

## آراء الآباء السعوديين تجاه استخدام العقاب البدني في الانضباط ضد أطفالهم

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### الخلاصة

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تقييم خطورة استخدام العقاب البدني من قبل الاباء نحو ابنائهم، وقد سعت هذه الدراسة الى محاولة تغيير مواقف الآباء حول استخدام العقاب البدني. اعتمدت الدراسة على عينات تكونت من عدد من المشاركين بلغ 240 من الآباء والأمهات من المملكة العربية السعودية، حيث اظهرت النتائج أن معظم الآباء لديهم نقص في الوعي بالآثار السلبية للعقاب البدني على الأطفال، كما أظهرت انه يجب تقليل استخدام العقاب البدني عن طريق زيادة وعي الوالدين، وعلى البلدان اتخاذ إجراءات جديّة لزيادة وعي الوالدين لحماية الأطفال من العقاب البدني، اضافة الى ان بعض النتائج كشفت أن الآباء أكثر ميلاً للاعتقاد بالعقاب البدني من الأمهات. اما الاستنتاجات التي وردت في هذه الدراسة فكانت تركز حول وجهات نظر الوالدين بالعقوبة الجسدية في المملكة العربية السعودية، وكيف ان توصيات الدراسة ستؤثر في الحد من العقاب البدني وعلى سلامة الطفل النفسية بشكل إيجابي لاحقاً، مما يؤدي إلى تربية الطفل دون أي مشاكل نفسية. ولقد توصلت الدراسة أيضاً إلى أنه يجب على الآباء كلما كبر الأبناء تشجيع استقلاليتهم و فهم احتياجاتهم لمساعدتهم لتكوين ارئهم و قراراتهم الخاصة.

# Saudi Parents' Perspectives Toward Using Corporal Punishment in Discipline Their Children

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** The purpose of the recent study was to evaluate the dangerousness of using corporal punishment, this study is designed to change person's' attitudes about the using of corporal punishment. **Method:** participants were 240 parents from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. **Results:** The findings from the current study shown that most of parents had limited awareness in relation to the negative influences of using corporal punishment to discipline their children. The use of corporal punishment must be decreased by increasing the awareness of parents and countries should take serious action to increase the awareness of parents to protect children from corporal punishment. The findings also revealed that fathers were more likely to believe in corporal punishment more than mothers.

**Conclusions/significance:** This study is investigating parent's perspectives with corporal punishment in Saudi Arabia. The findings from this study reducing corporal punishment will influence the child's psychological well-being positively, and helping to raise a child without any psychological problems. **Implementation:** As children grow, parents should encourage their self-independence and recognize their needs as they procedure their own perspectives and make their own decisions.

**Keywords:** corporal punishment, physical discipline, spanking, paddling

## Introduction

The tradition perspectives of using corporal punishment as discipline way in the home has been a widely debated issue not just in Saudi Arabia, but all over the world wide. Nowadays ending the physical discipline of young children is an enormous challenge. Karaj (2009) argued that the use of corporal punishment is supported by specific beliefs related to the effectiveness of this way of dripline to upbringing young children. They stated that parents and educators who believe in the values of corporal punishment disciplinary are more tending regularly to punish children corporally.

Corporal punishment, sometimes named as corporal punishment means the adults infliction of physical punishment on child's body which employed in different settings such as home, school, street and other settings for the purpose of educating him. Example of corporal punishment encompasses slapping, pinching, pulling, hitting with an object and spanking which is the most popular ways of corporal punishment. It regularly encompasses of a light blow with the open hand on the buttocks or hand as the child has disobeyed, diverged from the correct footpath, refuse to obey with the authority's requests or instructions, or refuse to accept that adults' authority (Gershoff & Bitensky, 2007).

The corporal punishment of children remains a popular practice that continue to be used over generations in different cultures in which families are mainly given self-sufficiency although it has long term consequences for young children. Traditionally, children have been stopped and disempowered; and their rights are either not fully respected. Saunders and Goddard (2010) asserted that even children who are distressed, and hurt by parental physical punishment might receive it as their parents' right to do so, and without it is challenged. Thus, these children will probably claim the same entitlement when they become parents in the future.

Adults should be aware of the aggressive attitudes they might have against their children which considers as a child abuse that demands clear understandings of the concept of children rights and social policies that protect young children from being victims. Freeman (2008) asserted we may no longer contribute to concepts of children as property, nevertheless the heritages of such an ideology persisted tightly rooted inside our consciousness. Children often want to be the centre of attention, so parents need to understand their children behavior before discipline them by hitting and parents need also to learn to respect their children needs of love, respect, protection, dignity and caring (Saunders & Goddard, 2010). Saunders (2013) clarified that social acceptance of using physical punishment justified as common discipline, or control in order to release of emotions, that supports children's relegation as well as vulnerability, which in order impact on their personality and potential.

Several studies have confirmed that corporal punishment is both ineffective way to dripline young children which associated to negative outcomes (Block, 1994 & scutt, 2009). It can be concluded that corporal punishment fails to erase children negative behavior, and that it validates hitting is not a better problem-solving option. For instance, Block (1994) found that students who experienced corporal punishment had

received it constantly by the adults over time which reflected as an ineffective practice as punishers.

Similarly, few studies have recognized an association between frequency of using corporal punishment and child's cognitive deficits (Berlin et al., 2009). Accordingly, while there is strong evidence that the more corporal punishment adults experienced, the greater the possibility of experiencing hitting a spouse later in their life, thus parents were responding to a high level of aggression by the child (Murray & Straus, 2001)

Some studies argued that physical punishment might temporarily overwhelm unwanted behavior of children, nevertheless that corporal punishment often has unintended and potentially adverse side effects. For instance, a previous study by Crockenberg (1987) found that more parents use the corporeal punishment, the more likely their children behaviors become aggressive at home and at school contexts.

Recent research indicating there are negative connection between parental use of spanking and children higher levels of violence besides subsequent behavioral regulation problems (Taylor, Manganello, Lee, & Rice, 2010). In the same context, previous research found that 83% of students who were in the school setting inclined to use spanking as way to discipline their own children in the future (Graziano & Namaste, 1990). Moreover, Graziano and Namaste (1990) argued that geographic district might have a strong association with parental beliefs of the value of using corporal punishment against their children. They also found that parents who were in school and had not experienced being spanked by their teachers, were less inclined to apply physical discipline with their offspring more than those parents who were spanked in school. Previous evidence revealed by Wissow (2001) evident that eleventh per cent of parents used spanking with their infants at aged six to eleven months. Almost fifteen per cent of parents with toddlers at aged twelve months being used spanked to discipline their young children (Wissow, 2001). The practice of spanking was reported to be highest among preschoolers in addition to school-age children. (MacKenzie, Nicklas, Brooks-Gunn, & Waldfogel, 2011). Overall, from some empirical studies it can be noted that many parents still prefer the use of methods of corporal punishment to control their children behavioral manners and attitudes.

Furthermore, prior research by Strauss and Field (2003) stated that almost ninety per cent of parents preferred to use alternative methods of discipline directed at their children and these included cruel verbal discipline such as name calling, cursing, screaming, and threatening.

In contrast, the MORI investigation on parental discipline style which reflected parents own upbringing methods which reported that half of parents disagreed and mostly dislike the idea of using smacking as is not the proper guided method to direct children behavior to teach how to distinguish the is right attitude from wrong one (DCSF, 2007). However, this survey showed that only a slight percentage of parents which around twenty-eight per cent who had used corporeal punishment believed it has a positive impact on their child's behavior. Nonetheless, in this research around

thirty- four per cent of parents disagreed with the conception of a complete prohibition of allowing parent to discipline their children. Other parents asserted that physical punishment should be banned by the law in order to protect the children from being victims (DCSF, 2007).

MacKenzie et al, (2011) noted that the number of parental violent behaviors against their young children in the home context is more likely to be an underestimate in Canada. In US context, almost fifty per cent of parents smack their infants, and around ninety-four per cent of parents were used spanking to deal with their toddlers when they misbehaved (Straus, 2010). Zolotar et al. (2011) stated that around ninety-four per cent of parents who believed in the benefit of applying spanked methods to discipline their children have been beaten with an object more than any other method. This result supported the previous finding by Straus and Stewart (1999) who found almost twenty-eight per cent of adults have used a object in order to hit their infants at the aged five to twelve years old. In Australian context, Tucci et al (2006) surveys have investigated that sixty-nine of per cent of adults across all regions in Australia had believe that it is important for parents to use spanking to deal with naughty children. Similarly, in China old generations of parents seemed to prefer using stricter and power-assertive approaches of discipline, which encompasses physical discipline which inherited and passed to be used in new generation of parents (Chang, Lansford, Schwartz, & Farver, 2004). Accordingly, parents across cultural backgrounds appeared to prefer the use of hard punishments include verbal and physical methods which based on their own beliefs and practices that were rooted to their own childhood experiences of being discipline by adults.

## Theoretical framework

Some parents continued the take a clear-cut side in relation to the question of whether or not to use spanking against their children. In this context, the conception of advantage of applying corporeal punishment method principally continue since the question of the how the legal punishment can be rationalized and justified for both parents who practice it also for the adults who were experienced it when they were children at the hands of their parents whom they respected (Bitensky, 2006). When these practices passed down from old generation to the new one, it caused a total changing of social relations which involves a real transformation in families' social conditions (Pupavac, 2011).

Recently, with children right movement around the world, some young children have been given the chance to express their perceptions toward experiencing corporal punishment in their upbringings (Saunders, 2013). Saunders (2013) found that children who were regularly being spanked at their homes, were faced increased physical harm in a cruel way that used for resolving conflict at home settings. Thus, the parental attitudes as consequence provoked negative emotions in children and these include anger, confusion, hatred, humiliation, sadness, resentment, and generates fear that may delays their learning (Saunders, 2013). These unusable practices are not constructive way to disciple misbehaving children, therefore using

reasoning technique by opening communication between parents and children assist to minimize violence against children.

RenteIn (2010) reported that national regulations continue to sustain parents' power over young children by involving in physical punishment practices otherwise they can encourage parents to be open-minded of the changes in society. This can replicate growing appreciation of young children as real citizens who have political rights. Santos (2011) acknowledged that customary international law entail that the adults right relate to the use of corporal punishment is emergent legislation that provides an normative ethical framework that endorse children values to be respected, and to be accepted as human, nevertheless law restructuring without help from society will not change with the continued use of old-fashioned attitudes and behaviors against children represented by legal correction.

The disagreement reported by Benjamin (2010) revealed the in support worth of using slight physical mistreatment as real and not hurtful means of educating children, it is as well exposed to unanswered question of why minor corporal mistreatment should be forbidden in the educational organization, up till now given freedom in the home sphere to be used. Rabbi and Halevy(1998) clarified that parents believed that their authority of discipline their children was taken from the their obligation to instruct and guide their children to the right path and this incorporated the right to exercise corporal punishment and the permission to utilize power must be reconsidered from time to time. They continued to argued that there is a specific condition in which parents and educators are commanded to employ alternative educational approaches.

Some parents had inherent explanations of the use of corporal punishment which further misleading picture and of the child's experience and these words consist of 'it is just a little smack or slap' (Saunders &Goddard, 2010). In addition, the word violence, assault and abuse described the inappropriate practices of physical punishment since they illustrated lawful actions (Global Initiative, 2009).

It was apparent that there are strong association between the adults use of physical punishment against children and adults' mental illness which impact on parent-child's social interaction and increased children threats to practice aggression and criminal behaviors, as well as enlarged the risk of physical abuse and of performing violence with their families in the future (Gershoffs, 2002). Besides, there were a clear association between the level of using physical discipline and the level of misbehaving problems showed by young children. On the other hands, Kotchick and Forehand (2002) stated that widespread literature discovered that positive parenting style that appear in warmth and appropriate discipline is linked with less child's behavioral problems.

Further aspects justified the parental use of physical punishment practices in particular spanking was incorporate the mothers being inexperienced or being young (Berlin et al., 2009). Deater-Deckard et al. (2003) reported justifications of the high level of using corporal punishment which referred to parents having high level of symptoms of depression, anxiety, life stress or being growing up in families that

authorized spanking as routine of discipline at home. Additionally, Chung et al. (2009) argued that there were association between being single parent and having more than one child in the home, which reflected conflictual or unhappy household atmosphere.

In contrast numerous scholars highlighted on the significance of recognizing the rights of children as human, which emphasizes on the child's right to be respectfully treated as other adults such as parent or teacher (Newell, 2011). Since the children have their own rights to not to be exposed to physical punishment and this right will constantly vest irrespective of the identity of the adults and their roles in the life of children. Benjamin (2010) clarified that adults include educators and parents should be given wise authority to guide and correct their children attitudes, nevertheless this authority must withdraw once it clashes with the rights of children over their dignity and safety.

Saunders and Goddard (2010) demonstrated that if adults physically assaulted someone in aggressive manner such as punching or smacking them, this manner will be reported to be against the law therefore they could go to jail. However, for few parents if their children in the house, it's acceptable for them to punch or smack them as they beliefs that the right way for discipline. It is vital to recognize the variances in how parents' discipline approaches that shape children characteristics in the future. In the same context, Grusec and Goodnow (1994) indicated that in order to understand the level of influence of the discipline on children, we need to recognize the extent to which children correctly perceive disciplinary messages delivered by their parents and how they accept those messages. For instance, if children see their parents' discipline approach as being unreasonable and unfair, they will be less likely to accept the message their own parents are attempting to convey and might demonstrate harmful long-standing adjustment (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994).

Indeed, if parents are stressed and not clam when they physically punishment their children, accordingly the outcomes for the children maybe harsher and harmful than the parent intended (Gonzalez et al., 2008). Accordingly, children maybe unjustifiably disciplined for ordinary childhood behaviors when their parents experienced emotional or challenging situations which stimulate corporeal responses to young children (Silverstein et al., 2009). For instance, when parents beat their children in angry and frustrated situations is forbidden, this will reflect hard and dangerous effects even if it frequently used for an educational purpose (Benjamin, 2010).

Saunders and Goddard (2010) asserted that the most influential predictor of parents' insulting behaviors to their children is the fact that the parents were mistreated or neglected in their childhood. Yet, Zigler and Hall (1989) stated that many parents who have experienced being suffered from abusive treatment as children grow up to be loving, non-abusive parents.

Interestingly, Benjamin (2010) clarified that although educational systems in many states in USA tried to reject using corporal punishment against students in different age groups, they have not held the identical attitude towards parental physical punishment. Therefore, physical punishment was forbidden in all school settings

across regions earlier than in the home settings. In the same context, it has been forbidden in all schools in many countries such as UK, Canada, and New Zealand (Barrett, 2012). For instance, in the USA it was successfully banned in thirty-one public schools in the states included the Region of Columbia (Human Rights Watch, 2008).

However, Barrett (2012) asserted corporal punishment was forbidden in all Australian regional areas except two areas where it is infrequently applied in the classrooms in particular private schools (Barrett, 2012).

In Canada, McGillivray and Milne (2011) reported that in 2004 the court decision permits parents legally to discipline their children physically, however without causing any risks or harm for children in angry or frustrated manners. This decision came up with few cases that shouldn't lead parents to applied smacking on children and these include conditions such as an insulting a child under two or over twelve years , or hit the child with an object or on his/her head, or of a degrading, cruel or hurtful nature ways. This finding supported the previous finding by Harry Hui (1988) who confirmed that if the behaviors of the parents and educators cause any harmful side effect on the child, these behaviors should be controlled and even if the adults show these behaviors were for the benefit of the child which is considered out of a constructive educational purpose.

Nowadays, physical discipline approaches include attitudes, beliefs, practices have been changed in many countries around the world. Modig (2009) clarified that law restructuring has been part of an educated process that inspires adults to punishment children without any violent actions. Renteln (2010) argued that cultural norms and traditions inherited in the adults form the old generation with very conservative characteristics lead to hard to erase popular perspectives toward discipline, however eventually they were able to cease these practices snice it reflects violent perceptions against human rights regulation. Consistent with the human rights legislation, it is clear that even soft-pedal physical punishment used by adults has to be completely forbidden, meanwhile the right to be free from aggression is one of the core human rights rule given to children and this right should also be granted (Maurer,1981). Subsequently, young children become more mindful about their rights as a result parents recognize that hitting children is no longer acceptable methods of discipline.

### ***Corporal punishment definitions***

Physical punishment happens when adults hits the children with the purpose of upbringing or educating them. It generally involves of a light blow with the open hand on the buttocks or hand as the children have disobeyed, or when children turned from the right direction, or when they unsuccessful obey the authority's desires or instructions of adults (Greshoff & Bitensky, 2007).

### ***Procedural definition***

The term of Corporal punishment indicates to the use of physical force upon someone's body to cause corporal obvious whether minor or intense injuries that

contain the thoughtful infliction of pain painful for the sake of discipline or reshaping unacceptable attitudes or behaviors. In fact, corporal punishment maybe be divided to three major categories and these include;

- 1) Domestic corporal punishment, within the family contexts where the children disciplined by their guardians include their parents.
- 2) School corporal punishment, within the school setting where students punished by their school administrators or teachers.
- 3) Judicial corporal punishment, which only applied as part of criminal judgment well-ordered by a court of law.

## Methods

### *Research problem*

This current research intended to address the following main questions:

- How do children feel about corporal punishment, and what we can do to prevent it?
- Examine all the reasons of why parents use corporal punishment to develop a complete explanation of why parents use it?
- What are the perspectives, attitudes and beliefs of adults and children towards physical discipline?
- What are the outcomes of using corporal punishment for children?

### *The Significance of this research*

This study is investigating parent's perspectives with corporal punishment in Saudi Arabia which investigated this phenomenon in order to;

a) minimizing the impact of corporal punishment on child's psychological well-being positively, leading to raising a child without any psychological issues; b) describing corporal punishment and its negative effects on children in an attempt to raise parent awareness about the dangerous of using it; c) Trying to make parents aware of positive alternatives methods for corporal punishment in order to prevent them to use it, which upbringings psychologically moderate children to society.

### *The aims of this research:*

The objective of this research analyzing of the most common parental beliefs about corporal disciplining of children:

- 1) To determine the disciplinary value of corporal punishment.
- 2) To identify parents' beliefs about possible consequences of corporal punishment.
- 3) To identify the negative effects of using corporal punishment.
- 4) The need to find possible alternatives for corporal punishment, to avoid negative effects of corporal punishment.

### Participants

Research sample formed from 240 parents, and they were selected randomly from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

### Instrument

The questionnaire contains eight focal themes; which examined participants' gender, marital status, education, age, family size, children ages, monthly income and how were they punished while they were children. The data were evaluated along with the ongoing data collection process. The following section is a in depth demonstration of the data analysis of these themes as shown Tables 3 to 10.

### Reliability and Validity

**The validity of the parents' belief questionnaire on corporal punishment of children means the capability of the questionnaire to answer the research questions that measure what they were intended to measure.**

#### Internal validity:

Validity was calculated by internal validity by analyzing the correlation coefficient (Pearson correlation coefficient) between the score of each statement and the total score of the questionnaire. The following table illustrates this:

**Table (1)** correlation coefficients values between the degree of each statement and the degree of the questionnaire

Sig	Correlations	No
0.01	0.821	1-
0.01	0.873	2-
0.01	0.937	3-
0.01	0.792	4-
0.05	0.612	5-
0.01	0.808	6-
0.05	0.640	7-
0.01	0.915	8-
0.01	0.712	9-
0.01	0.841	10-
0.05	0.625	11-
0.05	0.606	12-
0.01	0.746	13-
0.01	0.901	14-

It is clear from the table that all correlation coefficients are significant at the level of (0.01 - 0.05) for their proximity to number one, which clarifies the validity and homogeneity of the terms of the questionnaire.

### Reliability

Reliability refers to the accuracy of the test in the measurement, its inconsistency with itself, its consistency and frequency in the data it offers about the performance of the

examinee, in addition it's the ratio between the degree variation on the scale indicating the actual performance of the examinees, and reliability is calculated by:

- 1- Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
- 2-Split-half method

**Table (2)** the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire about Parental beliefs about corporal punishment of children

Split-half	Cronbach's Alpha	
0.846 – 0.921	0.881	Reliability of questionnaire as whole

It is clear from the previous table that all the values of reliability coefficients: Alpha Coefficient, Split-half are significant at the level of (0.01), which indicates the consistency of the questionnaire.

## Demographic information

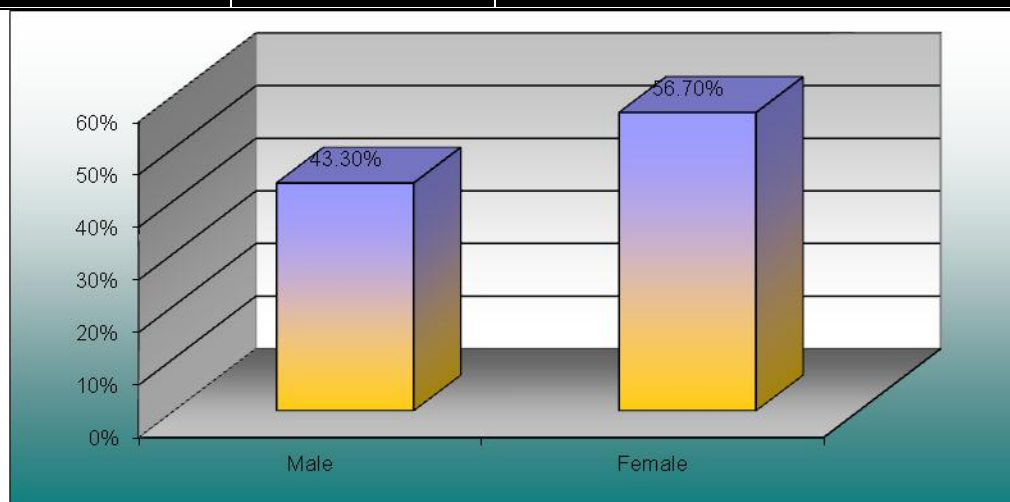
### Description of the study sample:

The following is a comprehensive explanation of the sample of the study, as revealed in tables (3 to 10) and figures from (1 to 8) in terms of:

#### 1- Gender :

**Table (3)** The distribution of the research sample according to the gender variable

Percentage	Number	Gender
43.3%	104	Male
56.7%	136	Female
100%	240	Sum



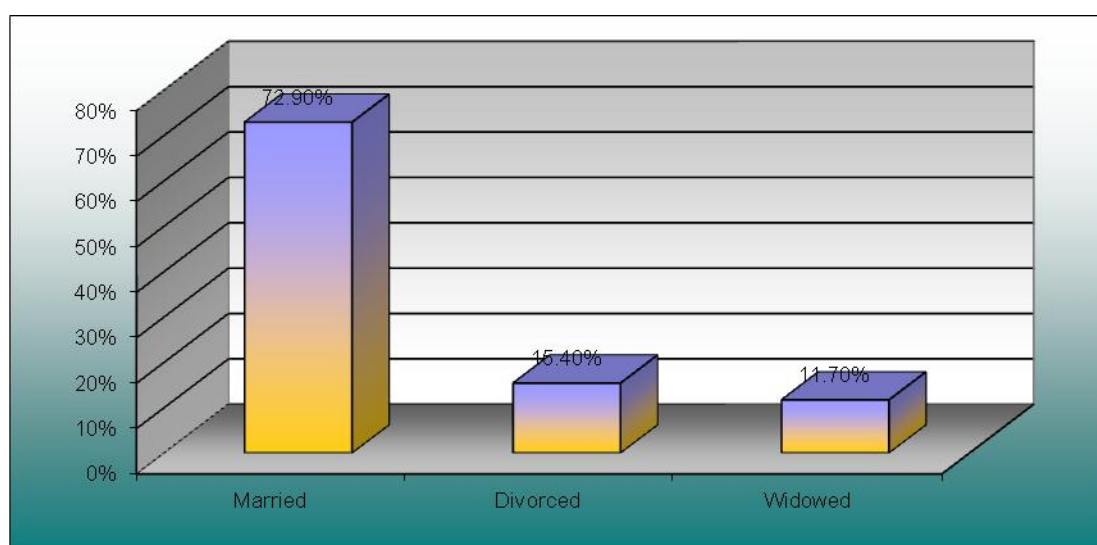
**Figure (1)** Illustrates the distribution of the research sample in regard to the gender variable

As shown in Table (3) and figure (1), the 136 of the contributors were female with a percentage 56.7%, While 104 of contributors were males with a percentage of 43.3%.

## 2-marital status:

*Table (4) The distribution of the research sample according to the marital status variable*

Percentage	Number	Marital status
72.9%	175	Married
15.4%	37	Divorced
11.7%	28	Widowed
100%	240	Sum



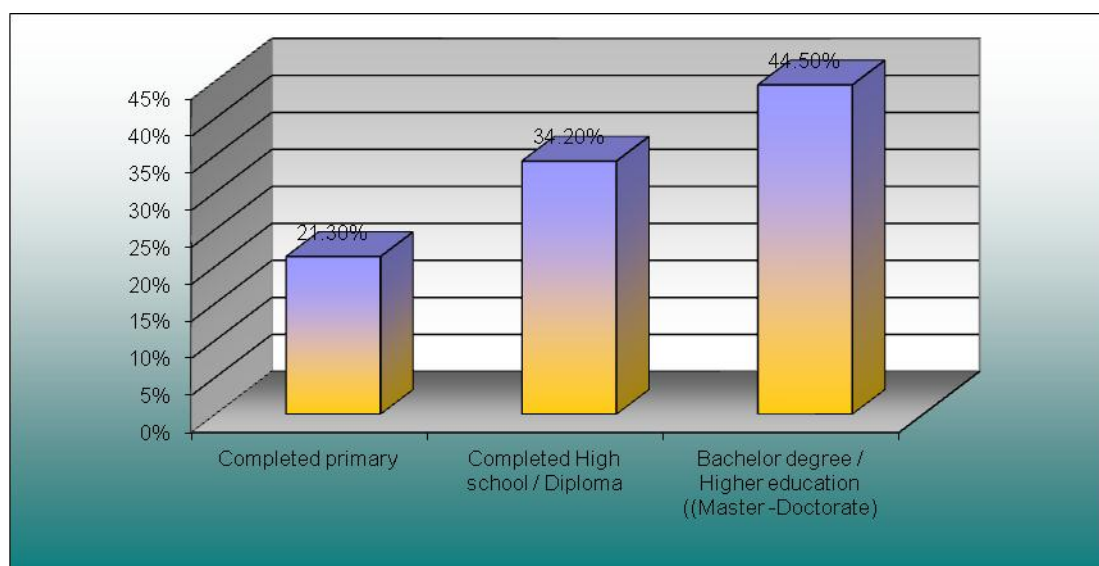
*Figure (2) Illustrates the distribution of the research sample according to the marital status variable*

As shown in table (4) and figure (2), There were 175 of the research sample were married with a percentage 72.9%, while 37 of the research sample were divorced with a percentage 15.4%, Finally 28 of the research sample were widows with a percentage 11.7%.

## 3-Education:

*Table (5) The distribution of the research sample according to the education variable*

Percentage	Number	Education
21.3%	51	Completed primary
34.2%	82	Completed High school / Diploma
44.5%	107	Bachelor degree / Higher education ((Master -Doctorate)
100%	240	Sum



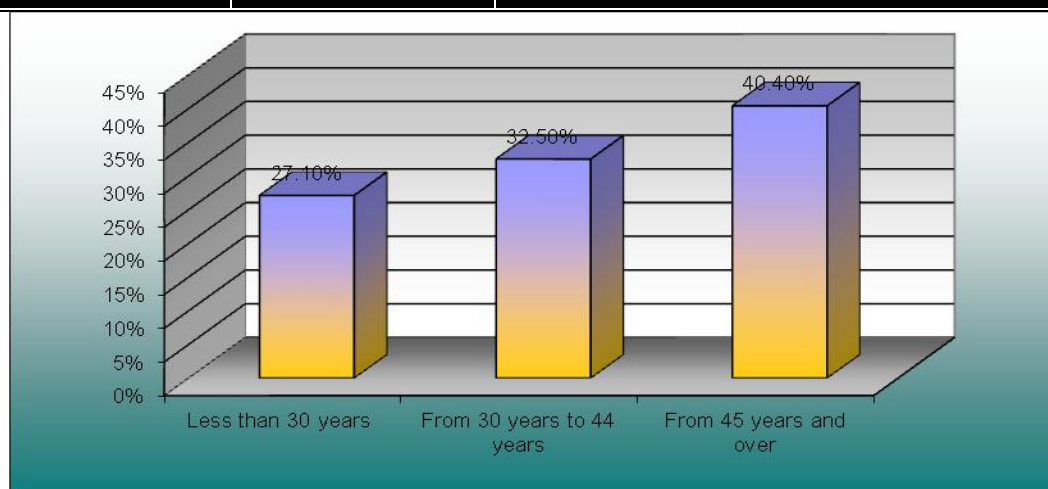
*Figure (3) Illustrates the distribution of the research sample according to the education variable*

As shown in table (5) and figure (3), There is a total of 107 of the research sample obtained Bachelor degree / Higher education ((Master -Doctorate) with a percentage 44.5%, followed by 82 of the research sample Completed High school / Diploma with a percentage 34.2%, then in the third place 51 of the research sample completed primary with a percentage 21.3%.

#### 4-Age :

*Table (6) The distribution of the research sample according to the gender variable*

Percentage	Number	Age
27.1%	65	Less than 30 years
32.5%	78	From 30 years to 44 years
40.4%	97	From 45 years and over
100%	240	Sum



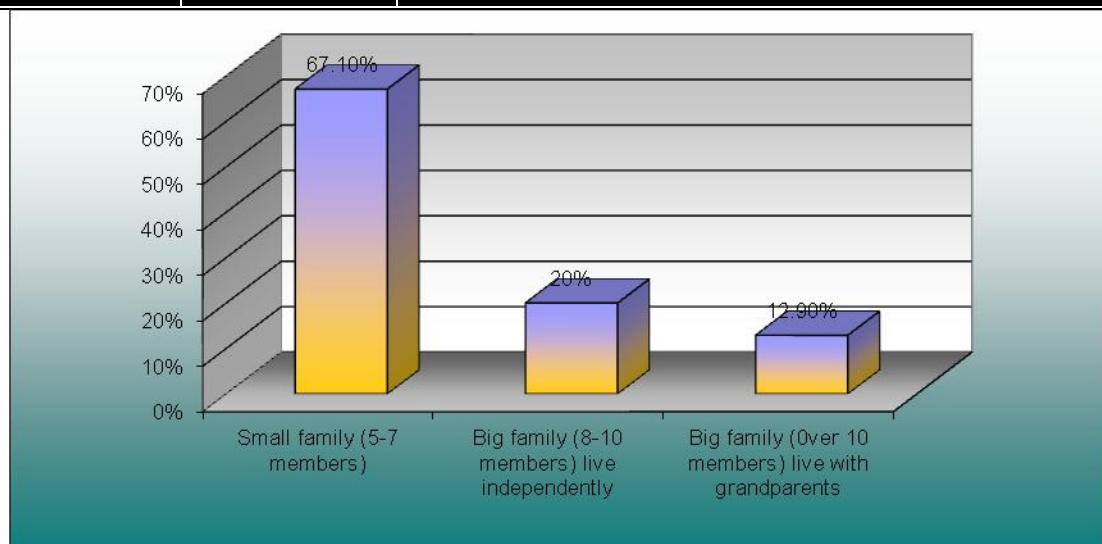
*Figure (4) Illustrates the distribution of the research sample in relation to the age variable*

As shown in table (6) and figure (4), There were 97 of the research sample their ages were 45 years and over with a percentage 40.4%, followed by 78 of the research sample their ages ranged from 30 years to 44 years with a percentage 32.5%, then 65 of the research sample their ages were less than 30 years with a percentage 27.1%.

### 5-Family size :

*Table (7) The distribution of the research sample according to the family size variable*

Percentage	Number	Family size
67.1%	161	Small family (5-7 members)
20%	48	Big family (8-10 members) live independently
12.9%	31	Big family (Over 10 members) live with grandparents
100%	240	Sum



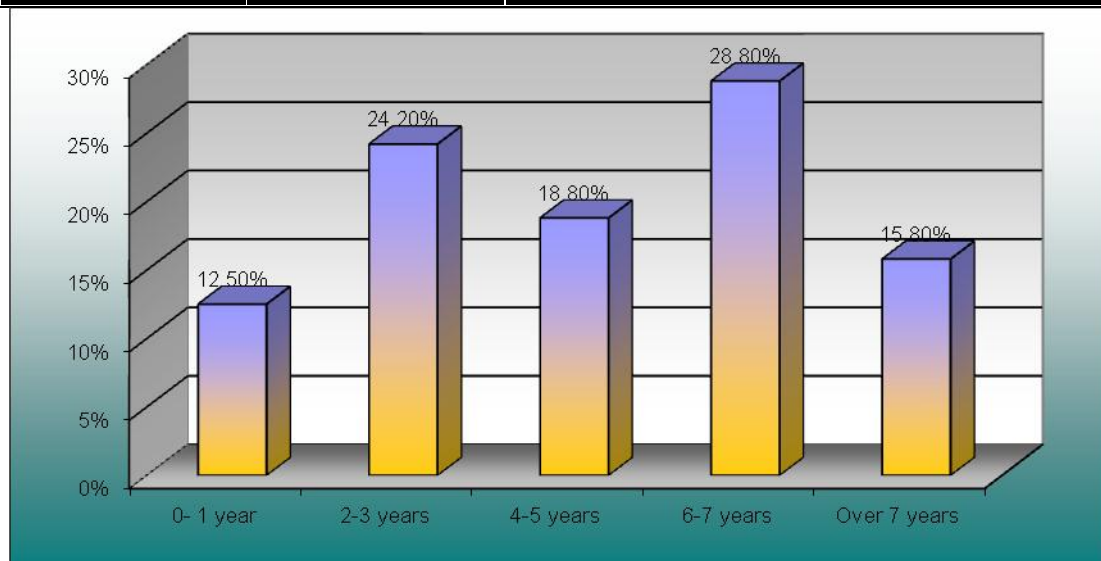
*Figure (5) Illustrates the distribution of the research sample according to the family size variable*

As shown in table (7) and figure (5), There were 161 of the research sample the number of its members varied from 5 to 7 members "small family" with a percentage 67.1%, followed by 48 of the research sample the number of its members varied from 8 to 10 members "live independently" with a percentage 20%, and finally 31 of the research sample the number of its members over 10 members "big family" with a percentage 12.9%.

## 6-How old your children :

*Table (8) The distribution of the research sample according to the children age variable*

Percentage	Number	How old your children
12.5%	30	0- 1 year
24.2%	58	2-3 years
18.8%	45	4-5 years
28.8%	69	6-7 years
15.8%	38	Over 7 years
100%	240	Sum



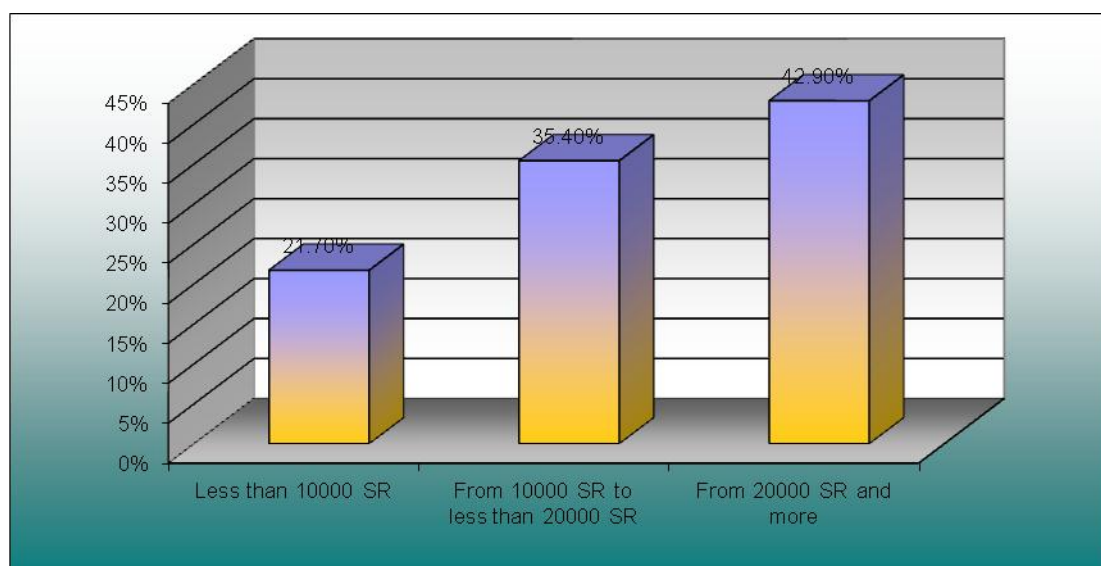
*Figure (6) Illustrates the distribution of the research sample according to the children age variable*

As shown in table (8) and figure (6), There were 69 of the research sample the ages of their children ranged from 6 to 7 years with a percentage 28.8%, followed by 58 of the research sample the ages of their children ranged from 2 to 3 years with a percentage 24.2%, then there were 45 of the research sample the ages of their children ranged from 4 to 5 years with a percentage 18.8%, then there were 38 of the research participants the ages of their children over 7 years with a percentage 15.8%, finally 30 of the research sample the ages of their children ranged from 0 to 1 year with a percentage 12.5%.

## 7- What is your average household salary per month :

*Table (9) The distribution of the families of the research sample according to the monthly income variable*

Percentage	Number	What is your average household salary per month
21.7%	52	Less than 10000 SR
35.4%	85	From 10000 SR to less than 20000 SR
42.9%	103	From 20000 SR and more
100%	240	Sum



**Figure (7)** The distribution of the families of the research sample according to the monthly income variable

As shown in table (9) and figure (7), the largest monthly income groups of households in the sample were in the category "from 20000 SR and more", then the category "from 10000 SR to less than 20000 SR", their percentages were respectively (42.9% - 35.4), and finally families with income "less than 10000 SR", with a percentage 21.7%.

#### 8- How were you punished? (We would like to know what types of corporal punishments you experienced when you were growing up) :

**Table (10)** The distribution of the research sample in regards to Type of punishment inflicted on parents' variable

Percentage	Number	How were you punished? (We would like to know what types of corporal punishments you experienced when you were growing up)
12.9%	31	Spanked (hand on buttocks)
9.2%	22	Slapped in the face
15.4%	37	Slapped on the back of the head
8.3%	20	Punched
4.2%	10	Hit with a belt or extension cord
10.4%	25	Hit with a shoe or other object
22.1%	53	Pinched / Kicked
17.5%	42	Force to stand for long periods of time
100%	240	Sum

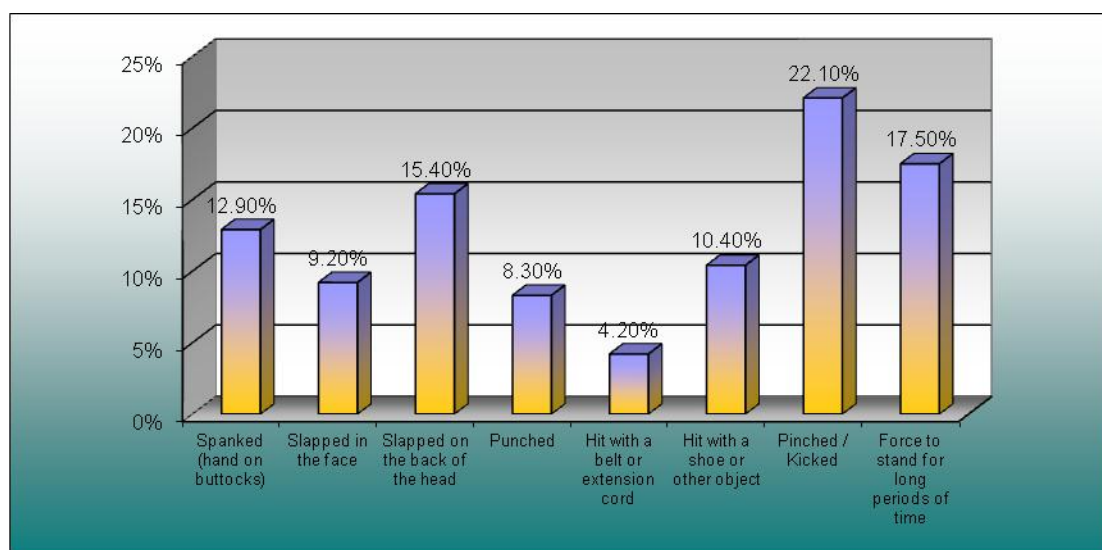


Figure (8) The distribution of the research sample according to Type of punishment inflicted on parents

As shown in Table (10) and figure (8), a total of 53 of the research participants indicated that their punishment was “pinched/kicked” with a percentage 22.1%, followed by 42 of the research sample said that their punishment was “Force to stand for long periods of time” with a percentage 17.5%. Then 37 of the research sample reported that their punishment was “Slapped on the back of the head” with a percentage 15.4%. Then 31 of the research sample reported that their punishment was “Spanked (hand on buttocks)” with a percentage 12.9%, Then Around 10.4% of the parents (n=25) reported that their punishment was “Hit with a shoe or other object”, followed by 22 of the research sample said that their punishment was “Slapped in the face” with a percentage 9.2%, followed by 20 of the research sample said that their punishment was “Punched” with a percentage 8.3%. Finally, 10 of the research sample said that their punishment was “Hit with a belt or extension cord” with a percentage 4.2%.

## Results

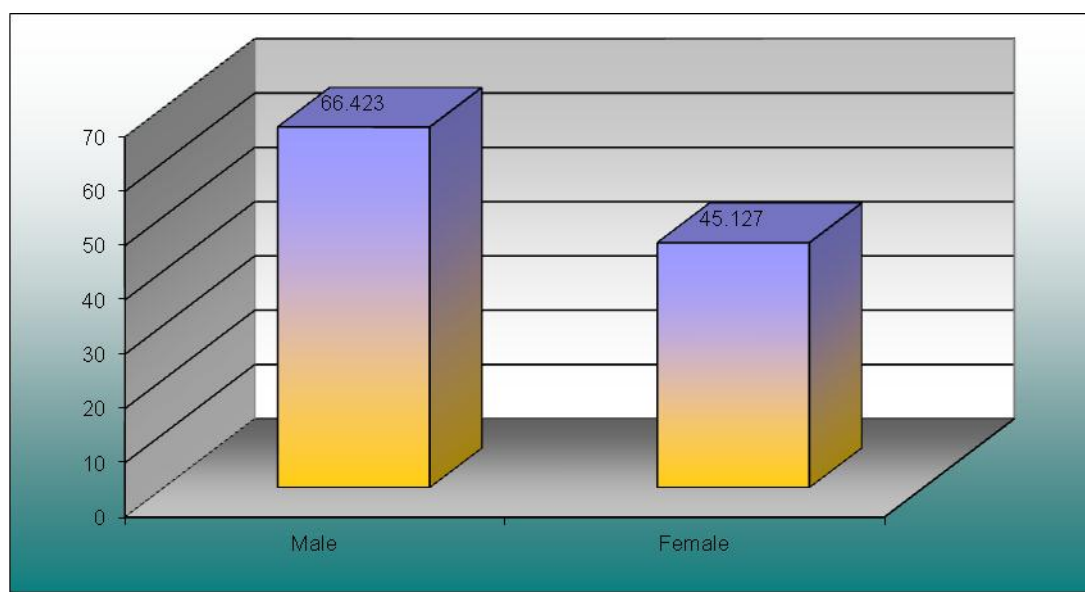
### First hypothesis:

There were statistically significant differences between the average scores of the participants in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children depending on the study variable.

To verify this hypothesis, T-Test and ANOVA were applied to the sample scores in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children, and the following tables illustrate that.

**Table (11)** Differences in average scores of sample members in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children

Sig	t	df	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	Gender
0.01	13.328	238	104	4.217	66.423	Male
			136	3.004	45.127	Female



**Figure (9)** Differences in average scores of sample members in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children

Illustrated by the table (11) and figure (9), that the value of (t) was (13.328), and it's a statistically significant value at a level of significance (0.01) in favor of males, where the average scores of males (66.423), while the average scores of females (45.127).

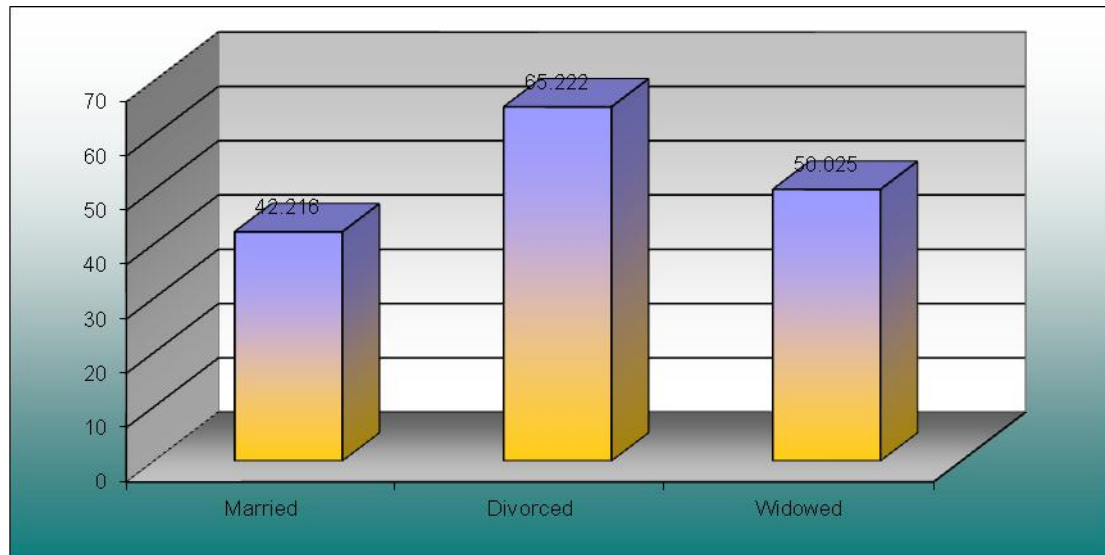
**Table (12)** Analysis of variance of sample scores in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children

Sig	F	df	Mean Square	Sum of Squares	Your Status
0.01	44.956	2	2741.295	5482.590	Between Groups
		237	60.977	14451.553	Within Groups
		239		19934.143	Total

Illustrated by the table (12), that the value of (f) was (44.956), and its A statistically significant value at a level of significance (0.01), which Indicates differences between the scores of the sample members in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to marital status variable. To see the direction of significance, the Scheffe test was applied for several comparisons and the following table shows this:

**Table (13)** scheffe test for multiple comparisons

Widowed M = 50.025	Divorced M = 65.222	Married M = 42.216	Your Status
		-	Married
	-	23.006**	Divorced
-	15.197**	7.809**	Widowed



**Figure (10)** Differences in scores of samples in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to marital status variable

Illustrated by the table (13) and figure (10), there is a differences in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children between "divorced" and both of "married and widowed" in favor of divorced at the level of significance (0.01), there also differences between widowed and married in favor of widowed at the level of significance (0.01), where the average score of divorced (65.222), followed by widowed with average (50.025), followed by married with average (42.216), so divorced comes in the first place, then widowed in the second place, and then married in the last rank.

**Table (14)** Analysis of variance of sample scores in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to education variable

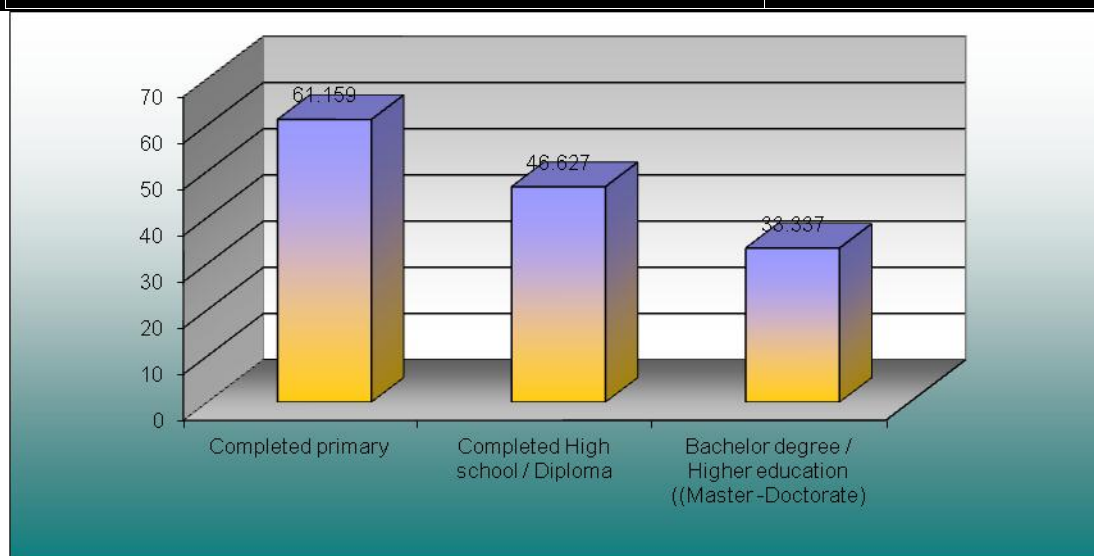
Sig	F	df	Mean Square	Sum of Squares	Education
0.01	67.920	2	2847.015	5694.029	Between Groups
		237	41.917	9934.411	Within Groups
		239		15628.440	Total

Illustrated by the table (14), that the value of (f) was (67.920), and its a statistically significant value at a level of significance (0.01), which Indicates differences between the scores of the sample members in their beliefs about corporal punishment of

children according to education variable. To see the direction of significance, the Scheffe test was used for several comparisons and the subsequent table explains this :

**Table (15)** scheffe test for multiple comparisons

Bachelor degree / Higher education (Master -Doctorate) M = 33.337	Completed High school / Diploma M = 46.627	Completed primary M = 61.159	Education
		-	Completed primary
	-	14.532**	Completed High school / Diploma
-	13.290**	27.822**	Bachelor degree / Higher education ((Master - Doctorate)



**Figure (11)** Differences in scores of samples in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to education variable

Illustrated by the table (15) and figure (11), there is a differences in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children between the sample members who have "completed primary" and each of the sample members who have "Completed High school / Diploma , Bachelor degree/Higher education (Master-Doctorate)" in favor of sample members who have "completed primary" at the level of significance (0.01), there also differences between sample members who have "Completed High school/Diploma" and sample members who have "Bachelor degree / Higher education ((Master - Doctorate))" in favor of "Completed High school / Diploma" at the level of significance (0.01), where the average score of the sample members who have "completed primary" (61.159), followed by sample members who have "Completed High school/Diploma" with average (46.627), followed by sample members who have "Bachelor degree/Higher education (Master -Doctorate)" with average (33.337), so sample members who have "completed primary" comes in the first place, then sample members who have "Completed High school/Diploma" in the second place, and then

sample members who have "Bachelor degree/Higher education (Master -Doctorate)" in the last rank.

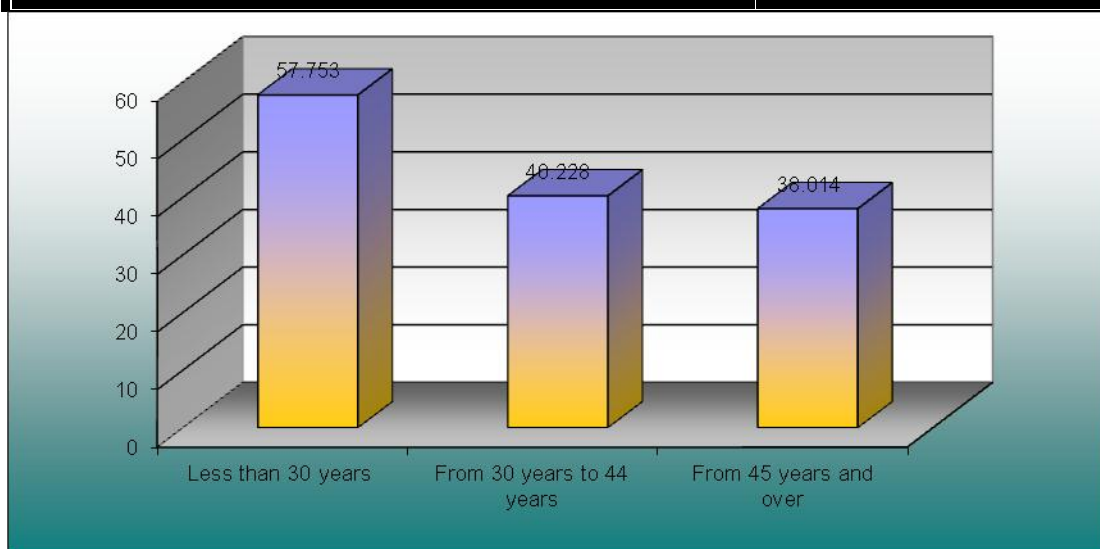
**Table (16)** Analysis of variance of sample scores in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children in relation to age variable

Sig	F	df	Mean Square	Sum of Squares	Age
0.01	31.585	2	2639.202	5278.404	Between Groups
		237	83.558	19803.329	Within Groups
		239		25081.733	Total

Illustrated by the table (16), that the value of (f) was (31.585), and its A statistically significant value at a level of significance (0.01), which Indicates differences between the scores of the sample members in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to age variable, To see the direction of significance, the Scheffe test was used for multiple comparisons and the following table illustrates this :

**Table (17)** scheffe test for multiple comparisons

From 45 years and over M = 38.014	From 30 years to 44 years M = 40.228	Less than 30 years M = 57.753	Age
		-	Less than 30 years
	-	17.525**	From 30 years to 44 years
-	2.214*	19.739**	From 45 years and over



**Figure (12)** Differences in scores of samples in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children relate to age variable

Illustrated by the table (17) and figure (12), there is a differences in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children between the sample members aged "less than 30 years" and each of the sample members aged "from 30 to 44 years , from 45 years and over" in favor of sample members aged "less than 30 years" at the level of

significance (0.01), there also differences between sample members aged "from 30 to 44 years" and sample members aged "from 45 years and over" in favor of "from 30 to 44 years" at the level of significance (0.05), where the average score of the sample members aged "less than 30 years" (57.753), followed by sample members aged "from 30 to 44 years" with average (40.228), finally the sample members aged "from 45 years and over" with average (38.014), so sample members aged "less than 30 years" comes in the first place, then sample members aged "from 30 to 44 years" in the second place, and then sample members aged "from 45 years and over" in the last rank.

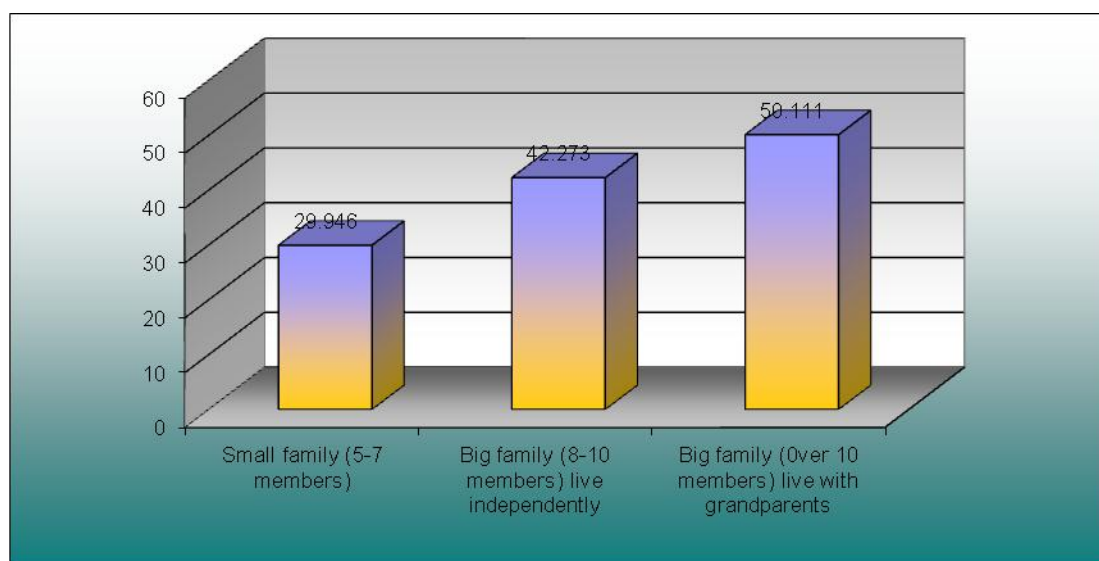
**Table (18)** Analysis of variance of sample scores in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to family size variable

Sig	F	df	Mean Square	Sum of Squares	Family size
0.01	47.273	2	2580.148	5160.295	Between Groups
		237	54.580	12935.421	Within Groups
		239		18095.716	Total

Illustrated by the table (18), that the value of (f) was (47.273), and its A statistically significant value at a level of significance (0.01), which shows differences between the scores of the participants in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children relating family size variable. To see the direction of significance, the Scheffe test was used for multiple comparisons and the following table illustrates this :

**Table (19)** scheffe test for multiple comparisons

Big family (Over 10 members) live with grandparents M = 50.111	Big family (8-10 members) live independently M = 42.273	Small family (5-7 members) M = 29.946	Family size
		-	Small family (5-7 members)
	-	12.327**	Big family (8-10 members) live independently
-	7.838**	20.165**	Big family (Over 10 members) live with grandparents



**Figure (13)** Differences in scores of samples in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to family size variable

Illustrated by the table (19) and figure (13), there is a differences in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children between sample families who live in "Big family (Over 10 members) live with grandparents" and each of sample families who live in "Small family (5-7 members) , Big family (8-10 members) live independently" in favor of sample families who live in "Big family (Over 10 members) live with grandparents" at the level of significance (0.01), there also differences between sample families who live in "Big family (8-10 members) live independently" and sample families who live in "Small family (5-7 members)" in favor of sample families who live in "Big family (8-10 members) live independently" at the level of significance (0.01), where the average score of the sample families who live in "Big family (Over 10 members) live with grandparents" (50.111), followed by sample families who live in " Big family (8-10 members) live independently" with average (42.273), finally the sample families who live in "Small family (5-7 members)" with average (29.946), so sample families who live in "Big family (Over 10 members) live with grandparents" comes in the first place, then sample families who live in "Big family (8-10 members) live independently" in the second place, and then sample members aged " Small family (5-7 members )" in the last rank.

**Table (20)** Analysis of variance of sample scores in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to monthly income variable

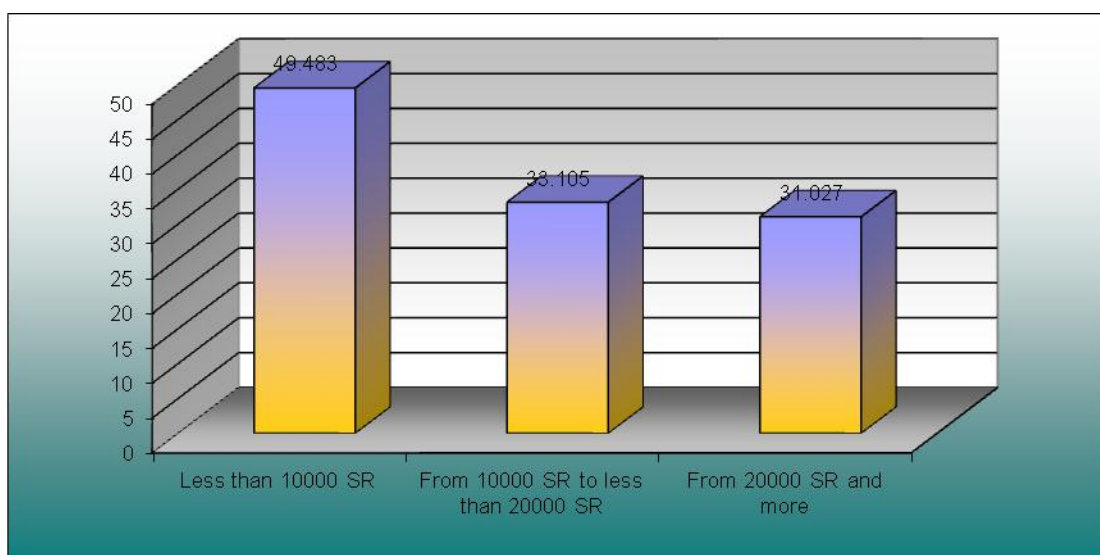
Sig	F	df	Mean Square	Sum of Squares	Monthly income
0.01	39.212	2	2703.069	5406.139	Between Groups
		237	68.934	16337.435	Within Groups
		239		21743.574	Total

Illustrated by the table (20), that the value of (f) was (39.212), and its A statistically significant value at a level of significance (0.01), which Indicates differences between

the scores of the participants in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to monthly income variable, To see the direction of significance, the Scheffe test was employed for multiple comparisons and the following table illustrates this :

**Table (21)** scheffe test for multiple comparisons

From 20000 SR and more M = 31.027	From 10000 SR to less than 20000 SR M = 33.105	Less than 10000 SR M = 49.483	Monthly income
		-	Less than 10000 SR
	-	16.378**	From 10000 SR to less than 20000 SR
-	2.078*	18.456**	From 20000 SR and more



**Figure (14)** Differences in scores of samples in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children according to monthly income variable

Illustrated by the table (21) and figure (14), there is a differences in their beliefs about corporal punishment of children between sample members with income "Less than 10000 SR" and each of sample members with income " From 10000 SR to less than 20000 SR , From 20000 SR and more" in favor of sample members with income "Less than 10000 SR" at the level of significance (0.01), there also differences between sample members with income "from 10000 SR to less than 20000 SR" and sample members with income "from 20000 SR and more" in favor of sample members with income "from 10000 SR to less than 20000 SR" at the level of significance (0.05), where the average score of the sample members with income "less than 10000 SR" (49.483), followed by sample members with income "from 10000 SR to less than 20000 SR" with average (33.105). Finally the sample members with income "from 20000 SR and more" with average (31.027), so sample members with income "less than 10000 SR" comes in the first place, then sample members with income "from

10000 SR to less than 20000 SR" in the second place, and then sample members with income "from 20000 SR and more" in the last rank.

### Second hypothesis:

There is a clear correlation between the parental beliefs about physical punishment of children and study variables.

In order to verify the validity of this hypothesis, a correlation matrix was created between the parental beliefs toward using corporal punishment of children and study variables, and the subsequent table shows correlation coefficients values :

**Table (22)** *A correlation matrix between the parental beliefs about corporal punishment of children and study variables*

Parental beliefs about corporal punishment of children	
0.112	Gender
0.163	Your Status
- 0.886**	Education
- 0.729**	Age
0.140	Family size
- 0.636*	Monthly income

\*Significant at 0.01

\*\*significant at 0.05

Illustrated by the table (22), there is a reverse correlation relationship between the Parental beliefs toward physical discipline of children and some of the study variables at the level of significance 0.01 - 0.05. The higher the education the less the Parental beliefs about corporal punishment of children. Also, the higher the age the less the Parental beliefs about corporal punishment of children, and the higher the monthly income the less the parental beliefs about corporal punishment of children. While there is no correlation relationship between gender, marital status, family size, and the Parental beliefs about corporal punishment of children.

### Discussion

As this study intended to get deep understanding of parents' perspectives about corporal punishment in Saudi Arabia. The results highlight the fact that males were probable preferred to practice corporal punishment than females in the family's households in Saudi Arabia. These results were parallel to earlier findings, which confirmed that fathers used more strict physical discipline than mothers with their sons, nonetheless they reported to use similar levels with their daughters, which is congruent with the findings of Chang et al. (2003). These evidences confirmed Straus and Stewart (1999) previous findings that gender of parent and child have significant impact on the frequency in which firm discipline is applied. For instance, boys at all age groups are more likely to receive harsh physical discipline and harsh discipline is more likely to be used by mothers than by fathers.

The analysis of this study revealed that corporal punishment decreases as parents' age increase, and also corporal punishment decrease as the age of children increase. This result confirmed the previous disagreement that the use of spanking was found to be highest among preschoolers and school-age children, however even in the first year of life we realize current sign of 11% of infants and toddlers were spanked by their parents (Wissow, 2001; MacKenzie, Nicklas, Brooks-Gunn, & Waldfogel, 2011). Hence, these findings are partially disagreed with a nationally-representative review showed in 1995 which recorded that around 35% of infants, 94% of toddlers and over 50% of school children had experienced many methods of parental corporal discipline throughout their previous year (Strauss & Stewart, 1999). Furthermore, physical punishment should not be given to children as they can understand the errors of their ways and how to improve them. Thus, the findings from the recent research agreed with previous finding that physical punishment include soft-pedal type is prohibited in any age range as well (Benjamin, 2010).

This research indicated that if the level of parental education decrease, they are more likely to believe in the usefulness of applying corporal punishment as a method of discipline and vice versa. Similarly, the data generated from the recent study showed that the more level of the monthly income of the family decrease, the more parents believe in concept of using corporal punishment at home and vice versa.

### ***The recommendations of this research:***

- As children grow, parents should encourage their being independent and recognize their own needs in order to encounter us as they form their own perspectives and make their own decisions.
- Delivery of trainings to the parents about the consequences of applying corporal punishment on children and the alternative methods of disciplining.
- Countries should take a lot of serious actions to increase the awareness of parents about the dangerous of using corporal punishment on children while growing up through ads and awareness programs.

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