Assessment of Health Issues that Encountered by Street Children in Kirkuk City

Nazar Ahmed Mahmood*

ABSTRACT

Background and aim: Street children used to refer to children who experience homelessness and live on streets. They are the most vulnerable group to political and economic changes. We conducted this study to assess the health problems that face street children in Kirkuk city as well as identify demographic characteristics of those children.

Material and method: A cross-sectional survey was conducted from June 1st, 2014 to April 1st, 2015 in Kirkuk-Iraq. Data were collected in various settings including markets, streets, playgrounds, etc., we selected a convenient sample of 150 children and conducted questionnaire to reach the purpose of the study. Data analysis was done via using descriptive statistics, which included frequency and percentages.

Results: The findings of the study show that 50% of the children are at age 16 to 20 years of which, 80.7% were male, and 58% of them were refugees. Because of their being street children, poverty constitutes 81.3%. 50.7% of the children was selling wares, 59.3% of them had faced maltreatment, and 54.3% of the children had received treatment for headache. Poverty, low income, was the main reason that led children to work in streets because most of them were refugees.

Conclusions: The children were mainly suffering from headache and back pain.

Recommendation: this paper focuses mainly on basic needs as well as assets to minimize risk factors to the lowest extent possible.

Keywords: Street children, Poverty, Refugees.

* Lecturer / College of Nursing / University of Kirkuk