UNPROTECTED CHILDHOOD

The Experiences of Lebanese and Non-Lebanese Children in Abuse, Maltreatment & Discrimination in Lebanon
Research is Developed and Implemented by
Insan Association

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Unprotected Childhood: The Experiences of Lebanese and Non-Lebanese Children in Abuse, Maltreatment & Discrimination in Lebanon

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**Publisher:** Insan Association

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List of Acronyms

CAFAAG: Children Involved in Armed Conflict and Armed Groups
CRC: Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSA: Child Sexual Abuse
ICAST: ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tools
ICESCR: International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
ILO: International Labor Organization
IOM: International Organization for Migration
LDCs: Least Developed Countries
NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations
UNDP: United Nations Development Program
UNICEF: United Nations Children’s Fund
WHO: World Health Organization
PREFACE

The cycle of violence is an empty cycle, if you are a victim of violence you could become violent too...

If we live in a society where women and children are abused then we inevitably live in a violent society. Our culture is a culture of violence; we drive violently, we talk and discuss violently, we play violently. We use violence to prove our strength, and we are not accepted as leaders unless we master, and with excellence, the game of violence.

Violence comes in many forms and symptoms, however violent behavior goes against human nature that thrives for progress and aspires towards a better and more peaceful world.

Insan Association chose to look in the folds of Lebanese society and the starting point was the first and the most fundamental cycle of society, namely children.

It is very well known that children are the weakest link in society. They are also an indicator of the quality and health of our future societies; the childhood of today mirrors the societies of tomorrow. If we take a deep look at the Lebanese society we will find that it is not exclusively Lebanese. Lebanese society, as it has always been, is an open society. This is why we have decided in this study to look at three different groups of children; Lebanese children, documented children of migrants and undocumented children of migrants. Our aspiration was not to reckon the prevalence of violence against children in Lebanon. Our goal was to examine
closely the roots of violence in our society by highlighting the relationship between violence and children’s legal status and by shedding the light on the difference in the experience of violence among the three groups of children.

A child’s legal status does indeed provide him or her with protection, and it is the duty of our society to extend this protection to all its children.

This study constitutes an essential document for politicians, policy makers, officials, civil society, and specialized educational institutions, all of whom are responsible for providing protection to our children.

Thus, we put at your disposal this book entitled: “Unprotected Childhood: The Experiences of Lebanese and Non-Lebanese Children in Abuse, Maltreatment & Discrimination in Lebanon”.

This research was undertaken by the research department at Insan Association with the support of Australian Volunteers International and was funded by the Planet Wheeler Foundation. The book sheds the light on the phenomenon of violence that has left a big impact on our society in the hope that we all act to protect our children... our future.

Charles G. Nassrallah
Founding Director
Insan Association
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INSAN ASSOCIATION

Insan Association’s mission is to protect and promote the rights of the most vulnerable and marginalized individuals. Insan Association pursues its mission through holistic service delivery including education, psychological and legal services, advocacy and research. This report was undertaken by the research and advocacy team. The advocacy department aims to influence the structures that deny people access to and the realization of their human rights. Through campaigning, awareness raising and lobbying, Insan endeavors to build the structures that give human rights recognition to those people.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the parents and children that participated in this research, without their trust, patience and engagement this report would have not been possible.

We are also indebted to Dr. Jinan Usta, Senior Lecturer at the Family Medicine Department at the American University of Beirut Medical Center, and Dr. Bernard Gerbaka, the Chairperson of the Pediatric Department, Hotel-Dieu University Hospital and the Coordinator of the National Committee for Combating Violence against Children, whose insights and comments helped shape and adapt the questionnaire used in this study. We would also like to thank Hans Van De Glind, the ILO Senior Migration Specialist for Arab States, who reviewed the report and provided his valuable insights and expertise.

This report is the work product of a dedicated team of Insan researchers. Alex Shearn and Anais Carton developed a comprehensive literature review. Lara Hovsepian helped adapt the questionnaire. Samantha Hutt adapted the questionnaire and coordinated data collection. Nisrine Debian coordinated data collection. A team of dedicated interviewers collected data for this project. Those include Giovanna Zouein, Jihan Howayek, Rita Melkone, Lydia Selassian, Victoria Adeynka Samuel, Yara Chehayed, Yara Khoury, Rahel Abebe, Rahel Zageye. Maram Barakat and Nicolas Paolino entered and analyzed data in SPSS. Lala Arabian and Charles Nasrallah contributed to the development of the recommendations and supervised the research project. Roula Hamati coordinated the research project including analysis of the results, development of the recommendations and final report preparation.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report explores child abuse and maltreatment and parental disciplinary approaches in three respective groups; Lebanese children, documented children of migrants, and undocumented children of migrants.

In doing so, this report is the first to focus on child protection risks in migrant populations in Lebanon. This research starts from the assumption that migrant children are at greater risk of being subjected to child abuse and maltreatment than their Lebanese counterparts.

This research finds that migrant children are at a particular disadvantage in accessing several rights and services. Migrants are at a disadvantage in registering their children; this study finds that while 0% of the Lebanese children are not registered, 10% of children of documented migrants and 63% of children of undocumented migrants are not registered. Furthermore, this research reveals that children of migrants are more likely to engage in child labor; 50% of children of documented migrants and 23% of children of undocumented migrants were engaged in child labor as opposed to only 4% of Lebanese children of a similar socio-economic background. Migrant children are also less likely to be able to access education; 100% of Lebanese children attended school, while only 55.2% of undocumented migrant’s children and 56.7% of documented migrant’s children attended school.

This research also finds that being a child of a migrant is significantly associated with certain types of child maltreatment and abuse. Children of migrants, both documented and undocumented were more likely to be subjected to neglect and sexual abuse than their Lebanese counterparts. Being an undocumented migrant was particularly associated with child neglect. Interestingly, children of undocumented migrants registered the lowest levels of exposure to violence.

Notably, physical violence was pervasive and undifferentiated by residency status; the three sub-populations displayed equally high levels of using physical violence against their children.

The report also reveals some risk factors for parental violence and child abuse. Boys were more likely to be physically abused than girls, parental poverty, measured by the number of rooms in the household was also found to constitute a risk factor for severe physical abuse. By contrast parents’ age and gender and the child’s age did not increase the risk of physical abuse.
Introduction
Safeguarding the rights of children is one of the few principles upon which there is international consensus. Children lack the developmental capacity to exercise full autonomy and are therefore dependent on adults to meet their care and protection needs. This situation of dependency creates an inherent vulnerability. The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is a treaty that outlines the fundamental rights of children. Currently, the Convention is the most ratified human rights treaty in existence, with 190 ratifications. In 1991 Lebanon ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and in 2004 Lebanon became party to the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Central rights outlined in this treaty include the right to be protected from economic exploitation, the right to be protected from sexual abuse, and the right not to be forcefully separated from one’s parents (UNICEF 2009).

Despite the global will to address the needs of children, a multitude of risks and challenges remain. For instance the right of the child to education is compromised in many parts of the world. While the global average of primary education completion is at 75%, this average drops to 57% in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) (UNICEF 2014: 59). This figure suggests that many children in developing countries are not able to complete primary levels of education, putting them at greater risk of poverty, child labor and exploitation. The global average of the number of children engaged in child labor is 15% however this jumps to an average of 23% in LDCs. Child marriage is also at a global average of 11% while the number increases to 15% in the LDCs. A number of other issues are of great concern with regards to children however data is more challenging to obtain. These issues include sexual exploitation, abuse, trafficking, the use of disciplinary violence, and the involvement of children in war and conflicts.

Lebanon is no exception when it comes to the challenges faced by children worldwide. Multiple political, social, and economic factors have also contributed to the increased vulnerability of children. The fragile security situation within the country has also furthered the marginalization of children. In recent times, due to the spillover effect of the Syrian conflict, many children are exposed to violence as a result of sporadic shootings and indiscriminate explosions. In Tripoli, the second largest city in the country, a new phenomenon of ‘Children Involved in Armed Conflict and Armed Groups’ (CAFAAG) is emerging as a result of sectarian fighting in parts of the city.
Poverty is also pervasive within the country, a recent report by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the UNDP has established that around 28% of the population qualifies as poor, while 8% live under extreme poverty (UNDP 2008). Elevated percentages of poverty are well proven to affect children’s ability to access quality education, it also increases the risk that children will be engaged in child labor, trafficking or exploitation.

A combination of racial and class discrimination, a strict immigration regime and poverty have also played a key role in rendering some groups of children more vulnerable than others. While the literature has previously shown that Lebanese children coming from a low socio-economic background face multiple protection risks (Usta et.al. 2012), the intersection of race, class discrimination, poverty, and tight immigration controls mean that children of migrants face unique and largely ignored issues.

In recent years Lebanon has hosted a growing number of vulnerable populations including Syrian, Iraqi and Palestinian refugees; and a high number of migrant workers, many of whom have children who are born and raised in Lebanon. Multiple restrictions are placed on the participation of refugees into the labor market. Refugees are allowed to work only in a handful of occupations and in less lucrative employments categories. This pushes refugees into the informal sector where many labor and human rights violations occur. Labor migrants on the other hand generally come from a low socio-economic background and are recruited from the Global South to do unskilled work such as domestic work. Migrant workers are classified as third or fourth category migrants [1] depending on their occupation, and multiple restrictions are placed on their presence and work in the country. For instance workers from the third and fourth categories require a Lebanese sponsor for the duration of their work contract and do not enjoy the same rights to family reunification as workers from the first and second category. The low skills and therefore poorly remunerated nature of the jobs that migrants undertake, coupled with racist and xenophobic attitudes that the Lebanese typically associate with countries of the Global South have resulted in a higher risk of rights violations for children of migrants.

Maintaining a valid legal status within Lebanon is also complicated for children of migrants. Obtaining
Birth certificates is a difficult task requiring a significant financial investment relative to the average wage of most migrants and much negotiation of Lebanon’s convoluted bureaucracies. Due to their low socioeconomic status, migrant workers and refugees are often unable to settle their medical debts that result from giving birth at hospitals in Lebanon. A common practice has thus developed whereby hospitals withhold the birth certificate from parents who are incapable of settling their medical fees (Migrant Forum Asia 2012). Consequently many children of migrants are left unregistered and automatically become stateless. Lack of proper documentation directly impacts children of migrants who often live in the constant fear of arrest, detention and deportation. As a result of the lack of proper documentation, undocumented children become accustomed to evading the system and grow up to be legally and socially invisible.

Birth registration is an even more complicated process for undocumented migrants. Undocumented migrants who are able to pay their medical fees, and whose children’s birth certificates are consequently not withheld, are in many cases still unable to register their children. This is because the Mukhtar who is officially tasked with registering new births, refuses to do so on the basis of the illegal situation of the parents or only accepts in exchange for a substantial bribe.

Lacking the appropriate registration documents also impacts the child’s enjoyment of their human rights and their access to social services. As a result of their undocumented status children are not able to access their right to education. Lebanese schools require parents to present the child’s identity documents in order to enroll him/her in school. As adults, undocumented children are also denied gainful employment. This situation creates an endless circle of poverty, discrimination and marginalization.

Accessing health care is also challenging for both documented and undocumented migrants and their children because of high cost, lack of information on access and the lack of proper documentation. The situation is made worse by the exclusion of all foreigners from the National Social Security Fund, the government agency that provides low cost healthcare for Lebanese employees. Migrants are therefore left at the mercy of
private insurance companies, many of which do not provide full coverage.

Both migrants and their children also suffer from the social costs of migration. Migrants do not typically have familial support networks in Lebanon or the financial means to access formal care arrangements; as a result when parents have to work, children are left uncared for and are put at high risk of exposure to abuse or exploitation as a consequence of the absence of parental or custodial supervision.

The combination of all of these factors makes children of migrants particularly vulnerable to exploitation, violence, sexual abuse, trafficking and other human rights violations (OHCHR 2012, 29-30). At particular risk are children of undocumented migrants. While the legality of migration is by no means a guarantee on the safety of the migratory process, being deemed “illegal” works to exacerbate those vulnerabilities by placing children at a greater risk of being subjected to abuse by a state’s immigration control and by making them vulnerable to detention and deportation (McLeigh 2013: 1064).
Rationale
Whilst the impact of child abuse and exploitation is widely understood and recognized, the particular vulnerabilities faced by children of migrants are significantly less so. Only a handful of studies have focused on the role that migration plays in exacerbating child protection risks (McLeigh 2013; Save the Children 2007). Those studies have overwhelmingly pointed out that migration plays an important role in increasing the vulnerabilities faced by children. The literature has also identified undocumented migrants as being at particular risk of exploitation.

Within the Lebanese context, only two previous studies have sought to analyze child protection risks (Usta et al. 2012, & Usta & Favert 2010). The first study analyzed the occurrence of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Lebanon; this study found that CSA is widespread, with 24% of children suffering this abuse (Usta & Favert 2010). The second study by Usta et al. (2012) explored the incidence of three forms of abuse; witnessing violence, psychological abuse and physical abuse. Both studies however, focused on analyzing the occurrence of child abuse in Lebanese children.

Up to this date, the unique issues and risks facing children of migrants in Lebanon has not been previously studied at all. This is despite the fact that Lebanon has a strict immigration regime that guarantees very few rights to migrants. This in turn puts children of migrants at a heightened risk of facing many child protection risks such as violence and abuse, sexual exploitation, lack of documentation, inadequate medical support, educational difficulties, and child labor among many others.

Similarly, within the Lebanese context disciplinary approaches that parents use with their children have never been studied before. This is despite the fact that understanding parental disciplinary approaches is very important to forming a complete picture on the role that parents play in abusing their children or protecting them from child abuse.

In light of the importance and sensitivity of the issue of children’s rights, and in light of the absence of previous research focusing on child protection risks in migrant populations in Lebanon, this research project is undertaken to explore the in-depth experiences, unique vulnerabilities and challenges faced by the children of migrants.

In order to do so this research comparatively explores the conditions of three different groups: undocumented
migrants, documented migrants, and Lebanese people by looking at both the experiences of children in being subjected to abuse and maltreatment and the experiences of parents in disciplining or abusing their children. This comprehensive approach to analyzing child protection risks will fill a gap in the existing literature on the particular risks faced by children of migrants in Lebanon and will contribute to increasing the knowledge on child protection risks in the country in general. Starting from the experiences of marginalized groups, this research project aims to generate a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles that prevent children in Lebanon from enjoying, accessing, and fulfilling their rights.
The objectives of this research project are twofold. The first objective is to explore in depth the vulnerabilities faced by children in Lebanon in general whereas the second objective is to highlight the particular vulnerabilities facing migrant children. The task of uncovering the vulnerabilities of children is done comparatively. The prevalence of child abuse and neglect will be studied in three respective populations; documented migrants, undocumented migrants, and Lebanese.

Participants for this study were selected from the North Eastern Suburbs of Beirut. Inhabitants of this area are characterized by a low socioeconomic status, which makes children more vulnerable to child abuse and neglect. While the general population in the North Eastern Suburbs is more at risk of abuse and neglect due the socioeconomic status of the area, it is anticipated that in migrant children, especially undocumented migrants, those vulnerabilities are magnified. This is due to legal and social discrimination that children of migrants face, often making their access to basic human rights and services difficult.

Findings from this project identifying the particular risks facing children in general and migrant children in particular can be used to guide future lobbying activities that aim to secure more rights for vulnerable children. In particular, findings from this project will inform policy recommendations that aim to improve the situation of migrant children by addressing their particular protection risks. Furthermore, given that no previous research has looked at the experiences and vulnerabilities of migrant children in Lebanon, findings from this study will pave the way for further research in this field.

This study can also be of interest to organizations that provide services to children in general and migrant children in particular. Findings from this study will enable organizations to increase their expertise on child protection with the provision of updated and detailed information on areas of concern for children, risk factors for abuse, and the Lebanese legal framework.
Methodology
Data Collection

Data for this research project was collected using two sets of standardized questionnaires. The first set of questionnaires was addressed to children while the second set was addressed to their parents. Both questionnaires largely consisted of closed ended questions with some open ended questions that allowed parents and children to elaborate on ideas they deemed important. With neglect and abuse being such a sensitive issue, it was anticipated that families might be hesitant to share information about abuses and risks that their children are facing especially if they are personally involved. Therefore, preceding data collection, our researchers sought to build a relationship of trust with the families in order to obtain the most accurate information. Researchers were divided into teams of two and parents and children were interviewed separately. This measure was taken to increase the accuracy of the collected data and to ensure that children were not intimidated by their parent and felt safe to report abuse.

Questionnaires were available in three languages Arabic, English and French. The research instruments were developed in English and later translated into French and Arabic. The questionnaires were pre-tested with the target population to check the meaning of the language and the sequence and structure. Necessary changes were made as required.

The ISPCAN Child Abuse Screen Tools (ICAST) questionnaire was used as the foundation of the questionnaire used in this study. The ICAST questionnaire is a survey instrument developed by international child protection experts that allows the retrospective measurement of child abuse. The original ICAST questionnaire consists of “15 primary questions about potentially abusive physical, sexual, and emotional events, with follow-up questions about perpetrator characteristics, frequency of acts and periods in childhood when the recalled abuse occurred” (Dunne et al. 2009). The questionnaire was then adapted to suit the purposes of this study and the Lebanese
cultural context. Those adaptations were developed in consultation with Dr. Bernard Gerbaka, an ISPCAN council member and one of the experts who developed the ICAST questionnaire, and Dr. Jinan Usta, a senior lecturer at the family medicine department at the American University of Beirut with extensive research experience on child abuse.

Child abuse and maltreatment was measured using five categories. Those categories measured the child’s violence exposure, psychological victimization, neglect, physical punishment and sexual abuse (Zolotor et al. 2009). Children rated their exposure to violence by for example answering have you seen adults use drugs, shout in a frightening way, hit kick slap each other, use weapons, have you seen people get shot, fighting, rioting etc. Children were also asked to rate their exposure to psychological victimization: did anyone scream at you, insult you, lock you out, make you feel embarrassed, threatened to abandon you, bullied you. Neglect was measured by asking children if they felt hungry, not cared for, unimportant, had inadequate clothes, unmet medical needs, and had inadequate support. Physical punishment was quantified by asking children if they were pushed, grabbed or kicked, hit, beaten or spanked, choked, smothered, or drowned, burned or scalded, burned, threatened to be killed, threatened with a knife or gun etc. Children were asked to rate sexual abuse by answering if they were talked to in a sexual way, shown pornography, had to look at someone’s private parts or someone looked at theirs, someone tried to have sex with them unwillingly, etc.

Similarly, parental disciplinary approaches and abuse was measured by constructing six categories. Those categories allowed the classification of the disciplinary approaches and abuse in terms of: non-violent discipline, moderate physical discipline, severe physical punishment, psychological discipline, neglect, and sexual abuse. To measure non-violent discipline parents were asked to answer if they explained something is wrong, asked the child to stop doing something, distracted the child, and took away privileges. Parents were asked to rate moderate physical punishment by answering whether they, hit, hit with a knuckle, shook, twisted the ear, pull the hair etc. Severe physical punishment was measured by asking if parents kicked, choked, burned, beat up, threatened with a knife or gun. Parents were also asked to rate their use of psychological discipline by answering for example if they shouted, cursed, threatened to invoke spirits, threatened to send away or abandon, insulted, refused to speak, publicly humiliated the child etc. Neglect was measured by asking for example if children had unmet medical needs, inadequate food, and inadequate supervision. Parents rated their children’s exposure to sexual abuse by answering if children were sexually touched by an adult or had sex with an adult.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violence Exposure</td>
<td>Has anyone used drugs/ alcohol and behaved in a way that frightened you?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have you seen adults in your home shouting and yelling?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have you seen adults in your home kick slap punch each other physically?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have you seen anyone in your home use knives, guns, sticks, rocks or other things to hurt or scare someone else inside your home?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have you seen people shot, bombs went off, people fighting, or rioting?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone come into your home and stolen something?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Victimization</td>
<td>Has anyone in your family screamed at you loudly and aggressively?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in your family called you names, said mean things or cursed you?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in your family made you feel ashamed or embarrassed?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in your family said they wished you dead?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in your family threatened to leave you forever?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in your family locked you out of the home for a long time?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Have you been bullied so that you feel sad or bad, by another child at home?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neglect</td>
<td>Did you feel hungry or thirsty even though there was enough for everyone?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Did you have to wear dirty/ torn clothes?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Were you not taken care of when you were sick</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Did you feel that you weren’t cared for?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Did you feel no-one was looking after you, supporting, helping you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Punishment</td>
<td>Has anyone in the home pushed/ grabbed/ kicked you?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in the home hit/ beat/ spank you with a hand?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in the home hit/ beat spank with an object?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in the home tried to choke/ smother/ drown you?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in the home burned/ scalded you?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in the home locked you up in a small place?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in the home pulled your hair/ pinched you/ twisted your ear?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in the home made you hold heavy loads/ exercise as punishment?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in the home threatened you with a knife or a gun?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone in the home threatened to kill you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>Has anyone made talked to you in a sexual way?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone made you watch a sex video or look at sexual pictures?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone made you look at their private parts?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone touched your private parts/ made you touch theirs?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has anyone made a sex video of you?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Has anyone tried to have sex with you when you did not want them to?</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non- Violent Discipline</td>
<td>Explained why something is wrong?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Told him or her to start or stop doing something?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Took away privileges, forbade something or prohibited from leaving the house?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gave him or her something else to do (distracted him or her)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate Physical Discipline</td>
<td>Shook the child?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hit on the buttock with an object?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hit elsewhere with an object?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Twisted his or her ear?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hit on the head with a knuckle or back of the hand?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pulled his or her hair?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Forced him or her to stand or kneel in a painful way?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Put chilli pepper, hot pepper, spicy food in mouth?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Spanked him or her on the bottom with bare hand?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pinched him or her?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slapped on the face or back of the head</td>
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<tr>
<td>Severe Physical Discipline</td>
<td>Kicked the child with a foot?</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choked or squeezed him or her with hands?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Burned, scalded or branded him or her?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hit him or her over and over again with object or fist?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Threatened him or her with a knife of a gun?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Used a hand or pillow to prevent breathing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological Discipline</th>
<th>Threatened to leave or abandon him or her?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shouted, yelled, or screamed at him or her</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cursed him/ her?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Threatened to kick out of the house or send away for a long time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Locked out of the house?</td>
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<td>Insulted him/ her by calling names dumb, lazy, or other names?</td>
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<td>Locked him/ her in a dark room</td>
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<td>Used public humiliation to discipline him or her?</td>
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<th>Was there a time your child did not get the medical care for an injury or illness?</th>
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<td>Was there a time your child didn’t get the food or liquid that he/she needed?</td>
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<td>Was there a time that your child was seriously hurt or injured?</td>
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<th>Sexual Abuse</th>
<th>Was there a time that your child was touched in a sexual way by an adult?</th>
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<td>Was there a time that your child had sexual intercourse with an adult?</td>
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Interviewers’ Selection and Training

Interviewers were selected on the basis of their prior knowledge of the situation of migrants in Lebanon. Half of our interviewers were migrants themselves, while many others had prior experience through volunteer work or previous work experience. This was purposely accomplished to increase access and participation.

Prior to the collection of data, interviewers received a one-day training to familiarize them with the questionnaires and providing them with the necessary interviewing skills. Throughout the training day interview principles were discussed, questionnaires were rehearsed, and scenarios and interview questions were explored. Interviewers were also provided with ethical guidelines for participants in general and for interviewing children in particular. Finally safety guidelines were also given to interviewers.

In total, 180 participants were interviewed, 90 of whom were children and 90 of whom were parents of those children. The age of the children included in this study ranged between 7 and 18 years old. This age group was selected because literature on child abuse suggests that by that age most cases of child abuse would have occurred (Usta et al. 2013). So decreasing the lower age limit was accomplished to decrease recall bias and to increase early interventions in cases where abuse has taken place. Furthermore the research instrument, the ICAST questionnaire, is particularly compatible to assessing victimization during childhood, early adulthood, and adulthood (Zolotor et al. 2009). Interviews took place in the north-eastern suburbs of Beirut, an area with a low socioeconomic status and a high number of migrants. At the conclusion of interviews, our sample consisted of 30 Lebanese families (parent and child), 30 migrant families with papers, and 30 undocumented migrant families.
Sampling Method

Participants were identified using a combination of convenience and disproportionate stratified sampling. Convenience sampling was employed due to some anticipated hesitancy to participate in the study from families who have had no prior contact with Insan or its partner organizations. A list of potential participants was compiled by Insan and its partner organization and every second name on the list was contacted. Convenience sampling provided easy access to families whose relationship with Insan or its partner organizations made them more willing to talk to our researchers despite the sensitive nature of the topic. However, the problem with this sampling technique is the systematic bias that it creates whereby a convenience sample does not truly represent the population from which it is derived. Therefore to minimize sampling bias, convenience sampling was used with only 10% of respondents (9 caregivers and 9 children), while disproportionate stratified sampling was used to identify the remaining 90% (81 caregivers and 81 children) of participants.

Unlike convenience sampling, disproportionate stratified sampling increases the likelihood of a representation of a diverse set of views (Daniel 2012: 135). At the beginning of the research process, areas were allocated to each research team and our interviewers were given a numerical quota for each suburb. Afterwards, they were instructed to begin at the main street within a given suburb, randomly select a direction, and approach every third house or apartment block on that street. Then they were instructed to take every second street to the left. In case they reached the perimeter of the suburb, they were instructed to return to the main road and repeat the process again (excluding the previous street from the possibility of randomly selected directions). The quota was designed in a way to give equal representation to the subgroups that our researchers believed to be relevant for the research question. Thus, the population was divided into three categories; Lebanese families, documented migrant families, and undocumented migrant families. The objective was to observe whether child abuse was contingent on the residency status of the parents involved.

One of the main advantages of the disproportionate stratified sampling is that it allows the representation of various groups who might not be sufficiently represented through random sampling (Daniel 2012: 138). Since we were interested in comparing the difference between various migrant groups (documented migrant, undocumented migrant, and the Lebanese) on child abuse and neglect, disproportionate stratified sampling offered a way to allocate equal representation to these groups thus allowing internal and cross group comparison and inference. Disproportionate stratified sampling also preserves the randomness of the study design since participants from each group were selected at random.
Validity

In order for the results of a study to be valid two types of validity; external and internal, must be satisfied. External validity refers to the extent to which the result of a given study can be generalized, whereas internal validity refers to the extent to which the research project was successful at measuring what it intended to measure.

Disproportionate stratified sampling, which has been used as the sampling method in 90% of the sample, allows the random selection of participants from each subgroup. This is important because randomization allows for generalizations beyond the specific sample. Therefore, results from this study can be generalized to inform of the types and frequency of child abuse and neglect occurring within those three broader communities; documented and undocumented migrants and Lebanese.

During the questionnaire development phase two measures were specifically undertaken to warrant the internal validity of this study. First, an internationally recognized and scholarly tested survey instrument (the ICAST) was used as the foundation of the questionnaire designed by Insan. Second, all modifications to the ICAST questionnaire were effectuated in cooperation with two experts on child abuse; one of whom was involved in the development of the original ICAST questionnaire.

Data Analysis

After the completion of all interviews all data was entered into the SPSS software (version 20) for analysis. Descriptive statistics were undertaken for all variables. Chi square tests and Fisher’s exact test were used to explore associations between categorical variables, while Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used to assess the relationship among numerical variables such as age, and different indexes. t-tests were also performed to compare the mean score of various groups on numerical variables.
Ethical Considerations
Throughout the research project, efforts were made to ensure the ethical treatment of participants. Interviewers were asked to follow Insan’s child protection policy that includes; a code of conduct detailing the expected behavior of every Insan employee, and a reporting procedure detailing the measures to be undertaken whenever there is concern for a child’s wellbeing.

Researchers also abided by the principle of the best interest of the child, meaning that the interest of the child took supremacy over the research objectives. Researchers were instructed to discontinue the interview if at any point the objectives of the research were acting against the best interest of the child. Moreover, the researchers were actively involved in ensuring the wellbeing of children through providing child protection services by referring children identified as being at risk to the organization’s protection unit.

To ensure informed consent, each participant was given an introductory letter explaining the purpose of the research and detailing the contact information of the organization. This measure was adopted to secure that participants were informed of the purposes and use of the research and had the appropriate means to contact Insan should they feel the need to do so.
Limitations of the Research
The major limitation of this study was the difficulty in securing suitable respondents. This was the result of many factors. First, due to the sensitivity of the topic of child abuse many parents were hesitant to talk to our researchers and divulge sensitive information. This hesitancy to disclose was exacerbated by the fact that child abuse is often related in one way or another to parental behavior, either through direct involvement or indirectly through neglecting and putting the child at risk.

The age limit also proved to be another challenge that our researchers were faced with. It proved to be especially challenging to identify migrant families with children aged 7 or above who were willing to talk to us. This has substantially limited the scope of respondents for this study.

Parents found some items on the questionnaire difficult to discuss. Interviewers noted that when asked about items that denote violence in the questionnaire some parents were particularly sensitive. Some parents showed clear signs of guilt while others thought it was normal to use violence with children. Parents were also very sensitive when asked questions about sexual abuse that their children might have been subjected to. Parents especially had problems answering two questions on the survey; “Did anyone have sex with your child?” and “did you ever burn your child or hit him/her repeatedly”.

Furthermore, our interviewers reported that some kids particularly younger ones had difficulties understanding and answering certain questions. This was especially true in relation to questions about sexual abuse. Interviewers also noted that many kids did not understand the concept of pornography and asked the interviewers what were pornographic materials. This complicated the situation further since interviewers were ethically required not to explain new concepts to children who did not demonstrate sufficient understanding of the questions being posed.

Several eligible respondents refused to participate in the survey as a result of their mistrust in NGOs in general. Many potential participants felt that organizations take their information and then never meet their needs or provide the services they promised.

Finally, as the research was ongoing there were some changes in the research team. Those changes have meant that new staff members had to be trained and familiarized with the project.
Findings
Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Parents’ Socio-demographic Characteristics

90 parents were surveyed; 30 (33.3%) of whom were Lebanese, 30 (33.3%) of whom were documented migrants and 30 (33.3%) of whom were undocumented migrants. 24.4% of the sample consisted of males whereas 75.6% were females. 64% of respondents were Christians, 31.5% were Muslims, 3.4% were Buddhists and 1.1% were Hindu.

Respondents came from a low socio-economic background. The number of household rooms, the availability of electricity at home, and the age of marriage for women reflected this low socio-economic dimension. 62.9% of respondents reported living in a home consisting of 1-2 rooms while 14.6% reported not having electricity at home. The majority of female respondents reported getting married before the age of 22; 40.4% were married between the ages of 18 and 22, 19.8% were married between the ages of 15 and 18 and 4.5% were married when they were less than 15 years old.

Children’s Socio-demographic Characteristics

90 children were surveyed in total. The sample consisted of 30 (33.3%) Lebanese children, 30 (33.3%) children of undocumented migrants, and 30 (33.3%) children of documented migrants. An unintended equitable division between gender characterized our sample; 47.8% of the children sampled were boys while 52.2% were girls. The ages of children varied between 7 and 18 years old, with a mean age of 12 years old and a standard deviation of 3.14 years. 96.7% of children lived with their mothers and 82.2% lived with their fathers, while 77.7% lived with both parents.
The right to a nationality is one of the main rights guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). According to the CRC every child shall be registered immediately after birth and has the right to a name and nationality. Lebanon signed the CRC on January 26, 1990 and ratified it on 14th of May 1991. Yet, Lebanese laws set out stringent conditions for the acquisition of Lebanese nationality. To obtain a Lebanese nationality the child must satisfy one of those three conditions: the child must be born to a Lebanese father, or he/she must be born on Lebanese territory and did not acquire a foreign citizenship, or he/she is born on Lebanese territory and is declared an orphan. Those conditions - that effectively make it impossible for children of migrants to acquire Lebanese nationality - are in violation of the principle of non-discrimination and the right to nationality set out by the convention.

Despite not being able to obtain the Lebanese nationality children of migrant workers who were born in Lebanon were able until recently to obtain a yearly permit on the basis of their parents’ presence in the country and upon presenting a proof of enrollment in Lebanese schools. Granting yearly permits however was abruptly put to an end when the General Security issued a new directive prohibiting the renewal of children’s permits for category three and four workers. Thus, currently not only are migrant workers not able to obtain a citizenship for their Lebanon born children, they are also unable to obtain a residence permit for their children.

Birth registration is also complicated for migrant parents; both documented and undocumented. The study sample has shown that migrants are at a disadvantage when it comes to the registration of their children; while all Lebanese parents (100%) reported registering the birth of their children, 10% of documented migrants and 63% of undocumented migrants did not register the birth of their child.

Lebanese laws require the birth of a child to be registered within one year of the actual date of birth. Failure to do so results in the child being considered stateless. As a result of poverty and customary discrimination, migrant parents often face difficulties fulfilling this obligation.

Lebanon is host to a sizable migrant population. Migrants in Lebanon can be divided into three categories; high skill migrants, refugees (mainly Palestinian, Iraqis, and more recently Syrians), and low skill migrant workers - most notably domestic workers. Refugees and low skill migrant workers form the bulk of the migrant population.
Migrant workers and refugees are generally poorly remunerated and live in difficult socio-economic conditions. As a result migrants have a difficulty covering the costs that are incurred by giving birth. As a financial guarantee, hospitals have developed a customary practice of withholding the birth certificate from parents who do not settle their medical fees (Migrant Forum Asia 2012). In the absence of a birth certificate parents are unable to register their children and thus children become automatically undocumented.

The process of birth registration is even more complicated for undocumented migrants as obtaining a birth certificate from the hospital is no guarantee that the child will be successfully registered. Even when undocumented migrants are able to obtain a birth certificate, mukhtars might still refuse to register the child on the basis of the parents’ legal situation. Some mukhtars categorically refuse to register children of undocumented migrants while others accept to do so in exchange of a substantial bribe.

Birth registration is crucial to all children as it ensures that they “are counted and have access to basic services” (McLeigh 2013: 1062). Registering a child protects him or her from child marriage, child labor, sexual exploitation, and many other hazards by determining the child’s age; hence birth registration works to promote safe migration (McLeigh 2013). By contrast, being unregistered affects children of migrants in a plethora of ways: unregistered children face the constant fear of arrest and detention. This fear of arrest and detention is something unique to migrant families. When asked “What risks do children face at work” both undocumented migrants (28.7%) and documented migrants (69.2%) cited the fear of arrest or harassment by the police as the number one risk that children face. None of the Lebanese parents (0%) reported a similar concern. The fear of police harassment or arrest also directly affects the quality of life for migrant children. Migrant parents were asked to list the places where their children play; a large percentage of children (30% of documented migrants, and 13.3% of undocumented migrants) stated that their children do not play, while the percentage of Lebanese parents who stated that their children do not play was 3.3%. Fears of arrest, harassment and detention deprive migrant children of their childhood. Migrant children grow up in isolation, confined to their house for fear of being arrested and deported. Those fears were previously documented in a Terre Des Hommes and Insan study (2010: 29) which found that migrant parents often dissuaded their undocumented children from leaving the house for the fear of getting arrested or detained.

Unregistered children also have difficulties accessing vital social services such as education and health care. Unregistered children are in many cases unable to attend school for the lack of the necessary legal documentation. In the absence of other viable alternatives children of undocumented migrants are then pushed to work at a young age, often in the informal sector, which makes them an easy prey for exploitation and trafficking. For the same reasons, unregistered children face difficulties in accessing public health care and social benefits that are available to other children who possess the required documentation (Terre des Hommes & Insan 2010). This is despite that the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights that Lebanon has ratified clearly sets out the right of every child, including migrant children who are in an irregular situation, “to education, adequate food, and health on the same basis as citizen children” (McLeigh 2013: 1060).

Being unregistered greatly inhibits a child’s ability to enjoy his or her full rights and could lead to various protection risks and rights violation. In line with Lebanon’s international commitments such as the CRC and the International Covenant on Social and Economic Rights, birth registration ought not to be contingent on the parents’ national origin or legal status. Furthermore, children of migrants including migrants in irregular situation ought to have the right to register their children. Access to social benefits should also be made available to those children without discrimination.
The International Labor Organization (ILO) defines child labor as any “work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and mental development” (ILO 2004: 16). According to the ILO, 11% of the world’s population is engaged in child labor (ILO 2004). In Lebanon, UNICEF estimates that child labor is at a rate of 2% (UNICEF 2014).

In this research child labor was quantified by asking parents whether their children contributed to their family’s income. Findings from this study suggest that an alarming number of children engage in child labor; 25.6% of our respondents stated that their children contributed to the family’s income. This high percentage of children who are engaged in child labor is reflective of the socio-economic dimension of the population from which this sample is drawn and is not reflective of child labor in the broader population. The difference however becomes starker when stratifying the sample by residency status of respondents. Whilst 96.7% of Lebanese children do not contribute to their families’ income (only 3.3% of Lebanese children are engaged in child labor), 50% of documented migrants and 23.3% of undocumented migrants contribute to income. The percentages of child labor were then validated by analyzing children’s responses to the same question where similar percentages were reported. Those results suggest that both undocumented and documented migrants are respectively 7 and 15 times more likely to be involved in child labor than their Lebanese counterparts. The results also suggest that children of documented migrants are two times more likely to engage in child labor than their undocumented counterparts.

The contrast between the levels of participation of documented and undocumented migrants in child labor can be explained by the lack of documentation. While difficult living conditions push both children of documented and undocumented migrants to seek work, children of documented migrants have an easier time accessing employment because of their legal status. However, whilst documented migrants are more likely to engage in child labor, undocumented migrants are far more vulnerable to exploitation when they do. As a result of their precarious legal condition, undocumented migrants fear arrest and detention which means that they are less likely to report abuse and seek redress when their rights are violated. The combination of all of these factors means that undocumented child laborers are heavily dependent on their employer. This overdependence on their employer coupled with their precarious legal situation puts children of undocumented migrants at a greater risk of falling victim to trafficking and of being trapped into a cycle of slave-like working conditions.

The particular vulnerability of children of migrants to child labor has not been fully explored in the literature. Similar findings were reported in a working paper by the ILO (2010) which compared data from different types of migrants on child labor. The paper concludes that child migration increases the risk of child labor. This aggravated risk of child labor in children of migrants is due to many factors. Unlike citizens, migrant children are deprived of basic rights and services such as access to accessible and free education. Migrant children are therefore pushed into child labor as a result of the lack of another viable alternative. This is particularly true for children of undocumented migrants in which not going to school was significantly related to engaging in child labor. In fact this study finds that all children of undocumented migrants (100%) who did not attend school were engaged in child labor. This suggests that not attending
school is a risk factor for child labor in undocumented migrants. No similar relationship was detected between child labor and education in the other two groups. The lack of permanent residency status or legal documentation makes children more susceptible to child labor because children of undocumented migrants are overlooked in the promulgation of [governmental] work standards and protection” (IOM 2013: 35).

Access to Education

37.1% of the children interviewed reported not going to school. This is well above the national average of children who drop out of school or never attend school. Data from the World Bank estimates that in 2012 school enrollment in Lebanon was at 93% (World Bank 2014). However, a closer look at our data shows that the high percentage reported in this study is due to the unusually high rate of migrant children who do not attend school. In fact, our results show that 56.7% of children of documented migrants and 55.2% of children of undocumented migrants do not attend school. In contrast all Lebanese children (100%) reported attending school.

The numbers above highlight the particular vulnerabilities of children of migrants in accessing education. A report by World Vision (2009: 30) has previously established that migrant children have higher dropout rates than Lebanese children. The report also argues that migrant children who attend school experience a greater degree of harassment and corporal punishment. Among the principle obstacles that migrant children face in accessing education in Lebanon are poverty (War Child Holland) and the lack of ID documents (Terre des Hommes & Insan 2010). Migrants of a low socioeconomic background are faced with the choice of sending their children to public schools or to semi-private schools. Those two kinds of schools are not completely free as they typically charge a small tuition fee. However, tuition fees are not the only thing that parents have to pay for. Parents are also required to cover the expenses for transportation to and from the school, to pay for textbooks, stationary and uniform. The burden of the tuition fees, textbooks, stationary, uniform and transportation are something that many migrant families cannot afford. As a result children are forced to drop out of school. A previous study by Insan and Terre des Hommes (2010: 32) has estimated that around 8% of children enrolled in the Insan School [2] have dropped out of their previous school for financial reasons. These factors coupled with the non-registration of children that is a common problem among migrants explains the lower school attendance rate among migrants compared to Lebanese children.
The Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Lebanon is signatory, acknowledges the right of every child to education. The convention specifically sets out the rights of all children, regardless of nationality, to primary and secondary education. “Children have the right to education. Primary education should be free and all children should be required to attend. Secondary education should be accessible to every child”. Furthermore, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which Lebanon has ratified, also states that all children, including those who are in an irregular situation, have the same rights as citizen children including the right to education. Findings from this study however demonstrate that access to education in Lebanon and the enjoyment of this right is still very much contingent on national origin. Hence, more attention should be directed at guaranteeing equal access and free education to all children regardless of national origin. Furthermore, particular efforts should be made to guarantee that migrant children; both documented and undocumented, enjoy the same access to education as their Lebanese counterparts.

Child Abuse and Maltreatment

Child abuse and maltreatment was quantified using five categories; Violence Exposure, Psychological Victimization, Neglect, Physical Punishment, and Sexual Abuse. Categories were chosen based on their previous use in the literature and their conventional use in legal and social research (Zolotor et al. 2009). Furthermore those same categories have been previously used to assess the prevalence of child abuse in Lebanon, which facilitates comparison of results across studies. Each category consisted of the grouping of several variables [3]. Answering yes to one or more variables that make up the scale was taken as an indicator of the presence of the given type of abuse.

Our results show that the lowest type of child maltreatment was registered as sexual abuse with 17.8% of children reporting being sexually abused. The second least frequent type of abuse was neglect with 39.1% reporting being neglected by their parent. By contrast children scored high on violence exposure (69.8%), followed by psychological victimization (85.4%), and physical punishment (88.6%) [4]. Those results contrast with results of a previous study by Usta et al. (2012) which found that 30% of children surveyed in Lebanon reported witnessing at least one incident of violence in the home and 65% reported at least one incident of psychological abuse. Two reasons can explain the higher rates of abuse reported in our study. First, Usta et al. (2012) looked at the prevalence of violence at home and psychological abuse over a one year period, whereas this study looked at the lifetime prevalence of abuse.
with no specific time frame. Second, the nature of the sample can also account for this difference, our study purposefully sampled three equal groups of participants; Lebanese, documented and undocumented migrants, while participants in the Usta et al. (2012) study were selected randomly from health clinics. The oversampling of migrants compared to their size in the population and the expected higher abuse rates among migrant communities contributed to those contrasting results. For example the rate of exposure to violence among migrant children is at 71.4% compared to 66.7% for Lebanese children. This has resulted in elevated total percentages.

On the other hand, the rate of sexual abuse reported in this study is comparable to the rate reported in a previous study conducted by Kafa, Save the Children, and the Higher Council for Childhood which found that 16.1% of children surveyed had been subjected to at least one form of sexual abuse (Usta et al. 2008).

Children were not uniformly affected by all types of abuse. Some types of abuses were more prominent than others among child victims. The most prevalent type of exposure to violence was reported for “adults shouting and yelling at each other” with 60% of children reporting a similar experience. The most prevalent exposure to psychological victimization was registered for family members “screaming [at the child] loudly and aggressively” with 81.1% of children reporting being screamed or yelled at. The most prevalent type of neglect was “feeling unimportant” with 28.1% reporting this feeling, whereas the most prevalent type of physical punishment was “pulling [the child’s] hair, pinching [him/her], twisting [his/her] ear”, with 76.5% of children being subjected to such treatment. Finally the most common acts of sexual abuse were “talking to the child in a sexual way” (6.7%) and “making the child look at a person’s private parts” (6.7%).

Socio-demographic Characteristics and Types of Violence

A set of socio-demographic characteristics were associated with certain types of child maltreatment. These variables include residency status, gender and age.
The literature on migration has previously warned that migration could put children at a “potential risk of being exposed to abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation” (McLeigh 2013: 1058). In line with what has been reported in the literature, this study finds that residency status is significantly associated with certain types of child abuse and maltreatment. Children of documented migrants have higher exposure to violence (89.3%) than both children of Lebanese (66.7%) and undocumented migrants (53.6%). While the lower exposure to violence among Lebanese children is expected, the observed difference between documented and undocumented migrants can be attributed to the hesitancy of undocumented migrants to divulge abuse as a result of their precarious legal situation. This has been supported in previous research where undocumented migrants were shown to be more reluctant to report abuse “for fear of becoming entangled with the authorities and subsequently deported” (Center for Public Policy Priorities 2010).

Another reason that can explain the low exposure to violence is the home confinement that most children of undocumented migrants are subjected to. Parents of undocumented children often fear that their children might be arrested by authorities. Because of that fear, children of undocumented migrants are confined to the home and grow up in isolation (Terre des Hommes & Insan 2010). Isolation inside the home explains their reduced exposure to violence compared to the other groups and in particular to documented migrants who share the same circumstances with the exception of the fear of arrest over their illegal status. Ironically while home confinement is acting as a protective factor against exposure to violence, isolation is detrimental to the psychological and mental health and development of children (Elliott et al. 2005; McLeigh 2013). Isolation and the lack of social support can also have negative effects on parents’ ability to take care of their children (McLeigh 2013).

Undocumented migrants scored lower on exposure to violence that takes place near the home. Only 23.3% of children of undocumented migrants report experiencing people being shot, bombs going off, people fighting or rioting near their home while the percentage for children of documented migrant is at 33.3%. This suggests that home confinement does indeed explain the lower violence exposure reported by undocumented migrants.
Similarly, 67.9% of children of documented migrants and 31% of children of undocumented migrants reported being neglected by their parents as opposed to only 20% of Lebanese children. This increased neglect rate among migrants can be explained by the living situation of migrant children. Migrant children often come from broken families where one parent migrates to work and improve the family’s financial standing while the other parent is left behind. With reduced access to state services and limited family and social support networks, migrant children are at higher risk of being neglected when their parent is away working. This explanation finds validation in the results of this study where 93.3% of Lebanese children reported living with both parents, compared to only 63.3% of children of documented migrants and 80% of children of undocumented migrants. Thus, neglect is an unintentional consequence of migration whereby migrant parents have a difficult time meeting the basic emotional and material needs of their children.

Furthermore, residency status was found to associate with sexual abuse with documented migrants reporting the highest level of sexual abuse (36.7%). Rates of sexual abuse were at 10% and 6.7% for children of undocumented migrants and Lebanese children respectively. Those results suggest that children of migrants are at higher risk of being sexually abused than their Lebanese counterparts. The high percentage of sexual abuse among migrant children is due to the perpetrators knowledge of the precarious legal condition of those children that makes it difficult for them to file a complaint and to obtain legal redress.

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) can have adverse effects on the child victim. Children who are sexually abused are more likely to fail academically, to be unhealthy and have a worse psychological profile than non-abused children (Usta et al. 2008; Usta & Favert 2010). Moreover, sexually abused girls generally suffer more symptoms related to Post Traumatic Shock Syndrome (PTSD), sleeping problems and anxiety (Usta & Favert 2010).
By contrast being a child of a documented or undocumented migrant or Lebanese did not significantly associate with the child’s exposure to physical punishment. The prevalence of physical punishment in the population combined was at 88.6% which suggests that an alarming number of parents use physical punishment with their children regardless of their residency status. Those results are in line with a previous study by the World Health Organization (WHO) which showed that Lebanon has the highest number of children who reported being physically attacked by an adult family members in the entire Eastern Mediterranean region (World Health Organization 2005).
Psychical punishment can have a wide range of negative repercussions on the child’s physical and psychological development and mental health. Children found to be maltreated at home had higher trauma symptoms as a result and unsurprisingly, poorer family functioning than children who did not experience maltreatment (Usta et al. 2012). Moreover children who are physically abused are more likely to exhibit aggressive and antisocial behavior and to be depressed and anxious (Brown & Bzostek, 2003). Violence also affects the child’s academic performance; research has shown that children who are subjected to corporal violence or punishment experience more difficulties at school compared to their non-abused peers (Brown & Bzostek, 2003; Edleson, 2006). Finally, violence breeds more violence; males exposed to domestic violence as children were more likely to be physically violent as adults (Brown & Bzostek 2003).

Despite the well-documented repercussions of violence on the development of the child, physical violence in Lebanon is still an accepted and justified form of discipline and education. Furthermore, child victims tend to accept the violence directed at them as they view it as a customary mode of discipline and education (World Vision 2009:12).

One parent that was interviewed told our researchers: “I do it because everyone else does it” while another parent justified using violence by saying “I use violence against my child to discipline him”.

Some children reported extreme use of physical violence by their parents. Rami an 8-year-old boy reported being severely abused by his stepmother:

“my step mother would use different tools to hit me, sometimes she would hit me with a hammer on the toes, sometimes she would use an iron wire to hit me on the back... once she also used a knife to hurt me”.

The physical abuse has taken a negative toll on Rami’s life:

“I haven’t been able to sleep for so long, I wake up at night thinking she is coming to kill me, I am always having those nightmares”.

In addition to cultural norms that overlook violence towards children, the prevention and punishment of violence directed at children is made difficult by the fact that Lebanese legislation delegates the regulation of family matters to the different sects in the country. Different sects handle such matters according to their own legal procedures. Therefore, legal uncertainty is engendered by competing legislations. At present the only law concerning the prevention of children violence and juvenile justice is Law 422 on juvenile justice which had limited implementation. Thus, the absence of clear legislation and clear judicial process coupled with cultural factors that accept physical abuse as a form of discipline account for this elevated percentage reported in this study.
Interestingly this study exposes a trend of using different types of violence and maltreatment simultaneously. Results from this study suggest certain types of maltreatment are often accompanied and predict other type of violence and abuse.

Neglect was correlated with exposure to violence ($r = 0.370$, $p=0.001$), neglect was also correlated with psychological victimization ($r = 0.549$, $p=0.000$), and with physical punishment ($r=0.224$, $p=0.039$). Interestingly neglect was not correlated with sexual abuse.

By the same token, psychological victimization was correlated with physical punishment ($r=0.506$, $p=0.000$) and violence exposure ($r=0.426$, $p=0.000$), no correlation was observed with sexual abuse or with exposure to violence.

No significant relationship was observed between violence exposure and physical punishment or sexual abuse.

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<td>4. Physical Punishment</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.506***</td>
<td>0.224*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.546</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Correlation among different indexes in the general population. *$P<0.05$; **$P<0.01$; ***$P<0.001$
Correlation analysis was then performed in each group separately to distinguish which group might be more vulnerable to the trend of multiple abuses. Results in table 2 (a, b, & c) show many interesting findings. For instance while the relationship between violence exposure and psychological victimization is significant in the general population of this study and in children of documented and undocumented migrants, the relationship is not significant for Lebanese children. This suggests that children of migrants (both documented and undocumented) who are exposed to violence at home are more at risk of being psychologically abused than their Lebanese counterparts. Thus, violence exposure has more negative repercussions on children of migrants than on Lebanese children.

Neglect was significantly associated with psychological victimization in the three subgroups (documented, undocumented and Lebanese), while the relationship between psychological victimization and physical punishment was only significant in Lebanese and children of undocumented migrants. Finally, the relationship between neglect and physical punishment was only significant in Lebanese children.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Indexes</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Violence Exposure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Psychological Victimization</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Neglect</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.563**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Physical Punishment</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.789***</td>
<td>0.743***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>0.315</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.116-</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2a: Correlation between different indexes in children of Lebanese. *P < 0.05; **P < 0.01; ***P < 0.001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1. Violence Exposure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Psychological Victimization</td>
<td>0.544**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Neglect</td>
<td>0.544**</td>
<td>0.501**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Physical Punishment</td>
<td>0.247</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.196</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>0.088-</td>
<td>0.228-</td>
<td>0.219-</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 2b: Correlation between different indexes in children of documented migrants. *P < 0.05; **P < 0.01; ***P < 0.001
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indexes</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Violence Exposure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Psychological Victimization</td>
<td>0.498**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Neglect</td>
<td>0.339</td>
<td>0.684***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Physical Punishment</td>
<td>0.516**</td>
<td>0.574**</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>0.317-</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>0.363</td>
<td>0.196-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2c: Correlation between different indexes in children of undocumented migrants. *P < 0.05; **P < 0.01; ***P < 0.001*
Previous research has hypothesized that there are some gender and age differences in the levels of violence experienced with boys being more likely than girls to have been physically and psychologically abused while Usta et al. (2012) found no evidence of age affecting levels of physical or psychological abuse.

In our data gender was associated with psychological (p=0.006, eta2=0.085) and physical abuse (p=0.020, eta2=0.062) with boys more likely to be physically and psychologically abused than girls, while no significant associations were reported with neglect, violence exposure, and sexual abuse[5]. This relationship has been previously reported in Usta et al. (2012) where boys were also more likely to fall victim to physical and psychological abuse.

In line with the findings of Usta et al. (2012) no relationship was detected between age and violence exposure, psychological victimization, or sexual abuse. Age was correlated with neglect (r=0.350, p=0.001) with older children reporting higher levels of neglect. By contrast, age was negatively correlated with physical punishment (r=-0.442, p=0.000); with younger children being more at risk for being physically abused.

The analysis was subsequently performed in the three subgroups of this study. Age was not correlated with sexual abuse in both documented and Lebanese children, however it was positively correlated with sexual abuse in undocumented children (r=0.440, p=0.015).

Age was also negatively correlated with physical abuse in both children of undocumented migrants (r= -0.0742; p=0.000) and in the Lebanese (r= -0.449; p=0.013) suggesting that in those two subgroups younger children are subjected to more physical punishment than their older counterparts.

Furthermore, age was positively correlated with neglect in both documented (r=0.596, p=0.001) and undocumented migrants (r=0.571, p=0.001) and negatively correlated with Lebanese children (r=-0.546, p=0.002).
Parents surveyed were questioned about their behavior towards their children. The ICAST questionnaire allows the classification of those behaviors in terms of six approaches: Non-Violent Discipline, Moderate Physical Discipline, Severe Physical Discipline, Psychological Discipline, Neglect, and Sexual Abuse (Runyan 2009). Consequently, as we have reported in the methodology section of this report indexes were constructed by grouping several variables for each index[6]. As in the indexes constructed to assess child mistreatment and abuse, answering yes to one of the items constituting the index connoted the presence of the corresponding approach.

All parents surveyed (100%) reported using a non-violent disciplinary approach. 96.6% reported using moderate physical disciplinary approach, whereas only 18.2% reporting using severe physical discipline with their children. The rate of child neglect was at 24.7%. None of the parents surveyed (0%) admitted to sexually abusing their children.

The high use of moderate physical punishment (96.6%) is due to the widespread perception of physical punishment as an acceptable and effective form of discipline. This is despite that abundant research has found evidence that corporal punishment is an inefficient disciplinary measure; increasing the short term compliance of the child but leading to long term undesirable behavior such as increased child aggression and antisocial behavior (Gershoff 2002).

Interestingly, parents who used physical punishment did not view it as antithetical with caring for and loving the child. Instead physical punishment was viewed as an extension of the care that parents exhibit towards their children:

“You need to love your children, to show them that you care, and to discipline them with a little violence to show them that you care about them” (a mother of a ten year old girl).

For some parents physical punishment came at the top of a hierarchy consisting of different disciplinary approaches. Thus, physical punishment was only employed when all other means have failed:

“Sometimes they don’t understand when you yell at them... you have to use violence to make them understand” (mother of an eight year old boy).

Sometimes they make me so angry... I have to hit them in order for them to calm down” (mother of an eight year old boy).
However, despite the justifications that parents who use physical punishment offer, physical punishment is not only an ineffective disciplinary measure, it is also a violation of the child’s human rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child has characterized the use of physical punishment on children as “legalized violence against children” and called for its elimination through legislative, administrative, social and educational measures. Using violence against children is a violation of the universal principles of respect to the human dignity and the right to physical integrity that every child must enjoy.

There is also contention surrounding what constitutes physical punishment, as many acts of “small” physical punishment are not viewed as such by many parents: “I use ‘light’ hitting so my children learns to respect me” (Mother of an eighteen year old boy).

This is despite that the convention on the rights of the Child clearly defines physical punishment as “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light”.

While 0% of parents reported sexually abusing their children, 17% of children reported being sexually abused. This contrast in results suggests that victims were abused by someone other than their parent. This explanation is corroborated by data from the child questionnaire, which showed that children were sexually abused by another child or adolescent (100%) and not by a member of their family (0%). Another possible explanation could be that while reporting being sexually abused is difficult, it is even more difficult when the abuser is a member of the family. Therefore it is conceivable that children who were abused by their parents hesitate to disclose such incidents.

In the course of the interviews, Yara, a 7-year-old girl, reported that she and her younger sister Farah were sexually abused by their landlord:

“He [the landlord] used to force me to have sex with him; he also used to touch my younger sister”

The mother who worked long hours was aware of the danger this man posed to her daughters, but did not act to protect them because the landlord regularly accepted delays in paying rent. The mother emphasized:

“He [he landlord] loves the girls very much, he cares about them. [...] and he doesn’t say anything when I am late in paying rent”
No significant relationship between residency status and parental disciplinary approaches was detected. Non-violent discipline, moderate physical discipline and severe physical discipline did not significantly associate with parental residency status. Sexual abuse was also undifferentiated by residency status.

Neglect on the other hand was significantly related to parental residency status with 13.8% of undocumented migrants and 50% of documented migrants reporting neglecting their children, as opposed to only 77% of Lebanese parents. Those results were also validated in the child questionnaire where higher levels of neglect in children coming from migrant families were detected.

Higher child neglect rates among migrant families reported by both parents and children are due to the inability of migrants families to access many of the social services that are available to other Lebanese households coming from a similar poor background. As a result of their exclusion from the social system migrant families have in cases of financial hardship no alternative means of meeting some of their children's basic needs, like the need for adequate food or medical care. When asked why did the child not received adequate medical care, lack of money and medical insurance was cited as the number one obstacle for migrant families (66.7% documented migrants and 50% of undocumented migrants), none of the Lebanese families cited this problem. Similarly lack of money was cited as the only reason as to why migrant children did not receive adequate food. This is while none of the Lebanese parents reported that their children did not receive adequate food.

This proves that despite sharing comparable socio-economic conditions, migrant families suffer more hardships that often reflect on their children's health and wellbeing. Social services whose purpose is to cater for the needs of the poorest segments of society, fail to address the needs of migrant families, putting both parents and children in vulnerable situations and subjecting children to a greater risk of neglect.

While results from the child questionnaire showed that migrant children are more likely to be exposed to violence, be neglected, and sexually abused, the lack of such association between residency status and the parents’ disciplinary approaches suggest that migrant parents are not responsible for their children's heightened vulnerability but rather that migrants children's vulnerability is situational. This idea has been supported by a vast body of literature which has emphasized that migration is a situation that creates vulnerability for children (McLeigh 2013: 1058). This is significant because it implies that concrete steps aimed at increasing migrants' access to services and increasing the safety of migration will have a great effect in protecting migrant children from child abuse and neglect.
Correlation analysis in the general population has revealed that certain disciplinary approaches were significantly related. For example, the use of non-violent discipline was positively correlated with the use of moderate physical discipline. By contrast, the use of moderate physical discipline was negatively associated with the use of psychological discipline. Neglect was also associated with severe physical punishment.

Interestingly, the relationship between moderate physical punishment and severe physical punishment was not significant suggesting that the use of moderate physical punishment is not related to and does not predict the use of severe physical punishment. This could be related to the social acceptance of “light” violence in the forms of slapping, hitting etc as an appropriate disciplinary measure, whereas extreme forms of violence are deemed socially unacceptable and therefore condemned.

Table 3: Correlation among different indexes in the general population. *P < 0.05; **P < 0.01; ***P < 0.001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indexes (7)</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Violence Exposure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Psychological Victimization</td>
<td>0.281*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Neglect</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Physical Punishment</td>
<td>0.153-</td>
<td>0.143-</td>
<td>0.283*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>0.197-</td>
<td>0.419**</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>0.141-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The association between different types of discipline and maltreatment was also assessed based on residency status. In Lebanese parents, moderate physical punishment was positively associated with psychological discipline, while severe psychological discipline was associated with psychological discipline. Similarly, no interaction was observed between the use of moderate physical punishment and severe physical punishment.
Similarly no relationship was detected in any of these groups. Those results show that there are no gender differences in the frequency of types of violence and abuse that parents use on their children.

Further analysis was subsequently performed in two different subgroups, the first consisting of single parents whereas the second group consisted of two parents families (mother and father). In the single parent group women were more likely to use non-violent discipline than men. The mean of women’s use of non-physical violence was 3.6 whereas the mean of men’s use of non-physical violence was 2.3. No significant relationship was detected for the other types of violence and abuse. Interestingly however, in the two parents group, men were significantly more likely to use severe physical punishment with their children with a mean of 0.46 whereas women’s mean for severe physical violence was at 0.13. Men also registered higher levels of neglect (M=0.6) as opposed to (M=0.21 for women.

The higher use if non-violent discipline by women in the single parent household is due to the fact that single parent households are dominated by women. 84.2% of single parent households were headed by women as opposed to only 15.8% of single parent households who were headed by men. In two parent households the relationship between physical violence and gender becomes apparent. In line with what was suggested in the literature, our results show that when both parents are present men are more likely to use severe physical violence on their children than women.

Number of Rooms in the Household

By contrast, our results show that a low number of household rooms is a risk factor for severe physical abuse. In fact our results found that severe physical abuse is significantly related to the number of household rooms. The mean for severe physical abuse for those who live at a home with more than two rooms was at 0.0588 while the mean for those who live in a household consisting of 1 to 2 rooms was 0.2708. This suggests children coming from poorer families are at a greater risk of being subjected to severe physical abuse.

Mother’s Marital Age

Previous research has established that young mothers are more likely to be violent towards their children than older mothers (Gil 1971, Conelly et al. 1992). In this study we thought to analyze the impact of young marriage on violence towards children. Young marriage was defined as any marriage that has occurred at an age younger than 18 years old. Surprisingly, marrying young was not significantly related to increased use of physical punishment (neither severe nor moderate), however, marrying after the age 18 was significantly related to an increased use of non-violent discipline. The mean score of non-violent discipline for the less than 18 groups was 2.94, while the mean score for the older than 18 was 3.70. The same results were obtained when the analysis was performed in the three different groups of documented migrant, undocumented migrant and Lebanese, suggesting that a mother’s age of marriage does not impact her use of physical violence towards her child in any of those three groups.
Lebanon is a state party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Social and Economic Rights. Those two covenants address the right of migrants to register their children with disregard to their residency status. Article 2 of the CRC specifically addresses the right of all children, including migrant children, to be treated equally. Despite those obligations the research has revealed that migrants have difficulty fulfilling this right. Furthermore, children of undocumented migrants are the most vulnerable to becoming unregistered.

In line with Lebanon’s international commitments the Lebanese state has the obligation to ensure that migrant parents have the right and means to register their children regardless of their migration status or national origin. In order to do so the Lebanese state must ensure that mukhtars are obliged to register the birth of all children that are presented to their offices. In lieu of requesting and inspecting parent’s residency documents, mukhtars should be instructed to request an official identification from the child’s parents in the form of a passport, or a national ID or any other types of official documents.

Furthermore, the Lebanese state should ensure that registered and unregistered children have equal access to vital services including health care and education. Access to social services should not be used for immigration control or as a means to punish undocumented or unregistered children. The Lebanese state must take effective measures to ensure that all children are able to enroll in both public and private schools upon presenting an identification document such as a national passport or birth certificate. Similar procedures for admitting new patients should be followed by public hospitals.
The Right to Nationality and Regularization

The results of this study have shown that there exists a gap between the right of all children regardless of legal status, to birth registration and nationality set out by the CRC and migrants ability to register their children. In line with Lebanon’s international obligations children born in Lebanon ought to have the right to the Lebanese nationality. However, given the political climate and the mounting sectarian fears of the naturalization of various groups in the country, we recognize that this right is not likely to be fulfilled in the near future. Therefore, it is recommended that in the meantime the General Security stops the non-renewal of children’s residence permit and starts granting children of migrants an uncontested right of residence until they turn 18 years old.

Addressing Child Labor

Results from this study have revealed that child labor is a child protection risk for children in Lebanon. The study also revealed that while our Lebanese sample was considered at high risk for child labor (25%), undocumented migrants were 7 and 15 times more likely to be engaged in child labor than their Lebanese counterparts. These numbers reflect the particular vulnerabilities of children of migrants to child labor. The results also reflected a clear link between the lack of education and child labor. Lebanese laws categorically prohibit the employment of children under fourteen years old. In 1998, Lebanon enacted law number 686 making public education free and compulsory until the age of twelve. In 2010, a National Committee to Combat Child Labor was established within the Ministry of Labor. Lebanon also ratified the ILO Convention 138 “The Minimum Age Convention” and Convention 182 on “the Worst Forms of Child Labor” which guarantee the rights of all children, including migrant children to be free from child labor.
In line with Lebanon’s national and international obligations the Lebanese state must ensure that all children, and migrant children in particular, are free from child labor that is harmful to their development and have access to free and compulsory education. This can be accomplished by supplementing existing legislation with clear implementation strategies. Technical trainings for children of employment age (aged fifteen and older) should also be devised. Finally given the causal links between the lack of education (poverty) and child labor, the Lebanese government should increase spending on public schools as a preemptive measure to combat child labor.

The Right to Education

This research has revealed that migrant children, both documented and undocumented are less likely to attend schools than Lebanese children. This is due to two factors; poverty and lack of appropriate documentation. This is despite the fact that the CRC has clearly established that children are entitled to the right to education regardless of their immigration status.

To address this problem and ensure equal access to education the Lebanese state should take the necessary legal measures to guarantee that children in irregular situations have the same rights to education as their documented counterparts. Steps to equalize access to education have been undertaken by a number of countries such as Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands where national legislation has been amended to guarantee children “residing unlawfully in the territory [... the right to] be admitted to local schools” (UNICEF 2010:13). Furthermore, the absence of documentation or registration should not obstruct the ability of migrant children to take official exams. Presenting alternative documentation such as a national passport should be taken as a sufficient proof of identity.

Moreover, given the relationship that this study has revealed between poverty and migrant children’s inability to attend school, the Lebanese state must ensure that public schools are legally obliged to accept migrant children regardless of their legal status and without any discrimination. In this regard policies that give preferential treatment for the registration of Lebanese children should be abolished. In parallel, the state should ensure that public schools are adequately equipped to accept increasing numbers of students.

With the influx of more than 1.2 million Syrian refugees the majority of whom are women and children, the Lebanese state faces tremendous challenges in providing access to basic services including education to all children on the Lebanese territory. Therefore, in the short and intermediate term and until school capacities are expanded to meet the needs of all children, non-formal education can be undertaken as a temporary solution as long as diplomas are officially recognized and can lead to entry to formal schools when capacities have been expanded.
Results from this study have showed that all children undifferentiated by residency status are vulnerable to high levels of physical abuse. The high prevalence of physical punishment is due to two factors; the acceptance of physical punishment as a disciplinary tool and the absence of clear legislation that protects children from violence.

To reduce the incidence of physical punishment, a law clearly prohibiting the use of physical violence against children must be enacted and effectively implemented. Present legislation is ambivalent and contradictory on the issue of violence against children. Article 186 of the penal code authorizes “non-violent discipline” at home, while the 2002 law number 422 protects children from such violence. Furthermore, while law 422 does provide legal protection to children, it lacks a clear implementation strategy, which makes it ineffective. Thus efforts should be made to completely abolish article 186 of the penal code and supplement law 422 with a clear and effective implementation mechanism. The implementation of this law can be accomplished through the establishment of a family protection unit that would be tasked with handling cases of child abuse. Trained social workers from the Ministry of Social Affairs should be tasked with conducting regular visits to high-risk families and assessing the situation of children. A hotline where children can report abuse and physical violence should also be established.

In parallel to the implementation of clear legislation that protects children, efforts should be made to combat the culture of acceptance of violence directed at children, as legislation that is not rooted in societal norms and values is essentially doomed to fail. Child’s rights organizations and human rights organizations should work on raising awareness on the danger of using violence as a means of discipline. Workshops, trainings, and school interventions should focus on changing both parents and children’s perceptions and acceptance of violence. The danger of using physical punishment should be explained and parents should be educated on non-violent disciplinary alternatives. Educational institutions and child’s rights organizations should also promote the hotline and encourage children to report violence and abuse.

An unexpected finding from this research was the very low exposure to violence that undocumented migrants are subjected to compared to the other two groups. This is an unexpected outcome of the home confinement that those children are subjected to as a result of the fear of arrest and detention. While lower exposure to violence has a positive effect on children, home confinement is detrimental to their mental health and development.

Thus, the General Security must -in line with international agreement that prohibits the detention of minors for administrative breeches (UNICEF 2011)- cease to detain and arrest children who are in irregular situation. There are a number of alternatives to detention that the General Security can explore when dealing with administrative
breaches without jeopardizing the child’s right to liberty outlined by the CRC. A commonly used alternative to detention is reporting, whereby the child is required to report to a designated location on a regular basis. Authorities can also make use of available technology like electronic monitoring to monitor the whereabouts of the child in question (COMPAS 2009).

Furthermore, training specifically designed to add a child perspective to the regulation of migration must specifically target the General Security units tasked with handling cases involving children.

This study has also revealed that migrants are particularly vulnerable to certain types of child abuses; those abuses include Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) and neglect. In fact, our results revealed that undocumented children are the most vulnerable group to CSA, with 36.7% of the cases reporting being sexually abused. While measures should be taken to combat child sexual abuse in the entire population, efforts should be particularly directed at finding solutions and redress to CSA in children of undocumented migrants. Those measures should include ensuring that undocumented migrants are able to file complaints of sexual abuse against a perpetrator despite not having legal residency papers. At the level of the family, awareness should be raised on the dangers of CSA on the child’s development and health, early signs to detect CSA should be better explained to parents. Sexual education at school should explain to children what sexual abuse is and how to deal with it in case it happens to children.

Neglect was also more prominent among migrant populations. Results from this study have shown that documented and undocumented migrant children were 3.4 and 1.6 times respectively at higher risk of being neglected than Lebanese children. This increased risk is due to the exclusion of migrants from social services and to the high percentage of single parent families among migrants. To address the high levels of neglect among migrant children, the Lebanese government must ensure the implementation of policies that allow both regular and irregular migrant children to benefit from social services including the right to education and health care. Such measures have been successfully adopted in a number of countries including France and Argentina. Argentinian migration law allows migrants to benefit from “the right to health, social care and medical care, regardless of their immigration status” (UNICEF 2010). France has created a specific system called the “State Medical Assistance” to extend healthcare to undocumented migrants. Undocumented migrants who have been residing in France for more than three months and who are below a certain economic threshold are eligible to access health care for free (UNICEF 2010). To reduce the high level of child neglect in migrants, organizations that provide services to children must also devise care programs for young children so that children will be well cared for while their parents are away working.
Conclusion
This research is the first to explore in depth the Lebanese and migrant children’s experiences of abuse, neglect, and maltreatment from the perspective of both children and parents. While the relatively small sample size and sampling technique do not allow for generalizations, this research gives a clear indication for various trends and risk factors for child abuse and parental abuse. This report clearly indicates that while many child protection risks are common to both Lebanese and migrant children, and while measures should be taken to guarantee better protection for all children on the Lebanese territory, children of migrants (both documented and undocumented) remain highly susceptible to certain types of violations such as child neglect and sexual abuse. Other areas of concern for migrant children include home confinement and isolation, detention and deportation of children, child labor, lack of access to education, and birth registration. This report has also revealed that physical violence is an area of concern for both migrants and Lebanese children.

This report highlights the importance of examining the vulnerabilities of migrant populations in Lebanon and in particular the child populations therein. Recommendations from this report can be used to guide policy makers’ efforts to devise child protection policies that are sensible to the plights of migrant children.
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War Child Holland. Education in Lebanon.


1. Category three workers are workers who are employed in agriculture and the cleaning sector. Category four workers are domestic workers.

2. The Insan School is a specialized school that welcomes children of migrants who cannot attend regular schools either because of financial restraints, problems with legal documents, or other factors.

3. Scales were constructed using the following variables:
   - Violence exposure scale: adults used drugs in a frightening way; adults shouted in a frightening way; witnessed adults in the home hit, kick, slap; witnessed adults in home use weapons; seen people being shot, bombs, fighting, or rioting, something stolen from home.
   - Psychological victimization scale: screamed; insulted; made you feel embarrassed; threatened to abandon you; locked you out of home; bullied by another child at home.
   - Neglect scale: went hungry or thirsty; inadequate clothes; unmet medical needs; felt not cared for; felt unimportant; inadequate support/help.
   - Physical punishment scale: threatened to hurt or kill you; pushed grabbed or kicked you; hit, beat, spanked with a hand; hit, beat, spanked with an object; tried to choke, smother, or drown; burned or scalded; locked in a small place; pulled hair pinched or twisted ear; hold heavy load or exercised as punishment; threatened with knife or gun.
   - Sexual abuse scale: Talked to you in a sexual way, showed pornography, touched private parts, made you look at their private parts or wanted to look at yours; made a sex video of you; tried to have sex with you unwillingly.

4. Those percentages represent the prevalence of these types of abuse. The ICAST questionnaire measures the incidence of abuse in a year time-frame. However, for the purposes of this study we have chosen to measure lifetime incidence as the timing of the abuse is not relevant to our hypothesis. Therefore, some modifications have been made at the data analysis phase.

5. Psychological abuse (boys: M= 5.28, SD=3.97; girls: M= 3.17, SD=3.03); Physical abuse (boys: M= 5.58, SD=4.09; girls: M= 3.65, SD=3.50)

6. Non-violent discipline: explained something is wrong, told to stop doing something, took away privileges, and distracted him/her. Moderate physical discipline: shook child, hit on buttock with object, hit elsewhere with object, twisted ear, hit with knuckle on back of the head, pulled hair, painful kneel/stand, put chilly pepper on mouth, spanked, pinched, slapped on back of head. Severe physical punishment: kicked, choked, burn, beat up, threatened with knife or gun. Psychological discipline: Threatened to abandon, shouted, threatened to invoke spirits, cursed, threatened to send away, lock out of the house, insulted, refused to speak, withheld food, locked in a dark room, public humiliation. Neglect: Unmet medical needs, inadequate food, hurt- inadequate supervision. Sex abuse: sexual touch by an adult, sex with adult.

7. The Sexual Abuse Index had a total score of 0, therefore it was excluded from the table.

8. The Sexual Abuse Index had a total score of 0, therefore it was excluded from the table.

9. Cannot be computed – one variable is a constant.

10. The Sexual Abuse Index had a total score of 0, therefore it was excluded from the table.

11. The Sexual Abuse Index had a total score of 0, therefore it was excluded from the table.