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Examining Mothers' Own Childhood Experiences, Behaviours toward Their Children and Attitudes toward Violence

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the child-rearing experiences and attitudes toward the violence of mothers who witnessed or experienced violence in their childhood and those who have not. The research is conducted over a study group of 30 mothers whose 5- to 6-year-old children are attending kindergarten. The data have been collected using the semi-structured interview technique and analysed by performing descriptive analysis. As a result of the data analysis, the research findings have been gathered under five main themes: witnessing violence in childhood, unwanted behaviours in children, behaviours toward children when angry, punishments applied to children, and perspective on violence. According to the obtained results, 43.3% of the participant mothers had encountered a violent event that had affected them in their childhood, while 36.7% had not encountered any violent event. Regarding their child-raising experiences and attitudes toward violence, there were differences between mothers who had witnessed or experienced violence in their childhood and those who had not. When assessing the perspective on violence, 70% of the mothers consider using violence to be wrong, are completely against violence towards women and children, and believe that violence does not solve problems but instead leads to more violence.

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Keywords:

Mother, child, domestic violence, culture, violence against children.

1.Introduction

Raising children healthily in terms of physical, spiritual, and social relations is of utmost importance. They are whom we will entrust with our future, who will ensure the continuance of society, and who will form the future. Parents, being children's first educators, attempt to provide the child's social, cognitive, and emotional development and to have the child learn new information. While children's psychological development and behaviours take shape in the family, internal family relations also form the basis of the shape and attitudes of children's relationships with other individuals and objects. The family's inner social relations, particularly the mother-child relationship, are said to have an important place in children's personality development and maintain its effect throughout their lives (Yavuzer, 2013). However, domestic violence becomes an issue when the family becomes a place where violence is nurtured and practised. Violence can emerge in different ways at any period in one's life. The violence experienced frequently within the family, which forms the basis of society, is applied more to women and children in particular. This is because women and children may be more vulnerable to protect themselves.

The percentage of women who have witnessed physical violence worldwide has been reported at approximately 25%-50%. According to a World Health Organisation (WHO, 2013) report, 35% of women have been exposed to violence. The percentages of women who have been exposed to violence from their

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husbands are 29.8% in America, 25.4% in Europe, 25.4% in Southeast Asia, and 36.3% in Africa. The report additionally shows violence to be accepted by women. A report from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF; 2014) shows that nearly half of all girls between the ages of 15-19 (approximately 126 million) think that a husband has the right to beat his wife in certain situations. This percentage rises to 80% in Afghanistan, Guinea, Jordan, Mali, and Timor-Leste. In 28 of the 60 countries that have data on both genders, the percentage of girls who think men have the right to beat their wives in certain situations is higher compared to men. According to the Research on Domestic Violence Against Women in Turkey (Turkey's General Directorate on the Status of Women [KSGM], 2015), of the women throughout Turkey, 36% have been exposed to physical violence, 44% to emotional violence, and 12% to sexual violence. Of the women in the Research on Domestic Violence Against Women in Turkey, 37.5% indicated having experienced physical or sexual violence at least once during their lives (Turkish Statistical Institute [TurkStat], 2014).

Children in Turkey and the world have witnessed domestic violence or been directly exposed to violence. In both cases, violence has a devastating effect, and its effects continue throughout one's life. In many societies, the legal regulations against parents punishing their children by way of physical violence as a disciplinary tool to teach a lesson are seen to be insufficient. Moreover, most parents find occasionally hitting a child to be natural (Schaffer, 2008, pp. 299–300). Children who have witnessed domestic violence are known as "silent," "forgotten," or "invisible" victims (Edleson, 1999).

The report Child Maltreatment, published by WHO (2017), showed that one in four children worldwide had been subjected to physical violence, and 36% are victims of emotional violence such as threats, reprimands, humiliation, and oppression. In UNICEF's (2017) report A Familiar Face: Violence in the Lives of Children and Adolescents, stated that children worldwide and in all age groups have been subjected to violence at home, where they should be safest, as well as at school and in public spaces and that the trauma violence forms may continue throughout the child's life and even be able to impact later generations. According to the same report, 75% of children (300 million) between the ages of 2 and 4 have been exposed to psychological and/or physical violence by caregivers. One out of four of the approximately 177 million children under the age of 5 in the world lives with a mother who has been subjected to violence from their spouse/partner (UNICEF, 2017). Three out of ten adults in the world consider corporal punishment necessary for a child to grow up well (UNICEF, 2014, p. 4). One study on domestic violence in Northeastern Pennsylvania, where the crime rate is below the general average of the United States, determined as a result of evaluating the calls made to police within a year that almost half the incidents had occurred in the presence of children, 81% of whom were directly exposed to violence (Fantuzzo & Fusco, 2007). Three million suspected maltreatment reports are made each year in the USA, of which one million are confirmed after being investigated (Christian & Blum, 2017).

Studies done in Turkey have shown that physical and verbal punishments are found and commonly used as disciplinary and educational tools within the Turkish family structure and that children who witness domestic violence are at the same time also exposed to it. In their study, Bilge et al. (2013) found that most mothers and fathers expose their children to neglect and abuse and think they deserve corporeal punishment. According to Genç Hayat Vakfı's [Young Life Foundation] (2012) research on violence experienced by children within the home, 73.4% of children enrolled in primary school have experienced domestic violence at least once; 20.5% have witnessed domestic violence at least once; and 26% have been exposed to negligent behaviours, 68% to emotional violence, and 26% to physical violence at least once during their lives. Sofuoğlu et al. (2014) determined the frequency of negative childhood-age experiences in their study between 42% and 70%.

The importance of family, particularly the mother, in forming a child's identity is considered high. A child first begins modelling their mother, and learns responsibility and develops internal control mechanisms in this process. Mothers have a considerable role in the child's education. A child's identity is determined by their mother's behaviour. Girls are generally known to model the mother and boys their father.

Many of those who have experienced domestic violence in childhood become violence-inflicting adults (Kaufman & Zigler, 1987). How violence is learned is explained through the social learning theory. Children learn adult behaviours through imitation, and these become habits through the reinforcers the social

environment forms (Bandura & Barab, 1971). The intergenerational transmission of violence was developed based on the social learning theory (Kaalmuss, 1984). According to this theory, one exposed to or has observed violence can learn it as a social norm (Neighbors et al., 2010). Boys who have learned violence in this way can inflict it upon their spouse or children in the future. Girls who have learned violence in this way regard it as normal and direct it to their children. Experiencing things like this in one's early years contributes to the normalisation, spread, and transmission of violence to new generations (Hergüner, 2011, p. 48; Karal&Aydemir, 2012). However, violence alone is not transmitted, so is the emotional atmosphere in which the violence was experienced. The anger and fear children internalise can affect their attitudes and behaviours throughout their lives. Some children will identify themselves with the victim, withdraw, and draw a depressing picture full of fear. In contrast, others will identify themselves with the aggressive figure and start applying aggressive behaviours (Ernst et al., 2008). Even though many children who have been exposed to or witnessed domestic violence are not exposed to violence later on in life, domestic violence is transmitted from generation to generation (Steketee, 2017). Those who have seen more violence are not said to inflict violence; those who have witnessed more direct violence later inflict violence (Osofsky, 1995; Vahip, 2002; Kitzmann, Gaylort, Holt, & Kenny, 2003). The research done with men who have inflicted violence shows that children who have witnessed their father inflict violence on their mother during childhood adopt their father as a role model and view violence as a normal form of behaviour. This impacted how they inflicted violence on women in adulthood (Peralta et al., 2010, p. 397; Bevan & Higgins, 2002, p. 240; Abramsky et al., 2011, p. 114).

According to Boğaziçi University, Humanist Bureau and Frekans Research (2014): Domestic Violence Against Children Aged 0-8 Years in Turkey, 74% of parents inflict emotional violence, and 23% inflict physical violence on their children. In cases where emotional or physical violence occurs at home, 70% of the children aged 0-8 years witness the violence. Studies have shown that children under 6 years old have a greater risk of witnessing domestic violence; these children are vulnerable to violence, and being exposed to violence at this age directly impacts the child's cognitive development (Funzotto& Fusco, 2007; Enlow et al., 2012; Herman-Smith, 2013).

Ezen and Açıkgöz (2017) found that 45% of children (7-18 years old) had been exposed to physical abuse and 51% to emotional abuse; the mothers exposed to maltreatment in childhood were more likely to mistreat their children. Research on Domestic Violence Against Women (KSGM, 2015) showed that 28% of married women's mothers and 27% of married men's mothers had been exposed to physical violence throughout Turkey. The women most exposed to physical violence are those whose mothers had experienced physical violence. Throughout Turkey, the research showed that 51% of women whose mothers had been exposed to physical violence were also exposed to physical violence themselves, and 28% of women whose mothers had not been exposed to physical violence were victims of violence in childhood. According to Akalın and Arıkan (2017), 28% of women subjected to violence by their spouses inflict violence on their children, and 23.5% of those women had also been exposed to violence in their childhood. In the Domestic Violence Against Children Aged 0-8 Years in Turkey research (Boğaziçi University, Humanist Bureau, & Frekans Research, 2014), while 86.4% of mothers who stated being exposed to physical violence have inflicted emotional violence, and 47% of them have inflicted physical violence on their children, 75% of those who had not been exposed to physical violence have inflicted emotional violence, and 24.7% have inflicted physical violence on their children. In Aydemir and Demircioğlu's (2017) study, 60% of women had been subjected to violence. Of these women, 58.3% had been subjected to violence by their spouses, 33.3% their mothers, and 31.6% their fathers.

According to Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu and Çavlin (2015), 66% of women whose mothers had been subjected to violence also inflicted violence on their children. Children living in rural areas whose grandmothers and mothers had been subjected to physical violence make up the group with the most victims of physical violence (at a rate of 72%). Violence occurs less (37%) in cases where neither the women nor their mothers had been victims of physical violence. Studies show that women who had been subjected to violence in childhood and who have experienced problems and violence with their spouse after getting married tend to inflict violence on their children. Çalışkan et al.'s (2019) study reported that mothers who'd been exposed to verbal abuse from their spouse and had experienced physical violence from their parents in childhood were more likely to have inflicted physical violence on their children three or more times. Witnessing or being

exposed to violence affects violent actions and attitudes toward violence (KodanÇetinkaya, 2013). According to Straus (1991), the more families inflict physical violence on children, the more likely these children will inflict violence in the future. This is as valid for women as it is for men.

On inflicting violence on their own families in adulthood, White and Widow's (2003) 20-year research showed the difference between those who witnessed or had been exposed to domestic violence in childhood and those who had not at 12%. Although this may not seem like much, this difference does contribute to explaining domestic violence.

Yağmurlu and Sanson (2009) determined that Turkish mothers possess more obedience-oriented goals and use more punishment-oriented strategies than the parenting styles of Australian mothers with mothers who had migrated from Turkey to Australia.

UNICEF (2014) noted that the impact of violence children witness or are subjected to can continue throughout life and pass down to next generations; today's victims can become tomorrow's perpetrators. When domestic violence is mentioned globally and in Turkey, it is perceived as the violence directed toward women by men, and solutions are sought in this direction. There have been many studies on violence in Turkey. A considerable part of these studies is based on the causes of violence against children. The violence inflicted on children by mothers who have been subjected to violence themselves and bear the scars from this has not come into question.

The purpose of this study is to explore mothers' experiences with childhood violence, current child-rearing difficulties and reactions (i.e. punishment methods), and their perspectives on violence. For this purpose, the research asks the following questions:

- What is the mothers' situation regarding being exposed to or witnessing violence in their childhood?
- Which of the children's behaviours are unwanted by the mothers?
- How do the mothers behave when they get angry at their children?
- Which punishments do the mothers apply when their children make them angry?
- What are the mothers' views on violence?

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

This research, which was conducted in Turkey to examine mothers' experiences of childhood violence, their current child-rearing difficulties and reactions (i.e. punishment methods), and their perspectives on violence, was carried out in a qualitative design. Qualitative studies aim to explain and understand concepts, phenomena, and relationships with data collection methods such as observations, interviews, and document reviews (Merriam, 2013). This research is a phenomenology research from qualitative research designs. Phenomenology studies aim to reveal examples, explanations, and experiences that will help better understand a phenomenon (Cropley, 2002). Data sources are individuals/groups who experience the research phenomenon and reflect this phenomenon. The focus of this study is violence, and the people whose opinions are consulted are mothers.

2.2. Study Group

The research study group has been determined using the criterion sampling technique, a purposeful sampling method. The criterion sampling method is based on understanding the study of cases that meet a specific set of criteria. The researcher can create these criteria, or a preprepared criteria list can be used (Yıldırım&Şimşek, 2018). The criteria for this study are that the participants are mothers with a child between the ages of 5-6 enrolled in kindergarten. The 30 voluntary mothers who met these criteria constitute the study group of the research. Assistance was requested for selecting the study group by giving information about the study to the two kindergartens where the children are enrolled. Upon completing the required institutional approval processes, the voluntary mothers who met the criteria were interviewed. The characteristics of the interviewed mothers are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Demographic Findings from the Participants

		Frequency	Per cent			Frequency	Per cent
Working status	Working	4	13.3	Economical situation	Middle	25	83.3
	Not working	26	86.7		Good	5	16.7
	Total	30	100		High		
Age	24 years and under	1	3.3	Number of children	Total	30	100
	25-34 years old	14	46.7		1-2 children	23	76.7
	35-45 years old	14	46.7		3-4 children	7	23.3
	46 years and older	1	3.3		Total	30	100
	Total	30	100		Extended family	6	20.0
Education status	Primary education	3	10.0	Family structure	Nuclear family	22	73.3
	High school	13	43.3		Single parent family	2	6.7
	University	13	43.3		Total	30	100
	Total	30	100		Verbal violence by a spouse	Yes	8
The fighting situation of the spouses	Yes	3	10	No		20	66.7
	No	25	83.3	Total		28	93.3
	Total	28					
Physically abused by their spouse	Yes	1	3.3	Parental violence	Yes	13	43.3
	No	27	90		No	11	36.7
	Total	28	93.3		Total	24	100

Of the mothers participating in the study, 26% are unemployed, 83.3% are in the middle-income group, 76% have 1-2 children, 73.3% have a nuclear family, 3.3% have been physically abused by their spouse, 26.7% have been verbally abused by their spouse, and 26.7% have been exposed to violence from their parents.

2.3. Data collection and procedures

Personal Information Form: This form asked the participants about their educational status, age, employment status, family structure, number of children, economic status, if they fight with their husband, whether or not their husband has inflicted physical or verbal violence on them, and whether or not they had been exposed to violence from their parents during their childhood.

Qualitative Data Collection Tool: This study uses the semi-structured interview technique as the data collection method. This method, being neither as rigid as fully structured interviews nor as flexible as unstructured interviews, lies between these two extremes (Karasar, 1995, p. 165). The semi-structured interview technique has been used because of the flexibility it provides the researcher. Before preparing the interview questions, a national and international literature review was conducted on the research topic. The questions to include on the interview form were determined after contemplating the issue. Three faculty members and three mothers were interviewed to evaluate these questions regarding objective, understanding, and scope. The questionnaire form was finalised using the information obtained following these stages. The questions asked of the mothers in the research are:

- Did you experience or witness violence in your childhood?
- Which of your child's behaviours make you angry?
- How do you treat your child when they make you angry?
- What is your reason for these behaviours?
- Which punishments do you apply to your child?
- What are your thoughts on violence?

The data was gathered between 5/1/2019 and 5/31/2019 from the voluntary mothers identified by performing an approximately 20-minute interview in the kindergarten where their children are enrolled. During the interviews, the participants were informed about the research. Their permission was requested for using a voice recorder to prevent data loss. They were told they could end the interview whenever they wanted. At

the end of the interviews performed with the participants, they were told they could listen to the recordings if they wanted, and part or all of their unwanted views could be deleted if necessary. Therefore, the recording device's negative impacts on the participants were prevented. Care has been taken in the research to provide an interview environment where the participants felt comfortable, relaxed, and were able to express their opinions sincerely. An appropriate interactive environment was created. The researcher was cautious not to affect the participants while answering the questions.

2.3. Data Analysis

Content analysis has been performed in this research, designed following the qualitative research approach. The data have been analysed in four stages: coding the data, identifying the themes in the coded data, organising the codes and themes, and defining and interpreting the findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 228). First, the interview recordings and written forms were encoded and analysed during the analysis. In analysing the mothers' opinions, groupings were made according to the similarity of expressions. Explanations have been made in the analyses by giving each of the mothers whose views had been consulted a code number (e.g., M1, M2). The data obtained using the interview technique have been digitised and expressed as frequencies. Similar objects in the statements were grouped, and themes were formed according to the groups. Whether or not the mothers had witnessed/been exposed to violence was coded first and then supported with direct quotations to provide the internal validity of the research. The researcher constantly tested the significance and integrity of the findings. The consistency of the concepts forming the themes was assessed among themselves and through the other themes to ensure the consistency of the findings (whether or not they formed a meaningful whole was tested). The relevance of the findings has been compared with previous research. The themes have been explained and interpreted using either the deductive or inductive method based on the situation. The research process has been explained in detail, from preparing the data collection tools to implementing and analysis phases to ensure external validity. Arriving at the significance of the findings and the authenticity of the application was done by comparing the findings with the literature. Making the explanations required to test the research through other studies has been attempted using the research details. The mothers whose opinions had been taken were re-interviewed, and their views were confirmed by sharing the findings.

2.4. Ethical

The data related to the research was gathered between 5/1/2019 to 5/31/2019 from the voluntary mothers that had been identified by performing an approximately 20-minute interview in the kindergarten where their children are enrolled.

3. Findings

3.1 Findings Regarding Witnessing Violence During Childhood

The following results have been reached as a result of this study, which has been performed to examine the childhood experiences of mothers in Turkey, their behaviours toward their children, and their attitudes toward violence.

Five different forms of behaviour were determined in line with the participants' answers to the question, "Did you witness or experience violence during your childhood?". The findings are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Mothers' Status Regarding Witnessing or Experiencing Violence in Their Childhood

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
Witnessed/experienced violence	M1, M2, M9, M10, M14, M15, M16, M17, M19, M21, M23, M26, M30	13
Physical violence	M2, M14, M15, M16, M17, M19, M30	7
Psychological violence	M1, M9, M10, M21, M23, M26	6
Didn't experience violence	A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A11, A12, A13, A18, A20	11
Didn't answer	A22, A24, A25, A27, A28, A29	6
Total		30

Note: Mothers can give more than one answer.

According to Table 2 above, 13 mothers (43.3%) stated facing a violent event that had affected them in their childhood. Of these mothers, while seven (53.8%) were exposed to physical violence, six (46.1%) were exposed to psychological violence. Of the participants, 11 mothers (36.7%) stated having no encounter with any violent event that had affected them. Six participants did not want to answer. The participants who stated witnessing violent events in their childhood said they witnessed these events mostly in the family and at school.

The mothers' views on witnessing/being exposed to violence in childhood are as follows:

My father had stuccoed the wall of our shanty house; I had found a key and stuck it in the wall. My father slapped me twice when he saw the key in the stucco. I will never forget it. (M2)

One time I had made my mother very angry. I had insulted and berated her. She struck me on my face with the beads in her hand as she was making dhikr. I got a black eye from it. (M14)

My father had thrown the remote control at my head. My older sister constantly hit my head. My older sister would always say, "You're too little to understand." Because of this, I had no self-confidence. (M17)

Yes, I had come home late one evening. My dad beat me. I can't forget it. (M19)

I can't forget the way my dad would beat me. My mom would beat me too. (M30)

It wasn't physical, but our kindergarten teacher was intolerant of foreigners, and she would deliberately hurt their feelings in class. (M9)

I can't forget how our kindergarten teacher struck and broke a ruler over one of our classmates in front of all of us. (M15)

It didn't happen to me, but I did see a male teacher inflict serious violence on our classmates. (M16)

Seven different types of behaviours were identified in line with the responses the mothers who had witnessed/been exposed to violence in childhood gave to the question, "Which of your child's behaviours anger you?" The findings are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. *The Child Behaviours That Anger the Mothers Who Had Witnessed/Been Exposed to Violence in Their Childhood*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Participant</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>
Not listening	M2, M10, M14, M17, M26, M30	6
Physical violence	M9, M16, M21	3
Being insistent/stubborn	M9, M26, M17	2
Not taking responsibility	M1, M19, M30	2
Not eating their food	M22	1
Talking too much	M2	1
Expressing what they want by crying	M15	1
Rejecting the mother	M14	1

Note: Mothers can give more than one answer.

When examining Table 3 above, the children's behaviours that anger the mothers were determined as not listening ($f = 6$), inflicting physical violence ($f = 3$), being insistent/stubborn ($f = 2$), not taking responsibility ($f = 2$), not eating their food ($f = 1$), talking too much ($f = 1$), and saying what they want by crying ($f = 1$).

The views of the mothers regarding the child behaviours that anger them are as follows:

When I explain something to him, he says, "Okay, mum, it needs to be done." When I ask him why he didn't do it when it needed to be done, he says, "I forgot." (M1)

The way she doesn't listen and talks too much is bothersome. It is irritating. (M2)

This year, he tends to hit, despite never seeing it from us. But we don't allow him to hit. (M16)

The way they cry about the things they want. (M15)

Not taking responsibility. (M19)

Not listening. Not doing what they are supposed to do on time. (M30)

Saying, "I'm not your son." (M14)

Five different forms of behaviour were identified in line with the mothers' responses to the question, "What do you do when your children make you angry?". The findings are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. What the Mothers Who had Witnessed/Been Exposed to Violence in Their Childhood Do When Their Children Make Them Angry

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
Get Angry/Shout/Berate	M10, M14, M17, M19, M23, M30	6
Stay quiet/Wait for them to calm down	M1, M16, M2, M21	4
Talk	M1, M23, M26	3
Don't do what they want	M19, M21	2
Ignore them	M9, M15	2

Note: Mothers can give more than one answer.

According to Table 4 above, when the mothers who'd witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood get angry at their children, they show the following behaviours: get angry/shout/berate ($f = 6$), stay quiet/wait for them to calm down ($f = 4$), talk ($f = 3$), don't do what they want ($f = 2$), and ignore them ($f = 2$).

The mothers' views regarding what they do when getting angry at their children are presented below:

I prefer to stay quiet. When I get angry, I can say things I don't want. I respond to their questions later and talk about what had made me angry. (M1)

I take a deep breath. I hold them tight in my arms and kiss them. (M2).

Sometimes I ignore them and wait for them to notice their mistake. Sometimes I can't stand it because they did it intentionally. I don't tolerate the mistakes when he's been repeatedly warned (like hitting his sister). (M9)

I get angry, I shout, I get uncontrollably loud. (M10, M23, M30)

I just ignore him. I go somewhere else. (M15)

I yell. I berate. (M17)

It varies according to the situation. For example, I won't do what they want. (M19)

Six different types of behaviour have been identified in line with the mothers' responses to the question, "Why do you behave the way you do when you get angry at your children?". The findings are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Reasons for the Responses Mothers Who had Witnessed/Been Exposed to Violence in the Childhood Show to Their Children When They Get Angry

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
To stop the bad behaviour	M9, M10, M14	3
To not cause harm/not to make a mistake	M1, M15	2
To show love/understanding	M2, M26	2
To make them listen	M14,	1
The unrest in the family	M17	1
What they'd experienced in their childhood	M19	1

Note: Mothers can give more than one answer.

When examining Table 5 above, the reasons for the responses shown to their children when they get angry were determined as to stop bad behaviour ($f = 3$), not cause harm/not to make a mistake ($f = 2$), show love/understanding ($f = 2$), make them listen ($f = 1$), unrest in the family ($f = 1$), and what they had experienced in their childhood ($f = 1$).

The reasons for their behaviours when they get angry are as follows:

My love is higher than everything and overcomes everything. (M2)

I can't figure him out when mistakes are repeated. The only way to stop it is to get angry. (M9, M10)

I'm suddenly screaming before I'm aware of it; after a while, I apologise when I see they're upset. I can't change how they look at me (the traces remain when you grow up). (M14)

It's to not hurt them. (M15)

There is unrest in the family. The peace with my husband is disturbed. (M17)

It's what I'd experienced in my childhood. (M19)

Eight different forms of behaviour have been identified in line with the mothers' responses to the question, "What punishments do you give when you are angry at your children?". The findings are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. *The Punishments Mothers Who had Witnessed/Been Exposed to Violence in Their Childhood Give to Their Children When Angry*

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
Shout/Scold	M1, M9, M10, M11, M14, M15, M17, M19, M21, M23, M30	11
Intimidate/Threaten	M2, M10, M14, M17	4
Ignore/Let it slide	M2, M26, M17	3
Not show that you love them	M9, M14, M21	3
Ignore what they want	M10, M19	2
Spank/Pinch	M14, M17	2
Wait for them to calm down/Calm them down	M16	1
Send them to their room	M26	1

Note: Mothers can give more than one answer.

According to Table 6 above, the mothers who had witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood punish their children by: shouting/scolding ($f = 11$), intimidate/threaten ($f = 4$), ignore/let it slide ($f = 3$), not show their love ($f = 3$), ignore what they want ($f = 2$), spank/pinch ($f = 2$), send them to their room ($f = 1$), and wait for them to calm down/calm them down ($f = 1$).

Three different behaviours have been identified to the question, "What are your thoughts on violence?". The findings are presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7. *The Attitudes Toward Violence of Mothers Who had Witnessed/Been Exposed to Violence in Their Childhood*

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
Opposed to violence	M1, M2, M9, M10, M15, M16, M23, M26	8
Inflicts the violence they saw from their mothers on their children	M14, M19	2
Inflicts violence because she's in a loveless environment	M17, M30	2

Note: Mothers can give more than one answer.

According to Table 7 above, when examining the thoughts and attitudes of the mothers who had psychologically and physically punished their children are seen to be opposed to violence ($f = 7$). They inflict violence on their child even if they do not want to because they have been exposed to violence in childhood (by their mother; $f = 2$). They inflict violence on the child because they have grown up in a loveless environment in their childhood, their husbands do not love them, and the problems between spouses.

The mothers' opinions on violence are as follows:

There's no need for violence. Life is beautiful when there's love. (M1)

It's just despair, I think. There's no other meaning in violence toward children apart from insecurity. A healthy individual does not resort to violence. (M2)

I am definitely opposed to it. Children who inflict violence should not procreate. (M9)

I've never desired to inflict violence on a creature smaller than myself (my child, others, or all life), and I would intervene if I saw this outside. (M15)

All forms of violence are evil and should not be inflicted. (M23)

Unfortunately, those who are unloved and not taught to love are inclined toward violence. (M30)

When I was little, I was exposed to violence by my family (mother). Even though I said I wouldn't be like that, I've unwittingly yelled at my child and pinched them. (M14)

Because my psychology isn't good and my spouse is not at my side, I can resort to violence. Because I am not loved. The greatest deficiency is that I am in a loveless environment. The lack of love brings about violence. (M17)

Six different forms of behaviours have been identified in line with the responses to the question, "At which of your child's behaviours do you get angry?". The findings are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8. *The Child Behaviours That Anger Mothers Who have Witnessed/Been Exposed to Violence in Their Childhood*

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
Not listening	M1, M3, M4, M6, M8, M13, M20, M24, M28	9
Not eating their food/Irregular sleep hours	M4, M5, M6, M23	4
Shyness/Timidness	M11, M12	2
Expressing themselves by crying	M6, M29	2
Sibling jealousy/Acting like a baby	M28	1
Protecting their friends	M25	1

Note: Mothers can give more than one answer.

When examining Table 8 above, the behaviours that anger mothers are not listening ($f = 9$), not eating their food/irregular sleep hours ($f = 4$), shyness/timidness ($f = 2$), expressing themselves by crying ($f = 2$), sibling jealousy/acting like a baby ($f = 1$), and protecting a friend.

The mothers' views about child behaviours that anger them are as follows:

... when I tell him something, he says, "Okay, mum, that needs to be done." When I ask him why he didn't do what needed to be done in time, he says, "I forgot." (M1)

...the bad behaviours I see are like saying they don't care when I say something. (M3)

My child doesn't listen much to what I say. (M8)

He gets very insistent about things and cries a lot when he can't do it. (M6)

I get frazzled because they don't eat their food. (M4)

3.2. Findings of Mother's Who had Not Witnessed/Been Subjected to Violence in Their Childhood

Six different behaviours have been identified in line with the responses the mothers who have not witnessed/been subjected to violence in their childhood gave to the question, "What do you do when your children make you angry?". The findings are presented in Table 9 below.

Table 9. *What Mothers Who have Not Witnessed/Been Subjected to Violence in Their Childhood Do When They Get Angry at Their Children*

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
Talking after calming down/Talking	M3, M6, M8, M20, M22, M23, M25, M27, M28, M29	10
Raising their voice/Warning	M4, M5, M11, M12, M22, M29	6
Getting Angry/Threatening	M18, M22, M23, M28	4
Questioning the reason for the behaviour	M4, M8	2
Not doing what they want	M13	1
Applying rules	M27	1

Note: Mothers can give more than one answer

According to Table 9 above, when their children make them angry, the mothers who have not witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood respond by talking after calming down/talking ($f = 10$), raising their voice/warning ($f = 6$), getting angry/threatening ($f = 4$), questioning the reason for the behaviour ($f = 2$), not doing what they want ($f = 2$), and applying rules ($f = 1$).

The mothers' stated the following about what they did when getting angry at their children:

We question and solve together the improper behaviour I see. (M3)

I raise my voice. I warn. I shout. (M4, M5, M11, M12, M22, M29)

I ask him to sit without speaking for a bit. Or I go to another room. I go back to him after my nerves have settled. (M20)

First, I try to stay calm and hopefully act slow. Then I raise my voice and threaten a little, unfortunately. (M22)

I sulk; let's kiss and make up. (M25)

I apply the valid rules we have. Of course, I first calm him down then say we need to talk. (M27)

Six different behaviours have been identified in line with the responses to the question, “What is the reason for your behaviours when you get angry at your children?”. The findings are presented in Table 10 below.

Table 10. *Reasons for the Responses the Mothers Who Have Not Witnessed/Been Exposed to Violence in Their Childhood Showed Their Children When Getting Angry*

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
To show love/understanding	M3, M6, M7, M8, M20, M27	6
To stop the bad behaviour	M3, M4, M5, M12, M13	5
To not harm/make a mistake	M1, M15, M27	3
Current mood/Sadness/impatience	M24, M25, M28	3
Not listening/being insistent	M12, M18	2
Intensity of housework	M22	1

Note: Mothers can give more than one answer.

When examining Table 10 above, the reasons for these responses are seen as follows: to show love/understanding ($f = 6$), stop the wrong behaviour ($f = 5$), not cause harm/not make a mistake ($f = 3$), current mood/sadness/impatience ($f = 3$), not listening/being insistent ($f = 2$), and intensity of housework ($f = 1$).

The mothers stated the following as reasons for the responses they showed to their children when getting angry:

I feel they'll get sick if they don't eat healthily. (M5)

I say things I can regret when I get angry, and I'm scared of upsetting my child. (M6)

It's to prevent them from doing the same thing again. (M13)

I'm trying to listen to and understand my child. (M8)

I supposed I'm a little impatient. I have no tolerance. I guess I'm a little tired of my child and spouse. (M22, M28)

I always feel that talking is the most logical and most beautiful way. (M26)

Because I can be hurtful in anger. I need to calm down to understand and be useful to them. (M27)

Seven different behaviours were identified in line with the responses to the question, “What punishments do you give your children when you get angry at them?”. The findings are presented in Table 11 below.

Table 11. *The Punishments the Mothers Who'd Not Witnessed/Been Exposed to Violence in Their Childhood Give Their Children When Angered*

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
Shouting/Berating	M11, M12, M17, M18, M24, M28, M29	7
Scaring/Threatening	M4, M8, M11, M12, M17, M22, M25, M28	8
Ignoring what they want	M8, M12, M17, M22, M24	5
Ignoring/Neglecting them	M5, M7, M18, M22, M28	5
Not showing their love	M8, M12, M18, M24	4
Spanking/Pinching	M17, M29	2
Sending them to their room	M27	1

*Mothers can give more than one answer.

According to Table 11 above, the mothers punish their children when angry by shouting/berating ($f = 7$), scaring/threatening ($f = 8$), ignoring what they want ($f = 5$), ignoring/neglecting ($f = 5$), not showing their love ($f = 4$), spanking/pinching ($f = 2$), and sending them to their room ($f = 1$).

The mothers' views related to the punishments they give their children when angry are as follows:

... Unfortunately, I raise my voice a bit afterwards and make little threats. (M22)

I prefer to stay silent. I can say things I don't want to say when I get angry. I answer their questions and talk about the issue that made me angry. (M11)

I ask him to explain to me why he's acting this way. I wait for him to calm down and explain the mistake again. (M8)

Three types of behaviours were identified in line with the answers to the question, "What are your thoughts on violence?". The findings are presented in Table 12 below.

Table 12. *The Attitudes Toward Violence of the Mothers Who have Not Witnessed/Been Subjected to Violence in Their Childhood*

Category	Participant	Frequency (f)
Opposed to violence	M3, M4, M5, M6, M7, M8, M11, M20, M22, M23, M24, M25, M29	13
Regrets inflicting violence	M12	1
Children need to be scared	M18	1

When examining their attitudes towards violence, the mothers are opposed to violence. They do not approve of it ($f = 13$), are regretful for having inflicted violence ($f = 1$), and consider violence necessary for scaring their child ($f = 1$).

Their views towards violence are as follows:

It's a situation that absolutely never needs to occur. (M3)

I feel that violence doesn't solve anything. (M11)

I'm definitely against it and don't inflict it on my child. (M22)

It's the worst thing that can happen to a person. I think inept people inflict it. (M24)

I absolutely don't accept any form of violence. (M25)

It's an evil thought. God willing, may no woman or child be subjected to violence. (M29)

4. Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

In Turkish culture and society, violence is an acceptable child-rearing method and affects the structure of society through a variety of dimensions. At the same time, witnessing and/or being exposed to domestic violence reflects negatively on the child's future life. This study has examined the behaviours toward children, the status of inflicting violence, and the views on the violence of mothers who have witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood and mothers who had not.

According to the research findings, while 13 mothers had encountered violent events that had impacted them in their childhood, 11 mothers had not encountered any violent events. Girls who witness and/or experience violence are more likely to be exposed to violence from their husbands in adulthood and inflict violence on their children (Neugebauer, 2000). Experienced violence is generally seen to continue from father to mother and mother to child as a cycle in the form of the child reflecting the violence they have seen onto their peers or siblings or onto their own family at a later age (TAYA, 2018).

Studies show that mothers who have been exposed to or witnessed violence in their childhood are more likely to inflict violence on their children (Karakoç et al., 2015; Ezen&Açıkgöz, 2017). KüçükBiçer et al. (2017) determined the rate of exposure to violence in childhood to be 35.8%. Kara-Doruk (2012) found that 9.4% of mothers had been exposed to violence in their childhood. The same research showed that mothers who had been subjected to violence in their childhood inflict violence on their children. Ezen and Açıkgöz (2017) found that mothers were exposed to emotional abuse most during their childhood and that these mothers exposed their children to physical abuse. According to the *Research: Domestic Violence Against Children Aged 0-8 Years in Turkey* (Boğaziçi University, Humanist Bureau, & Frekans Research, 2014), parents' experiences with violence in their childhood are seen as follows: 15.1% had witnessed emotional violence in childhood, 17.4% witnessed physical violence in childhood, 14.1% experienced emotional violence in childhood, and 23.1% experienced physical violence in childhood. According to the same research, while parents who had been exposed to emotional or physical violence in childhood stated that emotional violence harmed them, they felt that it "did not harm" their children. Mothers who have witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood are more likely to inflict all types of violence on their children. Mothers who had not witnessed/been subjected to violence in their childhood are seen less likely to inflict any violence on their children. In the UNICEF-Turkey (2008) research, while the percentage of emotional violence inflicted on children by mothers with no experience of physical violence is 75.0%, this rate increases to 86.4% for mothers who say they had been subjected to physical violence. The perception of violence as a form of training and

discipline in Turkey and being considered legitimate both in the family and in society has caused the repetition of violence.

Differences exist between the child behaviours that anger mothers who have witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood and those who have not. Mothers who have witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood get angry at their children's behaviours when they do not listen, take responsibility, act insistent/stubborn, or inflict physical violence. Mothers who had not witnessed/been exposed to violence in the childhood get angry at their children's behaviour where they do not listen, do not eat their food/sleep irregularly, act timid/shy, express themselves by crying, or get jealous of their siblings/act like a baby.

While not listening is common in both, the other behaviours show differences. The most striking situation here is children inflicting violence for the mothers who had not witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood. In KüçükBiçer et al.'s (2017) research, 44.9% of the participants who had inflicted violence on their children and 38.4% of those who had not inflicted violence on their children believe that a child always needs to listen to their mother.

What is expected from children in Turkey is being well-behaved/smart. Indicators of this are obeying the rules the mother has set down without question, listening to one's elders, and being respectful. Mothers expect behaviours that align with their expectations and wishes without knowing or considering the child's level of development. What makes mothers angry is not the behaviour of the child but the meaning attached to the behaviour. A child not eating their food is associated with the rule in Turkish culture that mothers are as satisfied when their children eat and love food. The more the child eats, the better/more successful the mother feels.

According to the research results, mothers who have witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood have different responses regarding their children's behaviours that anger them than mothers who had not witnessed/been exposed to violence.

When mothers who have witnessed/been subject to violence in their childhood get angry at their children, their responses appear mostly as getting very angry/shouting/berating, staying silent/waiting to calm down, talking, not doing what the child wants, and ignoring the child. When mothers who have not witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood get angry at their children, they respond by mostly talking after calming the child down, raising their voice/warning, getting angry/threatening, questioning the reason for the behaviour, not doing what the child wants, and applying rules.

Mothers who have not witnessed/been subjected to violence in their childhood show the behaviours of calming their child or talking with the child after they have calmed themselves down. In contrast, mothers who have witnessed/been subject to violence in their childhood show the behaviour primarily of getting angry/shouting/berating their children. The mothers in the first group noteworthyly question the reasons for their children's behaviours, and rules exist between the mother and child.

In Turkish culture, problems are experienced in the mother-child relationship and communication. No matter how much mothers love their children, they can get angry, shout, and harass their children for many reasons. Studies have been performed that support this result. According to *Research: Domestic Violence Against Children Aged 0-8 Years in Turkey* (Boğaziçi University, Humanist Bureau, & Frekans Research, 2014), when mothers' children behave in a way that makes them angry, 74% apply emotionally violent methods (e.g., depriving the child of something they like, cutting off basic needs, locking them in their room, shouting, making threats) and 23% apply physically violent methods (e.g., slapping, pushing, shaking, pulling hair/ears). Research (Kırcaali-İftar, 2005; Tahiroğlu et al., 2009) has shown that 18%-26% of mothers prefer threatening the child with punishment without giving the punishment. According to Kutlu et al. (2007), mothers give these punishments for the child to learn education, authority, discipline, respect, and responsibility. Mothers resort to emotional violence because they think it disciplines their children. They resort to physical violence because they lose control. Emotionally violent behaviours such as yelling, rude and harsh attitudes, ignoring, walking away from the child, and punishing them by not giving them what they want jeopardise children's psychological and social development.

According to the findings, the reasons for the responses of the mothers who have witnessed/been subjected to violence in childhood to their children when angered differ from the mothers who have not

witnessed/been subjected to violence in childhood. The mothers who had witnessed/been subjected to violence in their childhood explained their behaviours toward their children when getting angry as: to stop bad behaviour, not harm/make a mistake, show love/understanding, make them listen, the lack of peace in the family, and because of what they experienced themselves.

The mothers who had not witnessed/been subject to violence in their childhood stated the reasons for their responses primarily as to show love/understanding, stop bad behaviour, not harm/make a mistake, their current mood/sadness/impatience, the child's disobedience/stubbornness, and the intensity of housework.

When comparing both groups, mothers who witnessed/were exposed to violence in their childhood are seen to primarily exhibit behaviours for stopping bad behaviour, while those who had not witnessed/been subjected to violence in their childhood primarily exhibited behaviour to show love/understanding. Another important point that draws attention here is that the mothers who witnessed/were exposed to violence in their childhood justified their behaviours with the lack of peace at home and their childhood experiences.

Explaining the behaviour made toward the child before inflicting a harsh technique is seen as a popular disciplinary method in the studies performed in Turkey. While 37.1% of families prefer telling their children the wrong aspects of what they are doing according to the data from Tahiroğlu et al. (2009), the study done by Kırcaali-İftar (2005) stated that 74% of the population apply the methods of verbally explaining and of getting angry. Nearly half the mothers in KüçükBiçer et al.'s (2017) study stated that children cannot be raised without fear and that actions such as shouting and slapping without hurting can be done to scare them.

According to the study's findings, the punishment mothers who have witnessed/been subjected to violence in their childhood give their children when angered show similarities to those given by the mothers who did not.

Those who witnessed/were subjected to violence in their childhood are seen to punish their children when they get angry by shouting/berating, scaring/threatening, ignoring/neglecting, not showing their love, ignoring what the children want, slapping/pinching, and sending them to their room. Mother's who did not witness/be subjected to violence in their childhood punish their children by shouting/berating, scaring/threatening, ignoring what the children want, ignoring/neglecting, not showing their love, slapping/pinching, and sending them to their room. When comparing the behaviours of both groups, what is most striking is that both punished similarly and applied psychological and physical violence in the same way.

In Turkey, mothers accept psychological violence as disciplinary and educational methods. The *Turkish Family Structure Research* (TAYA, 2011, 2016) showed that shouting/berating come in first and slapping comes in third place among the punishments mothers give. Research results show mothers in Turkey use the shouting/berating method the most for education and discipline (Kırcaali-İftar, 2005; Akduman, 2010; Tahiroğlu et al., 2009; Kartal&Bilgin, 2009; Altıparmak et al., 2013). According to Altıparmak et al. (2013), 64.8% of children have been subjected to physical abuse, 63.3% to emotional abuse, 36% to physical neglect, and 7% to emotional neglect. In the research TAYA (2016), 26.4% of mothers punish by not talking to the child, 36.6% ignored their requests for a while, and 37.5% used slapping. In Tahiroğlu et al.'s (2009) study, 21% preferred the method of not letting the child get what they want and depriving them of the things they like. Studies show that mothers also enable their children's morality to not become dysfunctional or overindulgent by not showing their love and that mothers adopt this as a disciplinary tool (Toros, 2010; Güler et al., 2002; Kara Doruk, 2012).

According to research (Dallar-Bilge et al., 2013; Orhon et al., 2006; Çayköylü et al., 2011; Kutlu et al., 2007; KüçükBiçer et al., 2017; Kırcaali-İftar, 2005; Erkmann&Rohner, 2006; Tahiroğlu et al., 2009; Altıparmak et al., 2013), mothers think they have the right to physically punish (beat) when a child makes a mistake; 20%-65% find slapping a child to be appropriate for educating them and approve of emotional abuse. The same studies show that mothers who have witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood use physical and emotional violence and neglect their children and think that children deserve a beating from time to time compared to mothers who have not witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood. At the same time, mothers apply the same methods to their children that were applied to them in their childhood.

Studies show mothers who have been subjected to violence by their husbands have more violent and negligent behaviours toward their children (Toros, 2010; Güler et al., 2002; Kara-Doruk, 2012; Dallar-Bilge et al., 2013; Orhon et al., 2006; Çayköylü et al., 2011; Kutlu et al., 2007; KüçükBiçer et al., 2017). Ezen et al. (2017) found that mothers exposed to emotional violence during childhood are the most likely to abuse their children. The research *Domestic Violence Against Women in Turkey* (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Family and Social Policies, 2014) determined that 30.6% of the children of women who had been subjected to violence are aggressive toward their mother or other children. The same behaviour was 17.2% for the children of mothers who had not been subjected to violence. While roughly half of the children of women who have been subjected to abuse show the behaviour of crying to be irritating, this same behaviour was shown to be much less among children whose mothers had not been subjected to abuse.

Studies conducted in Turkey reveal that many of the methods mothers use to discipline their children negatively affect their health, physical development, and psycho-social development. Mothers generally consider the reason for using violence against children to be the child's behaviour, and punishing the child is the method for changing their behaviour. They view punishment not as a detrimental factor but as an aid in child development. Additionally, these punishments are accepted as normal behaviours in society. A mother can support her attempt to educate her child by punishing them by accepting it as necessary for being a good parent instead of evaluating it as improper behaviour. Experiences of violence in the early childhood years, especially emotional violence, can leave permanent scars on a child. These may negatively affect a child's attitudes and behaviours regarding violence later in life.

According to the findings from the study, the attitudes toward the violence of the mothers who witnessed/were subjected to violence show similarities to those who were not in terms of being against violence. The mothers who had violence in their childhood stated being opposed to violence even while imposing psychological and physical punishments on their children by getting angry at their behaviours. However, mothers also stated being subjected to violence by her mother during childhood, growing up in a loveless family environment, and having a husband who did not love her as the reasons for inflicting violence on their children.

The mothers who did not witness/be subjected to violence in their childhood are also opposed to violence. Despite this, some of these mothers also believe that children need to fear their mothers and regret having inflicted violence. The mothers think that violence does not solve any problems but leads to more violence. Despite saying they are opposed to violence, the mothers are seen to continue to inflict violence on their children. Here the difference can be seen between attitudes and behaviours. Studies on violence show that violence is not a solution among those who inflict violence as much as those who have been subjected to violence. In Aydemir and Demircioğlu's (2017) study, while 64% of men advocate violence never to be a solution, this percentage is 76% among women (12% higher than men). In KüçükBiçer et al.'s (2017) research, 79.5% of the participants who inflicted violence on their children and 90.9% of the participants who did not inflict violence on their children consider striking a child to be an abnormal situation. Çalışkan et al. (2019) found that mothers subjected to verbal violence from their spouses and physical violence from their parents during childhood committed three or more acts of physical abuse upon their children.

Children face different psychological or physical punishments when they display behaviours following their developmental characteristics but are behaviours that their mothers do not want. Of course, many cultural, psychological, and personal reasons exist for this. However, witnessing or being exposed to violence in childhood, being subjected to violence by a spouse, and having a peaceless-loveless family environment makes transferring the experiences of violence to their children easy for mothers. Mothers who react quickly and suddenly when angered by the child may confront themselves after a while, regret it, and feel remorse. Once they realise this, they attempt to compensate for their violent behaviour with a positive attitude and approach toward their child. This situation disrupts the child's balance more, and the child has difficulty learning proper behaviours. When they get angry, they can express the behaviour and relationship style they witnessed/were subjected to to those around them.

The following results have been reached as a result of this study, which has been performed to examine the childhood experiences of mothers in Turkey, their behaviours toward their children, and their attitudes toward violence. Mothers who witnessed/were exposed to violence in their childhood and mothers who did

not inflict violence on their children who show disobedient behaviours. The mothers who'd witnessed/been exposed to violence in their childhood mostly respond by getting angry/shouting/berating when angered by their children. Meanwhile, the mothers who did not witness/experience violence in their childhood mostly respond by talking after calming down the child or raising their voice/warning when angered by their child. The mothers who witnessed/were exposed to violence in their childhood respond to their child when angry to cease the wrong behaviour, while the mothers who did not respond to show love/understanding to their children. Both groups are against violence. The mothers who witnessed/were exposed to violence state being opposed to violence while psychologically and physically punishing their children for behaviours that appear in children's natural developmental process. However, these mothers inflict violence on their children because they saw violence from their mothers. They grew up in a loveless family environment, have a husband who does not love them, and have problems with their spouse.

Mothers in Turkey still use emotional and physical methods of punishment as a method for training children despite the strong evidence of its negative effects on children's development. Domestic violence against women and children should be prevented, and the negative effects of violence experienced by the child should be prevented. Therefore, raising parents, especially mothers, in an environment centred on love, affection, compassion, and peace is important for a healthy future society and world. As such, mothers should be made aware of how to correctly apply reward-punishment methods within the family by raising awareness on this issue. Healthy disciplinary policies should be developed that can guide parents. In addition, support should be obtained using written and visual media.

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