents in the first place have anger management problems which need to be addressed through educational parenting programmes. Further, in cases of parents applying physical punishment out of anger, the risk of physical abuse is very high.

Parents' Mood

In this study, one of the significant reasons given by parents for using physical methods is that they are in a bad mood. Although fathers and mothers in this study emphasised that

their use of physical punishment depends on the child's misbehaviour[110], they failed to provide conclusive answers to the question of which kinds of child misbehaviour lead to the use of physical punishment and which lead to use of non-physical methods. All the fathers and mothers who use physical punishment (questionnaire and interview respondents) found it very difficult to answer this question and they admitted that it just depends on their mood. Further, fathers and mothers interviewed in this study who use physical punishment were asked whether they choose any specific method of physical punishment to address a certain type of child misbehaviour. They also reported that it depends entirely on the situation and their mood. One father, head of a scout group (age 48) said, 'I do not choose, it depends on the situation and my mood'. Furthermore, they also reported that when they are in a bad mood, they carry on beating the child until they feel satisfied. A housewife (age 19) said, 'if my mood is bad, I beat my child until I feel ok. I do not choose the method or for how long, I just beat him'. Parents, in these cases, misuse physical punishment of children, which is considered as abuse within Islamic teaching[111].

Overall, it seems that parents' anger and bad moods lead to their misuse of this method, which sometimes escalates to abuse according to Islamic teaching. Indeed, the cases of severe physical punishment that some parents reported[112], occurred mainly because of their parents' bad mood and anger.

8.3 Child-related Factors Influencing Parental Use of Physical Punishment

The child's age, age group, gender, birth order and the nature of their misbehaviour also appear to influence parents' use of physical punishment with their children.

Child's Age

Fathers and mothers who responded to the questionnaire expressed different views regarding the influence of the child's age on the use of physical punishment. 23 out of 33 mothers considered that the use of physical punishment is influenced by the child's age while 21 out of 33 of fathers reported that this method can be used regardless of the child's age. These differences could be because mothers included infants and toddlers while

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[110] See the section on child's misbehaviour later in this chapter.

[111] See the sections on controversy over the use of physical punishment -as a last resort- among Arab Muslim leaders under section 5.3 and the section on influence of Islam under section 9.5.

[112] See the section on physical discipline methods under section 7.3.1.

fathers did not, as they believe that looking after younger children is the duty of the mother[113].

However, in this study, all parent interviewees who use physical punishment (15 out of 15) seem to have in mind a specific age (5-6 years) when they think that a child is old enough to experience physical punishment, and this is younger than the age set by some Islamic scholars[114]. However, mothers and fathers seem to have different views about the types of physical punishment that should be used on children at this age. Mothers believe that children older than 5-6 years can be subjected to harsh physical punishment, while children who are younger should be subjected only to light physical punishment. A housewife (age 43) said:

> Children younger than 5 should be subjected to light physical punishment in order to threaten them but children older than that can be subjected to harsh physical punishment because they are old enough

Meanwhile, fathers think that children who are younger than 5-6 cannot be subjected to physical disciplinary methods under any conditions. One father, a lecturer (age 44) said:

> Children younger than 5 years cannot be physically punished; they are too young to understand the benefits of physical punishment. However, physical punishment with children older than this age is fine, they can understand it.

This contrast between fathers' and mothers' perceptions could either be, as stated above, because mothers, rather than fathers, are usually in charge of disciplining young children or the mothers in this sample are less educated than the fathers.

Some mothers with infants and toddlers who were interviewed in this study argued that some physical methods, such as shaking them, pinching them and hitting them on the hands, can be used on young children. According to those mothers, when a child is crying persistently, it makes them feel angry and frustrated, which leads them to use physical methods. A housewife (age 19) said:

> Children under one year of age, you can use light physical punishment with them, such as pinching or a light hit on hands, and that is what I do with my son who is one year old. He cries persistently and I do not know what he wants or why he is crying, he gets on my nerves so I just hit him.

Another mother, a teacher (age 31) said:

> The age of a child does not set a limit on using physical punishment. For instance, my sister-in-law hits her three month old daughter because she cries

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[113] See an earlier section on parents' gender under section 8.2.
[114] See the section on controversy over the use of physical punishment, as a last resort, among Arab Muslim leaders under section 5.3.

persistently, which makes her angry. I also used to beat my daughter when she was two out of frusation.

Similarly, Reich et al (2012) also found that mothers begin to use physical punishment as early as the infancy stage. According to them, mothers are not aware of child development stages and therefore they have unreasonably high expectations of their children which lead them to use physical methods. This is consistent with Habib's (2012) claim that one of the reasons for many Muslim Arab parents using physical punishment is their lack of knowledge about children's developmental needs. Indeed, in this study, all the parents who use physical punishment (15 out of 15) seem to expect their children to understand their orders fully and to have the same level of understanding as their parents rather than themselves going down to the child's level of understanding. For instance, a housewife (age 19) said:

> When the power cuts off, I use a candle. My child, who is one year, tries to touch it; I tell him not to, but he does not understand and touches it again. Thus, I take a candle and drop it (burn) on his hands to make him realise that a candle is hot, but he is a stubborn and does not understand that either.

This is in contrast to what is expected of Muslim parents, which is to understand and respect their children's abilities according to their age[115].

Some children who responded to the questionnaires in this study confirmed that they have experienced physical punishment from a young age. For example, 5 out of 14 female children who could remember when they started experiencing physical methods claimed that it was from the ages of 6-9 while 5 out of 14 male children reported that they were under the age of 3, as indicated in Table 8.14.

Table (8.14) When Children Started to Experience Physical Punishment

At what age did you start to experience physical punishment?	Child's Sex		Total (N=28)
	Male (N=14)	Female (N=14)	
Under 3	5 35.7%	0 .0%	5 18%
3-5	3 21.4%	1 7.1%	4 14.2%
6-9	2 14.3%	5 35.7%	7 25%
10-14	2 14.3%	2 14.3%	4 14.2%
I do not remember	2 14.3%	6 42.9%	8 28.6%

This study found that more than two thirds of fathers and mothers (41 out of 66) who responded to the questionnaires reported that children aged 6-9 are the group most

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[115] See the section on children's rights in Islam under section 5.3.

subjected to physical punishment by their parents, as summarised in Table 8.15. This is consistent with previous findings in different countries, such as the USA (Vittrup and Holden 2010), China (Akmatov 2011), the UK (Nobes and Smith 1997), India (Hunter et al 2000), which found that physical punishment is considered to be more appropriate for young school children than for older children.

Table (8.15) Levels of Subjection of Children's Age Groups to Physical Punishment

Which children's age group is most subjected to physical punishment?	Parents		Total (N=66)
	Fathers (N=33)	Mothers (N=33)	
3-5	3 9.1%	10 30.3%	13 19.7%
6-9	24 72.7%	17 51.5%	41 62.1%
10-14	4 12.1%	4 12.1%	8 12.1%
15-18	2 6.1%	2 6.1%	4 6.1%

Three quarters of fathers and mothers who were interviewed (15 out 20) in this study reported also that children of 6-9 years of age are the most likely to be subjected to physical punishment. Fathers and mothers agreed that children of this age (6-9) are over-active, which leads to naughty acts. One father, who works as a librarian (age 35) said:

> In this age, children are more active and do not accept staying in the same position or playing one game. So, you find they keep moving from one place to another and from one activity to another; that is why they experience physical punishment more.

Mothers added that children at this age are more stubborn, tend to be rebellious and start to go to school, which raises the opportunity to mix with others and learn bad language at school. For example, a housewife (age 30) said:

> Children between 6-9 years of age are the most subjected to physical punishment. At this age, they go to school and learn new impolite words from other children. We as parents feel like we tried hard to rear them in a particular way and then after going to school, they bring home with them new unacceptable words, so we increase the use of physical punishment at this age.

Meanwhile, fathers added that children aged 6-9 years are more tolerant of the use of this method. One father, a lecturer (age 46) said: 'it is acceptable to beat children aged 6-9 years. They tolerate it more than younger or older children'. This shows that some parents' use of this method depends on their perceptions of the child being the appropriate age. Indeed, parents in this study set 5-6 years as the age at which they think it is acceptable to use this method on children, as explored earlier. This is consistent with other studies (Akmatov 2011; Tang 2006; Caughy et al 2003; Flynn 1998).

Chapter 8

Child's Gender

Consistent with other findings (Tang 2006; Alyahri and Goodman, 2008; Abolfotouh et al 2009; Kerr et al 2004; Sanapo and Nakamura 2011), this study found that boys experience parental physical punishment more frequently than girls. Just over half of fathers and mothers (34 out 66) and the majority of children (30 out 34) who responded to the questionnaire in this study believe that boys are more subjected to physical punishment than girls, as indicated in Table 8.16. However, it seems that an only male child among female siblings is less subjected to parental use of physical punishment than the girls. A male child (age 15) wrote a note on the questionnaire stating that 'my parents beat me less than my sisters, because I am the only male child among four sisters'. This is because of his status as the only boy in the family and not because of a preference for sons, as there is also a social tendency to treat the only girl among boys with more attention and care, which means she is less subjected to physical punishment.

Table (8.16) Parents' and Children's Responses on Relationship of Child's Gender to Parental Use of Physical Punishment

Boys are more subjected to physical punishment than girls	Parents		Total (N=66)	Child's Sex		Total (N=34)
	Fathers (N=33)	Mothers (N=33)		Male (N=17)	Female (N=17)	
Yes	18 54.6%	16 48.5%	34 51.5%	15 88.2%	15 88.2%	30 88.2%
No	1 3.0%	2 6.0%	3 4.5%	1 5.9%	2 11.8%	3 8.9%
No difference	14 42.4%	15 45.5%	29 43.9%	1 5.9%	0 .0%	1 2.9%

15 out of 20 parents and all the children (10 out of 10) who were interviewed reported that boys are more subjected to physical punishment than girls. They explained that boys in general, and in particular teenagers, are more active than girls, more stubborn and less obedient; they go out a lot which leads to many problems, such as fighting physically with other children, taking up smoking and using impolite words. For example, a housewife (age 30) stated: 'boys in general, and especially teenagers, are more often subjected to physical punishment, because they smoke and/or come back home late'. Meanwhile, a male child (age 16) said, 'boys experience physical punishments more than girls, because boys are active, frank, do not get scared or shy'. Straus and Stewart (1999) also found that physical punishment is used more with boys than with girls because boys are perceived as more disobedient and misbehaving more, compared to girls. Generally, fathers and mothers in this study considered rearing a girl easier than raising a boy. As a housewife (age 44) said, 'rearing a girl is much easier than a boy. Girls stay home and can be controlled easily'.

Three fathers and two mothers reported that they avoided the use of physical punishment with girls. One father, a lecturer (age 46) said, 'you cannot beat girls. Girls are more sensitive than boys. Guiding them is much better than beating them'. Moreover, a housewife (age 44) said: 'we try not to hit girls because they are girls, and I want them to be delicate ladies'. They reported that there is a social tendency to discourage beating girls in general, in particular older females, and to avoid using harsh forms of physical punishment with them. This is consistent with Davidov and Khoury-Kassabri's (2013) finding that Arab parents believe that using physical methods with girls is inappropriate. Indeed, fathers and mothers who were interviewed in this study think that girls should not be subjected to severe or regular physical punishment and they have, moreover, to pay attention to the site of the body when they use physical punishment. They believe that hitting a girl's bottom can damage her virginity. A housewife (age 44) said:

> With girls, you cannot beat them regularly and not anywhere such as on the bottom. You know that can damage her virginity, but boys can be beaten with a stick and on any part of the body.

Furthermore, a father who works as a librarian (age 35) said:

> There are types of physical punishment that cannot be applied on girls, such as kicking or beating on the bottom. As you know, in our tradition, we have to pay attention to the part of the body when we hit girls.

This highlights the importance that traditional Arab values place on girls' virginity, which even affects parents' choice of body part when using physical punishment on a girl. On the other hand, two mothers and a male child described old-fashioned beliefs (superstition) about certain methods of physical punishment that are inappropriate for male children. A housewife (age 31) said, 'I do not pinch or beat on the rear or thigh with boys because we believe that boys will not grow physically for 40 days if we use these types of punishment'. In addition, a male child (age 11) said, 'beating a male child will stop him from growing or putting on weight for 40 days. This is what my aunt said'.

A number of children who were interviewed brought to light the fact that although boys are more likely to be subjected to physical punishment than girls, girls are more likely to experience verbal punishment than boys, not only at home but also at school. A male child, (age 16) said, 'although boys are subjected to physical punishment more than girls, girls experience verbal punishment more than boys, at home and at school too'. Indeed, since, traditionally, people try to avoid the use of physical punishment with girls, verbal punishment could be the alternative method for parents and teachers.

Chapter 8

Child's Birth Order

More than half of the fathers and mothers (38 out of 66) who responded to the questionnaire did not associate the use of physical punishment with a child's birth order. However, about a third stated that first-born children are the most likely to be subjected to parental use of physical punishment. Three quarters (15 out of 20) of parents who were interviewed in this study agreed that first-born children are the most likely to be subjected to harsh treatment, guidance and warning, full attention, verbal insults and physical punishment. The parents explained this as resulting from lack of parental experience, inner personal fear of failure in rearing their children and stress from others' expectations. Parents consider the first-born child as the first indicator on how successful they are in rearing their children, which can influence their status in the community. This reflects local traditions relating to social expectations of parents[116]. A mother who is a secretary in a primary school (age 31) explained this as follows:

> The first-born child is subjected most to physical punishment. It is the first parental experience for us and we do not want to fail in our duty. My first daughter experienced lots of physical punishment. However, I reduced the use of physical punishment when my second daughter was born.

Moreover, a housewife (age 44) stated:

> When my first-born child misbehaved, I thought that was a disaster, so I used to punish him physically a lot, for trivial reasons. However, after I had my other children and compared them to other children in other families, I realised that what he did was not a disaster as I was thinking.

Some parents in this study indicated that they also have certain expectations of their first-born children, and the child's failure to live up to them will result in the use of physical methods. For instance, they believe that the first-born child should set a good example for other siblings and help parents in different ways, such as looking after their siblings and helping at home. A head of scout group father (age 48) said:

> The first-born child has to set an example for his/her siblings. They are the oldest and their parents rely on them to do many things, such as looking after their siblings, and we want to be proud of them. So that is why we focus more on them by directing them and punishing them physically.

On the other hand, a father and a mother claimed that the nature of the relationship between parents can affect the way that the first-born child is treated. A social worker father (age 55) said, 'I think if parents have a smooth relationship, the first-born child will be spoiled, but if that is not the case, the first-born child will be subjected to physical punishment more'.

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[116] Will be explained in the section on influence of Arab traditions under section 9.5.

A number of first-born children who were interviewed in this study stated that their parents use harsh verbal methods and physical punishment with them more than with their siblings; they are always being reminded by their parents to set a role model for their siblings, have some expectation to help at home and look after younger siblings and their parents are not as tolerant of their misbehaviour as they are of their siblings'. This contrasts with the finding in a previous study by Youssef et al (1998) that parental use of physical punishment increased significantly with the increase in a child's birth order. This can be possibly because older children, especially the first-born child, in some areas of Egypt have to work outside the home, while the younger children stay at home.

On the other hand, the youngest children in this study claimed that they do not experience more physical punishment by their parents compared to their siblings. A female child (age 9) wrote a note on the questionnaire: 'my parents beat my siblings but not me, because I am the youngest in the family'; see also the quote from the interviews with the youngest male children in the family on the section on non-physical discipline methods in chapter 7. Some parents in this study explained that because, traditionally, the youngest child is the most spoiled and best cared for, s/he is not subjected to physical punishment, unlike the first-born child. One father, head of a scout group (age 48) said, 'it is our tradition to focus on first-born children's behaviour, with use of harsh discipline methods, and spoil the youngest child in the family'. This is consistent with the finding from research by Khoury-Kassabri and Straus (2011) that the youngest children appear to be less likely to be exposed to physical punishment. In addition, this study found that parents with only one child and suffering from fertility problems do not use physical methods with their children, as they expressed the great value and appreciation they have towards children. This is consistent with the findings in a study by Balen (1996).

Children's Misbehaviour

Parents who responded to the questionnaire reported that different types of children's misbehaviour lead them to use physical disciplinary methods. Mothers listed disrespect, using bad language and disobedience while fathers identified disobedience, stealing and lying. It seems that disobedience and disrespect for mothers and fathers are the most serious. This is similar to the finding in the Egyptian study by Youssef et al (1998) that child disobedience was strongly linked to physical punishment. Binghalib (2011), moreover, argued that children in Arab societies are expected to do what their parents ask and should always be respectful and obedient to their parents. This reflects the modern Arab understanding of children's obedience towards their parents, which is expected to be total[117].

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[117] See the section on parents' rights in Islam under section 5.3.

However, children's disobedience and disrespect to parents as a reason for using physical punishment are also found in other cultures, such as in India (Hunter et al 2000) and the Caribbean (Payne 1989). Interestingly, a few fathers who responded to the questionnaire in this study marked all of the 20 different kinds of children's misbehaviour that were included[118] and then added more, such as intervening in parents' affairs, not helping at home, playing with food or fighting with siblings during a meal, complaining of not having enough food, lack of bodily and clothes hygiene, and mothers' complaints about a child's behaviour to the father. They commented that they cannot tolerate children's misbehaviour and beat their children for everything they do wrong. Indeed, some parents and children who were interviewed in this study also expressed that parents use physical punishment for each instance of their children's misbehaviour[119].

On the other hand, children who responded to the questionnaire reported various types of child misbehaviour which influence parental use of physical punishment. Female children identified having fights with their siblings and/or other children (8 out of 14), making noise (5 out of 14), leaving toys on the floor (3 out of 14) and disobedience (3 out of 14), while male children reported that parents use this practice when they do not pray (6 out of 14), are disrespectful (4 out of 14) and disobedient (4 out of 14) to parents. The difference between female and male children responses is mainly because of the children's ages, as female children in this sample were younger than the male children. Younger children (under 10) are not expected to pray and mostly subjected to physical punishment for being over-active, as parents argue[120].

About half of the children (16 out of 34) who responded to the questionnaires and all children who were interviewed (10 out of 10) stated that they mostly experience physical punishment by siblings. This is mainly for the purpose of disciplining. A male child (age 12) said 'my older sister beats me a lot. She wants me to ask for permission before I leave home and not to talks back to her or others'. A female child (age 15) claimed that 'I beat my youngest sister when she lies or swears'. It seems that children from families where parents use physical punishment actually learn from their parents which misbehaviours by children should be physically punished. For example, a male child (age 16) stated, 'my parents say children deserve physical punishment when they disobey. Yes, I believe a stick for whoever disobeys'. Furthermore, a female child (age 15) said 'physical punishment is effective, especially when a child disobeys his parents, lies or swears, so my parents think'. This shows that children have learnt from their parents that it is acceptable to beat others in order

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[118] See appendix 2.
[119] See section 7.3.3.
[120] See an earlier section on child's age under section 8.3.

to stop them from misbehaving. Simons and Wurtele (2010) argue that one negative side-effect of the parental use of physical punishment is that children learn from their parents that hitting others is acceptable, even within the family, in solving interpersonal conflict.

However, all children who were interviewed (10 out of 10) in this study expressed that they do not accept their siblings beating them and the only way to solve the conflict is to beat them back. A female child (age 10) said, 'after my siblings hit me for whatever reason I have to beat them back. I cannot relax until I get my own back by beating them'. Furthermore, all of the parents interviewees in this study who use physical punishment (15 out 15) express their disapproval of siblings using physical methods among themselves (for fighting or disciplining) as they think children do not have the right to use this method on other children. This leads them to intervene between siblings and use physical punishment to stop them beating each other. A housewife (age 31) said, 'I always say to my older children, as long as I am alive, you do not have the right to beat your siblings. Siblings should be there for each other, not beating each other'. A father, head of a scout group (age 48) said, 'I want my children to be together and look after each other, not to hate and beat each other. Parents only can use physical methods'. This is consistent with findings in other Arab studies that parents use physical punishment when their children hit each other (Abolfotouh et al 2009; Youssef et al 1998). However, children in this study consider their parents' intervention between siblings by beating them as not being fair. A male child (age 11) commented that 'it is not fair when our parents hit us just because we have a row, fight, or hit each other. It is our problem not theirs'. Interestingly, this is the same language (our business) that parents use: when others intervene in relation to parents' use of physical punishment with their children.

Children indicated that they feel more angry and sad about the use of physical punishment by siblings than by parents, since they accept that only their parents have that right and not their siblings. A male child (age 12) said 'I do not mind parents using physical punishment; that is their right. However, I hate it when my siblings beat me, especially, my sister who beats me a lot, I hate her'. This may indicate two points: first, children could have learnt from their parents that siblings cannot use physical punishment. Second, the use of this method among siblings seems to affects siblings' relationships negatively.

Further, this can also make some children feel confused, in particular the first-born. This is because as some parents and children in this study stated that first-born children are expected to help parents by, for example, looking after younger siblings[121]. However, parents do not give first-born children the right to use physical punishment with their younger

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[121] See the section on child's birth order under the section 8.3.

siblings when they misbehave. This can make first-born children feel confused about how to react to any misbehaviour by their siblings, given that they have learnt from their parents to use physical punishment to address it. In such cases, if, however, they do use physical punishment, they get a beating from their siblings and their parents. This suggests that first-born children have been given major responsibilities by their parents, but no rights. This cycle of parents using physical punishment but not allowing children to do so, especially the oldest child, combined with resistance from younger siblings, can influence the family environment badly.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter focuses on exploring the findings regarding the personal factors relating to parents and children which seem to influence parental use of physical punishment. The findings suggest that there are some key factors that appear to influence parents to use physical methods, such as parents' and children's gender, age and experiences of parental use of physical punishment. For example, mothers, younger parents and parents with past experiences of parental use of physical punishment and who believe in it as a 'normal' method seem to be more likely to approve of and use of this form of punishment. Further, younger children, boys, first-born children and children who are considered as disrespectful, disobedient and fight physically with their siblings are those most often subjected to parental use of physical punishment. However, parents admitted that personal issues such as anger and/or bad moods are among the causal factors and not only increase the use of physical punishment but also increase its severity. Parents and children reported that when parents are angry, they cannot control themselves, so they carry on beating a child until they have released their anger, using any objects in front of them, such as a stick, a pencil and/or a belt, and offering no explanation to the child. In these cases, children are more likely to be subjected to serious physical damage. Chapter 8 also explores some negative effects of parental use of physical punishment on parents and children. For instance, some parents reported suffering from some mental issues and inability to interact with their children positively as a result of experiencing parental use of physical punishment in the past. Further, children from families where parents use physical punishment seem to learn that using physical punishment for disciplining and/or resolving interpersonal conflict is acceptable, although this goes beyond their parents' acceptance and has negative effects on sibling relationships and the family environment.

Chapter (9) Data Analysis and Discussion

External Factors That Influence Parental Use of Physical Punishment

9.1 Introduction

Following the preceding chapter, this chapter presents the second set of factors, those relating to family, professionals, community and the local culture, which seem to influence parental use of physical punishment among my sample.

9.2 Family Factors

This study indicates that children experience regular physical punishment by their biological parents and when a child lives between two homes. However, family size does not appear to have an impact on parental use of physical punishment, instead, parents referred to the age gap between siblings.

Family Type

In this study, it is difficult to compare single-parent families or step-parent families to two-parent biological families, because almost all of the participants (95 out of 100) were from two-parent families. However, the study indicates that many two-parent biological families use physical disciplinary methods as a mean of disciplining children. These are similar to the finding in studies by Nobes and Smith (2002) and Tajima (2000) that children in two-parent families were subjected frequently to physical punishment by their parents.

Child-rearing between Two Homes

In Libya, two home set-ups are common. Children stay with their grandparents most of the time, especially when they live nearby. This sometimes results in clashes between parents' and grandparents' strategies for disciplining the children, which leads to use of physical punishment by the parents. Some mothers who were interviewed in this study claimed that the chance of physical punishment being used is greater when a child lives between two homes (parents' and grandparents' homes). Mothers believe that grandparents spoil their children, which forces them sometimes to use physical methods to correct what has been spoiled. A mother who is a secretary at a primary school (age 31) stated:

> My mother-in-law lives on the floor below us. My children spend most of the day with her. She spoils the children a lot, whatever they ask for, even after midnight,

she goes to the supermarket and gets it for them. In addition, she lets them watch some romantic dramas on T.V which I do not like them to see. When they come to our house, they insist on us buying them something or watching some adult programmes, which makes me furious and sometimes I use physical punishment to stop them.

It seems that the anger arising out of the tension between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law influences the use of physical punishment by parents. Indeed, this study indicates that parents' issues such as anger are among the key factors behind the use of physical methods[122].

Family-Size

In contrast to many others studies across the world, which found physical punishment of children increased significantly within a large family (Alyahri and Goodman 2008; Qasem et al 1998; Youssef et al 1998; Gage and Silvestre 2010; Day et al 1998; Nobes and Smith 2002; Khoury-Kassabri and Straus 2011), this study indicates that parental use of physical punishment appears to be used in all families, regardless of the number of children. Actually, a number of fathers and mothers who were interviewed in this study claimed that a small age gap between siblings is more significant than family size in influencing parental use of physical punishment. According to them, this is because a small age gap between children increases parents' stress, tiredness and anger, which leads to the use of physical methods. One father, head of a scout group (age 48) said:

> I believe that the age gap between the children affects my use of physical punishment but not the family size. Whenever the age gap is small, children are more subjected to physical punishment. It is hard work looking after two or more young children, because everyone has different needs and interests which often cause parents to become stressed and angry and then use physical punishment.

However, two fathers stated that large family size may influence the use of physical punishment, but only when parents are uneducated and/or poor. One father, a lecturer (age 46) said:

> My father was a farmer and an illiterate person who had 10 children. He used to use physical punishment a lot. My parents were under significant stress. However, for me now, I have just four children and I am well-educated. My knowledge helps me a lot to control my children's behaviour in a much wiser way than my father.

Indeed, this study suggests that many of well-educated parents seem to be less likely to use

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[122] See the section on parental issues under section 8.2.

physical punishment[123] and children who live in poor areas appear to be more likely to experience this method[124].

9.3 Factors Related to Professionals

This section addresses my research question relating to professionals' views on the use of physical punishment as a method of disciplining children. It also includes discussion about children's experiences of physical punishment in professional settings such as at teaching centres and to what extent those experiences influence parental use of physical punishment. According to ecological theory (meso-system level), children's experiences at school and religious organisations can influence their experiences at home.

Although the number of Libyan professionals who took part in this study was small as a result of the Libyan war (2011), this study provides some indications about professionals' perceptions of physical punishment of children and their knowledge about child abuse. Shin and Koh (2005) found that the majority of Korean teachers in their study thought that physical punishment of children is essential to correct a child's misbehaviour and that banning this method would make children disrespectful to adults. Likewise, this study also indicates that teachers approve of the use of this method, not only at home but also in school (quotations from mothers who are teachers and support physical punishment at home can be found in the previous chapter). A primary school teacher in Tripoli said:

> I believe that beating children is the only way to make them study and do their homework. If that does not help, at least, it will release my anger and frustration. Just tell me about other ways to deal with children. Physical punishment is the only good way to deal with children. I do not know any other forms and I do not believe there are other alternative methods that would be as useful as physical punishment.

Reacting out of anger, lack of knowledge about other, healthy ways to deal with children and positive attitudes towards the use of physical punishment could be possible reasons for teachers using this method in schools. These are similar to reasons given by parents for using this method at home[125].

However, an Islamic scholar (Sheikh) was the professional in this study sample who was most against parental use of physical punishment. She said:

> The Prophet Mohammed emphasises that parents need to teach a child good behaviour by offering advice, being patient and rewarding good behaviour. If

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[123] See the section on parents' level of education under section 8.2.

[124] Will be discussed later in the section on place of residence under section 9.4.

[125] See chapters 7, 8 and in a later section on the influence of lack of knowledge and the need for educational programmes in this chapter.

parents were patient enough with their children, they would not need to use physical punishment at all.

To explore their perceptions regarding child abuse, professionals[126] in this study were asked about their definition of child abuse. The only one who was familiar with this concept was the Islamic scholar cited above, while the rest had to ask what child abuse means. This could indicate that there is no connection between Islamic leaders and the public in Muslim society. This is because all the professionals in the sample are Muslims; thus, socially, there are expectations of them, as well-educated people, to know more than ordinary people about this concept. Further, the professionals fail to recognise parental use of physical punishment as a form of child abuse, but instead, are only familiar with how parents can be abused (عقوق) by their children. A social worker at school said, 'What is child abuse? We know that children can be ungrateful (abuse their parents) but not parents'. They justified this viewpoint by explaining that parents have the right to discipline their children using this method and it is considered as a family matter. Meanwhile, a paediatrician stated, 'I do not know what child abuse is. Traditionally, child discipline methods are parents' business that we do not intervene in'. This might indicate that professionals are affected by local traditions that focus on parents' rights more than children's rights and consider child discipline methods as a matter for parents only[127]. This may also imply that many professionals in Libya reproduce the same traditions and values during their work with, or for children. Similarly, Andrade et al (2011) found that Brazilian health professionals were to some extent influenced by local norms regarding accepting and normalising the use of physical punishment of children.

Professionals in this study explained that they lacked knowledge about child abuse because they did not learn about it while they were students. Indeed, a lecturer in the social work department in Tripoli University said, 'in the department, there is a module about children's rights which are traditionally defined, but there is nothing about child abuse'. It can be argued that "child abuse in Islam" as a module should be taught in all faculties in universities in order to raise awareness among all professionals in Muslim society, which could help to challenge traditional beliefs and also help professionals to identify cases of abuse when they occur. Indeed, some studies suggest the importance of teaching students about child abuse (Laud et al 2013; Chen et al 2013). Furthermore, professionals in this study reported that according to their interpretation and understanding of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it does not consider the use of physical punishment by parents as abuse. A social worker at school stated:

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[126] See Table 7.6 which shows the characteristics of professionals in this study under section 7.2.

[127] These traditional beliefs will be explored in detail later in the section on the influence of Arab traditions under section 9.5.

> I do not think that the UN convention on the Rights of the Child considers parental use of physical punishment as a form of abuse or that professionals should do anything about it.

This may suggest that the Arabic version of the UN convention does not consider cultural differences in defining "who" the abuser is[128] or "what" violence means[129], as the translation from English to Arabic seems to be literal instead of focusing on the cultural context. Further, professionals in this study admitted that they have not been provided with training on child abuse and little was provided about children's rights. This is consistent with the UN's (1998) comments about the lack of training for professionals who work with, or for, children in Libya [130]. Libyan professionals in this study also expressed the view that there is disconnection between them and the Government in relation to guidance and support. A social worker at a school said:

> We work on our own, the Government knows nothing about us or our needs, and we do not know them either. I do not know which department in the Government we should turn to if we need help.

Moreover, a social worker at a hospital commented:

> We work based on our knowledge, wise guesses and personal relations with other colleagues. The Government's role with us is only written on paper, but in reality it is different.

On the other hand, professionals expressed their desire to work in partnership with governmental and nongovernmental offices/organisations to help them to get to know more about different forms of child abuse, which will enable them to do their jobs as expected. A social worker at a school commented, 'I hope that one day the Government will work with us. If they do not support and guide us to help children, they should not expect us to do our jobs as they expect'. In addition, a paediatrician said:

> I wish there could be a connection between us and the Government and other organisations that are interested in children, to help professionals in the first place to define and identify child abuse cases. This then could make the lives of some children far better.

Actually, professionals were enthusiastic about raising awareness about child abuse, and some offered suggestions as to how this could be done. A paediatrician said:

> I like this research, it has new ideas. I would suggest that you can start raising awareness about child abuse in Tripoli first, as people here are more open-minded than in the rural areas.

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[128] See section 7.3.2.
[129] See section 7.3.1.
[130] See the section on Libya and international conventions on the rights of the child under section 5.6.

Furthermore, a school social worker asked for a copy of the questionnaire of this study and commented:

> I have been working here for more than 25 years and never looked at harsh discipline children as abuse. I want to conduct this questionnaire with children at my school to find out more about their experiences. Further, I would suggest that you come to us at our school after finishing the research and let us know about the findings and recommendations. It is for sure going to be beneficial to every one of us here as professionals and as parents too.

Influence of Children's Experiences in Professional Settings on Parental Use of Physical Punishment

All children (10 out of 10) who were interviewed in this study reported that they experience physical punishment and verbal insults at school, for different reasons, such as being too active, naughty (includes physical fights with peers), using impolite words, not doing homework and/or getting poor academic results. Further, all of them stated that their parents reacted harshly verbally and/or used physical punishment when they found out about what they had done at school. On the other hand, some parents who were interviewed in this study also stated they sometimes use physical punishment with their children because of poor school performance, when they refuse to study during the exams period or use bad (impolite) language that was learnt from school. Interestingly, a school should be the place to learn polite language not the opposite. A housewife (age 31) said, 'I beat my children when they do not study during the exams; they need to do well at school'. According to parents, socially, children are expected and pressured to do well at school to ensure a decent future. This is similar to the finding in a Yemeni study by Alyahri and Goodman (2008) and Chinese research by Li (2005, cited from Liao et al 2011) that children who performed poorly at school were more likely to experience physical punishment at home.

Interestingly, children in this study expressed that they feel more annoyed about the use of physical punishment at school than at home and suggested banning it. They explained that parents have the right to use this method but not teachers. A male child (age 14) said:

> The Government should ban the use of physical punishment at school but not at home. Teachers should mark me down when I do not do my homework but not beat me. Disciplining is not their business.

Furthermore, a female child (age 12) commented:

> The Government should ban some types of physical punishment at schools such as hitting with books or using a hose, but not at home. The use of physical punishment for disciplining is a matter for parents only.

Children seem to associate the use of physical punishment with disciplining and rearing children. Thus only parents have that right, not teachers, as, according to the children, the job of a teacher is not supposed to include disciplining children.

In addition, two fathers in this study suggested that the Government should choose non-violent teachers and headmasters who can deal with children's misbehaviour in a professional way. One of the fathers, a social worker (age 55) said:

> Some teachers and headmasters are so violent with children. Many of my neighbours' sons have dropped out of school because they experience harsh physical and verbal punishment at school, which they still remember. The Government should take extra care when they employ teachers and headmasters in schools.

The reasons for some teachers reacting harshly to children's misbehaviour at school were mentioned in the previous section. However, the Government needs to help teachers/headmasters by providing efficient training, and cooperate with them for the children's good. It should be noticed that the use of physical punishment in schools in Libya has been banned by law (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children 2012) but clearly the participants in this study, even those who are teachers, are not aware of the existence of this law, as some asked the Government to do something about it and some teachers seem to use this method without knowing that they can be jailed for it. This could suggest that the Government has not done enough to implement the new legislation to the people.

In addition, two male children in this study reported that physical punishment at 'khaloha; خلوة'[131] is sometimes carried out. A male child (age 15) said: 'at the khaloha, there is a rule: if you do not learn the 'surah'[132], do not come to the khaloha or the sheik will beat you. I do not have a problem with that as we agreed with them from the beginning'. Rajabi-Ardeshiri (2009) also found that Muslim children in the UK experience physical punishment within the informal religious education 'Madrassah'. However, children in this study did not show disapproval towards the use of physical punishment at 'khaloha'. This could be, as they explained, because from an early stage, it is clearly explained what is allowed and what is not and the type of punishment that they will receive if they break the rules. This means that it is not affected by the mood or anger of the sheiks, which leads the children to accept it as fair. As Shubaily (2011a) argues, this is a very important rule in disciplining Muslim children, and is in contrast to the use of physical punishment at home and in schools. Interestingly, none of the children or parents expressed that children need to do well at Islamic centres; in

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[131] Khaloha: a place where they learn the Quran.
[132] Surah: a chapter in the Quran.

contrast, they consider it as non-formal/supportive education. This could be why children do not experience physical punishment at home when they fail to learn 'surah' at Islamic centres. Because parents view Islamic education at mosques as being non-formal, there may be less pressure on children to perform well there compared to in school.

Nevertheless, all Islamic leaders state that discipline for children should be based on rewards rather than punishment, as shown in an earlier section on child discipline methods in Islam in chapter 5 and also illustrated by the following quote from the sheik who was interviewed in this study:

> The Prophet Mohammed set a good example for Muslims to learn how to treat adults and children too. He was so soft with his wives, children and others. He never hit or insulted a person and was so kind with children. Every Muslim knows that but sadly they do not reflect that in their behaviour.

It is really interesting that some sheiks at Islamic centres use physical methods with children even though they know they are supposed to set a good example to the rest of society. One of the fathers interviewed in this study, an employee (age 40) commented on how the role of sheiks in Libyan society has changed over time:

> Sheiks used to be planners, implementers and would follow up children even with their families. They used to play a massive part in teaching values. They let children learn by playing in a friendly atmosphere. Further, they used to follow children in their families and at school, but now, sadly, all of that has changed.

This change in the role of Islamic leaders could possibly have occurred because in the past, education in Libya was mainly delivered by Islamic leaders[133] at Islamic centres, and even after a few schools had been established in some major cities in Libya, the majority of parents at that time were not sufficiently educated to follow up their children's school education. Thus, the Islamic leaders had to take on this duty. However, after schools developed and increased in number, many parents became educated and many organisations with an interest in children started to be established, and then Islamic leaders seemed to step back and leave the role of following up children to parents, teachers and the Government. However, it is not clear whether this change has influenced the use of physical methods by sheiks in modern Libya.

9.4 Factors Related to Community

In this study, feelings of isolation do not appear to have an impact on parental use of physical punishment. However, place of residence (rich and poor areas), parents' work

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[133] See the section on precedence of Arab traditions over Islam in Libya under section 9.5.

status and positive social support for the use of physical methods appear to influence parents to use such methods.

Place of Residence

The majority of parents (52 out of 66) and all the children who took part in this study live in urban areas. Therefore, it is difficult to compare parents' and children's experiences across urban and rural areas. However, this study indicates that child-rearing methods differ according to participants' areas of residence in Tripoli. Parents who live in poor areas seem to use physical punishment more than parents who live in wealthy areas. According to some of the parents in the study, this is because of the differences in lifestyles between the rich and poor areas. For example, children who live in poor areas spend most of their time in the streets, which, in comparison to children who live in rich areas, increases their chances of fighting with others and learning bad (impolite) language. One mother, a secretary in a primary school (age 31) said:

> I live in a poor area where children go out into the street a lot. They often pick up impolite words from others and/or sometimes have physical fights with other children. This is not acceptable so I often beat my children for such behaviour.

It could be that place of residence has an influence on children experiencing parental use of physical punishment. However, there is an important point here which is that children from families where parents use physical punishment are more likely to use physical methods in fights with peers (at school[134] and also in the street) to sort out personal conflicts. This can be added to the list of negative effects of parental use of physical punishment. Indeed, Simons and Wurtele (2010) argue that children of parents who use physical methods would learn to normalise and use this method with their peers.

The need to support children and families who live in poor areas was recognised by some parents in this study, especially fathers, who placed strong emphasis on the need for the Government to do so. One father, a lecturer (age 62) commented:

> Children in poor areas more often end up in the street and are more likely to be subjected to mistreatment by others and to mistreat others. The Government should focus on poor areas which have a higher population and suffer from a lot of problems.

Another father, an employee (age 40) stated:

> In the past, the Government helped a lot to reduce the financial burden on the family by selling stationery, books and some children's foods cheaper than

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[134] See the previous section.

supermarkets. However, in recent years, the state has abolished that financial support, which makes it so difficult, in particular for families in poor areas. They should re-establish that support.

It is not only the lifestyles of the place of residence that can affect the use of physical punishment by parents, as poverty can also increase stress on parents, which may lead to increase in the use of physical punishment.

Influence of Parents' Work Status and Experiences on their Use of Physical Punishment

Although the number of parents in professional occupations is very small compared to that of parents in non-professional occupations, there appear to be different perceptions among these two groups in the parents' sample. Almost all the parents (8 out of 9) who responded to the questionnaire and who work in professional occupations, for example, social workers, lecturers, lawyers and doctors, claimed that they use only non-physical methods with their children. In contrast, the majority of parents (40 out 57) who work as teachers[135], non-professional employees[136] or housewives reported that they use physical punishment with their children. However, the findings from the children's sample seem to indicate that children experience physical punishment at the hands of their parents regardless of their parents' employment status.

Fathers and mothers who were interviewed in this study and were teachers, employees and housewives were more likely to use physical punishment than parents with professional jobs. Similarly, Gage and Silvestre (2010) found that parents in Peru who have manual jobs or do domestic work use physical punishment significantly more than professionals. In general, this could reflect the influence of parents' level of education. In this study, parents who are teachers, employees and housewives, and who make up the majority of the sample, reported having educational qualifications lower than undergraduate level, while lecturers reported having either MA or PhD degrees. Furthermore, the teachers in this study demonstrated positive attitudes towards the use of physical punishment of children[137]. Meanwhile, in the case of the housewives, they may have more time at home to interact with their children, which could possibly increase the chance of conflict. Youssef et al (1998) found that Egyptian children with working mothers were less likely to be subjected to physical punishment than children whose mothers were housewives. It seems that it is the case, even in Libya, that working mothers are less likely to use this practice than mothers

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[135] The reason for not including teachers in professionals group in the questionnaire was explained in section 6.5.

[136] See footnote 2 in chapter 7.

[137] See section 9.3.

who do not work. However, it can be argued that the type of the job they do is also a factor. For instance, mothers in this study who work as teachers seem to be more in favour of physical punishment than those who work as employees. Although my sample is small, the findings are consistent with the claim by Cicchetti and Carlson (1989) and Barness et al (2006) that the nature of parents' employment can predict their use of physical punishment on their children. They reported that parents whose jobs typically require compliance and authority tend to stress obedience and conformity in their children and are in favour of using physical punishment. Indeed, a good example from this study is provided by participants who reported that fathers who work in the military are more likely to use physical punishment with their children. One mother, a teacher (age 45) stated:

> My husband is a soldier. Hs beats my children immediately whenever they misbehave. He also uses some military methods to deal with our children's misbehaviour. For instance, he locks the children up, asks them to stand on their feet and put their hands up. Further, he uses verbal insults a lot.

Isolation and Social Support

In contrast to an Egyptian study by Youssef et al (1998) and an Iranian study by Mikaeili et al (2013) which found that families with limited interactions with extended family, friends, and neighbours are more likely to use physical punishment than families who have good relationships with others, this study indicates that having good[138] relationships with close relatives or friends does not mean that children will be less subjected to parental use of physical methods. In fact, among the children in the sample who experience parental use of physical punishment, all the children (9 out of 9) who were interviewed and 24 out of 28 who responded to the questionnaire claimed that their parents maintain good relationships with others. Further, among the fathers and mothers who use physical punishment, all 15 parents who were interviewed and all 41 who responded to the questionnaire reported that despite the fact that they have good relationships with extended family and friends, they still use of physical punishment.

Some parent interviewees who use physical punishment claimed that people around them never question the practice of using physical punishment of children but ask only for the reasons behind it. For example, a housewife (age 44) commented, 'I sometimes used to beat my children in front of my mother, she did not mind me using it but she used to ask about what the child had done'. This means that there is a sense of justifying the use of physical methods[139]. Meanwhile, a father, head of a scout group (age 48) stated:

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[138] Good in terms of visiting each other frequently, supporting each other, sharing time and resources.

[139] See the section on physical discipline methods under section 7.3.1.

> This is the first time that somebody has questioned me about the use of physical punishment of children. My parents used it, people around me use it, although they do not like severe forms, but no one has questioned our use of this method before.

It can be argued that some parents learn from others (social support) that it is fine to use this method with children as long as there is a good reason. Kane (2014) and Francis-Connolly (2003) stated that parents' behaviour is shaped by accountability to friends and relatives while Walsh (2002) reported that parents are more likely to use physical punishment with their children when they have received positive messages from others about spanking. This could indicate that social perceptions of this method may be more important than the strength of parents' relationships with others, in influencing the use of physical punishment of children.

However, many parents reported that they avoid beating their children in the presence of others, especially the elderly and guests, as a matter of respect. For example, a father who works as a librarian (age 35) said, 'I do not hit my children in front of my mother-in-law as respect to her'. In addition, a housewife (age 31) stated:

> My relationships with friends and family do not stop me using physical punishment with my children. I just respect them and do not hit my children in front of them.

Some parents explained that beating children in front of others, in particular the elderly, can be considered as a disrespectful act mainly when others have asked the parents not to do so. Obeying the elderly and respecting guests' wishes is a way of showing respect in Arabic culture. Further, they reported that the reason that many elderly people, in particular grandparents, dislike seeing children being beaten in front of them is either because they are more interested in spoiling children (out of love) rather than disciplining them[140] or they suffer from health issues such as high blood pressure and/or heart problems which cause them to get upset easily or even become ill.

Meanwhile, some children stated that parents do not use physical punishment in front of others because they feel embarrassed about others seeing them angry. A female child (age 13) said, 'my parents do not use physical punishment in front of people because they feel ashamed of showing their anger to others'. Children seem to be aware that their parents are trying to show and maintain a good image in front of others.

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[140] See the quotation in the section on child-rearing between two homes under section 9.2.

9.5 Cultural Factors

Based on the definition that is adopted of culture in this study[141], this section will explore the following four elements of Libyan culture: Islam, Arab traditions, knowledge and laws, in terms of their influence on the use of physical methods among parents in my sample.

The Influence of Islam

Unlike other studies conducted previously in Arabic Muslim societies and reviewed earlier in this study, the current study addresses Islam as one of the factors that may influence parental use of physical punishment[142]. In this study, more than half of the fathers and mothers (37 out of 66) who responded to the questionnaire reported that they sometimes use physical punishment for religious reasons but not based on their religious beliefs, as participants made a distinction between the two terms[143]. The reason for making this distinction is that they acknowledge that there is a difference between what they are supposed to do (values) and what they do in reality (practice), as will be explained in the following paragraphs.

Table (9.17) Parents' Responses on the Use of Physical Punishment for Religious Reasons

Do you use physical punishment for religious reasons?	Parents		Total (N=66)
	Fathers (N=33)	Mothers (N=33)	
Yes	4 12.1%	3 9.1%	7 10.6%
No	7 21.2%	15 45.5%	22 33.3%
Sometimes	22 66.7%	15 45.5%	37 56.1%

In general, all fathers and mothers who were interviewed (20 out of 20) in this study stated that Islam has no influence on parental use of physical punishment. One father, a lecturer (age 46) said, 'it is not about Islam. Anyone who uses physical punishment of children knows nothing about Islam'. Furthermore, another father, a lecturer (age 62) said:

> We physically punish our children because of lack of understanding of Islam. Islam urges us to treat children and women well but a lack of awareness makes us go down a different path. For example, in Islam, there is nothing about physical punishment of children except when a child refuses to pray at the age of 10. In this case only, parents can use physical punishment, but not excessively.

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[141] See section 4.5.
[142] See the section on religious beliefs under section 4.5.
[143] This is explained earlier in the section on the pilot study under section 6.5.

Chapter 9

The Islamic scholar (sheikh) who was interviewed in this study expressed enormous frustration on how far Libyan parents stray from Islam regarding the use of physical methods with children. She said:

> Sadly, these days, parents in Libya do not stick to Islamic rules. Some parents use physical punishment methods not only when a child does not pray but for other reasons, or as a result of a fit of anger. In addition, Islam bans some physical methods, for instance, slapping the face, which is a humiliating method for anyone, however, some Libyan parents use it.

This is consistent with Habib's (2012) claim that Muslim parents' main reasons for using physical punishment are far from Islamic.

With regard to parents interviewed in this study who use physical methods (15), when they were asked about the influence of Islam on their use of this method, all of them admitted that they are aware that their way of disciplining is different from the Islamic manner. A housewife (age 31) stated, 'it is not because of Islam I beat my children. Islam does not encourage that'. Meanwhile, a father who is head of a scout group (age 48) said, 'our religion discourages lying and stealing but it deals with people who do so in a humane way. Sadly, I do not follow this way, especially with my children'. One mother, a teacher (age 45) explained:

> Islam does not urge us to use violent verbal methods and physical punishment. Although I beat my children for lying and disrespect, Islam does not address these behaviours in the same way as we do.

The parents also reported that although they are aware that some methods are banned in Islam, they use them out of anger. Another mother, a teacher (age 38) said:

> I slap on the face, despite knowing that this method is banned in Islam. My daughter always reminds me after I slap her on the face by saying, "mum, you said in Islam, you cannot slap the face". I feel embarrassed and regret it.

In addition, a father who is a head of a scout group (age 48) said:

> Sadly, even though the Prophet Muhammad bans slapping on the face and I personally believe that slapping the face is a crime against a child, I sometimes slap my children on the face when I am angry.

Another mother, a teacher (age 35) stated:

> Physical punishment should be used as a last resort, but these days how many parents are patient with their children? We get angry then beat our children immediately.

Clearly parents' anger appears to affect their use of physical methods[144].

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[144] See the section on parents' anger under section 8.2.

Although parents who use physical punishment and were interviewed in this study reported that they do not follow Islamic guidelines while they are dealing with their children's misbehaviour, it is possible that they are also not aware of some Islamic values. During the interviews, for instance, whilst they admitted knowing that in Islam, a child should be beaten lightly at the age of 10 for not praying, none of them mentioned the fact that parents have to wait for three years (7-10) before using physical methods and during this period, they have to use positive verbal methods. This is what is expected from Muslim parents[145]. The Islamic scholar who was interviewed in this study emphasised this point as follows:

> Praying is the main pillar in Islam, so it receives a lot of attention. Parents are asked to teach their children how to pray from the age of seven years. Islam urges parents to pray in front of their children, advise, remind, encourage and reward them five times daily for three years. By the time a child reaches 10, s/he will learn automatically to pray and does not need a reminder. However, the issue these days is that many Libyan parents fail to teach children to pray from a young age, then when children get older parents start punishing them harshly or using physical punishment.

Indeed, six older children who responded to the questionnaire and another one who was interviewed in this study reported that their parents beat them for not praying. Yet they were not taught to pray when they were young. According to some children and parents in this study, this is because parents start to feel ashamed of their older children's failure to pray correctly, as they will be judged by other people. This may suggest that those parents beat their children for social reasons and not for religious reasons. However, Muslims are expected to practise their religion only out of fear of God, not because of fear of other people's opinions[146]. A female child (age 13) said:

> My dad never took praying seriously when I was young. However, now, he tells me that I embarrass him and he feels ashamed of me because I do not pray and this is why he sometimes beats me. He always compares me to my relatives who are at my age or younger and who pray. They learned to pray when they were very young, with their parents, not like me.

According to the Islamic scholar who participated in this study and others whose views are explored earlier[147], parents in this case do not have the right to use physical punishment on their children, because they have failed in their responsibility to teach their children to pray at a younger age.

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[145] See the section on child-rearing in Islam under section 5.3.
[146] See the section on child-rearing in Islam under section 5.3.
[147] See the section on controversy over the use of physical punishment -as a last resort- among Arab Muslim leaders under section 5.3.

This point was clarified by the Islamic scholar in this study when she was asked about parental use of physical punishment in Islam and its limits:

> Despite there being nothing in the Quran about using physical punishment of children, some Islamic leaders set rules to control parental use of physical punishment, such as: the only reason for using light physical punishment is not praying. In this case, physical punishment is used as a last resort, after failure of all the verbal positive methods used for the previous three years. All the following acts are considered to be abuse in Islam: beating a child under 10, beating on sensitive areas, slapping the face, using objects such as a stick or a hose, beating children on an everyday basis and when parents are angry.

Based on this view, all parents who use physical punishment in this study can be considered as abusive and have no right to use physical methods. However, the question here is: why do parents and children believe that it is parents' right to do so? The study indicates that this belief is rooted in Arab traditions.

Influence of Arab Traditions

All parents who were interviewed and many of whom responded to the questionnaire in this study expressed that in general, child disciplining methods in Libyan are based on correcting a child's misbehaviour rather than encouraging good behaviour. This is in contrast to Islamic values that are based on encouraging good child behaviour.

With regard to parental use of physical punishment, all parents (in the questionnaire and interviews) who use physical methods in this study reported that parental use of physical disciplinary methods is related to local traditions handed down from previous generations. A father who works as a librarian (age 35) said, 'physical punishment of children is a method that we inherited and we still use it'. Parents also claimed that within Libyan traditions, parental use of physical punishment is seen as an acceptable, 'normal' method to deal with children's misbehaviour. A housewife (age 44) stated:

> Our traditions support the use of physical punishment of children. We see our cousins, friends, teachers in schools use this method and we give it the character of normality.

In addition, a father, a lecturer (age 46) said:

> Our traditions support the use of physical punishment of children, and we take it for granted. I believe that environment has a significant impact on our behaviour. We learn to do something or avoid something else from the environment we are surrounded by.

Indeed, various studies have indicated that parents who live within a culture that encourages parental use of physical punishment are more likely to approve of and use it with their

children (Davidov and Khoury-Kassabri 2013; Dietz 2000; Hunter et al 2000). Thus, all parents and children in this study (in the questionnaire and interviews) who use/experience physical punishment found it very hard to believe that there are some parents in Libya who never use physical punishment with their children and they questioned how they managed their children's misbehaviour. Interestingly, two children stated that if there were indeed parents who did not use this method, they would consider them as spoiling their children. A male child (age 16) stated: 'in Libya, all parents use physical punishment. It is normal. If parents do not use this method, they are definitely too soft and spoiling their children'.

Fathers and mothers who were interviewed in this study (20 out of 20) also claimed that generally, in Libya, the use of physical punishment by parents is not only accepted but also expected, in some cases, to make children 'Muadib مؤدب', which means polite. This is consistent with Hammad et al's (1999) observation that Arab children are taught a set of expected behaviours which is called in Arabic (Adab; أدب), to entitle them to earn approval as being good children. For example, children are expected to obey their parents, respect older people and follow the social norms. Indeed, in this study, parents reported that they are expected to use 'a good slap' with a child, if the child does not show respect to their parents or elderly people or does not seek permission before going out, especially in the case of girls. Otherwise, parents would be considered as not being capable of rearing their children well, which may lead to their loss of social status in the community. One mother, a secretary in a primary school (age 31) stated:

> I feel embarrassed and angry when my children talk back to elderly people. I have to beat them, you know it is shameful to do those things. I have to react, otherwise others will think I don't know how to rear my children.

Meanwhile, a housewife (age 31) stated, 'in our families, we have to beat girls for going out without permission. It is a shameful act if that happens'. Preventing female children from going out without permission or/and being accompanied is a way that parents use to protect the family name, which is very important traditionally[148]. This may suggest that parents are under social stress of being judged by others on how well they have done with their children. This finding is consistent with many other studies on Arabic parents, which found that the ability of parents to rear a child according to the expected manner is considered to be an indicator of 'how good' their parenting skills, which then reflects on the family's name in the community (Binghalib 2011; Shabbas 1979; Al-Krenawi and Graham 2000).

Parents' feelings of shame and of being judged by others and their fear of damaging the family name appear to be the reasons why five parents who were interviewed in this study

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[148] See section 5.4.

have not considered seeking professional help over their struggles with their children's misbehaviour. A housewife (age 55) said, 'I do not like to go to others (professionals) where they start telling you what you should do. We do not want the shame of going outside the family or the country'. Binghalib (2011) also found that in Arabic customs, there is a tendency to keep emotions hidden and family life is protected within a strong ring of privacy, whilst seeking help outside the family domain is seen as an inappropriate and shameful act. Interestingly, none of the parents in this study mentioned that they had considered seeking advice from Islamic leaders with regard to issues related to disciplining their children, which they are supposed to do as Muslim parents.

Traditional Arab Views on Parents' Right to Use Physical Punishment

More than half of the parents (42 out of 66) and about three quarters of the children (25 out 34) who responded to the questionnaire in this study think that parents have an absolute right to use any method that suits them to control their children's misbehaviour. 15 out of 20 parents and all children who were interviewed in this study (10 out of 10) also hold this belief. A male child (age 16) said, 'Yes, parents have every right to use physical punishment, because the children are their children'. Moreover, a housewife (age 31) said:

> Parents have every right to choose any method that suits their children because the children are theirs and parents are old enough to know about their children so they have the ability to choose the right method to discipline them.

These views are consistent with the finding by studies conducted in Iran (Oveisi et al 2010), Canada (Clement and Chamberland 2009) and Israel (Khoury-Kassabri and Straus 2011) that the majority of parents who use physical punishment seem to believe that parents have the right to discipline their children using physical punishment. This could explain why parents and children in this study failed to recognise the use of physical methods by parents as a form of abuse.

Many parents who were interviewed in this study explained this belief in parents' absolute right over their children as being rooted in predated traditions that consider children to be owned by their parents. One father, a social worker (age 55) said, 'parents are permitted in our traditions to hit their children, break their bones and even kill them. Put simply, this is because they are their parents'. All 10 children who were interviewed in this study reported that they need to do what their parents ask as their parents have the right to expect this. For example, a female child (age 10) said, 'I have to respect and obey my parents, whatever they ask for. I have to do it even if I do not want to. This is their right'. This is in contrast to Islamic values that teach that only God has the right to total obedience and no one has the

right to treat children harshly[149]. However, according to local Arab traditions, children cannot challenge their parents' authority; if they do so, they will be considered as rebellious and ungrateful children, as Wei and Mayouf (2009) argue[150].

Furthermore, whilst some parents in this study acknowledged that parents within their extended family do sometimes misuse the practice of the physical punishment of children and told stories about such cases[151], they reported that they could not report such cases to the authorities as, traditionally, reporting against their own flesh and blood is considered as a shameful (عيب) act. A housewife (age 44) said:

> Despite some parents using some types of physical punishment which are haram (حرام; forbidden by Islam) and it getting to the point of becoming a crime (جريمة), I cannot report it to the police because it is done by my family members or cousins, so it is not acceptable by tradition (Aeab;عيب) to do so.

This quotation indicates that parents make a clear distinction between Islam, traditions and law through using words such as (حرام; Haram) which refers to acts that are not acceptable in Islam, (Aeab;عيب) which refers to acts that are not acceptable according to the traditions of the people/country and (crime; جريمة), which refers to acts that are not allowed by the law. This means within the Libyan context, any behaviour will be looked at, and judged, based on these three perspectives (traditional norms, Islam and law). Therefore, when people use such words (Aeab;عيب, Haram; حرام and a crime;جريمة), they are actually reflecting on the roots of their perceptions about certain behaviour, which are either traditional, religious or legal. This quotation also indicates that traditions have more power over parents than anything else. As parents admitted that some types of physical punishment is considered to be 'حرام; haram' by Islam and 'جريمة; crime' by the law but they cannot report it or raise it as norms considered as acceptable and not 'عيب; Aeab'. Indeed, Hammad et al (1999) found that individuals in Arabic society learn within their norms that loyalty to their family and tribe is greater than any other obligation.

Therefore, when faced with a problem, many of the parents who participated in this study judge it on the basis of Islamic teachings, traditional values and norms or the stipulations of government legislation, and very often the traditional norms supersede those of Islam or law, as can be seen from the above quote. Hence, while parents acknowledge that some forms of physical punishment of children are a crime and not in line with the teachings of Islam, they still do not report it, as traditional values underscore the importance of the family unit. Within this context, there is a clear suggestion that children are in a fragile position in Libyan

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[149] See the section on parents' rights in Islam in under section 5.3.
[150] See section 5.6.
[151] See the section on physical discipline methods under section 7.3.1.

Arab society. From one side, parents are given the absolute right (traditionally) to do what they want with their children and children are expected to obey their parents totally. Hence, in cases of parents abusing their children, family and community members would not report them.

Perceptions of Children in Local Traditions

In this study, all the parents (questionnaire and interview respondents) who use physical punishment with their children used the term 'Devil;شيطان' to describe their children. They explained it as traditionally meaning over-active and needing to be controlled. This is totally opposite to Islam's perception of children as 'angels'[152]. This perception could possibly reflect that those parents have a devalued attitude towards children, which increases their use of physical punishment of their children (Thompson et al 1999). In general, 18 parents who were interviewed in this study expressed that children are traditionally considered as too ignorant to understand, too young to know their own best interests, and they are always their parents' children (owned) regardless of their age. Further, they admitted that they believe in these traditions and treat their children accordingly. Although my sample is small, these results are consistent with Gadour's (2006) finding that children in Libya are considered as 'Jahal; جاهل', which means ignorant, thus children's faith is shaped by their parents. Five parents in this study admitted that these perceptions of children lead them to force their children to follow the path that they believe is right, ignoring their children wishes. A housewife (age 44) said, 'I always say to my children, you have to follow my advice. Whatever I say is right'. Interestingly, some of those parents give themselves the right to behave in a particular way, but do not allow their children to do the same, using physical punishment when this occurs. For example, a housewife (age 43) stated, 'I use physical punishment with my children because I do not want them to adopt my bad behaviour. They have to listen to my advice'.

Children in this study also seem to be influenced by the local traditions regarding perceptions of children. All the children who were interviewed (10 out of 10) consider children as unable to understand and believe that their parents are more knowledgeable than them and can choose the right decisions on their behalf. A female child (age 15) said:

> In our culture, parents are responsible for their children; they know right from wrong and what is best for us. They do not use physical punishment unless it's for our own good.

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[152] See the section on Islam and its impact on Arab families under section 5.3.

This could suggest that both parents and children believe that children's voices are not important, as indeed, was acknowledged by three parents in this study. A housewife (age 44) said, 'we were brought up in the belief that children do not understand, so we should not listen to them'. Children in this case, are considered to be 'seen and not heard', as Jones (2007; 2008) argues. This could explain the lack of studies reflecting the views of Arab children. Gadour (2006) argues that adults and children in Arabic countries take for granted these negative perceptions of children, which has led to neglect of children voices in Arab literature.

Precedence of Arab Traditions over Islam in Libya

Looking through the findings of this study, participants clearly made a distinction between Islam and Arab traditions in terms of their influence on parental use of physical punishment. They are aware that many of their behaviours and beliefs are affected by Arab traditions which predate Islam (Al Jahiliyya time), as explored earlier. Indeed, a renowned Arabic Islamic leader, Abdul-Kafi (2012b), argues that many of the negative norms and habits acquired by Arabs during Al Jahiliyya time (before Islam) still have a deep influence on modern Muslims Arabs, which should not be the case. The findings of this study indicate that Arab traditions seem to have more influence on parenting compared to Islam[153]. For instance, parents in this study were aware that traditionally there are two types physical punishment, light and severe, both of which parents have the right to use if they choose to do so[154]. However, they reported that they were not aware of the concept of child abuse in Islam[155]. Therefore, parents in this study seem to have different definitions of physical punishment and abuse compared to Islamic leaders[156].

Further, the findings seem to suggest that the power of traditions appears to be very strong, to the degree that many parents in this study take from Islam what fits with their traditions and their personal beliefs rather than the other way around. Indeed, Habib (2012) claims that Islam has little influence on Muslim Arab parents, who seem to pick from Islam what fits with their interests. For example, although the Prophet urges people to respect older people and treat children with tenderness[157], participants reported that respecting older people is a fundamental tradition but being kind to children does not carry the same weight. Parents reported that they sometimes use a 'good slap' to force a child to respect older people, and

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[153] See how parents make a distinction between Islam and traditions in p.181.
[154] See the section on physical discipline methods under section 7.3.1.
[155] See the section on physical discipline methods under section 7.3.1.
[156] See the section on controversy over the use of physical punishment – as a last resort – among Arab Muslim leaders under section 5.3.
[157] See the section on children's rights in Islam under section 5.3.

by beating their children, parents fail to show mercy towards them. Furthermore, in this study, despite the fact that the fathers and mothers interviewed who use physical punishment acknowledged that in Islam, a child should not be beaten on delicate areas, such as private areas, the face and the head, they admitted that they slap their child's face out of anger, as shown earlier. On the other hand, they reported that they avoid beating children on private areas, especially in the case of girls, in order to protect their virginity, which traditionally is highly important, because of the concepts of shame and honour[158]. This could suggest that in some cases, parents pick only the Al.Hadiths that suit them, ignoring the rest. Based on my experience, some people in Libya seem to pick and choose even from fatwas delivered by Islamic leaders. For instance, when parents ask Muslim leaders about whether they can use physical punishment, those leaders generally start by saying yes and then they discuss the limitations. However, many people do not pay attention to the rest of the fatwa, as they pick up on the first few words that they want to hear. Islamic leaders need to develop new techniques for delivering fatwas when they deal with ordinary people.

Another example of picking and choosing from Islam is that although both parents and children have rights in Islam[159], parents and children who took part in this study were aware of how children should treat their parents but not how parents should treat their children[160]. Further, despite Islam recognising that children need affection, only two parents in this study acknowledged that [161]. Furthermore, child-rearing methods in Islam are based on encouraging good child behaviour[162]. However, all of the parents in this study who use physical punishment believe that physical methods set a limit to a child's misbehaviour and parents rarely mentioned the need to support good behaviour.

Overall, why does Islam have so little influence on the behaviour of some Muslim Arab Libyan parents in this study? Firstly, the historical changes that Muslim society went through[163] cannot be ignored. Muslim culture declined during the 19th century, which led to Muslim countries being colonised by the West. This influenced local laws and social values to different degrees. In the case of Libya, the country was colonised by the Italians, who tried to impose Western values. However, this was resisted by the majority of ordinary people at that time. The Libyans had some well-educated leaders (Islamic education), for instance, "Omar Mukhtar;عمر المختار ", who was the leader of the Libyan resistance (Al.Salaabi, 2010; Elbendak 2008). It can be argued that because many of those leaders, who used to teach

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[158] See the section on child's gender under section 8.3.
[159] See the sections on children's rights and parents' rights in Islam under section 5.3.
[160] See the next section.
[161] See the next section.
[162] See the section on child-rearing in Islam under section 5.3.
[163] See section 5.4.

Islam, were murdered, Islamic values decreased while ordinary people held on firmly to their national Arab culture as part of their identity. After the independence of Libya, there was a slow resurgence of Islamic education in the country. However, by then the previous generation appeared to be passing on many Arab traditions with little influence from Islam to the present generation, through child-rearing practices. In addition, an important point that can be added here, and which a few parents in this study mentioned, is that the use of violent methods, including physical punishment, during colonial times -by Italians towards Libyans- could have contributed to some degree to the belief in and use of physical punishment in modern Muslim Libyan society. The parents explained that as Libyan people were beaten and verbally insulted to force them to do things, over time, they adopted this form of treatment as the only way to make others obey them, and they (consciously or unconsciously) passed these beliefs and use of violent methods on to their children through their disciplinary methods. Secondly, the findings of this study seem to indicate that there is a gap between Islamic leaders and parents in modern Libya. This could be because many Islamic leaders have not delivered enough sermons to raise awareness about Islamic teaching on children's rights and child discipline methods[164]. It also could be related to their use of seemingly ineffective strategies and methods of communication to deliver fatwas, as explored earlier. Indeed, Mansour (2014) blames mainly the Islamic Arab leaders for the current situation where parents do not know how to discipline their children within the Islamic manner, which has led many of them to abuse and even kill their children under the name of discipline.

Influence of Lack of Knowledge and the Need for Educational Programmes

This study indicates that the majority of participants lack knowledge about children rights, child development stages[165], healthy discipline methods and the negative effects of the use of physical punishment on children's wellbeing.

When parents and children who were interviewed in this study were asked about children's rights, they were not sure about it. All the children reported that they do not know their rights, and they asked back what was meant by children's rights. However, some tried to answer the question and they mainly mentioned that parents should feed their children and send them to school. A female child (age 15) said, 'I do not know about children's rights, but education is important'. In addition, it was reported by another child that children have to give parents their rights first in order to obtain their own rights. A male child (age 16) said, 'my father always said you will get your rights after respecting me and giving me my rights first'.

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[164] See the next section.
[165] See the section on child's age under section 8.3.

Interestingly, Islam teaches that Muslim parents are expected to look after their children - giving them their rights first- and only then can they ask for their rights[166].

Regarding parents' responses to children's rights, they also mentioned the need to meet their essential needs and their right to education. A housewife (age 44) said, 'I do my best to supply the basic needs. I try not to make them feel they are lower than others'. Meanwhile, a father who is head of a scout group (age 48) said:

> There are basic rights such as providing clothes, food and shelter. In addition, education, it is so necessary and any parents who do not send their child to school should be punished.

According to Al.Uthaymeen (n.d.), merely providing the basic needs for a Muslim child does not amount to good care. Islam emphasises that at the top of the list of children' rights is the need for affection. However, just two parents in this study mentioned that, including a housewife (age 44) who commented as follows:

> Providing love and care to children is their right. I sometimes hug all of my children at once (group hug) then we start kissing each other, they love it. I believe that is a good thing to do, to make them think that I love them, despite the fact I use physical punishment.

On the other hand, a few parents expressed that the local traditions discourage people from expressing affection towards others, including children, especially after they grow up. One father, a social worker (age 55) said:

> A word of love in our society is a big shame traditionally (Aeab;عيب). Whenever you say to your girl or wife "you look beautiful", other people think you are shameless or a crazy person. They are not used to expressing their feelings. I do not blame them, this is the way they were brought up and they pass it on to their children.

Except for the mother who was quoted in the previous paragraph, it appeared during the interviews that all fathers and mothers who use physical punishment (14) assumed that despite their use of physical methods with their children, their children know that they love them without them having to say so. Parents believe that the use of physical punishment is for the child's own good, while many children in this study expressed their negative feelings about it[167]. Parents' failure to express their love for their children combined with their use of physical methods could affect the parent-child relationship negatively. Indeed, two parents in this study expressed that the relationship between them and their children has broken down because of the use of physical punishment. One of these, a mother who is a teacher (age

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[166] See the section on parents' rights in Islam under section 5.3.

[167] See section 7.3.4.

43) said, 'one of my sons has started telling me that he hates me and always reminds me of my misuse of physical punishment'. Indeed, research shows that one of the negative effects of parental use of physical punishment is the consequent existence of poor quality relationships between parents and their children (Ulman and Straus 2003; Smith 2006; Gershoff 2002).

Parents who were interviewed explained that their lack of knowledge about children' rights was due to traditions only teaching people about parents' rights and not children's rights. One father, head of a scout group (age 48) said, 'unfortunately, in our traditions, we focus on our rights more than our responsibilities and children are not aware of their rights'. On the other hand, when fathers, mothers and children who were interviewed in this study were asked about parents' rights, all of them offered responses very quickly compared to their responses to the question about children's rights. Clearly, parents and children have been taught about children's duties towards their parents but little about children's rights. All fathers, mothers and children who were interviewed claimed that the main duty of children towards their parents is to be 'Muadib; مؤدب', children who respect and obey their parents. In addition, some parents added that children need to do well at school, be good Muslims and look after their parents when they get older. Another father, an employee (age 40) said:

> Children's duties are obedience, doing well at school and making their parents proud. In addition, religious values are important, so I want them to sow seeds of love, altruism, dimensions of selflessness.

Moreover, a housewife (age 44) stated:

> I want them to be polite children and take care of me when I get older. I work so hard on them now, and I want them to appreciate that and look after me in the future.

However, it can be argued that some Islamic Arabic leaders contribute to the existing situation regarding people's lack of knowledge about children's rights and their knowing more about parents' rights[168]. Indeed, based on my experience, there are many Islamic leaders who focus more, through their educational programmes via the media, on parents' rights compared to children's rights. They think that parents never forget their children but children always need to be reminded of their parents' rights. This view is also shared by Arabic Islamic leaders such as Al.Nabulsi (2013b)[169]. This understanding among some Islamic leaders may also be the reason for many parents' lack of knowledge about the Islamic view of child abuse. However, it can be argued that some Islamic leaders to some

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[168] See the section on parents' rights in Islam under section 5.3.
[169] See the section on parents' rights in Islam under section 5.3.

extent are influenced by the local traditions and/or working under formal control. Based on my experience, Islamic leaders in Libya were controlled by the Government and/or the presenters of T.V. or radio programmes, especially regarding what to say about women's rights. Indeed, some would focus on husbands' rights and mention only basic needs in relation to their wives.

With regard to parents' knowledge about child disciplining methods, 15 parents, and mothers in particular, reported that they do not have enough knowledge about how to deal with their children's misbehaviour, except to use physical punishment. Three acknowledged that this method does not lead to the required results but they still use it as they do not know any alternative, positive methods. One mother, a teacher (age 43) said, 'even though I use physical punishment, it so often leads to unwanted results. It makes a child more stubborn but I do not have another choice'. Moreover, another mother, a secretary in a primary school (age 31) said, 'physical punishment makes children more stubborn and not scared of it anymore. But I do not know much about other, healthy discipline methods'. These findings are similar to the finding of the Iranian study by Hughes et al (2008) that mothers tend to use physical punishment because of a lack of knowledge about alternative methods of disciplining children. Furthermore, 12 parents who use physical punishment failed to see the negative effects of the use of physical punishment. A housewife (age 31) said, 'physical punishment does no harm to children'. Three parents who do not use physical punishment acknowledged that some parents in Libya lack parenting skills in general. One of these, a housewife (age 44) said, 'here, there are some parents who do not know how to deal with children and need help. They need to learn how to bring up a child in the right way'. Meanwhile, a father, a lecturer (age 53) said:

> Some parents do not know how to rear their children without mistreating them. This means they will produce useless members of the nation. Take criminals as an example, if you carry out research on them, you are going to find that the majority of them have been mistreated by their parents and suffered from a lack of love and care.

Views on the Government's Role and Intervention

More than half of the parents (53%) who responded to the questionnaire and all interviewees who use/experience physical methods (15 parents and 9 children) were against the government intervening in family life directly. They think that the Government should intervene indirectly in family life by raising awareness via seminars, the media and special social centres, but not directly, as they consider family life to be a private matter. One father, head of a scout group (age 48) said, 'the Government should focus on raising awareness through the media and seminars, but not intervene directly in family life. It is not their

business. In addition, a housewife (age 55) stated, 'the Government cannot intervene directly in everyday practices such as child-rearing. That is not their concern'.

When participants were asked about the government's role, nearly three quarter of fathers and mothers (47 out of 66) who responded to the questionnaire reported that the Government do not offer any educational programmes regarding parenting skills and disciplining children. In addition, 18 of the parents who were interviewed consider that the Government plays no role in teaching parenting skills. A housewife (age 30) stated, 'the state does nothing about teaching parents how they can manage their children in a healthy way'. However, all parents who were interviewed (20 out of 20) reported that they would like the Government to provide educational programmes to parents through seminars and lectures. Further, 5 children were of the same opinion. For example, a female child (age 15) said:

> The Government should offer advice to parents. This will help parents to do their duty well. For example, when parents use physical punishment with their children and leave them without any explanation and when parents ignore their children's cries or neglect them. Parents need somebody to point out the consequences of their actions.

Three parents acknowledged that cultural values would be obstacles to conducting such educational programmes (seminars). However, they suggested some solutions. A father who is a lecturer (age 62) stated:

> I know it may be difficult in the beginning of these programmes to attract people to attend but the Government needs to persists in doing them, which will enable them to succeed sooner or later.

Meanwhile, another father, an employee (age 40) said:
> Culturally, we have not reached the stage where we will go and seek out seminars to attend. So it will be much better if the Government offers awareness programmes to parents at their work sites as a beginning step. In addition, provide programmes on T.V. for parents who are at home.

18 of the parents who were interviewed believe that Libyan T.V. was doing nothing to raise awareness among parents. A housewife (age 45) said:

> The media is so important in raising awareness. I watch many programmes about disciplining children on other Arabic channels but nothing on Libyan channels. We do not have any such programmes.

Indeed, the Libyan media seems to be doing nothing to promote children's rights and challenge public attitudes (League of Arab States 2010). Lack of media reports on such issues was found to be one of the reasons behind parents' lack of knowledge about child abuse and its various forms (Hesketh and Lynch 1996). Based on my experience, the topic

of parental use of physical punishment as a form of child maltreatment has not been raised directly via educational programmes. Although some professionals have gone on T.V. and radio to advise parents not to use violent methods with their children, they have not challenged the concept that it is the parents' right to use such methods. In other words, professionals would speak to parents in the same way as if you were to advise somebody not to drink alcohol or smoke: although it is harmful to their health, it is their body and they are free to choose what to do. Also, children also are considered to be owned (possessions) by their parents and whilst parents can be advised, ultimately they are free to do what they want with their children. In order to introduce effective awareness programmes for parents in Libya, traditional beliefs need to be addressed first.

Further, seven parents expressed their desire to see the Government work on establishing social and sport centres for families and children. A father, a lecturer (age 44) said:

> Our children have too much free time and a lack of time-management. Children are full of energy and want to release it but, unfortunately, that energy is not channelled into the right activities. It is wasted in fighting with their siblings or in the street, where they mix with others and learn bad language. So the Government should establish sports centres for children, to fill their free-time.

In addition, housewife (age 44) said:

> The summer holiday lasts more than three months. This means that children are at home with me for too long, which leads me to use physical punishment more. If the Government established special places where children and families could go, I would consider stopping the use of physical punishment.

Just one mother, a teacher (age 45) made the point that the Government's role is not only to focus on providing educational programmes but also it should provide social centres and professional advice for the public. She said, 'I suffer from depression and have an unhealthy relationship with my children but I did not know where to go to seek help regarding my wellbeing and parenting skills until you told me''. This suggests that the Government needs to do more to help the public in such cases. Yet, there seems to be no connection or relationship between the Government and professionals[170]. Indeed, four fathers and mothers highlighted the need for the Government to support professionals, in particular social workers in schools, to raise awareness about children's rights. One such father, head of a scout group (age 48) said, 'Governmental and voluntary organisations and the social work sector should work together to support the work of social workers in schools'. Indeed, social workers and other professionals play an important role and they need to be supported by the

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[170] See section 9.3.

Government[171].

Disconnection between Legislation and Child Protection Policy in Libya

To create a general picture of Libyan legal policy regarding children, I should mention that, there is a formal legal process that needs to be followed regarding issues relating to children. This process promotes parents' authority, in particular that of fathers over children, and this can discourage children from speaking up about abuse within the family. For instance, 'the family book' is a document that children have to have, before they can be issued with personal documents such as ID and/or a passport. Young people and adults who have suffered mistreatment from their family and try to speak up or leave home need this document in order to start school/work and/or get married. However, very often the family refuses to give it to a child, as a punishment. Therefore, children/women are left only with three difficult choices: either to accept the mistreatment and go back to their family, or they have to go to court to complain against their family, which takes a long time, with no social support or not doing either of these ways and instead, they commit some of anti-social behaviour and/or crimes to survivor. Further, the Libyan Government provides what is called 'family benefit', which is financial help offered to the head of the family, the father/husband, who is usually keeper of the family book, on behalf of all the family members. However, the state ignores the fact that some women/young people do not live with their biological family/husbands, despite their names still being in the family book, which means that the money does not reach them. The system still works on the supposition of family unity, ignoring the fact that there are some exceptions. This could reflect the need for the Government to adopt a more flexible policy, especially when dealing with women/children in exceptional circumstances.

With regard to the findings of this study, the study indicates that except the judge, no participants in the interviews were aware of any existing legislations regarding protecting children from the misuse of physical punishment. This could suggest that there is disconnection between the Government and the public. The judge who was interviewed in this study was asked about child protection policy within the family in Libya. She stated, 'we have legislations to protect children. Go and check the website of the General Committee for Justice and you will find these legislations there'. Yet the great majority of Libyans do not have access to the internet (Twati and Gammack 2006). However, when the lawyer who took part in this study was asked about child protection law within the family, she replied:

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[171] See section 9.3.

> Save yourself the trouble, as far as I know, we do not have any specific and clear law to protect children in cases of abuse by their parents. In addition, our law regarding family life has not changed since 1984, where children in relation to parents were mentioned in an article of law on divorced families.

It seems the lawyer has a different understanding of Libyan law from the judge. This could be because Libyan law uses confusing words that have different meaning for different people[172].

When the judge was asked about the mechanism of the law, she replied: 'if any child comes to me complaining about mistreatment by his/her parents, I will look at it'. Interestingly, she was too busy to meet me and I had to interview her over the phone, so how will children know about her and/or where to find her? This could indicate the real picture regarding practice of the law in Libya. There is a law but no mechanism to process it. Indeed, some parents in this study expressed that the issue in Libya is not about having a law but about enforcing it and, more importantly, it should be applied equally to all people regardless of their social or political stature in the country. For example, one father, a lecturer (age 44) said:

> In Libya, our problem is in enforcing the law rather than having laws. We have many laws but they are not used effectively. Further, laws here do not apply to everyone. If you are a big person or know somebody in power, you can get away with murder.

Further, a part of the mechanism of the law is offering protection for people who point out or intervene in cases of parental use of physical punishment. Three fathers who were interviewed in this study brought to light that the lack of support from the Libyan authorities makes them hesitant to intervene in such cases, in particular when it happens in a public place. A father who works as a librarian (age 35) said:

> There is no support from the police if I want to intervene when a parent uses physical punishment in public. Therefore, when parent(s) beat their children harshly in public, I have to look at the parent's physical appearance and their state of mind, before I intervene. You know some of them are strong and mad so they can beat me and harm me.

Despite the fact that parents who were interviewed in this study were not aware of any legislation, they were asked about their views on whether they think that the lack of a ban on the use of physical punishment is the reason behind parental use of physical punishment in Libya. Mothers and fathers reported that not only is the lack of criminalisation a reason for parents to continue using physical punishment but also the lack of public awareness about the issue. One mother, a secretary in a primary school (age 31) said, 'a lack of legislation, public awareness and absence of special parental centres could be the reasons behind our

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[172] See the section on a critique of Libyan child policy under section 5.6.

continuing use of this method'. Some think that raising public awareness is more important than having a law. A father, a lecturer (age 62) said:

> It may be that lack of legislation has an impact on use of physical punishment of children but the most important thing is to raise awareness. Whenever there is awareness, people automatically will avoid using physical punishment and they will ask for enforcement of the law.

Indeed, many studies have indicated that public debate about parental use of physical punishment has a positive impact on the beliefs and use of this method (Zolotor and Puzia 2010; Clement and Chamberland 2009). According to many participants in this study, the debate about this issue in Libya –as a Muslim society- should be incorporated with religion in order to increase acceptance among the general public[173].

In this study, when participants were asked their opinion on banning parental use of physical punishment, 28 out of 41 of parents who use this method reported that they would not support such a move. Further, all the fathers and mothers (15) interviewed who use physical punishment were not in favour of banning physical punishment at home and eight of them felt that the Government should ban only severe physical punishment. A father, a lecturer (age 62) said, 'the Government should work on raising awareness and not ban this form, but if they want to do so, it should be in cases of severe physical punishment only'. In addition, a housewife (age 43) said, 'No. Banning 'normal' physical punishment, definitely not, but in cases of severe physical punishment they should do so'. Regarding children's views, in this study, more than half (19 out of 34) of the children who responded to the questionnaires and all of those interviewed who experience physical methods (9 out of 9) were not in favour of the Government banning physical punishment at home. A male child (age 15) stated, 'having a law to ban the use of physical punishment would not help children. There would be more problems without the use of physical punishment'.

Participants who were interviewed in this study gave the following reasons for not being in favour of banning parental use of physical punishment: firstly, almost all of the parents and children consider parental use of physical punishment as a family matter and not the state's business. A housewife (age 19) said 'No. I would not support the Government banning physical punishment at home. This is a matter for the father and mother, not anyone else'. Moreover, a male child (age 15) said, 'rearing a child is the responsibility of the parents not the Government'. Studies conducted in other Arabic countries have also found that parental use of physical punishment is considered as family business, and that intervention by any formal body is unwelcome (Qasem et al 1998; Alyahri and Goodman 2008; Habasch 2005).

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[173] See quotations in section 10.5.

Secondly, many participants in this study think that physical punishment is a necessary method in educating a child. A housewife (age 55) asked, 'how is a child going to learn if the Government bans physical punishment? The Government should not intervene in everything'. Furthermore, a male child (age 16) said, 'Libyan society cannot stop using physical punishment. If physical punishment were banned, children would commit antisocial behaviours and crimes'. Also, a female child (age 15) stated, 'Libyan people do not understand without beating. Children do not realise their mistakes unless they are subjected to physical punishment'. In addition, some participants argued that the state lacks knowledge about their children. One father, a lecturer (age 46) said, 'nobody knows the personality of my children. So I can manage their behaviour better than anyone else'. Meanwhile, another father, a lecturer (age 44) said, 'nobody should intervene. Parents know better than anybody else about their children'. It is also strongly believed that banning parental use of physical punishment is a Western idea. A male child (age 15) said, 'in the USA parents cannot use physical punishment, but that's not so here'. Furthermore, a father who is a lecturer (age 62) said, 'we are different from Western countries. If the Government wants to ban physical punishment, the law should not clash with Islamic values'. Finally, a few participants fear that banning parents from using physical punishment would mean that parents would lose their power and control over their children. A father who is a lecturer (age 60) said:

> Banning physical punishment will lead to children rebelling against their parents. In this case, I will not be a father and there will not be respect between us. The child will be your peer not your child and the relationship will no longer be that of a father and his child.

In addition, a male child (age 15) said:

> Parents cannot control their children without using physical punishment. Parents use physical punishment to help children to avoid smoking, but with a law parents can do nothing.

9.6 Factors Related To Social Change over Time

This section explores social changes[174] and life events that occur over time. In addition, consideration is given to the war that Libyan society was experiencing at the time of the study and the way it appeared to influence the use of physical punishment of children.

Changes to Family Structure

A few parents in this study expressed that recently the divorce rate has risen in Libya

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[174] See the social structure in Libya in section 5.6.

compared to in previous generations. According to them, this is mainly because of people focusing of the wrong values when choosing a partner. For example, a father who is a social worker (age 55) said:

> The divorce rate among the younger generation is too high in Libya. Why? The choice of partner is wrong; people focus on physical appearance and how wealthy that partner is, rather than essential characteristics for starting a family.

This could suggest how far the society is from Islamic values regarding choosing the right partner[175]. Although the sample of children and parents from divorced families is very small (two), it was reported that children experience physical punishment and/or great emotional distress in such families. A male child (age15) who responded to the study questionnaire, wrote a note saying:

> My parents are divorced. I feel lost, spending some time with mum and her husband and other time with my father with his wife. I want to stay with my mum, but her husband does not like me and he sometimes beats me and my mum cannot do anything, and when I go to my dad I do not feel welcomed either by his wife.

This means that children in such circumstances are in urgent need of effective support and protection. Indeed, three fathers who were interviewed in this study acknowledged the need for the Government to protect children in broken families, such as children who have lost their parents (not in their care) and those whose parents are divorced. A father who is a lecturer (age 44) said:

> The Government should look after orphan children and children whose parents are divorced. Those children are in danger and more likely to commit crimes or antisocial behaviour. I have met a child of age 17-18 years, in the market, and he was sleeping in a tin hut, when I asked about him, I was told that his mum was dead and his father had remarried and neglected him. This child is more likely to drink alcohol or use drugs than others.

Another father, a lecturer (age 62) said:

> I asked my daughter who is a lawyer about whether we have a law to protect children in cases where their parents get divorced. She replied that we do not have one. This is really a problem, why aren't children protected in our society?

Changes in the Education System

Some participants in this study acknowledged that modern Libyan society went through negative changes with regard to the role of schools and teachers, which increased the use of physical punishment of children at home and in schools. One father, an employee (age 40)

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[175] See the section on children's rights in Islam under section 5.3.

said:

> In the past, schools helped parents to discipline children, because our parents were illiterate. So teachers used not to give us homework. They explained the lesson and gave us extra work in the class. However, these days, things are different. A child has homework and needs to revise at home. What if his/her both parents are working or not educated? The child will be punished at a school and home. That is not fair to the child. Teachers should acknowledge that and work with the family to help the child.

Indeed, teachers in this study mentioned that children need to do their homework and if they do not, teachers will beat them for that[176]. On the other hand, some parents admitted that although they cannot help their children with their homework, they beat them when have poor reports. For example, a housewife (age 43) said:

> I sometimes feel sorry for children, teachers ask them to do their homework and they expect us to help, but we cannot. They have very difficult lessons which are at a higher level than my education. However, I do beat my children when they get poor marks.

This would suggest that teachers need to acknowledge the background of their pupils, as they used to do in the past. Further, some parents in this study reported that in modern Libya, schools focus only on education and leave disciplining children to the family. One father, a lecturer (age 62) said:

> I wish the Government could focus on the role of schools in disciplining children. The Education Sector was called the 'Education and Discipline Sector', now it is just 'Education'. We used to study 'discipline and values' as modules at schools, which helped us to learn a lot of values but now schools just focus on filling a child's mind with information. Schools and families need to work together for children's good.

There seems to be disconnection not only between schools and families but also between families, schools and Islamic centres. A father who is an employee (age 40) commented, 'these days, schools, Islamic centres and families work separately. They should work together as they did before. They were one team working for the child's interests'. Indeed, teachers, sheiks and Islamic centres working together could be the solution that modern Libya society needs, because this could, by reducing the stress on parents, minimise the risk of parental use of physical punishment at home and also at school by teachers.

Libyan War (2011)

This study was carried out during the Libyan war (2011) and it was therefore important to assess its influence on parental use of physical punishment. The majority of fathers and

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[176] See the quote from a teacher in a primary school in section 9.3.

mothers (75.8%) and children (82.4%) who responded to the questionnaires reported that the conflict did not increase parental use of physical punishment, as indicated in Table 9.18.

Table (9.18) Impact of the Libyan Conflict on Parental Use of Physical Punishment

Did the conflict increase parental use of physical punishment?	Parents		Total (N=66)	Child's Sex		Total (N=34)
	Fathers (N=33)	Mothers (N=33)		Male (N=17)	Female (N=17)	
Yes	8 24.2%	8 24.2%	16 24.2%	4 23.5%	2 11.8%	6 17.6%
No	25 75.8%	25 75.8%	50 75.8%	13 76.5%	15 88.2%	28 82.4%

Despite the fact that all fathers, mothers and children who were interviewed in this study reported that they experienced a tremendously stressful time during the conflict, the majority (27 out of 30) claimed that parental use of physical punishment did not increase. Only three out of 30 participants (a father and two male children who use/experience physical punishment) reported that parental use of physical methods increased during the conflict and they attributed this to the high level of stress. A father who works as a librarian (age 35) said, 'I was so stressed at that time and I released my anger on my children'. In addition, a male child (age 15) said:

> During the conflict, my father became too careful and paid attention to the time when I came back home. He had a lot of fear that I might have been injured or kidnapped if I came home late. I had to be home early, otherwise, I would be beaten.

It seemed that fathers were using this method more than mothers during the conflict, in particular with teenage boys. This could reflect the local tradition of considering fathers to be responsible for disciplining teenage boys[177].

On the other hand, six out of 30 participants who use/experience only non-physical disciplinary methods reported that the war did not change parents' methods of disciplining children. Further, 10 out of 24 of participants who use/experience physical punishment -three fathers, three mothers and four children- also stated that the conflict did not affect the use of physical disciplinary methods. None of them considered the conflict to be a good reason for increasing the use of physical punishment. A female child (age 15) said, 'the conflict did not change my parents' methods of disciplining. It has been the same before and during and after the conflict'. However, it was mentioned by some of them that parents told off and shouted at their children more often during this time. For example, a female child (age 10) said, 'my parents told us off more, especially when they wanted to watch the news, and we

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[177] See section 7.3.4.

were playing loudly. But that did not affect the use of physical punishment, it was the same'. This view was confirmed by a father, an employee (age 40) who said:

> The only problem was that I have one T.V. and I was following the news and my children were shouting that they wanted to watch a cartoon and I was shouting at them back, but after a while, I bought a new T.V. to watch the news and left them watching their programmes.

The rest of the participants who use/experience physical punishment (11out of 24) -five mothers, three fathers and three children- reported that, in fact, the conflict reduced the use of physical punishment by parents. A male child (age 16) said, 'during the conflict my parents reduced the use of physical punishment a lot'. Meanwhile, five mothers and a father reported that the conflict not only reduced the use of physical methods but it also made them more compassionate with their children. A housewife (age 30) said:

> The conflict made us kinder and awakened in us many emotions that we had forgotten about. That we and our children are going to die one day, so we have to give them love and care.

The reported differences between mothers and fathers on reducing physical punishment and feeling sympathetic towards their children could possibly be because of gender differences. However, both fathers and mothers explained the decrease in their use of physical punishment as being due to the increased possibility of death or injury, and they felt it was a time for protecting their children and not for punishing them. In addition, some believed that the conflict was an unfair punishment of the whole of Libyan society. As a father, a lecturer (age 44) stated:

> Definitely, the conflict reduced the use of physical punishment of children. Because what happened to Libya is a punishment in itself of all Libyans and that is more than enough punishment.

Furthermore, a housewife (age 31) stated:

> Although we were so stressed, we reduced the use of physical punishment. I was scared of feeling guilty if my child was killed or injured by a bullet. Then I would regret using physical punishment. So why should I use physical punishment when I was under threat of losing them or they could lose me at any moment? At least, if I died, they would have a nice memory of me.

However, the negative effects on children of the armed conflict were mentioned by some parents. One mother, a teacher (age 35) said:

> The conflict left an impact on my daughters' behaviour and thoughts. Despite the fact that they are girls, they started talking about beating, violence, killing and war and playing war games.

Indeed, from my own observation, it was noticeable that the Libyan conflict had a great effect on children's views and attitudes towards violence. Children seemed to play war games more often than before the conflict. In addition, they seemed to accept the idea of exercising authority through violent means, such as by using guns[178]. Furthermore, some parents and children reported that the conflict influenced children's wellbeing. They described some symptoms of what is called post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This is consistent with the finding by Thabet et al (2004) and Charlson et al (2012) that people, including children, who live in a war zone develop different forms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). For example, children in this study reported that they developed unreasonable fear, sleep disorder, nightmares, and inability to sleep without the light or to stay alone in a room. A female child (age 12) said, 'I fear sleeping without the light on and fear the loud sounds a lot. I feel that fights and bombing can break out and harm me at any time'. Furthermore, a housewife (age 31) said, 'since the war started, my daughter's behaviour has changed completely. She is unable to sleep, cries at every little sound and feels on edge most of the time'. Other parents and children also indicated that they started feeling scared when they saw a plane in the air, and without thinking they lay down on the floor. Actually, I witnessed such a reaction from a few participants while I was interviewing them.

On the other hand, a few mothers stated that the conflict had a positive impact on their husband by making them more co-operative with in child-rearing. One of these, a mother who is a secretary in a primary school (age 31) stated, 'the conflict changed my husband completely. Now, he spends more time with the children and goes with them to the park. He was not like that before the conflict'. This could possibly indicate that some parents' perceptions and attitudes towards parenting may have been changed by their experiences during the war.

9.7 Conclusion

Chapter 9 presents the findings related to the external factors (family, community, professionals and culture norms) which seem to influence parental use of physical punishment. This chapter discussed how parents made a clear distinction between Islam, traditions and law through using words such as (حرام; Haram), (عيب;Aeab) and (crime; جريمة) and they explained that much of their behaviour related to child-rearing is dominated by traditional norms that supersede those of Islam or law. They reported that the use of physical punishment of children mainly occurs as a result of local traditions that accept it, justify it and expect parents to use it. Further, the lack of knowledge about the negative effects of using

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[178] See section 6.4.

physical methods and alternative, healthy discipline methods, and most important, the lack of understanding of many Islamic principles related to child discipline and failure to adhere to many Islamic values all contribute to the belief in and use of this method. In addition, parental anger seems to have a big influence on the use of this method. For example, parents admitted that they respond to the stress deriving from having a small age gap between children and the tension between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law by beating their children. They also revealed that a fit of anger is among the key reasons behind using some physical methods with their children which are banned in Islam. The use of this method out of anger also seemed to be one of the reasons behind its use in schools by teachers. Although children consider that teachers do not have the right to use physical methods and only parents have the right to discipline them using these methods, children who have experienced this method at Islamic centres consider this as fair. This is because the rules on its use are clear and it is not based on the mood of the sheiks. Except for the Islamic leader (Sheikh) in this study, all the other professionals seemed to be unaware of the meaning of the concept of child abuse; instead, they were only familiar with the concept of parent abuse (عقوق), which refers to the mistreatment by children of their parents. Professionals also reported that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is interpreted based on the Arabic context and not on the Western context. This means that the definitions of abuse and abusers are different in each context, which consequently means that in practice, the UN convention will be implemented differently. The findings suggest that the Libyan Government seems to play no role in terms of raising awareness about child disciplining methods, children's rights and child protection legislation. It was indicated that there is real disconnection between the Government, parents and professionals. In fact, it seems that there is disconnection between the Government's claims regarding protecting children by following Islamic values and the reality. Chapter 9 also indicates that Libyan society has undergone many negative social changes, such as in the family structure, education system and more recent changes due to exposure to the war of 2011, impacts of which have included increased parental use of physical punishment and/or negative effects on children's and parents' wellbeing.

Chapter 10: Conclusion and Implications
Looking Back and Looking Forward

10.1 Introduction

It is important to acknowledge that this study was carried out on a small scale, with a sample of 108 Libyan parents, children and professionals, which does not enable me to make generalisations, but there are some tentative conclusions that can be drawn and clearly need testing out further in other studies. This chapter starts by looking back on the journey of doing my research in terms of identifying its limitations, strengths, and the main things that I would change if I could. This is followed by a summary of the main findings of this study which includes some recommendations to policy makers and highlights new areas that need more investigation.

10.2 Limitations and Strengths of the Study

As with any research, this study has some limitations. The study focuses only on the use of physical punishment by fathers and mothers and it does not include the use of this method by loco-parental figures such as aunts and grandparents who, in Libya, commonly participate in child-rearing using this method. Actually, while I was visiting social gathering places to look for parents who might be interested in taking part in my study, some women approached me and asked to take part in the study. However, when I found out that they were not parents, I apologised but had to turn them down. Interestingly, they were not happy and considered my focusing only on parents as unfair as they share the duties of looking after their nieces and nephews. One of these women said:

> Why cannot I take part in this study? This is not fair. My nephews stay with me while their parents are working. I take care of them and deal with their misbehaviour as their parents do.

However, they inspired me to conduct another research study which will include all such parental figures. In addition, as a result of the armed conflict in Libya, the scale of the sample in this study was relatively small and it did not cover all parts of the country. The sample was limited to geographic areas which were closest to the researcher's residence or safe to reach. Further, doing research during a time of the war in Libya also had an impact on applying the theoretical framework fully. Data collection for the study was already framed around particular themes regarding child discipline methods. They were: child discipline

methods, perceptions, experiences and the practice of non-physical methods and parental use of physical punishment, factors influencing the use of physical punishment of children, the influence of traditions, law, Islam and the Libyan war on parents' use of physical punishment and distinguishing between physical punishment of children and child abuse. The way in which certain themes were already framed by the data collection methods can be seen as one of the limitations in the application of a social constructionist approach within the study. Furthermore, because of the limited time and cultural differences, it was difficult to interview fathers, mothers and children from the same family. Parent and child participants in this study were therefore drawn from different families. Interviewing family members from the same family could help to make more accurate comparisons between parents' and children's responses.

Despite its undoubted limitations, this study also has some significant strengths. It can potentially contribute to filling gaps in the literature about parenting and child discipline methods in the Libyan context, in particular because both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered on the perceptions, experiences and practices of a diverse sample. The sample of the current study represents a wide spectrum of people from different areas, people of both genders, adults in different employment groups and young people of different ages. Some professionals' views have also been captured. In addition, this study offers specific discussion about the Libyan context in terms of the influence of Arab traditions and Islam on the Arab Muslim family. The fact that this study was conducted during the Libyan armed conflict gives it the extra value of demonstrating the impact of the war on family life, particularly on parental use of physical punishment. Furthermore, it explains some of the political, contextual and practical challenges in carrying out empirical fieldwork in such a different and complex context. This study also has implications in terms of potential changes to policy and support services.

10.3 Reflection on the Current Study

I need first to acknowledge how much I have learned through the process of this study. I have developed my knowledge about parental use of physical punishment, the concept of child abuse and related issues. In addition, as a result of studying in the UK, I had the opportunity to understand the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in its full context, which is so important for me as a professional working in this field. Further, being abroad expanded my horizons and enabled me to look at my topic from different angles. I also developed skills in using research software such as SPSS and NVIVO. Furthermore, I gained experience of working calmly under pressure in the stressful context of the Libyan

war. In addition, through my discussions with people from different groups (pro and anti-government) during the fieldwork, I learned to be more tolerant of other viewpoints.

However, after I finished the thesis, I looked back and wished I could have done certain things differently. For example, I wished that the study could have been carried out in the pre-war period. Despite the study producing very important findings in the area of the impact of war on parenting, the circumstances during the Libyan war made my situation while I was in the UK and during the fieldwork in Libya extremely tense, stressful and, most important, I felt I was in a very vulnerable position emotionally and financially, and had to decide what was the best for me, which was very difficult and confusing. Further, despite questionnaire being a useful method for collecting primary data, I would prefer to conduct interviews on any matter related to family life, as the interviews gave me the chance to interact more closely with the participants and to gain a deeper understanding of their views about the topic. In addition, this study focuses on fathers, mothers, children and professionals and I would not in future consider using mixed methods research for studying that number of different groups. It could be argued that the use of mixed methods enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the topic through approaching it from different perspectives. However, regardless of the pressures of limited time and budget, it was very challenging to find the appropriate way to present the data. I spent about 20 months changing the structure of presenting the findings. Initially, I presented the data from the questionnaires in two chapters – one for children and another for parents. These were followed by four chapters of interview data -children, fathers, mothers and professionals- and the discussion took up another chapter. Then the structure was changed to include the discussion within the data rather than presenting it separately, to make it easier for the reader to follow. However, by then, it was acknowledged that there was much similarity between the interview data from fathers and mothers so the decision was made to mix the two sets of data and point out any differences between the two as they arose. Thus the structure consisted of presentation of questionnaire data (parents and then children separately) and then interview data (parents, children and professionals separately). However, the findings of the study were too lengthy and complex and it was necessary to restructure the thesis again in order to keep it within the word limit set by the University of Sheffield. Therefore, questionnaire and interview data for parents were mixed in one chapter and data for children were presented in another chapter. However, as the thesis was still too long, the amount of data then had to be reduced, for example, by reducing the number of quotations and cutting out points which were considered to be of limited relevance. Despite all of this restructuring, the study was still too long. Therefore, to avoid too much compromise of the data, the only option was to mix the quantitative and quantitative data with the discussion on parents and children.

However, separation of the data on children and parents would be considered as a format for a future publication. Although each format was problematic, the option finally chosen helps to avoid repetition, makes the thesis easier to follow and keeps it within the word limit. Table (10.19) indicates the stages of developing the structure for presenting the data.

Table (10.19) Phases of Developing the Structure for Presenting the Data

Interview data	Questionnaire data
Structure 1	
Fathers	Parents
Mothers	Children
Children	
Professionals	
Discussion	Discussion
Structure 2	
Fathers+ Discussion	Parents+ Discussion
Mothers+ Discussion	Children+ Discussion
Children+ Discussion	
Professionals + Discussion	
Structure 3	
Fathers+ Mothers + Discussion	Parents+ Discussion
Children+ Discussion	Children+ Discussion
Professionals + Discussion	
Structure 4	
Parents' Data (Questionnaires+ Interviews+ Discussion).	
Children's Data (Questionnaires +Interviews+ Discussion).	
Professionals' (Interview Data)+ Discussion	
Structure 5	
Keeping the previous structure but cutting out a lot of data	
Structure 6	
Fathers+ Mothers +Children +Professionals + Discussion (Questionnaires+ Interview)	

10.4 Summary of the Study (Key findings and their implications for local policy and further research)

This study adopts social construction theory and ecological theory to understand child discipline methods within a Libyan context. Both theories emphasise the importance of understanding culture and the key elements of any given society to gain deeper insight into parents' behaviour and children's rights (Corsaro 2005; Christensen and James 2000; Woodhead 1997; Lupton and Barclay 1997). Further, social construction theory and ecological theory acknowledge that the practice of 'cultural norms' -which shape people's perceptions and behaviour towards child-discipline methods and children's rights- are different from one culture to another (O'Hagan 2001) and even among different social groups in the same country (Duncan 1998). They are also subject to change over time, even within the same country (Halpenny et al 2010; Anderson et al 2002; Hays 1996). However, it seems that there is a tension between theories and practices regarding the concept of 'children rights' across the world. Many researchers believe that the idea of 'children rights' is actually based on a Western theoretical framework (Mayall 2000) and cannot be

applicable without adaptation to other contexts (Twun-Danso Imoh 2012; De Waal 2002; Boyden 1997). For example, the UN Convention on the Right of the Child (UNCRC) which sets out universal rights, should, in theory, fit all children everywhere at all times but whether it does in practice is debatable (Merry 2001; Twun-Danso Imoh 2012). This may suggest that the UN did not adequately consider cultural differences in defining these rights, which consequently can mean that in practice, the UNCRC will be implemented differently across cultures. Indeed, the findings of this study seem to indicate that in Libya, local culture is central to the interpretation of Article (19) of the UNCRC, which requires protection of children from all forms of physical violence/abuse in all settings including the home. The understanding and practise of this Article seems to be influenced by Arabic local traditions in defining what 'physical abuse' is and who can be identified as an 'abuser'. This will be explored in the following paragraphs. Further, the study indicates there is a conflict between theory and practice even with Islamic Arabic Libyan culture. How Muslim parents are supposed to behave towards their children and how they should discipline them according to Islamic texts are different from the way parents do these things in practice, as can be seen in the findings.

Regarding the key findings, this study indicates that parents use both physical and non-physical methods to discipline their children. More than two thirds of the participants (69%) reported that physical punishment is commonly used alongside non-physical methods, while 31% claimed that they use/experience only non-physical methods. It was reported that fathers are more likely to use non-physical methods compared to mothers. This could be because of the influence of high level of education among fathers in this study. Parents who use only non-physical methods explained that this is because of the impact of their past (with or without violent methods) and their age. Meanwhile, parents who use a mixture of physical and non-physical methods reported that their choice of disciplining methods depends on their mood. If they are in a bad mood, they are more likely to use physical punishment; otherwise, they will use non-physical methods.

The findings seem to suggest that although a few parents who use only non-physical methods reported using positive non-physical methods such as stimulating the child, the majority seem to use negative non-physical methods such as telling the child off which includes shouting, scolding, intimidating and insulting the child. However, those parents, in particular fathers, think that non-physical methods are healthy and do not harm children (do not leave marks) as much as physical methods. On the other hand, the majority of mothers and children who use/experience physical methods think that the non-physical methods used mostly by fathers are worse than physical punishment. According to mothers and

children, non-physical methods damage and hurt children more, even though they do not leave visible marks, as the emotional effects (feeling upset and crying) last for a long time and it is used in the presence of others, which makes it more humiliating. It seems that fathers and mothers judge the effects of both physical and non-physical punishment on the visible effects and fail to see the negative effects of harsh non-physical and physical methods on children's wellbeing. Thus, this study recommends that parents should be provided with educational programmes about healthy and unhealthy child discipline methods. Also, it may be beneficial to carry out another study to explore use of non-physical methods by parents in more depth and how physical and non-physical methods affect children's wellbeing in both the short and long term.

Regarding the participants' perceptions of what physical punishment is, the majority believe that there are two types of physical punishment: light 'normal' and severe. Parents and children think that light physical punishment is a light hit on hands but they have different views about what constitutes severe physical punishment. Children emphasise that feeling pain for a long time and the use of objects qualify as severe physical punishment while parents consider only punishment causing serious physical injury as severe. In practice, many parents and children who use/experience physical methods expressed that parents use many physical methods, for example, hitting the child on the hands, using the hands or an object, slapping the face, putting pepper in the child's mouth a paper on the child's mouth and hitting anywhere on the child's body. However, fathers and mothers report that hitting a child on the hands is the most common method while children claim that the most common physical methods used on them are spanking on the rear and legs and hitting them anywhere on the body. These differences in responses between parents and children could be because they are from different families and/or parents may try to minimise the reality of their practice. Therefore, further research is needed that focuses on whole families, to find out more about the real picture of Libyan family life.

On the other hand, all parents and children reported that this was the first time they had heard the term 'child abuse', which made them think that it is a Western concept and not an Islamic one. The majority of children and mothers think that child abuse possibly means verbally insulting a child, while the majority of fathers believe that child abuse mainly means depriving a child of their basic needs (education and food), and spouses arguing in front of their children. However, the majority of parents and children expressed that parental use of physical punishment is not a form of abuse, as they believe that using physical methods of punishment aims to discipline 'educate' children which is considered to be the parents' right. They also reported that although some severe forms of physical punishment are used on

children -which are not acceptable and sometimes reach criminal levels-, they think that parents cannot be called abusers as they are the parents of that child and therefore have the right to administer physical punishment as they wish. In cases where a child's misbehaviour damages the family name, they think using such methods does not qualify as abuse because it brings the shame not only to a child but to all the family/tribe members. Participants also seemed not to consider the concept of child abuse as a matter for external intervention because it is considered to be parents' business. Furthermore, except for the Islamic leader, all the professionals were either not familiar with the meaning of child abuse or did not consider parental use of physical punishment as a form of abuse. They expressed that based on their interpretation and understanding of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, parental use of physical punishment is not abuse. This could possibly indicate that article (19) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not take into account cultural differences in defining violence and abusers against children. It should be noted that the sample of professionals was very small in this study, therefore, further research is needed to find out more about professionals' attitudes towards the use of physical punishment of children and their understanding of the UN convention articles. Based on such context, the Libyan Government and NGOs should work on raising awareness among professionals and the general community about parental use of physical punishment and child abuse. This could be achieved by establishing a child protection department/office in the Social Affairs Sector to work on defining and raising awareness about child abuse. So far, no such department/office exists in Libya to deal with child abuse cases. Another suggestion that could be made to policy makers in Libya is for inclusion of teaching modules about 'child abuse in Islam' for all students, from primary school to university level. This would be especially applicable to social work departments, as, according to one lecturer in the social work department at Tripoli University, students are currently taught nothing about child abuse. Most importantly, such modules should be taught by lecturers who are specialists in this area, to ensure good quality of the content.

With regard to participants' perceptions of physical punishment as a method of disciplining children, the majority of parents who use physical punishment of children consider (light) physical punishment as a necessary method and they find it difficult to imagine that a child would learn without it. Indeed, Oveisi et al (2010) also found that the majority of Iranian mothers in their study considered physical punishment as an important method for disciplining children and they questioned how a child would learn otherwise. However, the current study also includes children's perceptions about this method, which seem to be similar to those of parents. The children believe that physical punishment is necessary for disciplining children and expressed that good parents use physical punishment in order to

respond to a child's misbehaviour. On the other hand, children reported that, in fact, they do not learn when their parents beat them. They are frightened by their parents, so they learn only to avoid behaviour which annoys their parents, without knowing the reason why they should avoid it. Despite many parents and children thinking that physical punishment is for the children's own good, the children expressed that they feel sad, angry, frightened and confused after being subjected to parental use of physical punishment, while parents expressed regret over their use of this method as it is mainly used out of anger. Such feelings of unhappiness after the use of physical punishment among both parents (regret) and children (negative emotions) could indicate that this is not the best method for disciplining children.

Regarding factors that influence parental use of physical punishment, the findings seem to suggest that these factors include individual factors related to parents and children, such as gender and age, family characteristics such as family type, factors related to the community, such as place of residence and neighbourhood, parents' social support network and parents' work experience, and finally, factors related to culture, including traditions, knowledge and laws.

With regard to parental factors, it appears that parents' anger and/or bad mood are the key factors behind the use of physical punishment of children among my sample. The parents actually failed to give a conclusive answer about the type of misbehaviour that leads them to use this method. This may explain why some children reported that they sometimes feel confused because parents may or may not use this method for the same misbehaviour. This could also explain why the Islamic Arab leader Shubaily (2011a) argues that Muslim parents need first to explain clearly to their children what is right and wrong, what kind of punishment they will receive if they misbehave, and encourages parents to apply the punishment consistently regardless of their mood. Parents' anger seems not only to affect the use of physical punishment but also to influence the level of its severity. Parents and children claim that parents have no control over themselves when they are angry. They beat the child until they have released their anger, using any objects in front of them and offering no explanation to the child. This could suggest that the chance of physical abuse is high in such circumstances. Indeed, all the cases mentioned by certain parents, of severe physical punishment which led to broken bones, disability or the death of a child, were mainly because of parents' anger. This leads to the suggestion that the Government should work on developing child management skills and anger management among parents, in order to reduce the use of physical punishment and/or its severity. This study also indicates that there are other factors affecting parental use of physical punishment that relate to the

parents themselves. For instance, parents with limited and violent experiences of receiving physical punishment, fathers in general, older parents and fathers who had the chance to travel to developed countries were less approving of the use of this method with children. However, although in the parents' sample, it was indicated that parents who work as professionals and have a high level of education, particularly those who have PhDs, are less likely to use physical punishment, the children's sample reported experiencing physical punishment by their parents regardless of their level of education and work status. These differences between parents and children could be because they are from different families. Another point that should be mentioned is that despite this study indicating that mothers use physical punishment more frequently than fathers, parents reported that fathers spend most of their time outside the home. Hence, it would be worthwhile to conduct further study to measure the time that Libyan fathers and mothers spend at home, and compare this to the actual use of this method, to assess the link between these two factors.

Regarding factors relating to children, the findings seem to indicate that male children, younger children, in particular those aged 6-9, first-born children and children who are considered as disrespectful, disobedient and who fight a lot with their siblings are more likely to be subjected to physical methods by their parents. Further, the findings seem to suggest that although children accept the use of this method as their parents' right, negative emotional feelings and physical harm were both mentioned. The negative effects of this method seem to exceed harm to children's feelings and to affect child-parent, child-sibling and child-peer relationships. The study indicates that a few parents reported having unhealthy relationships with their children as a result of using this method. Further, children whose parents use physical punishment seem to learn that using this method is normal and acceptable in resolving interpersonal conflict with their siblings and peers (in the street and at school), which affects negatively their relationships with their siblings, peers and parents. In addition, children also expressed that they definitely will use physical methods for disciplining their own children in the future. Other studies also support the thesis findings by reporting that children who experienced parental use of physical punishment are more likely to have poor quality relationships with their parents and they also are more likely to use physical punishment with their siblings, peers and even with their own children in the future (Thornberry and Henry 2013; Simons and Wurtele 2010; Smith 2006; Ulman and Straus 2003; Gershoff 2002 Deater-Deckard et al 2003; Holden et al 1991). Hence, it would also be worth conducting a study in Libya to explore to what extent parental use of physical punishment affects children's relationships with their parents, siblings, peers and their own future children.

With regard to family and community factors, this study indicates that children who live in poor areas and children who live between two homes (parents' and grandparents' homes) are more likely to experience physical punishment. Further comparative research is needed in this area. Furthermore, it seems that disabled children, children from divorced families, and children who are orphans (living in and outside orphanages) experience physical punishment and/or great emotional distress. Further research is needed to find out more about children's experiences in Libyan residential care and the effects of divorce and separation on parenting and children's wellbeing. This could indicate to policy makers in Libya the urgent need for protection of all groups of vulnerable children and support for their families. It should be noted that in this study it was difficult to compare parents' and children's experiences in rural and urban areas because none of the children live in rural areas. Further study is needed to explore this area. Within professional settings in the community, the findings suggest that teachers are the most approving of using physical methods at home and school, in contrast to the Islamic leader who was against the use of this method. However, when some children were asked about their experiences at school and Islamic centres, they stated that they experience this method in both settings. Previous research also suggests that children are more likely to be subjected to physical punishment at school and Islamic centres (Shin and Koh 2005; Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2009). However, this study explored a new research area by studying children's perceptions of the use of physical methods in these settings (schools and Islamic centres) and the relationship between the use of physical punishment of children in homes, schools and Islamic centres. The findings suggest that parental use of physical punishment is influenced by children's behaviour at school but not at Islamic centres. For instance, children stated that when they fail to do their homework, get poor academic results and/or use bad (impolite) language at school, they experience physical punishment by both parents and teachers, while children who do not do their homework at Islamic centres are more likely to be beaten by sheiks but not by parents. This could be because parents consider formal education (school) to be vitally important to a child's future compared to non-formal education (at Islamic centres), which is considered supportive of their future. It is important to note here that many mothers in this study believe that children, in particular young children, learn bad (impolite) language at school, whereas school is supposed to be a place where they learn good manners. Therefore, this topic is also worthy of further investigation. Regarding children's perceptions of the use of physical methods at schools and Islamic centres compared to at home, children expressed more frustration with the use of physical punishment at school than at home. According to them, parents have the right to use this method but teachers do not. On the other hand, children accept the use of this method at Islamic centres as the rules are clear and firm from the beginning. Although children accept the use of this method by Islamic teachers, the latter are

actually not expected to use such methods. Further investigation is needed to find out the main reasons behind this phenomenon in Libya. Overall, this study seems to suggest that parents, schools and Islamic centres are working separately and it was suggested by some participants that cooperation between teaching centres and parents is needed to serve the best interests of children. For instance, teachers need to take special care of children, especially those whose parents are not well-educated, because those children are more likely to be subjected to physical punishment at teaching centres and at home.

Furthermore, it was also indicated that parental use of physical punishment did not increase during the armed Libyan conflict (2011). Many parents reported that child discipline methods (physical or non-physical punishment) did not change during the conflict. In fact, about half of the participants who use physical punishment reported that as a result of the war and the fear of death or loss of loved ones, they decreased their use of physical methods. Although some studies have focused on the influence of the war on children and family life (Boxer et al 2013; Robertson and Duckett 2007; Smyth et al 2004), unlike this study, none have considered its effects on parental use of physical punishment. Further, this study indicates that war has negative impact on children in terms of the use and acceptance of violence, as Boxer et al (2013) also argue. However, the negative impact of the war was noticed not only in relation to children but also communities and society as a whole. During my fieldwork, it was clear that Libyan society had been damaged and divided; therefore, further study of this topic is needed. On the other hand, this study indicates that the Libyan war had a positive impact on parenting, in particular among fathers, in terms of their taking a bigger part in child rearing than before the war. This finding is a new contribution to the literature and worth further investigation to find out more about how the war affected parenting styles.

With regard to the influence of Arab traditions on parental use of physical punishment, the study seems to suggest that local Arab traditions appear not only to encourage parents to use physical punishment but it is also expected in some situations, such as when disrespect is shown to parents and/or the elderly. Parents seem to be under social stress to rear their children in the expected manner (Adab;آداب), which is reflected in judgements of their parenting abilities, which consequently can affect the family's good name, a finding supported by other studies (Binghalib 2011; Shabbas 1979; Al-Krenawi and Graham 2000). Protecting the family name seemed to be the reason behind some parents refusing even to consider the idea of seeking professional help regarding any issue related to their children's misbehaviour. To challenge this perception some participants suggested that the Government should send a team of experts to provide educational programmes for parents in their work places along with delivering intensive programmes through the media, in

particular via T.V, for parents at home rather than expecting parents to seek professional help. On the other hand, almost all the participants stated that traditionally children are expected to obey their parents totally, with no complaint. Children also expressed their belief that their parents have absolute rights over them and they have to do as their parents ask. This highlights the need to carry out another study to explore to what extent parents do influence their children's lives in areas such as on their choice on career, marriage or divorce. In cases of parents' misuse of physical punishment, parents expressed that tradition does not encourage people to report such cases because it is considered a shameful act (Aeab:عيب) to report your own flesh and blood. This could reflect the power of parents' position in Libyan Arab society, which allows them to shape their children's future with no intervention from others when abuse occurs. This finding is unique in that it shows the whole picture regarding parents' and children's respective positions and the perceptions of intervention by others when parental use of physical punishment occurs within the influence of local traditions.

This study also diverges from other studies by addressing the influence of Islam on parental use of physical punishment. The findings seem to suggest that despite the fact that Libya is considered a Muslim country (Abubaker 2008), Islam appears to have little influence on parental use of physical punishment compared to traditions. Participants in this study made a clear distinction between Islam and tradition by admitting that some norms of Al Jahiliyya era (before Islam) still exist in modern Libyan society, such as belief in the absolute rights of parents over their children. They also clearly reflected the difference between Islam and tradition by using distinctive words such as 'Haram; حرام', 'Halal; حلال' and 'Aeab; عيب'[179]. It is vital to remember that as the literature[180] indicated, there is different understanding of Shariah among Muslims from different Islamic schools and ethnic groups. This study explores Arab Sunni/Malikis school perceptions. Therefore, it could be valuable to conduct other studies to explore or compare Sunni and Shiite Muslim and Arab Muslim views with those of non-Arab Muslims in matters related to child discipline methods.

With regard to the influence of Islam on parental use of physical punishment, fathers and mothers who were interviewed reported that Islam has nothing to do with parental use of physical punishment. Some expressed that lack of knowledge about many of the Islamic principles regarding child-rearing is the reason behind using this method, a view supported by Habib (2012). Therefore, it was suggested that the role of Islamic leaders regarding teaching child discipline methods that comply with Islamic thinking needs to be promoted

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[179] See section 1.4 for the definitions of these terms.
[180] See section 5.2.

more by the Government in Libya. Further, parents who use physical methods admitted that they are aware that their ways (practices) of disciplining children diverge from Islamic values. For example, some parents reported slapping children on the face (out of anger) despite the fact that they are aware that this method is banned in Islam. Furthermore, they seem to choose from Islam what fits with their personal interests and traditions. For instance, parents are aware that according to Islam a child should not be beaten on delicate areas, such as private areas and the face. In practice, they stated that although they may slap on the face they avoid beating girls on the private areas, to protect their virginity, which traditionally is extremely important. Habib (2012) also argued that Arab people tend to choose from Islam what fits with them. In addition, this study seems to suggest that there is a gap between Muslim leaders and Muslim parents. For instance, they differ in their definition of physical punishment and its limitations. Many parents think physical punishment using hands or objects is acceptable as long as it does not lead to serious physical injuries, while some Islamic leaders, for example, consider the use of physical punishment as a first resort, out of anger and using objects, as abuse; meanwhile, all parents were not even familiar with the term 'child abuse'. Thus, Islamic leaders in the country should be aware of that fact, in particular when they issue Islamic advice as 'fatwas' to parents, to prevent any misunderstanding of such fatwas. This area of difference is worth exploring in order to understand its roots and how it could be addressed.

Another factor that seems to influence parental use of physical punishment is parents' lack of knowledge about children's' rights, children's developmental stages, alternative healthy methods of disciplining children and the negative effects of using physical methods and negative non-physical methods on children's wellbeing. For example, the majority of parents and children summarised children's rights as meeting their basic needs, which includes providing food, clothes and education. On the other hand, they were clear about children's duties towards their parents. Parents explained the lack of knowledge about children's rights as deriving from the influence of local traditions that emphasise parents' rights at the expense of children's rights. However, it was suggested that even Islamic leaders have not done enough to challenge traditional values and promote Islamic values, possibly because they are also influenced by such traditions, as the findings seem to suggest that Islamic leaders seem to focus more on parents' rights than children's rights. However, they are supposed to give both groups (parents and children) the same attention, with great concern for children as a vulnerable group. It would be worth exploring in more depth the relevant motivations and challenges that face Islamic scholars, which may affect their attitudes and behaviours. In addition, the study seems to indicate that parents, in particular mothers with infants and toddlers, lack understanding of children's developmental stages, which causes

them to have unrealistically high expectations of their children that eventually, in most cases, lead to the use of physical punishment. Educational programmes about children's developmental stages are needed to bring about reduction in the use of physical methods. Indeed, Habib (2012) thinks that parents' lack of knowledge about children's basic needs is a major crime against children. Therefore, he encourages Arab policy makers to provide parents with short courses to explain children's needs at each stage of their lives. Further, parents in this study admitted to a lack of knowledge about other, healthy methods of disciplining children, which means they carry on using physical methods even though some acknowledged it does not lead to the required results. Indeed, there is literature evidence that parents who use physical punishment are more likely to lack knowledge about healthy forms of child discipline and that educational programmes are needed to raise awareness among parents about appropriate child discipline methods (Oveisi et al 2010; Ateah and Durrant 2005).

However, in this study, parents and professionals considered that the Government is doing nothing to raise awareness about parenting skills and child discipline methods. Professionals reported an absence of training about children' rights and abuse, as also identified by the UN (1998). However, although many parents and children expressed their desire for the Government to provide educational programmes for parents through seminars, lectures and media, they were not supportive of any direct intervention in child discipline practice, as this is considered the family's business. The findings indeed seem to suggest that the Government have not done enough to educate the public and that there may be a disconnection between the Government and the public. For example, parents, children and professionals were not aware of any Libyan legislation being in place to protect children from physical abuse at home and in school. This may suggest to the policy makers the need to do more to familiarise the public with the current legislation relating to family life and the use of physical punishment at school. This could be achieved by introducing modules about family and child protection legislation to students at schools and universities. Based on my professional experience, although students in the Social Work Department at Tripoli University are taught a module about pension legislation, nothing is taught about other social laws relating to family life and children. In addition, it seems that some parents were not aware of any existing social centres or professionals that can offer help to parents. Therefore, the Government should do more to introduce such facilities to the public. It is worth conducting another study to explore the reasons behind this broken relationship between parents, professionals and the Government.

In addition, it seems that there is disconnection between what the Government claims and its

practice. For example, despite the fact that the Libyan state believes that the local law reflects Islamic thinking: 'the Quran legislates Society' (Wei and Mayouf 2009), the findings suggest that Libyan child protection law (1997) does not appear to match Islamic rules regarding parental use of physical punishment. The reasons for this disconnection are also worthy of further study. Furthermore, although the Libyan Government works on the old law that protects anyone, including children, from physical abuse and claims that children are protected from violence (Libyan General people's committee 2012), in practice, this study indicates that the Government does not intervene in protecting children within the family and they seem to expect children to come forward and complain to the legal authorities.

In general, Libyan legislation seems to lack clarity about the definition of child abuse and prohibition of parental use of physical punishment, there is no machinery to receive and follow up complaints from children and nothing is mentioned about how the law protects any person who may report such a case to the authorities. To gain deeper understanding of the roots of the Government's attitude towards criminalising parental use of physical punishment, further research is needed. Another critical point about Libyan law that emerges from this study is that the construction of the law is complicated (not intelligible to everyone) and not organised in one body of law; it is necessary to search through other articles in different laws to get the whole picture. Therefore, it would be easier for ordinary people if the law regarding protection of children were incorporated into one straightforward document to ensure it is understandable by everybody in the society. Interestingly, within the local law, it appears that there is a mismatch regarding the definition of a child, as some articles define children as persons under 14, another as under 16 and another as under 18. Therefore, it is suggested that policy makers need first to work on clarifying the definition of a child and then to enhance the current law to ensure full protection is provided for children under the care of their parents.

Reading the influence of the law on parental use of physical punishment, many parents were against banning this method because they believe that it is the parents' right, for the child's good, and parents know what is best for their children. Moreover, they think it is a Western idea and fear that it could lead to them losing control over their children. However, although some parents expressed that establishing a law to ban this method could reduce the use of physical punishment at home, they believe that it is more important to raise awareness among the public. According to this view, challenging the negative traditional values regarding child discipline methods and raising awareness among people can have a bigger impact on the society than having and fearing laws. In particular, some participants criticised the process of applying the law in Libya on the grounds that it is applied to people unfairly

(corruption), which indeed implies that raising awareness could be a more beneficial approach in Libya. Therefore, as some participants suggested, the Government and Islamic leaders need to work together to serve children's interests.

10.5 Concluding Words

This thesis has sought, on a small scale, to highlight child discipline methods in Libyan society, focusing largely on the use of physical methods. The study seems to indicate that there are many overlapping factors that influence parents to use physical punishment. These factors are related to parents, children, family, community and culture. By addressing such a topic within Libyan Muslim Arab society, this study has possibly taken the first step towards opening the debate about parents' and children's rights and the extent to which parents have or should have power over their children. Although the study indicates some individual and family factors that could lead parents to use physical methods, it seems that the social norms of accepting and expecting the use of this method, compounded by lack of knowledge about children's rights, their needs and healthy discipline methods, together constitute the main factors that influence parents to carry on using this method. Although it can be argued that all professionals have a vital role to play in raising awareness among parents, in a Muslim Arab society, the role of Islamic leaders in challenging traditional norms and promoting Islamic values is the key. The incorporation of Islamic values into the debate would increase acceptance among the local people, as it would reflect their identity. Indeed, many participants also recognised that. For example, a social worker father said:

> Many Muslim parents beat their children a lot and for everything, under the name of disciplining and give different excuses for that. However, they need to be reminded of their Islamic values and how their role model (the Prophet and his companions) never used violent -physical and non-physical- methods to discipline children.

Meanwhile, another father, a lecturer, stated:

> We do not need to go far away to look for solutions to our problems. Islam has the solutions but we need to understand it first in order to practise it. Muslim leaders have a huge responsibility and they have to deliver.

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231

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Appendices

Appendix (1) Children's Questionnaire

1.1 Arabic Version

1) كم عمرك؟   اقل من 5 ◯   9-6 ◯   14-10 ◯   18-15 ◯

2) هل انت؟   ذكر ◯   انثى ◯

3) كم عندك اخوة؟   ليس عندي اخوة ◯   3-1 ◯   اكثر من 4 ◯

4) ما هو ترتيبك بين اخوتك ؟   الاول ◯   الوسط ◯   الاخير ◯

5) هل تعيش مع كل من والديك؟   نعم ◯   لا ◯   لو اجابتك لا مع من تعيش؟ --------------------------

6) ما المستوى التعليمي لوالدك؟   لا يقرا ولا يكتب ◯   اقل من ثانوي او ما يعادله ◯   جامعي ◯

   عالي ◯   لا اعرف ◯

7) ما المستوى التعليمي لامك؟   لا تقرا ولا تكتب ◯   اقل من ثانوي او ما يعادله ◯   جامعي ◯

   عالي ◯   لا اعرف ◯

8) ما وظيفة والدك؟   عمل حر ◯   مدرس ◯   اعمال مهنية (كاستاذ جامعي طبيب محامي) ◯

   موظف ◯   لا يعمل ◯   عمل حرفي ◯   غيرها تذكر --------------------

9) ما وظيفة امك؟   ربة بيت ◯   مدرسة ◯   اعمال مهنية (كاستاذ جامعي طبيب محامي) ◯

   موظفة ◯   اعمال الاكتفاء الذاتي ◯   ممرضة ◯   غيرها تذكر--------------

10) هل عائلتك تقيم علاقة جيدة مع الاقارب و الاصدقاء؟   نعم ◯   لا ◯

11) اين تسكن؟   مدينة كبرى ◯   مدينة صغرى (قرية) ◯   ارياف ◯

12) هل والدك مدخن؟   نعم ◯   لا ◯

13) كيف والديك يعاقبك؟   عقاب جسدي ◯   غير جسدي ◯   الاثنين معا ◯

قسم رقم (1):

أ- في حالة والديك يستعملان العقاب الجسدي الرجاء الاجابة على هذه الاسئلة:

1. اي نوع من العقاب الجسدي والديك يستعملان اكثر؟ **(رتب اجابتك بالارقام)**

الضرب على الراس ◯   الضرب على الوجه ◯   الضرب على اليدين ◯   الضرب على الظهر ◯

الضرب على المؤخرة و الارجل ◯   الضرب على الرقبة ◯   الضرب على اي مكان ◯   شح الشعر ◯

قرض الاذنين ◯   المنع من الاكل ◯   القرص ◯   العض ◯   الدف ◯   الكوي بالنار ◯   الربط ◯

غيرها تذكر ---

2. من هو اكثر استعمالا للعقاب الجسدي؟   الاب ◯   الام ◯   ليس هناك اختلاف ◯

3. كيف تعاقب جسدي؟   باستخام اليدين ◯   باستخام اداة كالعصا وغيرها ◯   كلاهما ◯

4. ما السبب وراء عقابك؟ **(رتب اجابتك بالارقام)**

عدم الاحترام ◯   عدم الطاعة ◯   السرقة ◯   الكذب ◯   العناد ◯   دوشة ◯   التدخين سرا ◯   البكاء ◯

ضعف التحصيل الدراسي ◯   ترك الصلاة ◯   خروج من المنزل بدون اذن ◯   عدم الدراسة اثناءالامتحانات ◯

تحويس المنزل ◯   التبول على نفسك ◯   المشاجرة مع الاخوة اواطفال اخرين ◯   تحطيم ممتلكات الغير ◯

اللعب باشياء خطيرة كالولاعة و السكين ◯   قيادة السيارة بدون رخصة ◯   عدم غسل اليدين قبل او بعد الاكل ◯

التلفظ بالفاظ غير لائقة ◯   غيرها تذكر --

5. كم عمرك عندما والديك بدا يعاقبك جسديا؟   اقل من 3 ◯   5-3 ◯   9-6 ◯   14- 10 ◯

18-15 ◯   لا اتذكر ◯

6. كم عمرك عندما والديك توقفاعن عقابك جسديا؟   لم يتوقفا ◯   اقل من3 ◯   5-3 ◯   9-6 ◯

14-10 ◯   18-15 ◯

7. كم مرة والديك يعاقبك ؟   كل يوم ◯   عدة مرات في الاسبوع ◯   عدة مرات في الشهر ◯   غير منتظم ◯

8. هل والديك يشرحان لك سبب عقابك؟   نعم دائما ◯   لا مطلقا ◯   في بعض الاحيان ◯

9. ما هو شعورك بعد عقابك؟ غاضب ◯   حزين ◯   خجل ◯   لا اشعر اي شئ ◯   غيرها تذكر -------

10. هل هناك نزف او كدمات او علامات بقت على جسمك بعدعقابك؟   نعم ◯   لا ◯   لا اتذكر ◯

11. من يعاقبك اكثر غير والديك؟ اخوتك ◯   خوالك ◯   اعمامك ◯   جيران ◯   الجد و الجدة ◯

248

زوجة الاب ⟲   زوج الام ⟲   غيرها تذكر -------------------------------

ب- في حالة والديك يستعملان مزيج من العقاب الجسدي وغير العقاب الجسدي الرجاء الاجابة على هذه الاسئلة:

1. اعطي مثالا متى يستعملان العقاب الجسدي---
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2. اعطي مثالا متى يستعملان العقاب الغير الجسدي---
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3. ما اسلوب العقاب الغير الجسدي الذي يستخدمها والداك؟ **(رتب اجابتك بالارقام)** بقاء لمدة معينة في مكان محدد ⟲
تجاهل تصرفاته ⟲ ارساله (حبسه) فى حجرته ⟲ التوبيخ (تكشيخ) ⟲ الاهانة (تعزير) ⟲ التخويف ⟲
التوقف عن التكلم معه ⟲ التفنيص ⟲ السب و الشتم ⟲ غيرها تذكر------------------------------

قسم رقم (و) :

في حالة والديك لا يستعملان العقاب الجسدي الرجاء الاجابة على هذه الاسئلة:

1. كيف والديك يعاقبك؟ (رتب اجابتك بالارقام)
بقاء لمدة في مكان محدد ⟲   تجاهل تصرفاتك ⟲   ارسالك (حبسك) فى حجرتك ⟲

التوبيخ (تكشيخ) ⟲   الاهانة (تعزير) ⟲   التخويف ⟲   التوقف عن التكلم معك ⟲   التفنيص ⟲   السب و الشتم ⟲

غيرها تذكر ---

الرجاء الاجابة على هذه الاسئلة و ابداء رايك حولها

14) هل ترى ان هناك عقاب جسدي خفيف وعقاب جسدي قوي ؟   نعم ⟲   لا ⟲

15) هل ترى ان هناك اختلاف بين العقاب الجسدي للطفل واساءة معاملته (عدم احترامه)؟

نعم ⟲   لا ⟲   لا اعرف ⟲

16) هل تعتقد ان الوالدين لهم كامل الحق لعقاب اطفالهم جسديا؟   نعم ⟲   لا ⟲   لا اعرف ⟲

17) ما رايك في الوالدين الذين يستعملان العقاب الجسدي؟   كويسيين ⟲   مش كويسيين ⟲   لا اعرف ⟲
غيرها تذكر ---

18) هل تعتقد ان الاولاد اكثر تعرضا للعقاب الجسدي من البنات؟   نعم ⟲   لا ⟲   لا اختلاف ⟲

19) هل تعتقد انه من المفروض الحكومة تمنع الوالدين من استخدام العقاب الجسدي للطفل ؟   نعم ⟲   لا ⟲

20) هل تعتقد انه من المفروض الحكومة تتدخل في كيفية تربية الطفل داخل الاسرة؟   نعم ⟲   لا ⟲

21) هل تعتقد ان الاحداث التي تعرضت لها ليبيا مؤخرا زادت من استعمال والديك للعقاب الجسدي؟   نعم ⟲   لا ⟲

الباحثة ترغب في اجراء مقابلة معك, إذا كنت ترغب في ذلك، الرجاء وضع علامة في المربع ☐

249

1.2 English Version

1. How old are you?
   a) Under 5 ◯   b) 6-9 ◯   c) 10-14 ◯   d) 15-18 ◯
2. What is your gender? a) Male ◯   b) Female ◯
3. How many siblings do you have?   a) None ◯   b) 1-3 ◯   c) 4 or over ◯
4. What is your birth order?   a) The first ◯   b) The middle ◯   c) The youngest ◯
5. Do you live with your both parents? a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯ if no, who do you live with? --------
6. What is the educational Level of your dad? a) Illiterate ◯   b) High school or less ◯
   c) University degree ◯   d) Higher Education ◯   e) I do not know ◯
7. What is the educational Level of your mum?   a) illiterate ◯   b) High school or less ◯
   c) University degree ◯   d) Higher Education ◯   e) I do not know ◯
8. What is your father job?   a) Self-employed ◯   b) A teacher ◯   c) Professional such as (
   a lecture, doctor, lawyer) ◯   d) Employee ◯   e) Craft jobs ◯   f) Unemployed ◯
   Military services ◯   g) Others, pleas indicate ------------------------------------
9. What is your mother job? a) A housewife ◯   b) A teacher ◯   c) Professional such as (a
   lecture, doctor, lawyer) ◯   d) Employee ◯   e) Self-sufficiency works ◯   f) A nurse ◯
   g) Others, please indicate --
10. Does your family have a good relationship with an extended family and friends?
    a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯
11. Where do you live?   a) A big city ◯   b) A small city ◯   c) Rural areas ◯
12. Is your father a smoker?   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

13. How do your parents punish you?
    a) Physically only ◯   b) Non-physically only ◯   c) A mixed of both ◯

> **Please answer section (1) OR section (2)**

Section (1):

❖ **If your parents use physical punishment, please answer this section:**

What types of physical punishment are used by your parents most? (Please indicated them in order

1) Hitting on the head ◯ 2) Slapping the face ◯ 3) Hitting on hands ◯ 4) Hitting the back ◯
5) Spanking the rear and legs ◯ 6) Hitting on the neck ◯ 7) Hitting anywhere ◯

8) Pulling the hair ◯ 9) Twisting the ears ◯ 10) Prevention from food ◯ 11) Pinching ◯

12) Biting ◯ 13) pushing ◯ 14) Cauterization with hot material ◯

15) Holding a child with cloth ◯ 16) Others, please indicate --------------------------------------

2. Who is the most likely to use physical punishment?

   a) Father ◯   b) Mother ◯   c) No difference ◯

3. How do they apply physical punishment?

   a) Using hands only ◯   b) Using an object only ◯ c) Using both of them ◯

4. What is the reason behind your punishment? **(Please indicated them in order)**

   1) Disrespect ◯ 2) Disobedience ◯ 3) Stealing ◯ 4) Lying ◯ 5) Stubbornness ◯
   6) Making noise ◯ 7) Smoking secretly ◯ 8) Persistent crying ◯ 9) Poor school
   performance ◯ 10) Not praying ◯ 11) Going out without a permission ◯ 12)
   Not studying during exams period ◯ 13) Leaving toys on the floor ◯ 14) Wetting
   the bed at night ◯ 15) Fighting with siblings or other children ◯ 16) Destroying
   others staff ◯ 17) Playing with dangerous tools such as matches or knives ◯
   18) Driving without a licence ◯ 19) Not washing hands before or after meals ◯
   20) Using bad language ◯ 21) Others, please indicate --

5. From what age did you start to experience physical punishment?

   a) Under 3 ◯   b) 3-5 ◯   c) 6-9 ◯   10-14 ◯   d) 15-18 ◯

   e) I do not remember ◯

6. At what age does it stop? a) Never ◯ b) less than 3 ◯ c) 3-5 ◯

                              d) 6-9 ◯   e) 10-14 ◯ f) 15-18 ◯

7. How often do you get physically punished?
   a) Every day ◯   b) Several times a week ◯
   c) Several times a month ◯   d) Irregular ◯

8. Does your parent explain why you are being punished?
   a) Yes, always ◯   b) No, never ◯   c) Sometimes ◯

9.How do you feel after being punished? a) Angry ◯   b) Sad ◯   c) Shamed ◯

d) I do not feel anything ◯   d) others, please indicate ------------------------------------

10. Has the punishment ever left marks or scars on your body or led to bleeding?

a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

11. Who is else physically punishing you except your parents?

a) Siblings ◯ b) Uncles (mum's side) ◯ c) Uncles (dad's side) ◯ d) Neighbours ◯

e) Grandparent ◯ f) Step-mother ◯ g) Step-father ◯ h) others, please indicate ---
----

If your parents use mixture, please answer this section:

1. When do they use non-physical methods? --
2. When do they use physical methods? --

3. What are non-physical punishment methods that your parents use? **(Please indicated them in order)**

a) Time-out ◯ b) Ignoring your behaviour ◯ c) sending you to your room (Lock up) ◯ d) Telling you off ◯ e) Verbal insults ◯ f) Intimidation ◯ g) Stop talking to you ◯ h) Staring ◯ i) Swearing and cursing ◯ j) Others, please indicate ---

----

Section (2):

❖ **If your parents use non-physical punishment, please answer this section:**

1. What are the alternative methods your parents use? **(Please indicated them in order)**

a) Time-out ◯ b) Ignoring your behaviour ◯ c) Sending you to your room (Lock up) ◯ d) Telling you off ◯ e) Verbal insults ◯ f) Intimidation ◯ g) Stop talking to you ◯ h) Staring ◯ i) Swearing and cursing ◯ j) Others, please indicate ------

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Please indicate your views about these

14) Do you think that there is a normal physical punishment and severe punishment?

a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

15) Do you think that there is a difference between physically punishing children and abusing them?   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯   c) I do not know ◯

16) Do you think that parents have every right to discipline their children physically?

a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯   c) I do not know ◯

17) Do you think parents who use physical punishment to discipline their children are?

a) Good parents ◯ b) Bad parents ◯   c) I do not know ◯ d) Other, please indicate-----

18) Do you think parents use physical punishment on boys more than girls?

a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯   c) No difference ◯

19) Do you think the government should ban parents of using physical punishment?
a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

20) Do you think the government should intervene in child-rearing within family?
a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

20) Do you think the recent conflict has increased the use of physical punishment by your parents?   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

The researcher would like to interview you if you would like so, please tick this box ☐

Appendix (2) Parents' Questionnaire

2.1 Arabic Version

1) ما جنسك؟   ذكر ⬤   انثى ⬤

2) كم عمرك؟   30-18 ⬤   44-31 ⬤   45 او اكبر ⬤

3) ما وضعك الاجتماعي؟   متزوج ⬤   مطلق ⬤   ارمل ⬤

4) كم عندك طفل؟   1 ⬤   4-2 ⬤   5 او اكثر ⬤

5) ما مستواك التعليمي؟   لا تقرا و لا تكتب ⬤   اقل من ثانوي او ما يعادله ⬤   جامعي ⬤   عالي ⬤

6) ما وظيفتك؟   عمل حر ⬤   مدرس ⬤   اعمال مهنية (كاستاذ جامعي طبيب محامي) ⬤   موظف ⬤

اعمال حرفية كالنجارة و الاعمال اليدوية ⬤   اعمال الاكتفاء الذاتي ⬤   لا تعمل ⬤   تمريض ⬤   عسكري ⬤
غيرها تذكر-- ⬤

7) اين تسكن؟   مدينة كبرى ⬤   مدينة صغرى ⬤   ارياف ⬤

8) هل انت مدخن؟   نعم ⬤   لا ⬤

9) هل تعتقد ان استعمال العقاب الجسدي للطفل اسلوب نافع لتربيته؟   نعم ⬤   لا ⬤   في بعض الاحيان ⬤

10) ما رايك في اساليب التربية التالية: (ضع اشارة / امام الخانة المتماشية مع رايك):

غير مقبولة و سابلغ عنها للشرطة	غير مقبولة	مقبولة	بعض اساليب العقاب الجسدي المستخدمة لتربية الاطفال
			ضرب الطفل باليدين
			ضرب الطفل باي اداة (كالعصا و الشبشب وغيرها)
			ضرب الطفل على الوجه (كف)
			ضرب الطفل على الراس
			رج او هز طفل اصغر من 3 سنوات
			ضرب الطفل مع ترك علامات على جسمه
			ضرب الطفل بدون ترك علامات على جسمه
			ضرب الطفل لحد كسر العظام
			وضع فلفل في فم الطفل
			قرض الاذنين
			عقاب الطفل بمنعه من الاكل
			الكوي بالنار
			العض
			ربط الطفل

11) هل تعتقد ان اساليب العقاب الجسدي المذكورة في السؤال السابق قد تستخدم على حسب عمر الطفل؟ ◯ نعم ◯ لا ◯

12) هل تعتقد ان اساليب العقاب الجسدي المذكورة في السؤال السابق تتماشى مع الذكور و الانات؟ ◯ نعم ◯ لا ◯

13) كيف تعاقب طفلك؟ ◯ جسديا فقط ◯ غيرجسدي فقط ◯ كلاهما

الرجاء الاجابة على قسم رقم (1) او قسم رقم (2):

قسم رقم (1):

ا- في حالة استعمالك للعقاب الجسدي الرجاء الاجابة على هذه الاسئلة:

1. ما انواع السلوك التي يرتكبه الطفل و تجعلك تعاقبه؟ **(اختار ما ينطبق عليك ثم رتب اجابتك بالارقام)**
   ◯ عدم الاحترام ◯ عدم الطاعة ◯ السرقة ◯ الكذب ◯ العناد ◯ دوشة ◯ التدخين سرا ◯ البكاء

   ◯ ضعف التحصيل الدراسي ◯ ترك الصلاة ◯ خروج من المنزل بدون اذن ◯ عدم الدراسة اثناء الامتحانات

   ◯ ترك العابه ملقاة ع الارض ◯ التبول على نفسه ◯ المشاجرة مع الاخوة اواطفال اخرين ◯ تحطيم ممتلكات الغير

   ◯ اللعب باشياء خطيرة كالولاعة و السكين ◯ قيادة السيارة بدون رخصة ◯ عدم غسل اليدين قبل او بعد الاكل

   ◯ التلفظ بالفاظ غير لائقة ◯ غيرها تذكر ---

2. اي نوع من العقاب الجسدي تستعمل اكثر؟ **(اختار ما ينطبق عليك ثم رتب اجابتك بالارقام)**
   ◯ الضرب على الراس ◯ الضرب على الوجه ◯ الضرب على اليدين ◯ الضرب على الظهر

   ◯ الضرب على المؤخرة و الارجل ◯ الضرب على الرقبة ◯ الضرب على اي مكان ◯ شح الشعر

   ◯ قرض الاذنين ◯ المنع من الاكل ◯ القرص ◯ العض ◯ الدف ◯ الكوي بالنار

   ◯ ربط الطفل ◯ غيرها تذكر --

3. كيف تعاقب الطفل جسديا؟ ◯ باستخدام اليدين ◯ باستخدام اداة كالعصا وغيرها ◯ كلاهما

4. ما الفائدة من العقاب الجسدي مقارنة مع العقاب الغيرجسدي؟
   ◯ جعل الطفل يخاف منك ◯ تعلم الطفل عدم فعل نفس الخطا مرة اخرى ◯ تفريغ الوالدين لشحنة غضب
   ◯ العقاب الجسدي يعلم الطفل الطاعة ◯ غيرها تذكر ---

5. هل تشرح للطفل سبب عقابه؟ ◯ نعم دائما ◯ لا مطلقا ◯ في بعض الاحيان

ب- في حالة استعمالك كل من العقاب الجسدي وغير العقاب الجسدي الرجاء الاجابة على هذه الاسئلة:

255

1. اعطي مثالا متى تستعمل العقاب الجسدي؟ --------------------------------
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----
2. اعطي مثالا متى تستعمل العقاب الغير الجسدي؟ --------------------------------
----
----
3. ما اسلوب العقاب الغير الجسدي الذي تستخدمه؟ **(اختار ما ينطبق عليك ثم رتب اجابتك بالارقام)** بقاء لمدة معينة في مكان محدد ⬤ تجاهل تصرفاته ⬤ ارساله (حبسه) فى حجرته ⬤ التوبيخ (تكشيخ) ⬤ الاهانة (تعزير) ⬤

التخويف ⬤ التوقف عن التكلم معه ⬤ التفنيص ⬤ السب و الشتم ⬤ غيرها تذكر--------------------

قسم رقم (2):

فى حالة عدم استعمالك للعقاب الجسدى الرجاء الاجابة على هذه الاسئلة:

1. لماذا لا تستخدم العقاب الجسدي؟ ⬤ لانها لا تعلم الطفل اي شئ ⬤ لانها تزيد الطفل عناد ⬤

العقاب الجسدي يمثل انتهاك لحقوق الطفل ⬤ له تاثيرسلبي على صحة الطفل ⬤ غيرها تذكر-------------------------

2. ما الاسلوب البديل الذي تستخدمه لتربية طفلك؟ **(اختار ما ينطبق عليك ثم رتب اجابتك بالارقام)**

بقاء لمدة معينة في مكان محدد ⬤ تجاهل تصرفاته ⬤ ارساله (حبسه) فى حجرته ⬤ التوبيخ (تكشيخ) ⬤

الاهانة (تعزير) ⬤ التخويف ⬤ التوقف عن التكلم معه ⬤ التفنيص ⬤ السب و الشتم ⬤
غيرها تذكر--

من خلال خبراتك الوالدية ما رايك فى التالى

14) ما الفئات العمرية اكثر تعرضا للعقاب الجسدي؟ اقل من 3 ⬤ 3-5 ⬤ 6-9 ⬤
10-14 ⬤ 15-18 ⬤

15) هل تعتقد ان الاولاد اكثرتعرضا للعقاب الجسدي من البنات؟ نعم ⬤ لا ⬤ لا اختلاف ⬤

16) اي طفل اكثرتعرضا للعقاب الجسدي؟ الاول ⬤ الوسط ⬤ الاصغر ⬤ لا اختلاف ⬤

17) ما الاسباب المتعلقة بالوالدين التي قد تجعلهما يلجان لاستعمال العقاب الجسدي مع الطفل؟**(اختارثم رتب اجابتك بالارقام)**

نوبة غضب ⬤ التوثر ⬤ الاكتئاب ⬤ العنف الاسري ⬤ المشاجرة بين الابوين ⬤

امر مزاجي ⬤ مشاكل في العمل ⬤ غيرها تذكر-----------------------------

18) من هو اكثر استعمالا للعقاب الجسدي؟ الاب ⬤ الام ⬤ ليس هناك اختلاف ⬤

19) هل والديك كانا يسعملان العقاب الجسدي معك؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

20) هل تعتقد ان الاحداث التي تعرضت لها ليبيا مؤخرا زادت من استعمالك للعقاب الجسدي؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

21) هل رؤية طفل يضرب من قبل والديه في منطقتك امر طبيعي و عادي؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

22) هل ترى ان هناك عقاب جسدي بسيط وعقاب جسدي مفرط؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

23) هل تربطك علاقة جيدة مع الاقارب و الاصدقاء ؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

24) هل تعتقد ان الوالدين يستخدمان العقاب الجسدي مع الطفل لاسباب دينية؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪   احيانا ⚪

25) هل ترى ان هناك اختلاف بين العقاب الجسدي للطفل واساءة معاملته ؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

26) هل تعتقد ان الوالدين قد يسيؤا لاطفالهم؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

27) هل تعتقد ان الوالدين لهم كامل الحق لاختيار اي اسلوب يرؤنه مناسب لتربية اطفالهم؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

28) هل تقدم الحكومة اي برامج توعوية للوالدين فيما يتعلق بكيفية تربية الطفل؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

29) ما رايك في الوالدين الذين يسخدمان العقاب الجسدي المفرط:

1) هذا حقهم لاختيار الاسلوب الذي يرؤنه مناسب لتربية اطفالهم ⚪

2) اتمنى لو اني استطيع عمل اي شى اتجاه ⚪

3) اتدخل بالنصح ⚪

4) هذا لا يهمني ⚪

انا عندي وجهة نظر اخرى تذكر--

30) هل تعتقد انه من المفروض الحكومة تمنع الوالدين من استخدام العقاب الجسدي للطفل ؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

31) هل تعتقد انه من المفروض الحكومة تتدخل في كيفية تربية الطفل داخل الاسرة؟   نعم ⚪   لا ⚪

الباحثة ترغب في اجراء مقابلة معك, إذا كنت ترغب في ذلك، الرجاء وضع علامة في المربع   ▢

2.2 English Version

1) Gender: a) Male ◯   b) Female ◯

2) Age: a)18-30 ◯   b) 31-44 ◯   c) Over 45 ◯

3) Marital status: a) Married ◯   b) Divorced ◯   c) Widowed ◯

4) Number of children: a) 1 ◯   b) 2-4 ◯   c) 5 or more ◯

5) Level of education: a) Illiterate ◯   b) High school or less ◯

          c) University degree ◯   d) Higher Education ◯

6) What is your job?   a) Self-employed ◯   b) A teacher ◯   c) Professional jobs such as (a lecture, doctor, lawyer) ◯   d) Employee ◯   e) Craft jobs ◯   f) Unemployed ◯   g) Self-sufficiency works ◯   h) A nurse ◯   i) Military services ◯   k) Others, pleas indicate --

7) Where do you live?   a) A big city ◯   b) A small city ◯   c) Rural areas ◯

8) Are you a smoker?   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

9) Do you believe physical punishment is a beneficial method to discipline children?

          a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯   c) Sometimes ◯

10) What do you think of the following methods as ways of disciplining?

Physical methods of disciplining	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Unacceptable and it consider as a crime
Hitting a child with hands			
Hitting a child with objects such as (stick and slipper or others)			
Slapping a child's face			
Hitting a child's head			
Shake a child under 3			
Hitting a child leaving marks on his body			
Hitting a child leaving no marks on his body			
Hitting a child leaving broken bones			
Putting paper in child mouth			
Twisting ears			

Prevent a child from food			
Cauterization with hot material			
Biting			
Holding a child with cloth			

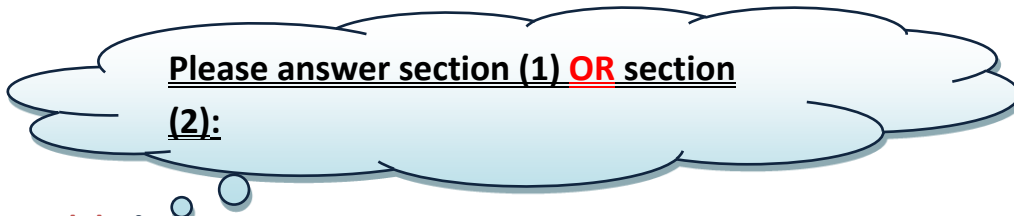11) Dose physical punishment methods can be used depends on the child age?

a) Yes ⚪   b) No ⚪

12) Dose physical punishment methods can be used depends on the child gender?

a) Yes ⚪   b) No ⚪

13) How do you punish your children?

a) Physically only ⚪   b) Non-physically only ⚪   c) A mixture of both ⚪

Please answer section (1) OR section (2):

Section (1):

❖ **If you use physical methods, please answer this section:**

1. What is the type of child's misbehaviour your punishment for? (Please indicated them in order)

1) Disrespect ⚪   2) Disobedience ⚪   3) Stealing ⚪   4) Lying ⚪   5) Stubbornness ⚪

6) Making noise ⚪   7) Smoking secretly ⚪   8) Persistent crying ⚪   9) Poor school performance ⚪   10) Not praying ⚪   11) Going out without a permission ⚪

12) Not studying during exams period ⚪   13) Leaving toys lying on the floor ⚪

14) Wetting the bed at night ⚪   15) Fighting with siblings or other children ⚪

16) Destroying others stuff ⚪   17) Playing with dangerous tools such as matches or knives ⚪   18) Driving without a licence ⚪   19) Not washing hands before or after meals ⚪   20) Using bad language ⚪   21) Others, please indicate -------------------------

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2. What types of physical punishment do you use most? (Please indicated them in order)

   1) Hitting on the head ◯   2) Slapping the face ◯   3) Hitting on hands ◯

   4) Hitting on the back ◯   5) Spanking on the rear and legs ◯   6) Hitting on the neck ◯

   7) Hitting anywhere ◯   8) Pulling the hair ◯   9) Twisting the ears ◯

   10) Prevention from food ◯   11) Pinching ◯   12) Biting ◯   13) Pushing ◯

   14) Cauterization with hot material ◯   15) Holding a child with cloth ◯

   16) Others, please indicate --

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3. How do you apply physical punishment?

   a) Using hands only ◯   b) Using an object ◯   c) Using both of them ◯

4. What are the benefits of physical punishment compared with Non-physically methods?
   a) Make a child fear you ◯   b) Child's learning not to do the same mistake again ◯
   c) Unloading a shipment anger parents ◯   d) Physical punishment teach a child obedience ◯   e) others ---

5. Do you explain to your children the reason behind the punishment?
   a) Yes, always ◯   b) No, never ◯   c) Sometimes ◯

- **If you use mixture methods, please answer this section**

1) When do you use non-physical methods? --

2) When do you use physical methods? ---

3) What are non-physical punishment methods that you use? (Please indicated them in order)

   a) Time-out ◯   b) Ignoring their behaviour ◯   c) Sending him to his room (Locking up) ◯

   d) Telling him off ◯   e) Verbal insults ◯   f) Intimidation ◯   g) Stop talking to them ◯

   h) Staring ◯   i) Swearing and cursing ◯   j) Others, please indicate -----------------------

Section (2):

❖ **If you use non- physical methods, please answer this section:**

1. Why do you not use physical methods?

a) Do not teach a child anything ◯   b) It increases child's stubbornness ◯
c) Physical punishment is a violation on the rights of the child ◯

d) Physical punishment has a negative impact on the child health ◯   e) Other---------------

2. What is the alternative methods do you use to raise your child? (Please indicated them in order)

   a) Time-out ◯   b) Ignoring his behaviour ◯   c) Sending them to his room (Lock up) ◯

   d) Telling him off ◯   e) Verbal insults ◯   f) Intimidation ◯   g) Stop talking to them ◯

   h) Staring ◯   i) Swearing and cursing ◯   j) Others, please indicate -----------------

Based on your experience, what do you think about these questions

14) Which age group do you think are the most exposed to physical punishment?

a) Under 3 ◯   b) 3-5 ◯   c) 6-9 ◯   d) 10-14 ◯   e) 15-18 ◯

15)   Do you think boys are more likely to be punished physically than girls?
   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯   c) No difference ◯

16)   Which child do you think is most likely to be physically punishment?
   a) The first-born child ◯   b) The middle child ◯
   c) The youngest child ◯   d) No difference ◯

17) What causes of making parents resort to the use of physical punishment with the child?
(Please indicated them in order)

a) A fit of anger ◯   b) Stress ◯   c) Depression ◯   d) Domestic violence ◯
e) Poor marital relationship ◯   f) It depends on mood ◯   g) Works problems ◯

Others, please indicate --

18) Who is the most commonly used for physical punishment?
   a) Fathers ◯   b) Mothers ◯   c) No difference ◯

19) Do you have experiences of being physical punished in your childhood?

   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

20) Do you think the recent conflict has increased the use of physical punishment?

   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

21) Do you think it is normal to see a child being hit in your area?   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

22) Do you think that there is a normal physical punishment and severe punishment?

  a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

23) Do you have a good relationship with extended family and friends?

  a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

24) Do you think that parents use physical punishment for religious reasons?

  a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯   c) Sometimes ◯

25) Do you believe that there is a difference between physically punishing children and abusing them?   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

26) Do you think that parents may abuse their children? a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

27) Do you think that parents have the absolute right to discipline their children as they wish?

    a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

28) Does the government provide awareness programmes for parents on how to raise a child?   a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

29) What do think of parents who punish their children excessively?

  a) That is their right to choose the way that suit them for rearing their children ◯

  b) I wish I could do anything about it ◯

  c) I interfere by offering advice ◯

  d) I do not care ◯

  e) I have other view, please indicate ---

30) Do you think the government should ban parents of using physical punishment?

    a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

31) Do you think the government should intervene in child-rearing within family?

    a) Yes ◯   b) No ◯

The researcher would like to interview you if you would like so, please tick this box ▭

Appendix (3) Interview Questions

3.1 For Children

Q.1 What do you think of physical punishment as a way of disciplining a child?

Q.2 Do you think that there is a light 'normal' physical punishment and severe punishment?

Q.3 Do you think that there is a difference between physically punishing children and abusing them?

Q.4 What do you think of parents who use physical punishment to discipline their children?

Q.5 Do mothers use different types of physical punishment than fathers?

Q.6 Do you think that parents have the right to hit their children?

Q.7 How are you going to punish your child in the future?

Q.8 Who is physically punishing you after your parents most? How do you feel?

Q.9 Do you think parents use physical punishment on boys more than girls?

Q.10 Does anyone intervene when your parents physically punish you? Who, what does he do? How do you feel about it?

Q.11 Do you think the government should ban parents of using physical punishment?

Q.12 Do you think the government intervene in child-rearing within family?

Q.13 Do you think the recent conflict led your parents to use of physical punishment more?

Q.14 What do you know about children's rights?

Q.15 What are your duties towards your parents?

Q.16 Do you have anything to add?

3.2 For Parents

Q.1 What do you think of physical punishment as a way of disciplining a child?

Q.2 Do you think that parents use physical punishment because of religious reasons?

Q.3 Do you think that parent use physical punishment because of or cultural reasons or a lack of legislation?

Q.4 Do you think that there is a light 'normal' physical punishment and severe punishment?

Q.5 Do you think that there is a difference between physically punishing children and abusing them?

Q.6 Do you think that parent may abuse their children?

Q.7 Do you think physical punishment can be used according to child's age?

Q.8 Do you think physical punishment can be used on boys and girls the same?

Q.9 How do they apply physical punishment?

Q.10 Do you explain to your child the reason behind punishment?

Q.11 Which age group do you think are the most subjected to physical punishment?

Q.12 Do you think boys are more likely to be punished physically than girls?

Q.13 Which child do you think is most likely to be physically punishment?

Q.14 Who is the most likely to use physical punishment?

Q.15 Do mothers use different types of physical punishment than fathers?

Q.16 How do you choose type of punishment to your child?

Q.17 How do decide to stop punishing child?

Q.18 What is your target of punishment? (What value)

Q.19 How do you feel after punish your child?

Q.20 Do you have experiences of being physical punished in your childhood? How has this experience affected your attitudes towards using physical punishment towards your children?

Q.21 Do you think the recent conflict has increased the use of physical punishment?

Q.22 Does your family or friends intervene when you use physical punishment with your child?

Q.23 Do you think that parents have every right to discipline their children as they wish?

Q.24 How do you feel if you see a child being hit in front of you?

Q.25 Do you think the government should ban parents of using physical punishment?

Q.26 Do you think the government should intervene in child-rearing within family?

Q.27 What are child's rights over his/her parents?

Q.28 What are child's duties towards his/her parents?

Q.29 Do you have anything to add?

Appendix (4) Participants' Information Document

4.1 Arabic Version

<u>وثيقة معلومات متعلقة بالدراسة</u>

1) عنوان البحث:

العقاب الجسدي كاسلوب لتربية الاطفال في الاسر الليبية.

2) دعوة للمشاركة:

قبل ان تقرر مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة الرجاء اقر هذه الوثيقة لمزيد من المعلومات على البحث وما يستزمه. لمزيد من المعلومات او في حالة لديك اي استفسار الرجاء الاستفسار من الباحثة.

3) ما هدف الدراسة؟

شرعت هذه الدراسة لغرض الحصول على درجة الدكتوراه من جامعة شيفيلد ببريطانيا. و الباحثة تسعى من خلال هذه الدراسة لفهم طبيعة العقاب الجسدي للاطفال كاسلوب للتربية واتجاهات الوالدين والاطفال نحو هذا الاسلوب.

4) لماذا تم اختيارك؟

اختيارك كان عشوئي ومقترح من بعض اصدقائك لاحتمالية مشاركتك في هذة الدراسة. بالرغم من هذا فان مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة هو امر اختياري يرجع لك.

5) هل مشاركتي في هذه الدراسة امر الزامي؟

مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة هو امر اختياري يرجع لك وليس الزاميا وفي حالة ليس لديك الرغبة في المشاركة لك كامل الحرية في رفض المشاركة. بالاضافة الى ذلك يمكنك الانسحاب في اي لحظة دون الداعي لاعطاء سبب لذلك. في حالة قررت المشاركة سوف تزود بهذه الوثيقة للاحتيفاظ بها وسوف تسال للتوقيع على نموذج يدعى نموذج الموافقة على المشاركة بالدراسة.

6) ما سيحدث لو قررت المشاركة؟

الباحثة مهتمة لمعرفة وجهة نظرك حول موضوع الدراسة من خلال استمارة استبيان سوف تعطى لك لملئها ومقابلة وجهة لوجهة لمن يرغب في اجراءها. بالرغم من ان فترة دراسة الدكتوراه تستغرق 3 سنوات الا ان فترة جمع البيانات منك ستكون خلال مقابلة واحدة او مرثين فقط. لا يسمح لاي شخص من خارج نطاق البحث للاطلاع على البيانات التي ستزودها. جدول زيارة الباحثة لك سيتم الاتفاق عليه مقدما معك مع العلم انك لن تتكلف مسئؤلية التنقل لان الباحثة ستقوم بزبارتك في المكان الذي سيفق عليه لاحقا.

7) ماذا يجب علي ان افعل؟

مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة لا تفرض عليك اي شروط .

8) ما الجوانب السلبية التي قد تترتب عن مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة؟

مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة لن يترتتب عنها اي مخاطر او جوانب سلبية.

9) ما الجوانب الايجابية التي قد تترتب عن مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة؟

بالرغم من انه لا توجد فوائد قريبة المدى من مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة الا ان هذه الدراسة على المدى البعيد ستساهم في تطوير الاطار المعرفي و خاصة فيما يتعلق بادراك العقاب الجسدي للطفل كاسلوب لاساءة معاملته. بالاضافة الي ان تلك المعلومات ستساعد المختصيين و المهتمين هذا المجال للرفع من مستوى الوعي لدى المواطنيين حول هذا الموضوع.

10) ما سيحدث لو ان الدراسة ستتوقف قبل الوقت المحدد لانجازها؟

في هذه الحالة الاسباب سوف توضح من قبل الباحثة للمشتركين.

11) ماذا لو لديك اي تساؤل حول الدراسة؟

في حالة لديك اي تساؤل حول اي ناحية من نواحي الدراسة يمكنك اولا الاستفسار من الباحثة ثم مشرفة الدراسة او مدير قسم الابحاث بالجامعة.

مدير قسم الابحاث بالجامعة: Prof. Jan Horwath: j.horwath.sheffield.ac.uk

12) هل مشاركتي في هذه الدراسة ستكون سرية و محمية ؟

كل المعلومات التي ستجمع منك ستكون محمية و سرية. و لن يكون بامكانك معرفتها في اي تقرير او منشورات علمية اخرى.

13) ماذا سيحدث لنتائج الدراسة؟

نتائج الدراسة ستعرض في مؤتمرات و لقاءات علمية و ستنشر بعد الحصول على درجة الدكتوراه.

14) من الممول لهذه الدراسة؟

مصدر التمويل لهذه الراسة هو ادارة البعثات بالتعليم العالي/طرابلس.

15) من راجع الدراسة اكاديميا واخلاقا؟

نالت الدراسة علي الموافقة الاكاديمية و الاخلاقية من خلا ل قسم الخدمة الاجتماعية بجامعة شيفيلد/ بريطانيا.

16) لمزيد من المعلومات

يمكنك اولا مراسلة الباحثة: حنان المخزوم على الايميل التالي   sop10hem@sheffield.ac.uk

في حالة تريد معلومات اضافية يمكنك مراسلة مشرفتي الدراسة :

المشرفة الاولى للدراسة: Prof. Jan Horwath. Email: j.horwath.sheffield.ac.uk

المشرفة الثانية للدراسة: Dr. Afua Twum-Danso Imoh. Email: a.twum-danso@sheffield.ac.uk

او مراسلة الجامعة على العنوان:

The University of Sheffield / Department of Sociological Studies

Elmfield Northumberland Road

Sheffield, S10 2TU

مع جزيل الشكر على مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة

Participant Information Document

1**.**   **Research Project Title:**

Physical Punishment as a Method of Disciplining Libyan Children in Homes

2.   **Invitation**

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

3.   **What is the project's purpose?**

The present study is being undertaken to contribute to a PhD. I am completing at   University of Sheffield in the UK. I am interested in understanding the nature of physical child punishment in Libya and the attitudes of Libyan parents and children towards it.

4.   **Why have I been chosen?**

You were selected because I am approaching people suggested by friends as potentially interested in participating. However, please note that participation in this study in entirely on a voluntary basis.

5.   **Do I have to take part?**

Participation in this study in is entirely voluntary and you do not need to take part if you decide that. Also, you have the right to withdraw at any time and you do not have to give a reason for that. However, if you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form)

6.   **What will happen to me if I take part?**

I am interested in your views and these will be sought through the use of face to face interviews, and through the use of a questionnaire. While the whole project will be for three years, fieldwork which involves your interaction with the researcher will be done on one or two occasions. No one outside the project will be allowed to access your information. The

schedule for the researcher visits to you will be negotiated with you in advance. You will not incur any travelling expenses as the researcher will be visiting you on site.

7.   **What do I have to do?**

Your participation in this study will not impose any restrictions on your lifestyle.

8.   **What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

Your participation in this study will not expose you to any risks or disadvantages.

9.   **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Whilst there may be no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will make a significant contribution to the development of knowledge on recognising physical child punishment as a form of abuse. This information will be important to professionals in their work aimed at raising public awareness about this topic.

10.   **What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?**

If this is the case the reason(s) will be explained to the participants.

11.   **What if something goes wrong?**

If there is concern about any aspect of this project it should be addressed in the first instance to the PhD student, to the tutor supervising the work, or to Director of Research.

Director of Research: Prof. Jan Horwath: j.horwath.sheffield.ac.uk

12.   **Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

All the information that I collect about you, during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications.

13.   **What will happen to the results of the research project?**

The finding from the research will be disseminated to academic audiences and published after the PHD is completed.

14.   **Who is organising and funding the research?**

The research is being funded by Libyan Embassy/London.

15.   **Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

This project has been ethically approved via the Department of Sociological Studies at the University of Sheffield.

16.   **Contact for further information**

You may contact me in the first instance: Hanan Mesbah by email (sop10hem@sheffield.ac.uk) or Tel: 0925243946

If you require even further information you can contact my supervisors:

- Prof. Jan Horwath. (The first supervisor of the research)
  Email: j.horwath.sheffield.ac.uk.

- Dr. Afua Twum-Danso Imoh (The second supervisor of the research)
  Email: a.twum-danso@sheffield.ac.uk

OR contact the University on the following address:

The University of Sheffield / Department of Sociological Studies

Elmfield Northumberland Road

Sheffield

S10 2TU

Thank you for considering participating in this small scale study

Appendix (5) Participant Consent Form

5.1 Arabic Version

The University of Sheffield
Department of Sociological Studies
Elmfield Northumberland Road
Sheffield, S10 2TU

<div dir="rtl">

نموذج الموافقة على المشاركة بالدراسة

عنوان الدراسة: العقاب الجسدي كاسلوب لتربية الاطفال في الاسرة الليبية

اسم الباحثة: حنان المخزوم sop10hem@shef.ac.uk

اسم المشرفة الاولى: Prof. Jan Horwath: j.horwath.sheffield.ac.uk

اسم المشرفة الثانية: Dr. Afua Twum-Danso Imoh: a.twum-danso@sheffield.ac.uk

الرجاء ملاحظة انك مخير للمشاركة وليست مجبر على ذلك و بامكانيك
التراجع اي وقت بدون اعطاء اى سبب

الرجاء اشر على الفقرات التالية:

1) انا اؤكد انني قد قرات وثيقة المعلومات المتعلقة بهذه الدراسة وقد اتيحت لى الفرصة للاستفسار. ⚪
2) انا على يقين اني مخير للمشاركة في الدراسة وليست مجبر على ذلك و بامكاني التراجع اي وقت بدون اعطاء اى سبب. ⚪
3) انا على معرفة ان اجابتي ستظل مجهولة الهوية واني اعطي الاذن للباحثة لاستخدام تلك الاجابات. ⚪
4) انا موافق على المشاركة في هذه الدرسة. ⚪

اسم المشترك: ------------------------------- التاريخ --------------------- التوقيع -----------------------

اسم الباحثة: حنـــــــــــان المخزوم   التاريخ --------------------- التوقيع -----------------------

</div>

5.2 English Version

Participant Consent Form

The University of Sheffield
Department of Sociological Studies
Elmfield Northumberland Road
Sheffield, S10 2TU

Title of Project:

Physical Punishment as a Method of Disciplining Libyan Children in Homes

Name of the researcher: Hanan Mesbah Massud: sop10hem@shef.ac.uk

Name of the first supervisor: Prof. Jan Horwath: j.horwath.sheffield.ac.uk

Name of the second supervisor: Dr. Afua Twum-Danso Imoh: a.twum danso@sheffield.ac.uk

Please note that you have the right to withdraw at any time and you do not have to give a reason for that.

Please initial box

1) I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2) I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

3) I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis. I give permission for the researcher to have access to my anonymised responses.

4) I agree to take part in the above research project.

_____   _____   _____

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

Hanan El.Makzoum   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Date   Signatur

272

Appendix (6) Libyan Child Protection Law

6.1 Arabic Version

قـانـون رقـم (5) لـسـنة 1427م ميلاديـة بـشأن حمايـة الـطـفولة

مؤتمر الشعب العام،

– تنفيذاً لقرارات المؤتمرات الشعبية الأساسية في دور انعقادها العادي الثاني لعام 1427 ميلادية والتي صاغها الملتقى العام للمؤتمرات الشعبية الأساسية واللجان الشعبية والنقابات والاتحادات والروابط المهنية (مؤتمر الشعب العام) في دور انعقاده العادي في الفترة من 25 إلى 29 شعبان الموافق من 25 إلى 29 الكانون 1427 ميلادية.

– وبعد الاطلاع على إعلان قيام سلطة الشعب.

– وعلى الوثيقة الخضراء الكبرى لحقوق الإنسان في عصر الجماهير.

– وعلى القانون رقم 20 لسنة 1991 إفرنجي بشأن تعزيز الحرية.

– وعلى القانون المدني.

– وعلى قانوني العقوبات والإجراءات الجنائية.

– وعلى قانون النظام المالي للدولة وتعديلاته.

– وعلى القانون رقم (36) لسنة 1968 إفرنجي بشأن الأحوال المدنية.

– وعلى القانون رقم (5) 1969 إفرنجي بشأن تخطيط المدن والقرى.

– وعلى القانون رقم (58) لسنة 1970 إفرنجي بشأن العمل.

– وعلى القانون رقم (106) لسنة 1973 إفرنجي بشأن إصدار القانون الصحي.

– وعلى القانون رقم (95) لسنة 1975 إفرنجي بشأن التعليم الإلزامي.

– وعلى قانون الخدمة المدنية الصادر بالقانون رقم (55) لسنة 1976 إفرنجي.

– وعلى القانون رقم (13) لسنة 1980 إفرنجي بشأن الضمان الاجتماعي.

– وعلى القانون رقم (10) لسنة 1984 إفرنجي بشأن الزواج والطلاق وآثارهما.

– وعلى القانون رقم (17) لسنة 1992 إفرنجي في شأن أحوال القاصرين ومن في حكمهم.

– وعلى القانون رقم (1) لسنة 1425 ميلادية بشأن نظام عمل المؤتمرات الشعبية واللجان الشعبية.

صاغ القانون الآتي

المادة الأولى

يقصد بالطفل في تطبيق أحكام هذا القانون الصغير الذي لم تبلغ سنه السادسة عشرة ويشمل ذلك الجنين في بطن أمه.

المادة الثانية

يكون إبرام عقود الزواج بعد التأكد من سلامة الزوجين من الأمراض الوراثية والمعدية ومن الأمراض الوراثية الناتجة عن زواج الأقارب ذات الأثر على صحة الأطفال الجسمية والعقلية، ويصدر بتحديد الأمراض المشار إليها قرار من اللجنة الشعبية العامة للصحة والضمان الاجتماعي.

المادة الثالثة

يجوز تأجيل تنفيذ العقوبة السالبة للحرية على المرأة الحامل والمرضع لمدة لا تتجاوز سنة بعد الوضع، ما لم تكن الجريمة المعاقب عليها ماسة بأمن الدولة، وفي كل الأحوال يجب مراعاة توفير الظروف الصحية الملائمة للمرأة الحامل أو المرضع في السجن.

المادة الرابعة

على المرفق الصحي الذي تتم به الولادة إجراء الفحوصات الطبية للمولود للتأكد من سلامته من أي سبب للإعاقة الوراثية أو بسبب الولادة وعليه إحالة المولود إلى المركز المتخصص فور اكتشافه لأي نوع من أنواع المرض أو الإعاقة.

المادة الخامسة

تتولى المرافق الصحية بكل مستوياتها توفير الأمصال والتطعيمات اللازمة للأطفال بدون مقابل، ويعتبر التقصير في تقديم الطفل للتطعيمات أو في إجرائها بدون مبرر في حكم إساءة معاملة القصر المعاقب عليها بموجب قانون العقوبات.

المادة السادسة

يتولى من لهم صفة الضبط القضائي في تطبيق أحكام هذا القانون متابعة الجهات والأفراد الذين يقومون على شئون الأطفال الأيتام، وكذلك الأطفال الذين يبلغ عن تعرضهم للإساءة في المعاملة من قبل ذويهم أو من غيرهم على أي وجه، أو يكتشف تعرضهم لها بأي وسيلة والتحقق من طبيعة المعاملة التي يلقونها والرعاية المقدمة لهم.

المادة السابعة

يكفل المجتمع من خلال المؤسسات التي يقيمها حق الرعاية الإيوائية الكاملة للأطفال الذين لا ولي لهم.

المادة الثامنة

يمنح الأطفال مجهولو النسب أسماء ثلاثية، ويسجلون بسجل معد لذلك بمكتب السجل المدني المختص، ويحق لهم الحصول على البطاقات الشخصية وجوازات السفر وكذلك كتيبات العائلة دون التقيد بشرط إبرام عقود الزواج.

المادة التاسعة

التعليم الأساسي حق يكفله المجتمع لأبنائه — الأسوياء والمعاقين — القادرين عليه وهو إلزامي ولا يجوز حرمان الطفل منه.

ويعاقب بالعقوبات المقررة لإساءة معاملة القصر في قانون العقوبات كل من كان سبباً في حرمان الطفل من هذا الحق.

المادة العاشرة

مع مراعاة الأحكام المقررة بقانون العمل رقم (58) لسنة 1970 إفرنجي المشار إليه يحظر تشغيل الأطفال في أي عمل إلا إذا كان ذلك

لغرض تعليم حرفة من الحرف وبناء على رغبة الطفل.

المادة الحادية عشرة

يجب أن تكون مخططات المدن والقرى مشتملة على ساحات وملاعب وحدائق ومرافق خدمات للأطفال، ودور الحضانة المناسبة لمواقع العمل التي تشتغل فيها النساء على أن تقدم خدماتها للأطفال بمقابل، وذلك بما يضمن لهم — أسوياء ومعاقين — أسباب النمو وحرية الحركة والانطلاق واللعب في ظروف صحية مأمونة.

المادة الثانية عشرة

تنشأ لجنة تسمى اللجنة العليا للطفولة، تتولى إعداد الخطط والبرامج اللازمة للاهتمام بالطفل ورعايته ومتابعة الجهات ذات العلاقة بتنفيذ أحكام هذا القانون، وإصدار ما يلزم من تعليمات في هذا الشأن ويصدر بتشكيل اللجنة ونظام عملها وتبعيتها قرار من اللجنة الشعبية العامة.

المادة الثالثة عشرة

تخصص بالميزانية العامة للدولة سنوياً ضمن مخصصات القطاعات ذات العلاقة بتنفيذ أحكام هذا القانون المبالغ المالية اللازمة لتغطية مصروفات المناشط والمزايا المقررة وفقاً لأحكامه بما في ذلك الاهتمام بثقافة الطفل وتشجيع التأليف والنشر في مجال الطفولة والاهتمام بمسارح ومكتبات ومعارض الأطفال بما يحقق رسالة إعلامية وثقافية ذات مضمون يساهم في إعداد النشيء وإتاحة الفرصة أمامه للتألق والإبداع.

المادة الرابعة عشرة

تكون للإخصائيين الاجتماعيين والنفسيين الذين يصدر بتحديدهم قرار من اللجنة الشعبية العامة صفة مأموري الضبط القضائي في تطبيق أحكام هذا القانون.

المادة الخامسة عشرة

لا تخل أحكام هذا القانون بأية أحكام أو مزايا أفضل للأطفال مقررة بموجب التشريعات النافذة.

المادة السادسة عشرة

تصدر اللجنة الشعبية العامة القرارات اللازمة لتنفيذ أحكام هذا القانون.

المادة السابعة عشرة

ينشر هذا القانون في الجريدة الرسمية وفي وسائل الإعلام المختلفة ويعمل به من تاريخ نشره في الجريدة الرسمية.

مؤتمر الشعب العام

صدر في / سرت

الموافق / 29 / الكانون / 1427 ميلادية.

Appendix (7) A Copy of Ethical Approval of This Study

The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Department
Of Sociological
Studies.

Hanan Mesbah Massud
Department of Sociological Studies

Department Ethics Co-ordinator
Dr Jo Britton

The University of Sheffield
Department of Sociological Studies
Elmfield, Northumberland Road
Sheffield, S10 2TU

28 July 2011

Telephone: +44 (0) 114 222 6431
Fax: +44 (0) 114 276 8125
Email: n.j.britton@sheffield.ac.uk

Dear Hanan

PROJECT TITLE: " Physical Punishment as a Method of Disciplining Libyan Children in Homes "

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 28 July 2011 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documents that you submitted for ethics review:

- A completed research ethics application form (dated 27 July 2011)
- A participant information document (dated 27 July 2011)
- A participant consent form (dated 27 July 2011)

If during the course of the project you need to deviate from the above-approved documents please inform me. Written approval will be required for significant deviations from or significant changes to the above-approved documents. Please also inform me should you decide to terminate the project prematurely.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jo Britton
Department Ethics Co-ordinator