

## Family Protection Policy in the UAE: A Descriptive Analytical Study

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### Abstract:

This research aimed at identifying the main themes and components of family protection policy in the UAE, in addition to examining the existence and availability of needed laws and services to protect family members from all forms of violence. This study used the descriptive method, where the researchers accessed the available data related to family protection policy in the UAE to conduct an intensive review of national legislation, laws, services, and programs related to the policy. Results showed that the policy consisted of five themes which are laws and regulations, protection and intervention mechanisms, increasing competencies, research and statistics, besides the prevention and community awareness themes. It was also found that the UAE government is highly committed to eliminating family violence through issuing several legislations and laws related to family rights and dedicating decent resources to support the provision of comprehensive protection, intervention, and prevention services. However, the research showed that several improvements are needed in the areas of governance, law enforcement, accessibility, networking, and effective participation from all the stakeholders. Several corrective measures were proposed by the researchers to improve family protection policy in the country, the most prominent of which is the establishment of the Supreme Family Council in the country to exercise the supervisory and oversight role over all policies and services related to the family as well as strengthening the awareness and preventive programs and conducting further quantitative and qualitative research, in addition to ensuring the activation of all legislations and regulations related to family protection.

**Keywords:** family policy, Family protection, family protection policy in UAE, family violence.

**\*The authors has signed the consent form and ethical approval**

## 1. Introduction

Family is the first nucleus in the body of human society, and the essential foundation and cornerstone for its development and stability. The family performs various vital functions, most notably ensuring the satisfaction of the biological, psychological and emotional needs of its members in a manner consistent with the social norms. In addition to its great responsibility of socialization and transfer of culture, values, ethics and accumulated knowledge to the future generations to ensure the continuity of human society. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued in 1948 also stated that family is the natural and basic collective unit of society, and emphasized on the importance of strengthening it, and protecting it from all forms of abuse and violence (Al-Attayah, 2009). Family protection has been defined widely as protecting family members from family violence, which means primarily ensuring the safety of every family member and preventing any risks or hams to their personal safety caused by another family member.

Protecting family members from violence drawn the attention of leaders and policymakers, who started to work on developing social policies to protect the safety and dignity of all family members. Essentially, the global interest in family policies began around thirty years ago, due to the increasing rates of delayed marriage, low fertility, family disputes, family violence, divorce and other negative phenomena (Kamerma, 2009). As a result, United Nations decided to declare the year 1994 as the "International Year of the Family", where protecting family from violence and abuse become one of the most common issues tackled in that year (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2001), due to increasing rates of family violence especially against women, children and elderly.

It was found in several research that violence against women is commonly perpetrated by current or former husbands or intimate partners (WHO, 2018). Also, it is estimated that 35% of women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence at some point in their lives, and this percentage increases up to 70% in some developing conservative countries. Evidence shows

that women who have experienced intimate partner violence report higher rates of depression, HIV, and abortion (WHO, 2013). Violence against women can be fatal as it is estimated that 50,000 women were globally killed in 2017 by intimate partners or family members (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). Family violence against children also became a global issue, since it was found that children under 18 years old are suffering from all forms of abuse whether it is perpetrated by parents or other caregivers. Globally, it is estimated that up to 1 billion children aged (2–17) years, have experienced physical, sexual, emotional violence or neglect during the past year, which is concerning, since experiencing violence in childhood impacts lifelong health and well-being (WHO, 2020). UNICEF also found that children stereotypically experience violence at the hands of the people they trust most, as it is estimated that about 10% of the world's children are not legally protected from corporal punishment, and that around 1 in 4 children under the age of five lives with a mother who is a victim of intimate partner violence, in addition to 3 in 4 children (between the ages of 2 and 4) who are regularly subjected to violent discipline by their caregivers (UNICEF, 2020). In regards to elderly abuse by family members, World Health Organization study reported that around 1 of 6 elderly in the world experienced some form of abuse, which can lead to serious physical injuries and long-term psychological consequences, it is also predicted for the abuse to increase because of the rapid increment in aging populations (WHO, 2021). Also, it was found that approximately 1 in 10 elderly people who lives at home experience abuse including maltreatment and exploitation (APA, 2022). Although women, children and elderly people are the common victims of family violence, men also have been victimized but in a smaller scale, as studies showed prevalence rates of 3.4% to 20.3% for domestic physical violence against men (Kolbe & Büttner, 2020).

Due to those concerning statistics, the international community stressed on the importance of developing family protection policy to combat family violence, and to assure the presence of needed legislations, laws, services and programs. Therefore, the declaration of

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to create a balanced social, economic and environmental sustainability, dedicated several SDGs to end all forms of violence including family violence which is clearly reflected in many goals like goal No. (5.2) on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, and goal No. (5.3) on eliminating all harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, besides goal No. (16.2) on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children (WHO, 2020), as well as some other goals which include all family members like goal No. (3) on ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, and goal No. (11) on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (Shevelkova, Mattocks, & Lafortune, 2023). Those SDGs were adopted by all the countries around the world including UAE and then translated into national strategies and action plans to protect families and end family violence.

The United Arab Emirates Government has been always concerned with family protection, as well as the development of necessary legislations, laws, programs and services to enhance family cohesion and to assure safety of its members. The decision-makers in the country believe in the importance of protecting every family member's right to live in a secure, safe, decent family environment which is free of violence. This is clearly reflected in the articles of the UAE Constitution, since article No. (15) explicitly states that "the family is the foundation of society. Its foundation is religion, morals, and patriotism. The law guarantees its existence, preserves and protects it from deviation" (Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, 2021).

### **Research Questions**

Family protection policy in UAE has not been examined scientifically through research, therefore family protection's laws, services, and programs have not been evaluated accurately. Hence, this research aims to conduct a scientific situational analysis to identify the main axes of family protection policy in the country, in addition to examining the existence and availability of needed laws and services.

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

- What are the main axes and components of family protection policy in the UAE?
- What are the laws and legislations that protect family members from violence in the UAE?
- What are the available programs and services related to family protection in the UAE?

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study comes from several points, first of all, this is the first national research in the UAE that examines the components of the family protection policy in the country, shades light on the availability of needed laws and services, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the current policy, which will add to the body of knowledge in regards to family protection policy in the country. Furthermore, the results and the recommendations of the study can be used by decision-makers to modify and enhance the current policy or develop new policies to combat family violence, and to ensure family members' dignity and safety in the UAE more effectively.

### **Research Methodology**

This study used the descriptive method, due to its relevance to the subject of the study and its aims, where the researchers accessed the available data related to family protection policy in the UAE to conduct an intensive review of national reports, legislations, laws, services, studies and research regarding the policy in the country. In order to identify related laws, articles, books, and reports, the researchers accessed multiple organizational websites, committees' platforms, judicial databases, and academic databases at both Sharjah and Zayed University in UAE, as well Scopus and Google Scholar. The researchers search included several terms mainly family violence, family protection policy, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, child abuse, and elderly abuse. After that, the researchers conducted title and abstract screening to detect relevant sources, and finally a full-text review was done to evaluate the quality of each source. By using this method, the researchers were able to do scientific situational

analysis for family protection policy in the country, which helped in understanding the policy components, related laws and services, in addition to its strengths and the weaknesses, and then proposing some corrective measures to close the gaps and strengthen the good practices.

### **Data Analysis**

The information reviewed and selected from the sources were analyzed and organized through using a narrative synthesis approach, where the researchers organized the findings into thematic sections that reflect three main areas which are policy axes and components, legislations and laws, in addition to services and programs, based on that, that the researchers summarized the key strengths and weaknesses related to those areas in the discussion part.

### **Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

#### **● Family protection policy's: Theoretical concept**

policy is defined as a public statement of an objective, and the kind of instruments that will be used to achieve it, it is a plan that guide and direct decisions, actions and outcomes. It was also defined as guiding principles, statements of intent or working frameworks. Policy as well means what the government decides to do toward a specific issue, therefore, it is a particular package of legislation, services, programs, organisations and resources that the government guarantees and delivers in regards to a certain matter (Althaus, Bridgman, & Davis, 2007).

Whereas policy analysis can be seen as a social and political activity, and the process of which problems get conceptualized and brought to government for solution, that solution requires making a policy the delivers the intended targets. Policy making includes a set of processes, mainly the setting of the agenda and identification of the problem, then the specification of alternatives or solutions from which a choice is to be made based on a certain criteria, followed by an authoritative choice among those stated alternatives through a legislative vote or a presidential decision, and finally the implementation of the decision, and continuous monitoring and evaluation to assure the effectiveness and the efficiency of the plan

and to guarantee the accomplishments of the intended outcomes and targets. In that sense, policy analysis can be defined as determining which of several alternatives will mostly achieve a given set of goals (Azline, et al., 2018).

Based on policy definitions mentioned above, family policy in general can be defined as everything government does to and for families, family policy might include issues related to family functions, child care and support, divorce, family violence, juvenile crime...etc. (Bogenschneider , 2000). Family protection policy can be defined as what the government decides to do regarding family violence, it is a governmental framework that guide the provision of legislations, laws, services, projects and initiatives that combat family violence and assure protecting family members from all forms of violence. Family violence happens when one family member uses his power to control and harm or abuse another family member. Furthermore, family violence as a broader term is often used to include intimate partner abuse, [child abuse](#), [elderly abuse](#), and other violent acts between family members (Wallace, 2005). Family violence can take multiple forms, including physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, economic abuse and neglect, it often occurs when the abuser believes that they are entitled to it, or that it is tolerated, acceptable, justified, or unlikely to be reported. Reports and statistics generated by international organizations showed that women and children are the most vulnerable groups in the family system and therefore, they represent the majority of victims, besides other family members like the elderly (Halket, Gormley, Mello, Rosenthal, & Mirkin, 2013).

- **Reviewing Some Good Family Protection Practices**

Based on the literature, there are a number of characteristics that distinguish effective family protection policy from other policies and give it its unique and complex nature, most notably is that in such policy the family as a whole is the unit of analysis, and not the individual members. Also, such policy views the family as a central institution in society that affects and get affected by other institutions, in addition, it defines family as a unified system, and at the same time

recognizes the differences between the members relationships, roles and needs. Furthermore, effective family protection policy is a cross-sectional policy that requires coordination with other sectors like legal, economic, health, educational to assure successful implementation (Kamerman, 2009).

For the purpose of this study, the researchers will showcase some good practices and effective family protection policies that represent the characteristics mentioned above in regional and international level, to help in assessing and evaluating the UAE current situation. The researchers will present the Protection from Harm System in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a regional example, and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) in United States of America as an international example.

Protection from Harm System was developed by the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development in K.S.A. The system was implemented after issuing the Royal Decree No. 52 of 2013 Concerning the Law of Protection from Abuse. The System aims at ensuring protection against all kinds of abuse and violence, providing social, psychological and health support for the victims along with sheltering services, taking necessary legal actions against the perpetrators, raising community awareness about violence or abuse and its consequences, in addition to setting a clear and practical mechanisms to deal with abuse. This system defines abuse as "any form of abuse or exploitation; physical, psychological or sexual, or the threat thereof committed by an individual against another exceeding the limits of powers and responsibilities derived from guardianship, dependency, sponsorship, trusteeship or livelihood relationship". The term (harm) includes the omission or negligence of an individual in the performance of his/her duties or responsibilities in providing basic needs for a family member whom he/she is legally responsible for. Based on the Law, reporting abuse against any family member is mandatory and must be reported immediately to the Ministry or the police, taking into consideration that the identity of a person reporting the violation or abuse must not be disclosed without his consent. The law as well specified the perpetrator penalty, hence any person who



commits any act of abuse specified in this law shall be subject to imprisonment for a period of not less than one month and not more than one year, and a fine of not less than five thousand and not more than fifty thousand Saudi Riyals, or to either punishment, however in case of re-offense, the punishment shall be doubled and the competent court shall issue an alternative punishment. The law as well stated that the ministry shall take the needed measures after receiving the report like ensuring the provision of necessary health care and medical evaluation of the case, providing family and social counseling to the parties, offering psychological treatment and rehabilitation programs, as well as sheltering the victims in a safe place in severe cases.

In addition, the law assigned other tasks to the Ministry like raising awareness about abuse, its negative impacts on the individuals and the community, also providing valid statistical data about abused cases to be employed in readjusting intervention and treatment mechanisms and in conducting scientific research and studies, as well as organizing specialized training programs for all personnel involved in dealing with cases from different sectors (Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development, 2023). This system is considered the first system in the Gulf which criminalize family violence in all forms, and covers all family members. Furthermore, it is a cross-sectional system which required lots of coordination between the ministry and the related entities. One of its advantages is that it is a national system, therefore the availability and accessibility of all the related services is assured for all the citizens. The system as well, did not focus on the legal part only, but also tasked the ministry with the assignment of community awareness and conducting research and generating statistics for the prevention purposes.

At the international level, the researchers chose to present the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act in the United States of America. The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) represents the 50 states in the field of combatting domestic violence. The NNEDV was formed in 1990 when a group of domestic violence victim advocates came together to promote federal legislation related to domestic violence. In 1994, it put pressure on the Government to

pass the [Violence Against Women Act](#) (VAWA), and the group efforts worked as the law was passed. This law was the first federal legislation that strengthen the government response to crimes perpetrated against victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking. In 1995, and due to their efforts, the group became The National Network to End Domestic Violence, and continued it work as an innovative group that serves as the leading voice for domestic violence victims and their allies. The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) works to make the elimination of domestic violence a national priority, change the way society responds to domestic violence, and strength the advocacy efforts at the national and the local levels. Therefore, the Network leads the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) as it shapes how the U.S.A. response to domestic violence and ensures that local entities are capable of serving more than 1.3 million victims annually. FVPSA also funds over 1,500 community-based programs in all the states, to assure the provision of emergency shelters, counselling, legal assistance, crisis intervention, and prevention education. (The National Network to End Domestic Violence , 2017).

As per the the [Violence Against Women Act of 1994](#) (VAWA), evidences showed that it improved both victim services and arrest and prosecution of batterers, as VAWA created a national domestic violence hotline and allocated substantial funds for a number of different kinds of initiatives, including shelters and other services for battered women, judicial education, training programs, and programs to increase outreach to rural women. VAWA also reauthorized STOP grants, which support programs planned to improve law enforcement and prosecution response to domestic violence, in addition to mandating that domestic violence advocates must be involved in the planning and implementation of these programs. Furthermore, VAWA also reauthorized funds for victim and witness counselors, who work with domestic violence victims in federal prosecutions.

Based on the Act all the states issued their local act as well, like the Minnesota's [Domestic Abuse Act](#), which authorized the Order for Protection (OFP), designates the procedures that must followed after

OFP, and describes the kind of relief that can be granted. The Act also describes penalties for violations of both OFPs and no contact orders, and describes how law enforcement officials should enforce such orders. In addition, the Act includes a number of provisions that facilitate victims' access to the legal system waiving the filing fees for orders of protection and give the victims the right after requesting the OFP to not disclose his/her address to the public. Minnesota has also passed a Domestic Violence Arrest [law](#), that allows officers to arrest an individual without a warrant if there is probable cause to believe that the individual has committed domestic abuse. The Minnesota's Act as well requests that police departments must develop policies and protocols for dealing with domestic violence, and explicitly requires police officers to assist victims in obtaining medical treatment and providing the victim with a notice of his or her legal rights and referring them to social services districts to offer emergency shelter and other services, including advocacy, counseling and referrals (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 2003).

As it was showcased, UAE can benefit from the U.S.A. experience in the field of family violence, especially in activating non-government organizations roles as strong advocates to end family violence through passing legislations and granting funds for federal and local entities to assure the provision of services. Also, one of the U.S.A. Act strengths is that it stresses on the importance of enforcing and issuing the protection orders to prevent any danger as well as building the capacity of police officers since they usually intervene first in family violence cases before referring them to the social sector entities.

- **Main Sociological Theory**

There are many sociological theories that can explain family violence from different perspectives, for the purpose of this research, the researchers will focus on conflict theory and functional theory.

Conflict theory arose in the nineteen centuries from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Hutchison, 2013), it focuses on power structures and power variations and its effect on social inequality, it is based on the central idea which states that crime is caused by the

economic and social drives within society. Conflict theory functions on a core principle which is that human beings are competitive creatures by nature, this competitiveness forces them into conflict over scarce resources and wealth (Rössel, 2013). According to conflict theory, wealthier or upper classes are able to maintain power over lower-income and minority groups by allowing oppressed groups to believe that the advancement of another oppressed group will be to their disadvantage; therefore, oppressed groups contribute to the oppression of each other with anticipation that they will be the ones to advance. From this viewpoint, social order exists through coercion of less powerful groups by the more powerful classes, Power imbalance, oppression, classism, racism, and sexism work as regular triggers or contributors to human rights violations including family violence, since socioeconomic inequality between classes works as a fuel that maintains all forms of violence in the societies (Shriver, 1998). This theory argues that what could better explain the struggle between the victims versus the perpetrators, than living in a society that has different value systems and norms that affect the establishment of rules and behaviour in it, this variation creates a constant conflict between two groups, in this case, the conflict between victims and perpetrators. In most of the societies, one of the most important factors for determining people's chances in life has been their gender alone with age group. Women are noticeably inferior to men in their access to wealth, power, jobs, and education as well as other valued resources. Men superiority and powerfulness was a critical factor on manipulating and abusing the victims. When we reflect that on family violence, we can see a clear pattern, where in most of the violence scenarios, the perpetrators are men and victims are women and children (Usman, 2014).

Another theory the researchers are focusing on is the functional theory. Functional theory arose in the early 20th century and it was associated with authors like Herbert Spencer, Émile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton. This theory focuses on structure, roles and the overall articulation of institutions in the society, it aims to explain those structures based on their functions and roles in

strengthening and maintaining the stability of the societies. In other words, functional theory focuses on the functions performed by social structures, where function refers to the activity that enhances the maintenance of a system. Functionalism, sees society as a structure with interrelated parts designed to meet the biological and social needs of the individuals in that society. Functionalism argues that society can be seen as a human body, where several organs work together to keep the body functioning. Based on that logic, functionalism believes that all parts of the society must work together to keep society functioning, those functioning parts could be social institutions, patterns, norms, beliefs or behaviours which help in meeting the various social needs of the society, including government, education, healthcare, religion, and family (Garner, 2019). Based on that, family can be defined in this theory as a system or unit where all members have a specific role, contribution and function. In that sense, family violence occurs when there is a lack or absence of those contributions, or when members do not play their roles or perform their functions effectively, or when they fail to meet other member needs.

After reviewing those theories, the researchers decided to build this research around those two theories, since it is obvious that we cannot combat family violence without promoting family cohesion, and increasing each member capabilities to perform his/her role in an effective manner. In addition, improving the most vulnerable groups, like women, children and elderly's accessibility to protection, care and rehabilitation, medical, financial, and legal services can play a critical role in reducing the harm. The victims cannot break the cycle of abuse without being protected by law, supported by a comprehensive service in the community like the existence of hotlines, shelters, family consultation services and other forms of support when needed.

- **Literature review**

Since family violence is a global concern, lots of international research have been conducted concerning this issue in different regions, one of the studies in Canada found that police reported nearly 95,000 victims of family violence, representing a rate of 279 victims for every 100,000 individuals in the population, where the most

common abusers were the spouses with nearly (49%), and then the parent with (18%), followed by extended family members with (13%), the sibling with (11%), and then the child (most often a grown child) by (9%). The study also showed that victims of family violence were mainly female with (69%), as (80%) of those females stated that they have been abused by the spouse, then extended family member (58%), parent (57%) and sibling (57%). As per elderly abuse in the family setting, the study found that seniors aged 65 and older had the lowest rates of family violence, this was seen for both men and women, though rates for senior women were higher than those for men (67 versus 53 per 100,000 population), grown children were found to be responsible for elderly abuse, followed by spouses (Sinha, 2013). Another study examined the prevalence of maltreatment within the family and adolescents' mental health problems in Uganda found that (95%) of the students experienced at least one type of family violence in the past month, and that (81.3%) had developed some level of acceptance of violent discipline as a behaviour modification effective strategy, furthermore, maltreatment within the family was related to peer victimization and mental health problems (Senyonga, Muwonge, & Hecker, 2019). Research in Kosovo also found similar results, as it was found that father, husband and sons were the common abusers, and that systematic violence used in the family has left short-term and long-term negative impacts on children's experiences, as well as on their safety and well-being, creating the perception that violent behaviour is normal and can be tolerated. In addition, the study showed that the use of violence by male children began around the age of 10, initially against sisters and gradually against the mother herself (Gagica, 2021). Several international studies as well showed that women are the most common victims for family violence, as it was revealed that one in three women in some regions (WHO, 2018) and one in four women in other regions have experienced at least one incident of violence by an intimate partner (Hook, 2020). In the matter of elderly abuse, World Health Organization study reported that around 1 out of 6 old people in the world experienced some form of abuse (WHO, 2021), similar results were found in many research,

where the prevalence of elderly abuse was found to be 54.5%, and the most common form of abuse was neglect (23.1%), psychological abuse (20.6%), physical abuse (6.5%), financial abuse (2.4%), and sexual abuse (1.9%). Also, it was found that elderly females were significantly more likely to experience physical and psychological abuse (Acharya, Suman, Pahari, Shin, & Moon, 2021). This result was supported by another research in Sri Lanka, where It was found that the most prevalent type of abuse was neglect within interfamily relationship followed by emotional abuse, financial abuse and physical abuse respectively (Munasingharachchi & Siddhisena, 2020). In Sweden, recent study regarding causes of elder abuse found that abuse is repeatedly associated with an individual vulnerability which is related to a complex of aging body, illnesses, and help dependence in connection with dysfunctional settings ( Ludvigsson, Wiklund, Swahnberg, & Simmons, 2022) .

Other family violence research examined the causes and consequences of family violence, as one of the studies found that stress is the consequence, and at the same time a trigger for violent behaviour, the research showed that family conflict, perceived stress, and coping strategies explain the variance of family violence by 68% (Muñoz & Acosta, 2019). This finding was supported by a newly published study which aimed to examine the relationship of exposure to family violence and psychological wellbeing, results indicated that experiencing parental violence was associated with lower levels of self-efficacy, furthermore, a negative relationship was found between self-efficacy and post-traumatic stress disorder (Yahia, Abbas, Malka, & Sokar, 2021). Another study found other factors that triggers family violence among police officers like burnout, authoritative relationship, alcohol use, and department withdrawal (Johnson, Todd, & Subramanian, 2005). International organizations conducted several multi-country studies about this issue as well, for example, World Health Organization found that men are more likely to perpetrate violence if they have low education, a history of child maltreatment, exposure to domestic violence against their mothers, harmful use of alcohol, unequal gender norms including attitudes accepting of

violence, and a sense of entitlement over women (WHO, 2017). Similar data were gathered from other regions like the Middle East and North Africa (UN Women and Promundo, 2017).

While there is extensive research on family violence in Western literature, this topic is notably rare in Arab literature, where most of the research focussed on one family member like women or children, and not on identifying the determinants of family violence among all family members. One of the studies explores intimate partner violence (IPV) prevalence among Bahraini women, the prevalence was found to be 71.11%, in addition, it was found wives' pregnancy, husbands' violent behaviours towards other family members, substance abuse, antisocial behaviours, criminality and mental health issues, individual behaviour of women supporting violence were significantly associated with abuse (Al Ubaidi, Tawfeeq, Ayed, Hasan, & Alahmed, 2021). In Lebanon, the likelihood of perpetrating physical violence was more than three times higher among men who had witnessed their fathers beating their mothers during childhood than those who did not (UN Women & Promundo, 2017). In Jordan, a study investigated the factors associated with the acceptance of wife-beating among currently married men and women, results demonstrated that acceptance of wife-beating is significantly associated with respondents' age, labour force participation, their view on women's autonomy, and their own history as perpetrators (Khawaja, Linos, & El-Roueiheb, 2008).

In regard to child abuse in Arab region, research found that they are subjected to all forms of abuse and neglect, however, child abuse is ignored or may even be tolerated and accepted as a form of discipline, as a result, abused children continue to suffer and most abusers go free, unpunished and untreated (Al-Mahroos, 2007). One Saudi study found that physical abuse was shown to be the most common form of family violence among girls, and that brothers were the most common perpetrators of physical and sexual abuse. The study also demonstrated significant associations between family violence and the likelihood of female delinquency (Alluhaibi, 2014). Furthermore, a study conducted in Kuwait to determine the prevalence



of childhood abuse found that 35.6%, 53.5% and 19.8% of the respondents experienced at least one form of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, respectively (Almazeedi, Alkandari, Alrazzuqi, Ohaeri, & Alfayez, 2020). In regards to family violence against elderly, one of the studies in Saudi Arabia identifies the knowledge of elder abuse and attitudes towards it among the adult attendees of health care centers, the majority of respondents (97%) stated that it is the individual responsibility to report elder abuse and neglect if they witness any, and (91.8%) of the respondents agreed that elder abuse and neglect is a criminal act and it must be prevented (Almakki, Alshehri, & Abdel Wahab, 2020).

In United Arab Emirates, there is a lack of research in the field of family violence. One of the exploratory studies that was conducted in 2016, aimed to assess the level of awareness about family violence and its prevalence in the UAE community, and to explore the need for legislations that can reduce family violence and provide Emirati and resident families with the essential social support. The study sample consisted of 1,196 respondents from all emirates, and the sample included Emiratis and non-Emiratis between the ages of 15-60 years. The results of the study showed a high level (82%) of awareness of the concept of family violence among respondents living in the United Arab Emirates, furthermore, the majority of the respondents indicated that traditional and new media platforms are the main source of information about family violence. Besides that, about (42%) of the respondents believe that domestic violence is totally unacceptable, and (22%) of respondents believe that "wife" is mostly the victim in the majority of family violence incidents, followed by the daughter (15%). Also, around (21%) of the respondents witnessed family violence incident or know someone who experienced it, and (84%) of them support the need for a specific family violence law in the UAE (Dubai Foundation for Women and Children , 2016). Another research revealed that practices of family violence varied, as they ranged between ridicule, mockery, cursing, neglect, and threats of beating. In addition, those research results showed that wives ranked first in the list of most common victims of domestic violence by (73%), then

children by (16%), followed by husbands by (8%), and finally the elderly by (3%). While they were many economic, psychological, social and religious factors associated with family violence (Al Suwaidi, 2013).

The rest of the literature about family violence in the country focused on a specific segment, mainly women and children. For example, Al Serkal, et al., (2014) conducted research to measure the prevalence of intimate partner violence against women in Dubai, and its associated factors and health consequences, results showed that (31%) of the sample reported a lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence with at least one act of physical abuse. Also, the study found that risk factors associated with such violence were mainly low education as well as drug and alcohol intake of the perpetrators. Moreover, Almueini (2013) found in her study about determinates of violence against women in the UAE society that three-quarters of the respondents were subjected to some forms of violence, and that psychological abuse was the most common form of abuse, then verbal and physical abuse respectively. Moreover, it was found that anger, family interferences and lack of proper socialization were the main causes of violence. Those results were consistent with another national research which found that emotional violence was the most common forms of abuse, followed by verbal abuse, then physical and sexual abuse respectively. That study also revealed that husbands were the perpetrators in more than half of the cases, in addition, lack of harmony among family members ranked as the first cause, followed by poor economic conditions, then the irritability and anger (Al Suwaidi, 2017). Recent research in the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah aimed to study the reality of domestic violence in RAK society, identify the types and forms of domestic violence, study the causes of violence from the victim's point of view, in addition to detecting the psychological effects resulting from domestic violence. The results revealed that victims were subjected to all forms of violence, where the most common causes were anger, suspicious, jealous and holding to ignorant ideas. The results also showed the negative effects of violence, which were anxiety, frustration, depression and loss of self-

confidence. In addition, it was found that parents were the most common perpetrators (Al Shehhi, 2021).

Another study aimed at understanding the magnitude of all forms of abuse occurs at home and schools among Emiratis and resident children in UAE, the findings of the study show that (6.5%) of children are abused at home and the father is common abuser by (32.7%). Psychological abuse was the most prevalent at home, it was rated at 23%, then witnessing violence (22%), followed by physical abuse (22%), then neglect (18%) and the least was sexual abuse (15%) (Al Gharaibeh, Al Midfa, & Al Farsi, 2020). Another qualitative study about child protection governance in the Emirates of Dubai showed that there is a lack of governance and clarity, as well as poor coordination in regards to managing child abuse cases by concerned entities in the Emirate, besides duplication of tasks and overlap of powers which affect the quality of intervention and prevention negatively (Al Halyan, 2019).

No literature was found by the researchers in UAE evaluating the effectiveness of family protection policy in the country.

### **Results and Discussion**

The results of the study were presented and discussed according to the questions addressed by the researchers regarding the family protection policy, all questions were answered as follows:

Q1: What are the main axes and components of family protection policy in the UAE?

The first family protection policy in the UAE was approved by the cabinet in 2019, this policy aims at protecting family members from domestic violence, as well as strengthening social ties within the families. The policy defines family protection as “protecting the family from any abuse, violence or threat committed by a family member against any other family member exceeding his guardianship, jurisdiction, authority or responsibility, which result in causing physical or psychological harm”. The policy identified six forms of abuse and violence which are physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, financial abuse, and neglect. Physical abuse was defined as "any aggressive physical behavior perpetrated on an individual by another

member within the family, or withholding physical needs from him\her, or performing any of harmful physical behaviors, or threatening to perform them directly". Where verbal abuse was defined as "any abusive language used to dishonor, embarrass or threaten the victim, such as using ugly and inappropriate names, telling victims that they are not wanted, agitating and screaming". As per emotional abuse, it was defined as "any behavior that takes advantage of the victims' weakness or vulnerability to confuse them and make them feel insecure, whether in real life or in virtual reality, such as manipulation, intimidation, criticism that undermines the victim's self-confidence, and public humiliation". Sexual abuse was defined as "any behavior whether verbal or physical that includes sexual harm, such as the use of force or coercion to have sexual contact with the victims, or involvement in prostitution". Also, financial abuse was defined as "any behavior that involves manipulating the victim's economic resources like not allowing the victim to obtain money or limiting their access to it in one way or another, or misdirecting family income", as per neglect, it was defined as "the continuous failure to secure basic physical, psychological, health or educational needs, or to take precautions and measures to prevent harm, which threatens the safety of any family member, and jeopardize his/her right for protection and care, like failure to issue identification papers or provide guidance and direction for the members when its needed".

The policy also stated that the target groups for this policy are the spouses, their children, their father and mother (grandparents), and the grandchildren, children of one of the spouses from another legal marriage, brothers and sisters of either spouse, the person under the custody of an alternative family, and relatives up to the fourth degree like cousins. The policy development process was led by the Ministry of Community Development as the owner of the policy, however, to assure successful policy development, the ministry established a policy development committee to assure active engagement and participation of all related entities. This committee was consisted of 12 federal entities, 13 local entities, and 11 non-government

organizations. For example, there were representatives from the Ministries of Justice, Interior, Education, Ministry of Health and Prevention, Gender Balance Council, Islamic Affairs, Social Services Department, Sharjah Family Supreme Council, General Women Union, local courts and prosecutions, housing authorities, women associations, shelters...etc.

The policy committee collectively developed the policy vision, mission, objectives, axes and initiatives. The policy vision is "a stable and secure family life" and its mission is to move "towards a social system that achieves protection for family members and secure their rights in a manner that enhances the role of the family and its active participation in community development". The policy has six objectives which are, focusing on the regulatory and legislative frameworks that govern just relations between family members, strengthening coordination mechanisms between the authorities concerned with family protection, and referral systems, developing appropriate tools and channels for communication with protection centers, improving the effectiveness and the feasibility of programs and services directed towards protecting family members and rehabilitating them if necessary, expanding studies and research on family protection and increasing its interrelationship, in addition to rising the community awareness regarding family violence and healthy relationship.

As per the policy components, five axes were identified for the policy which are: laws and regulations, protection and intervention mechanisms, training of staff and increasing competencies, studies, research and statistics, besides prevention and community awareness axis. Based on those axes, many initiatives were suggested like creating and adopting a national unified system for reporting and receiving complaints, assessing severities and damages, and determining the responsive measures at the national level. Also, one of the policy initiatives is building and applying a standard guide based on the best practices, in a way that ensures integration and accuracy of roles between the concerned authorities. In addition to reforming the administrative structures in the concerned authorities (courts,

prosecutions, hospitals, etc.) to support policy successful implementation. Another policy initiative is establishing a specialized family protection center to receive and accommodate cases, provide the necessary services, and develop the appropriate treatment plan for each case to help them solve their problems. Besides the creation of a unified database linking local and federal institutions data regarding family protection. Moreover, introducing university disciplines in the field of family protection was proposed as an initiative, as well as issuing a law for family protection (Ministry of Community Development, 2020).

It is obvious from what was mentioned above, that the UAE Government understands the importance of having a comprehensive holistic, shared, and cross-sectional policy when it comes to family protection from violence and abuse, however, the implementation of those optimistic initiatives is not an easy task. Therefore, lots of those initiatives were not implemented in reality which weaken the policy and delayed its expected impacts. Therefore, in the following paragraphs the researchers will reveal the actual laws, services, and programs that were implemented in in the country, which will help us understand the real situation in comparison to this policy in a better way.

Q2: What are the laws and legislations that protect family members from violence in the UAE?

When we discuss UAE legislations and laws regarding family protection, we must start with the Constitution of the UAE since it paid great attention to family protection, this can be seen in several articles in part two of the constitution that covers the fundamental social and economic bases of the union. For example, it was stated in article (14) that "equality, social justice, the provision of safety and security and equal opportunity for all citizens shall be the bases of the community. Mutual co-operation and respect shall be a firm bond between them". Furthermore, article (15) mentioned that "the family is the basis of society. It is founded on morality, religion, ethics and patriotism. The law shall guarantee its existence, safeguard and protect it from deviation". Also, it was mentioned in article (16) that

"society shall be responsible for protecting childhood and motherhood and shall protect minors and others unable to look after themselves for any reason" (Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, 2021). The above articles showed that family protection is a priority for UAE Government and that its protection is not a need but a constitutional right, therefore it was clearly stated that every family must be protected by laws and especially vulnerable members who cannot protect themselves. As a result, the Constitution became the base and the foundation for all the family's legislations, laws, and regulations regarding family protection in the country. There are several federal laws that are concerned with family protection in the UAE In this section, the researchers will do a historical review of those laws starting from the law No. (3) of 1987 Concerning the Penal Code, and ending with the latest Federal Decree Law No. (10) of 2019 on Protection Against Family Violence.

Federal Law No. (3) of 1987 Concerning the Penal Code and its amendments was the first law in the country that emphasized on the protection from violence right for every family member. It specified part six of the law for crimes affecting families. For example, article number (327) stated that "whoever abducts a new born child from his legitimate guardian, conceals him or substitutes another for him, or falsely attributes him to other than his legitimate parent, shall be punished". Article number (329) also mentioned that "either parent or grandparent who abducts his minor child or his grand child, by himself or through others, even without deception or coercion, from the person who is entitled to be his guardian or curator in accordance with a judgement or order passed by a judicial authority, shall be punished". The law as well stated on article number (339) that "if anyone physically assaults another person in any manner and the assault leads to illness or the inability to perform his personal work for a period of twenty days, he shall be punished by detention and by a fine". The first version of the Penal Code stated as well on article number (35) that there shall be no crime, if the act takes place by the use of a person right like " punishment by a husband of his wife and punishment by parents and custodians of minor children, within the limits prescribed by Sharia or by Law". This article created a big

debate in the countries because some people misused such right to violate other family members rights specially women and children, as a result, the law was amended based on the Federal Decree Law No. (15) of 2020 as this item was removed (Ministry of Justice, 2020).

After that, [Federal Law No. 28 of 2005 on Personal Status](#), and its amendments was issued, this was the first personal status law in the country and it aimed at organizing family issues related to marriage, divorce, material rights, custody and guardianship, as well as inheritance. As this law serves as a shield and protectors for family members rights in the UAE it was amended several times especially in 2019 and 2020 to assure that it takes family best interest into consideration. One of biggest contributions of the law is the creation of family guidance sections in all the courts, since article number (16) stated that the lawsuit concerning personal status matters shall not be admitted in the court unless it has previously been submitted to the "family orientation committees". The same article also mentioned that when conciliation between the parties takes place before the "family orientation committee", it shall be recorded in minutes signed by the parties and the competent member of the committee, then these minutes shall be sanctioned by the judge, and enforced as an immediate action and shall not be subject to any means of appeal except if it violates the personal status law. Another excellent addition of the law is article (30), which mentioned clearly that the capacity to marriage is completed by reasoning and maturity, and that the age of maturity is 18 years, so whoever matures before reaching the age of eighteen may not marry unless he obtains the authorization of the judge and after providing critical reasons. Article (54) as well specified mutual rights between the spouses which includes good treatment, mutual respect and compassion and preservation of the family welfare, as well as care of the children and their needs. Article (55) on the other hand mentioned that the wife rights include her right for education, family visitations, and fair treatment in case the husband has several wives. In addition to her right for divorce in many cases specially deprivation of rights or causing harm, since article (117) stated that each of the two spouses is entitled to ask for divorce



due to prejudice that would make the continuity of the healthy companionship between them impossible. The Personal Status Law protected the spouses and their children from violation, exploitation, or deprivation of rights by the other spouse or the parents, and it also granted the rights to file for a divorce to both parties to avoid injustice or harm. As a result, this law considered to be one of the most fundamental laws of family protection, however, it does not tackle directly the domestic violence issue, as it did not explain what is family violence or when it can be criminalized.

Later, Federal Law No. 51 of 2006 On Combating Human Trafficking Crimes as amended under Federal law No.1 of 2015 was issued, the UAE Government understands the importance of issuing such law to protect everyone in our society including families from such dangerous and organized crime. This law aims at combating and eliminating human trafficking crimes, and it defines human trafficking in a very extensive way as "selling persons, offering persons for selling or buying, or promising the same, soliciting persons, employing, recruiting, transferring, deporting, harbouring, receiving, receiving or sending the same whether within the country or across the national borders thereof, by means of threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the person's vulnerability for the purpose of exploitation. Also trafficking means giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation of the latter, recruiting a child, transferring, deporting, harbouring or receiving the same for the purpose of exploitation, in addition to selling a child, offering the same for selling or buying". The law also stated that exploitation includes all forms of sexual exploitation, engaging others in prostitution, servitude, forced labour, organ-trafficking, coerced service, enslavement, mendicancy, and quasi-slavery practices. In order to prevent such crime in a family system, the law specified that the perpetrators shall be punished by temporary imprisonment for a period of no less than five years, and a fine of no less than one hundred thousand AED", and by the penalty of life imprisonment in

several cases especially if the victim was a child or a person with disability, or if the perpetrator was the spouse, a relative, antecedent, descendant, or guardian of the victim (National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, 2015). This article proves that even when the county develops laws related to an international organized crime, it always thinks about its effect on the family system.

One of the most important laws in regard to family protection is Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 on Child Rights (Wadeema Law), the Ministry of Community Development worked on the preparation of the law for several years, however, the tragic death of an Emirate girl "Wadeema" after receiving a severe violence from her father and his intimate partner accelerated the process of issuing this law due to the availability of the political will and the pressure of the public after such incident. As a result, the law was issued and activated in 2016 and was named after that girl. This law closed a huge gap in UAE legal system, because before its issuing, the child abuse specially from parents or family members were tolerated and considered to be acceptable as an act of discipline, also reporting child abuse was not mandatory by child care providers entities or professionals. However, the situation changed after the law, for example, article (2) ordered all the competent authorities and entities to protect the child from all forms of neglect, exploitation and abuse and from any physical and psychological violence that exceeds the limits of the sharia and the law, such as the rights of the parents and their equivalents to discipline their children. In addition, article (4) emphasized on the importance of the family as it is the best environment for the upbringing the child. Therefore, the law stated that the government must guarantee its existence and protection and to achieve the child best interests. Chapter (8) in the law was dedicated to the explanation of child rights. Several articles in this chapter specified that the children must be protected from neglect, rejection, deprivation of needs and care, exploitation, and child abuse, and from every action or omission posing a threat to children life, or their physical, psychological, mental or moral development. In addition, the law consisted of protection mechanisms where all the competent authorities and the concerned

entities that provide different services for the children were requested to establish child protection units to implement the law. This unit must employ a child protection specialist who will be responsible for preventive intervention when the child's health or physical, psychological, moral or mental status is endangered. One of the most valuable additions of the law was article (42) which clearly mentioned that every person is requested to notify the child protection specialist or child protection units in case of any child rights violation from his family or anyone else. However, such notification become mandatory for the educators, physicians, social specialists or practitioners who are entrusted with child care, with a complete guarantee of protecting the witness or reporter identity. Based on the law the protection measures will be taken gradually based on the severity of the abuse, for instance in case of threats or danger, the child protection specialist can keep the child at his/her family, after taking the parents commit in writing to take necessary measures to remove such risk, with the provision of periodic supervision by the child protection specialist. In some necessary situation, placing the child temporarily at an alternative family, or other institutions will be executed.

Since this law is considered to be the first child rights law in the country, and due to its critical nature since it tackles the issues of child abuse in both public and private lives, the UAE Cabinet issued a Resolution No. (52) of 2018 Governing the Executive Regulations of Child Rights Law (Wadeema). This regulation helped in clearing lots of ambiguous points in the law to assure effective implementation. For instance, article (7) clarified the responsibilities of the child protection units, like receiving reports on child rights violations, evaluating the reported cases, take appropriate preventive measures to protect the child and setting appropriate intervention plans, in addition to providing counselling and support services for the victims and their families. The Executive Regulations also identified the roles of Ministry of Community Development as the Ministry shall develop the policies and programs pertaining to child protection and follow up on their implementation, conduct research, and develop national statistics on the cases where child rights were violated. Also, it shall

set the code of ethics of the child protection specialists, those specialists must be an Emirati, have full legal capacity, have a good conduct and never been convicted of an offense. Moreover, they must be a holder of a university degree in social or psychological sciences or any related fields, or have a diploma with at least 3 years of experience in the field of child protection, and pass the training program approved by the Ministry. However, those conditions are not applicable to the child protection specialists working for the Ministry of the Interior since they hold a university degree in law or police sciences. So, as it was revealed, this law and its executive regulation was developed based on a comprehensive view where all the protection, intervention, and prevention measures were considered.

After that, the Government issued the Federal Law No. 9 of 2019 On the Rights of Senior Emiratis, as protecting senior citizens or elderly is a priority for UAE Government. The objectives of the law are ensuring that all senior Emiratis have access to all information and services related to their rights, as well as providing psychological, social and health stability for them, and the continuity of their familial and social relationships. One of the most important articles in the law, is article (5) which speaks directly about the right to protection, where the Ministry of Community Development and the competent entities were asked to assume their duties of taking all necessary measures to ensure the protection of senior Emiratis from violence and abuse, and to take immediate actions to stop any act of violence or abuse toward them, besides providing adequate assistance for the senior Emiratis who were subject to any form of violence or abuse. Furthermore, the law requested any person who knows or witness such violation to immediately inform the Ministry or the competent entities without disclosing their identities. In order to assure people compliance to the previous articles, the law stated that any act of violence or abuse against a senior Emirati will result in receiving penalties whether in a form of fines or imprisonment (Ministry of Community Development, 2020).

In 2019, Federal Decree Law No. 10 of 2019 On Protection Against Family Violence was issued, this new law was a turning point in family protection field in the country. All the previously mentioned federal laws were not a comprehensive and specialized law in family protection, since each of them tackled one member of the family only one type of abuse or violation of rights. UAE Government realized that there is a gap in the legal system and that there is a need for issuing a law that deals with a family as one unit, and considers all sorts of abuse against its members. As a result, in 2019 the [President of the United Arab Emirates](#) issued Protection Against Family Violence Decree Law. The objectives of this decree law are combating family violence and strengthening social cohesion between family members and maintaining the family structure. Another aim is protecting the holiness of family's private life, in line with the inheritances, culture, and traditions in the society. The third objective is correcting and readjusting the practices that are harmful to the family, especially women and children, and maintaining the social and moral values, practices, traditions and customs in the society. The scope of the decree law was identified, so it can be applied to all family violence crimes.

For the first time in the UAE, the law identified the legal meaning for family violence. Article (3) of this Decree Law defines family violence as any "act, word, offence, injury or threat that is committed by any family member to another family member, exceeding the scope of the respective guardianship, custodianship, support, power or responsibility, and which causes physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm or damage". Article (5) as well identified the types of family violence that will be deemed as family violence which are physical, psychological, sexual, and economic abuse. Physical abuse was defined as "an assault in any way on the victim's body, even if there are no marks", psychological abuse was defined as "any act or word that is likely to cause a psychological damage to the victim", where sexual abuse was defined as "any act which constitutes a sexual assault or harassment of the victim or exploitation by any way", and economic abuse was defined

as "any act which may deprive the victim of his right or freedom to dispose of his property with the intention to inflict damage to him". The definition of family violence and the identification of its forms was a major and critical addition in the Decree Law, because we can't criminalize family violence without having a legal definition for it. Such detailed definition was needed, since the definition covered all forms of abuse and considered it illegal due to its harmful nature. This Decree Law not only defined family violence but in article (4) it accurately specified the members of the families that can be included in such law since family as a term is a very wide term and can be interpreted in a different meaning. Based on this Decree Law, the family meaning includes the husband, wife, their children and grandchildren. Also, the children of any spouse from another marriage, as well as the father and mother of the spouse, in addition to relatives up to the fourth degree. This law did not omit the non-biological family, as it added to the scope of family definition the person in the care and custody of an alternative family according to the applicable legislation. One of the most valuable additions of the law was article (6) concerning protection order, which allows the public prosecution to issue the protection order which restrains the assaulter from disturbing the victim, and from attending near the victim's places. It also orders the perpetrator to not cause damage to the personal property of the victim or any of his/her family members, as well as enabling the victim from collecting his/her personal belongings, or other measures that the public prosecution may see as necessary to ensure effective victims protection. This article closes a gap that existed in all the previous laws even the Penal Code Law, because none of the previously mentioned laws tackled such issue. Such protection order not only will assure the safety of the victims and enable them from receiving their belongings, but also allow the victims to stay in their homes and not to seek temporary sheltering in any entity. This is very important, because lots of vulnerable groups like women and children tend to leave their homes out of fears and lack of legal protection, but after activation of this article the situation will be different. The Decree Law ends with mentioning in article (9)

the penalty against any acts of family violence, and it states that any person who commits such violations shall be "sentenced to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six (6) months and to a fine not exceeding five thousand (5,000) dirham or either one of these two penalties", and that this maybe doubled if the perpetrator commits any of the family violence acts within one year from the commission of the previous act. Those penalties are considered as a deterrent for those who are thinking and committing such actions, and this is what the law is all about, it is a protection tool as much as it is an enforcement and punishment tool. However, we need to mention that although this federal decree law was issued by a presidential order in 2019, it was not activated until now, as article (13) revealed that this decree law shall enter into effect as from the date specified by UAE Cabinet decision, which was not declared yet (Ministry of Community Development, 2020).

Q3: What are the available programs and services related to family protection in the UAE?

Federal and local authorities in the UAE provide a package of comprehensive family protection services in the field of protection, intervention, rehabilitation and prevention services. Ministry of Community Development for example created social protection department which is responsible of for providing many services for family members. It lunched a hotline 800623 which receives abuse reports or complaints, this line provides a channel for the community members to report any abused directed towards women, children, elderly, men and people of determination to protect them from all forms of violence and abuse, as any individual or entity can report family abuse through contacting the call center on their hotline, or sending an email to the social protection department, or visiting any customer service center available in all the emirates. The ministry also provides social services for the victims, as the social workers study the coming reports, develop support plans and take actions to end such violence and protect the family members rights. The expected time to obtain those services is based on the assessment of the degree of risk applied to such cases, where dangerous cases will receive intervention

within 24 hours, an average risk cases within two working days, and a routine no-risk cases from 3 to 5 working days. In addition, the ministry has a clear referral mechanism as many cases will be referred by the ministry to the concerned federal authorities or local entities to obtain some specialized services like referring cases to the police, hospitals, shelters ... etc. Family counseling services is being provided as well where any family member can request a free counselling to deal with any conflicts, disputes or receive advice on any area related to family issues. In addition, the social security department provides financial assistance for the citizens who are unable to provide adequate income that assure a decent life for them and their family members. The vulnerable categories who are entitled to obtain social assistance in accordance with the provisions of Federal Law No. (2) of 2001 Regarding Social Security are widows, divorced, people of determination, senior citizens, orphans, children of unknown parentage, ill persons, married students, families of prisoner, abandoned women, emirates women married to foreigners, foreign divorced and widows who are married to nationals and gave birth to children and other categories specified by the Decree approved by the UAE Cabinet. Community awareness is another service that several departments in the ministry deliver to raise awareness among different populations in the country about family violence issues through conducting lectures, workshops, and launching campaigns. Some of those events were delivered through active collaboration with some national and international bodies (Ministry of Community Development, 2020).

Ministry of Justice also provides several legal services in regards to family violence, for example, in 2020 the Ministry issued a decision to establish Family and Child Prosecution in all the emirates that have federal prosecutions, due to the special and complex nature of family's issues and problems. This was an important action to guarantee the availability and the accessibility of specialized prosecution services for all family members when they face legal issues related to violence, abuse, juvenile delinquency, or any other crimes committed by or against any family member. The decision emphasizes on the



importance of establishing separate buildings to protect the family privacy, as well as the importance of employing technology in hearing sessions such as video conference technology. Another service provided by the Ministry is the family mediation services through the Family Guidance Section that were established in all Federal Personal Status Courts which handles all family cases related to matters of marriage, divorce, alimony, guardianship, custody, visitation, and inheritance. The Family Guidance Section are obligated to handle cases related to family conflicts or disputes free of charge before referring them to the judge, they try first to mediate and reconcile to reach to an agreement that is accepted by all parties to preserve family cohesion, but if they did not reach to a success, they will then send the files to the judges (Ministry of Justice, 2021).

The Ministry of Interior (MOI) provides important services as well in the field of family protection, since it monitors all the federal police stations that exist in the emirates and coordinates with the local police departments to maintain law and order in the respective emirates. Also, it runs both Child Protection Centre and Social Support Department which aim at protecting family members' rights and solving their problems without jeopardizing the family confidentiality or safety. The Child Protection Center (CPC) undertakes the role of developing, and implementing initiatives which aims at providing safety, security and protection for all children in the UAE, the functions of the CPC have been identified as developing child protection strategies, policies and best practices, conducting research, providing training for other entities for purpose of capacity building, collecting and analyzing of statistical data related to child protection, assuring all stakeholders compliance to the laws and regulations related to child rights, also running the child protection hotline (116111) and the smart application (Hemayati) to receive all the reports and complains about child rights violations, and then take the necessary child protection measures, as well as implementing some community outreach programs and organizing or participating in national and international conferences and events. Besides the CPU, the Social Support Department in the MOI aims as well at identifying

and dealing with social and family problems and find the suitable solutions before escalating the problems to the courts level to prevent families from falling apart. The department deals with several family problems and conflicts related to the child custody, parenting and visitation, juvenile delinquencies, domestic violence, violence toward elderly or people of determination and many other sensitive family cases. The department plays an important role since it is a legal entity, however its personnel wear civil costume and their centers are separated from police station to provide privacy for the family members (Ministry of Interior, 2021).

In regards to medical services provided for the family violence victims, the Ministry of Health and Prevention and through its federal hospitals and centers provide the victims of abuse with the needed medical services, including the provision of psychological and psychiatric services when needed. Also, in some severe cases, the hospitals report violence and abuse cases for police for further investigation, as well as submitting a comprehensive medical report about the signs, consequences and medical damages of the violence to the legal authorities when requested (Ministry of Health and Prevention, 2021).

We cannot speak about family protection in UAE without mentioning the role of Ministry of Education in the field of child protection, the ministry established a "Child Protection Unit" which receives reports about child rights' violation, develops appropriate intervention plans, provides the necessary consultations and support for families and children who experienced violence or abuse, and takes appropriate measures to protect those cases. The unit also coordinates with the concerned entities and the competent authorities to assure the provision of psychosocial, social, health, sheltering services when needed. The Child Protection Unit's process flow starts by receiving a report or complaints through the Ministry call center, then the report will be referred to the child protection specialist in the concerned school, this will be followed by an investigation to determine how serious the child abuse is, cases will be then classified into four degrees according to how serious they are. All child abuse

cases that occurs or discovered at schools even from a family member must be reported to the unit, since the Child Rights Law makes it mandatory to report any abuse against children. However, it is prohibited to disclose the identity of all involved parties and witnesses (Ministry of Education, 2021).

The Supreme Council for Motherhood & Childhood also plays a critical role in the field of family protection in the country, the council collaborates with different entities to develop strategies which aim at promoting welfare and development for mothers and children in all fields. One of the Council core goals is to enhance the child protection system in the country through activating effective collaboration with all concerned entities. This is done by providing support to child protection centers and informing them about the quality standards that match the best international practices in this field. The council had several successful initiatives like "Children's Advisory Council's" which is a platform for expressing children's needs expectations, problems, challenges and vision about the future. In addition to the launching of "The Emirati Children's Parliament" which consists of forty children (ages range between 10 and 16 years old) from all the emirates, with equal representation of males and females, including special needs "people of determination" to represent UAE children. One of Parliament core goals is to familiarize children in the UAE with their rights and how to defend them in accordance the Child Protection Law (Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, 2021).

General Women's Union plays an important role as well as a non-government organization that develop national mechanism for the empowerment and entrepreneurship of women in the United Arab Emirates. There are several women associations that became a member of the union like Dubai Women's Association, Um El Moameneen Association, and Umm Al Quwain Women Association. Th Union aims at developing and adopting policies, programs and initiatives that contribute to women empowerment in both private and public life. The General Women's Union have many initiatives that are related to family protection like the child visitation services and

family counselling. The Union dedicated its several facilities to organize visitations between children and their parents after the divorce when there is a family conflict or disputes which might affect the child safety or wellbeing. The "Child Visitation Office" aims at providing a safe and healthy environment for a child to meet with his/her other parent when home visitation is not applicable due to some severe conflicts, the office as well guide those parents to ensure emotional and psychological well-being of their children and educating families about the negative effects and consequences of such conflicts. Furthermore, the Union provides free counselling for families whether through their offices or associated partners, or through their newly launched "Unified Family Counselling Portal" which is an electronic smart portal that give all the family members the option of receiving free, confidential online counselling from a highly qualified professionals in all the emirates (General Women's Union, 2021).

Although the above-mentioned federal services are applicable to all the emirates, there are some emirates that established local authorities and departments to enhance the provision and the quality of family protection services in their local context. Those emirates are Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, and Ras al-Khaimah.

In 2018, local Law No. (12) Concerning the Establishment of the Department of Community Development was issued by the Abu Dhabi Government, based on article (3) the department aims at achieving an integrated social work system in the Emirate. The law as well assigned several tasks to the department like proposing strategic plans for the social sector in the Emirate, and supervise its implementation, in addition to the task of regulating the social sector in all areas through the development of policies, regulations, and operational circulars, besides the submission of periodic reports and analytical studies to Abu Dhabi Executive Office regarding the sector. There are several authorities under the Department of Community Development, for the purpose this research, the researchers will focus on the authorities which deliver services related to family protection. The first authority is the Family Care Authority which was established

in 2021, the Authority aims at creating a standardized model for governing family cases to assure high quality services which is supported by a unified database of beneficiaries, as well as conducting research about family issues and increasing the community awareness about critical family issues with ultimate goal of enhancing family care services. The second authority which is part of the Department of the Community Development is an authority called “Abu Dhabi Social Support Authority” which was established based on Law No. (5) of 2019, this authority was given an independent legal personality and full legal capacity to act and provide financial support to entitled Emirati persons to avoid any needs' deprivation or negligence. For that purpose, the Authority conducts social research and studies related to its field which aims to support the eligible persons and enable them to reach financial sufficiency and independence.

One of the most important authorities that was established to work directly with families to protect them from all forms of violence is Abu Dhabi Shelter and Humanitarian Care Centre " Ewa'a", the centre was established on 2020 as a legal entity to provide care and safe shelter, as well as health, social and psychological rehabilitation for victims of all forms of violence. The Centre aims to meet the victims' needs, protect their rights, provide legal, social and psychological counselling, and assist them to be reintegrated successfully to the community. All victims can reach the multi-lingual hotline at 800 SAVE (800 7283) and request help and support which will be given to them while preserving their dignity and privacy and through multi sectionals coordination (Department of Community Development, 2020).

As per protecting children who reside in alternative families in the cases of unknown parentage or orphans, the Abu Dhabi government established Dar Zayed for Family Care in 1988 to provide a decent life to those children and help them to live in an environment which is close to a natural setting until they become independent adults, or until they will be fostered by a real family. The centre monitors the wellbeing of those children in the shelter as well as in their foster families to assure their safety and prevent any abuse or

violation of rights. The centre has the authority to remove any child from the alternative family when any breach of rights or violations are being reported, with enforcing proper punishments based on the legal authorities' decisions on the perpetrators (Abu Dhabi Government, 2021).

The Emirate of Dubai provides comprehensive services in the field of family protection as well. Those services are delivered through several entities, the first one is the Community Development Authority (CDA) which was established based on Law No. (12) of 2008 Concerning the Establishment of the Community Development Authority in Dubai and its amendments. The Authority provides several social services which contribute to social development in the Emirate, and to the enhancement of social services to assure the provision of care, protection, empowerment of the community members in general, and inclusion of the vulnerable groups in particular. Their services include raising awareness, counselling, providing shelter, day and home care, rehabilitation, protection from abuse, negligence, and exploitation as well as offering financial benefits (monetary or in-kind). Based on the law, the most vulnerable segments that are being served by the Authority include the elderly, people of determinations, children, particularly those deprived of family care, juvenile delinquents, orphans and children with unknown parentage, drug addicts, prisoners and their families, and low-income persons. The Community Development Authority provides different services in the field of family protection, for example it has a unified and comprehensive hotline (800988) which receives abuse and violation reports and complains against children, elderly, and people of determination. The received reports will be then sent to specialized department in the Authority to reposed and provide the needed protection for that family members by the protection specialists. The authority as well provides social and legal services for the victims, and sheltering services for limited groups like children with unknown parentage in the Family Village which provides short and long care and hospitality services for orphans or children with unknown

parentage along with social, health and psychological care (Community Development Authority, 2016)

The second important entity is the Dubai Foundation for Women and Children (DFWAC), the Foundation was established by the Law NO. (15) of 2007 Concerning Establishing Dubai Foundation for Women and Children and its amendments. This Foundation is the first licensed non-profit shelter in the UAE for women and children's victims of domestic violence, child abuse, and human trafficking. It was established to offer victims residing in the Emirate of Dubai immediate protection and support services in accordance with international human rights obligations. The Foundation mission is ending all forms of violence and abuse against women and children through activating the role of prevention, providing a safe shelter, care and rehabilitation services in accordance with international standards. There are three main services provided by the foundation, the first one is care and rehabilitation services including temporary shelter and hospitality services for the victims, as well as social, psychological and legal services. The second service is community awareness services; the Foundation launched lots of programs and initiatives that aims at increasing the level of awareness among different categories about issues related to violence and abuse, in addition to the third service which is conducting research, and generating a statistical annual report about the cases to help decision-makers to take the needed corrective actions (Dubai Foundation for Women and Children, 2016)

Besides the above-mentioned social entities in the Emirate of Dubai, there are several smaller scale departments and centers that can be linked to family protection like the Child and Women Protection Department which was established under the General Department of Human Rights in Dubai Police, the Department aims to preserve the family cohesion, and protect it against negative incidents or crimes that threaten family safety and rights, such as abuse and violence. The Department receives violence reports through different channels like calling (901) as well as receiving cases and referrals from police stations and other entities. The Department personnel do the needed

investigations about the cases and based on the results and evidences coordinates with other partners to assure victims' rights and safety (Dubai Police, 2021). Seniors' Happiness Center also plays a critical role in protecting elderly from family violence. This Center was established in 1993 under Dubai Health Authority, it provides 24/7 sheltering, medical, social, rehabilitation, nutritional, cultural and recreational services for the senior citizens in the Emirate. The center does not aim to replace the natural family, but it provides the option of temporary stay for Emirati elderly in cases of family negligence or some other medical conditions (Seniors' Happiness Centre, 2020).

Furthermore, the Government of Sharjah established several entities in the field of family protection. The main governmental body is the Sharjah Social Services Department (SSSD) which was established in 1995 by the ruler decree. The department aim to move towards a society that enjoys prosperity, security, family stability and social inclusion. The Department mission is providing therapeutic, preventive and developmental social services in the field of security, care, protection and rehabilitation for individuals, families and groups with special social conditions, as well as studying social problems to find solutions in order to support decision making and to contribute to the sustainable development process of Sharjah community .The Department is specialized in providing social protection services for several vulnerable groups through lunching hotlines and establishing shelters for protection, care and rehabilitation services, as well as conducting research and community awareness programs. Its scope of works covers abused women and children, elderly, patients with mental health issues, prisoners and other groups of people who are Sharjah's citizens or residents. There are several competencies delegated to the department, those competencies are distributed among the following sections:

- Elderly Care Home: It was established in 1986, to provide alternative care home and services for elderly who don't have any family members that can take care of them, and cannot manage their own affairs, or suffer from any sort of abuse from their



families. The Care Home provides both sheltering and physiotherapy services.

- Children's Social Care Home: It was established in 2006 to temporarily shelter children who lack social care or suffer from abuse or negligence. The Care Home provides them with social, educational, health and psychological services until the children are reintegrated into their natural families.
- Child and Family Protection Section: This section provides several services like hotline services (800700) that was launched in 2007 to receive reports and complaints about family violence 24/7, with immediate intervention based on the cases situations. Those reports will be then classified and handled by a highly qualified teams from different backgrounds (legal, social, psychological...etc.) to assure their safety and to develop effective solutions and rehabilitation programs.
- Al-Rushd Oasis: It was founded in 2007 as a first alternative temporary home for mentally-ill people deprived of family and social care in the Country. The Oasis works to secure their rights, provide them with protection, manage their financial affairs, and reintegrate them into their natural families or any other options that assure their best interest.
- Safe House (Dar Al Aman): It was established in 2008 to take care of prisoners' children and their families. The house shelters the infants of the prisoners (mothers) to assure their presence in a natural environment that contributes to their healthy development and secure their rights in terms of health, identification papers and the right to breast-feed until the end of the mother's sentence.
- Women's Protection Center: This was established in 2011 to ensure the protection of abused women in Sharjah, educate them about their rights, support them to have a safe and healthy relationship. The support services include social, legal, and psychological services along with the provisions of temporary shelter and care (Social Services Department, 2021).

Besides the Social Services Department in Sharjah, there is another entity that plays an important role in family protection in the Emirate, which is the Supreme Council for Family Affairs. The Supreme Council was established under the Emiri Decree No. (24) of 2000, the Council consists of departments working in the field of social development and family protection along with other fields. The main two departments that work directly with family protection issues are the Department of Family Development Centers and the Child Safety Department. The Child Safety Department's core function is to spread awareness regarding the importance of child safety and protection among society members, and to emphasize on the importance of child prevention and protection from violence, abuse, exploitation, and negligence. The department is trying to achieve that through effective participation in developing relevant policies and implementing initiatives in collaboration with its partners and specialized entities (The Child Safety Department, 2021). The second concerned department is the Department of Family Development Centers which has several branches in the Emirate and aims at promoting and strengthening family cohesion through the delivery of family counselling and community awareness services, in addition to conducting research to help decision-makers to take the necessary actions in order to improve the family policies, laws, and services (The Child Safety Department, 2021).

In Ajman, Himaya Foundation for Woman and Child was established in 2017 by a decree issued from the ruler of the Emirate, with a clear vision of creating a society that is free from all forms of violence. Himaya Foundation provides several services for women and children victims of abuse like hotline services (800446292) to encourage people to report all sorts of abuse in a confidential basis. The foundation as well provides free counselling, social services and legal advice for the victims (Himaya Foundation for Woman and Child, 2020).

In 2017 also, Aman Shelter for Women and Children was established in Ras Al Khaimah as a semi-governmental institution in accordance with Decree No. 3 of 2017, issued by the ruler of the

Emirate. The Shelter ensure the provision of safe sheltering, protection, care, rehabilitation and legal assistance for victims of violence, abuse and human trafficking in Ras Al Khaimah. Besides those basic services, it plays an active role in raising awareness among the community about all forms of violence, with an ultimate goal of creating a society that preserve justice and dignity of women and children. The Shelter prevention role is obvious through plans, initiatives and local and international activities that was lunched to support combating those crimes, it also works to raise awareness among victims to avoid falling into the nets of human traffickers again, and to provide them with full knowledge and awareness regarding this crime. Furthermore, the Shelter has a hotline (80089999) to receive reports and compliances related to violence against women and children (Aman Shelter for Women and Children, 2020).

After reviewing legislations, laws, services and programs related to the family protection in the country, the researchers were able to understand the current policy's strengths and weaknesses. The strengths were then identified in many points, the first one is the presences of political will to end all forms of family violence, since the government and the political leaders are supporting family protection agenda and legislations, and investing lots of resources (financial, human, technical ...etc.) to eliminate such violence. The second strength is the availability of comprehensive services as the government works very hard to assure the provision of many protection, intervention and prevention services in regards to family violence, including social services like hotlines, shelters, counselling, rehabilitation programs, awareness programs, social assistance and empowerment programs, in addition to legal support, as well as medical and health services. Another strength is the existence of legislation and laws sine the UAE Constitution protect the family's rights, besides several laws that work together to eliminate family violence like the Penal Code, Personal Status Law and child rights law, in addition to other laws discussed previously, especially the Federal Decree Law No. (10) of 2019 on Protection Against Family

Violence. This point leads to another strength which is the establishment of specialized family prosecution in federal and local level, to provide specialized services in a safe, private and healthy environment for the family members during the prosecution process, as well as the establishment of several police units, departments and sections like the social support police in all the emirates to resolve family conflicts before acceleration.

besides the strengths, the situational analysis showed many gaps that need to be bridged and lots of weaknesses that need to be tackled to improve the family protection policy. First of all, the absence of unified family violence database on the national level, it is very important to understand the characteristics of victims and perpetrators in the UAE (both Emiratis and non-Emiratis) however, the researchers were not able to find any national document that statistically analyzed their socio-demographic and economic characteristics which reflect a clear gap in the data. The absence of scientific statistics will affect any policy development or improvement negatively, since those data are the foundation for programs and initiatives development. The second weakness is the absence of national referral mechanism as well, it was revealed in policy components' part, that there are multi federal and local entities that provides a variety of services for the victims; however, those efforts lack proper coordination and networking. Another gap is lack of quantitative research and the absence of qualitative research, most of the conducted research were quantitative research that focused on family violence issue not the policy, however the researchers believe on the importance of using qualitative research to collect in-depth information from victims, their families, and the practitioners which reflects their beliefs, points of views and perspectives about family protection policy in the country and their recommendations and suggestions for improvement.

Furthermore, the situational analysis showed lack of legal activations of few laws, although the Federal Decree Law on Protection Against Family Violence was issued in 2019, it was not activated yet since the activation date will be decided by the UAE Cabinet. In addition, the Child Rights Law, and Federal Law on the

Rights of Senior Emiratis, lack effective law enforcement mechanisms, therefore, many articles are not implemented effectively in reality. Accessibility to specialized social services was additional gap in some emirates, until now, the UAE did not establish a federal shelter for victims of family violence. The five shelters available in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman and Ras Al Khaimah are funded by the local governments and serve mainly the local residents. In addition, most of the shelters do not shelter people of determination and elderly people, and some as well only shelter male up to the age of 12. One of the most important weaknesses is community awareness efforts, although several entities provide community awareness programs like lectures, campaigns and events, however, those efforts were done randomly and were not based on research findings, also impact assessment were not measured to evaluate the effectiveness of those programs.

### **Conclusions & Recommendations**

This descriptive research used available data methodology to understand the components of family protection policy in the UAE, and to examine the existence and availability of needed laws and services related to family protection. It was found that the UAE government is highly committed to eliminate family violence through strengthening family protection policy in the country, therefore, the government issued several legislations and laws related to family rights, and dedicated a decent resource to support the provision of comprehensive protection, intervention and prevention services. However, the research showed that several improvements are needed in the area of governance, law enforcement, accessibility, networking and effective participation from all the stakeholders. The following recommendations are proposed by the researchers to promote the policy strengths and improve its weaknesses:

- Establishment of National Supreme Council for Family Affairs: family protection policy review indicated the absence of a national family council; which resulted in lack of governance, this council will be tasked with suggesting, supervising, and monitoring all the family policies and strategies, and will be asked to play the role of

coordinator between all entities, to insure successful development and implementation of family protection policy in the UAE, as well as assuring all stakeholders participation in the policy process.

- Legislations and laws activation, which includes several legal initiatives like the revision and activation of Federal Decree Law on Protection Against Family Violence, since the law was issued in 2019, but without activation order.
- Enhancing accessibility to protection and sheltering services, this might include several initiatives that aims at widening the scope of protection and sheltering services to cover all emirates, like launching the unified national family violence hotline and establishing federal shelters that accept all abused family members regardless of their age or gender and place of residence.
- Promoting prevention programs that include conducting community awareness programs through coordinating with social, educational, legal, health, and religious entities, which aims at improving the public and the victims' awareness of their rights and the available supporting services, as well as changing their mindsets and perception of family violence. also, it might include the development of impact assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of those awareness programs.
- Focusing on victims' rehabilitation and empowerment through launching many initiatives, like supporting the victims to continue their school and tertiary education, also providing free certified training for the victims in many fields to help them gain lots of life, vocational and professional skills.
- Launching family research and statistic center on the federal level, this center must be given the tasks of creating a unified database for family violence in the UAE, in addition to collecting funds from different buddies to support research projects in all related sectors, along with publishing an annual report about the family violence in the country, as well as using forecasting methods to predict the future situation in regard to family violence.
- Establishing a national referral mechanism which aims at creating a unified protocol and mechanism to handle and manage family

violence reports, starting from screening assessments, social and psychological intake, unified classifications and severity levels, and identification of coordination officers in all the concerned entities in the seven emirates.

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## سياسة حماية الأسرة في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة: دراسة وصفية تحليلية

الأستاذة/ غنيمة حسن البحري

باحثة لدرجة الدكتوراه في برنامج علم الاجتماع التطبيقي - مسار سياسات التنمية

قسم علم الاجتماع - كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية

جامعة الشارقة - الإمارات العربية المتحدة

الأستاذ الدكتور/ حسين محمد العثمان - أستاذ علم الاجتماع

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### الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة المكونات والمحاور الرئيسية لسياسة حماية الأسرة في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، بالإضافة إلى دراسة مدى توافر القوانين والخدمات اللازمة لحماية أفراد الأسرة من كافة أشكال العنف، إذ تم استخدام المنهج الوصفي بالاعتماد على مراجعة وتحليل البيانات المتاحة المتعلقة بالسياسة لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة. أظهرت النتائج أن السياسة تتكون من خمسة محاور رئيسية هي التشريعات والقوانين، وآليات الحماية والتدخل، ورفع الكفاءات، والبحوث والإحصائيات، إلى جانب محور الوقاية والتوعية المجتمعية، كما كشفت النتائج أن حكومة الإمارات ملتزمة بشكل كبير بالقضاء على العنف الأسري من خلال إصدار العديد من التشريعات والقوانين المتعلقة بحقوق الأسرة وتخصيص الموارد اللازمة لتوفير وإتاحة خدمات الحماية والتدخل والوقاية لكافة أفراد الأسرة. على الجانب الآخر، أظهرت الدراسة وجود حاجة لإدخال المزيد من التحسينات خاصة في مجالات الحوكمة وإنفاذ القانون وإمكانية الوصول للخدمات، والتواصل والمشاركة الفعالة في اتخاذ القرارات من جميع أصحاب المصلحة. وعليه اقترح الباحثان العديد من التدابير التصحيحية لتحسين سياسة حماية الأسرة في الدولة، من أبرزها إنشاء المجلس الأعلى للأسرة في الدولة ليمارس الدور الإشرافي والرقابي على كافة السياسات والخدمات ذات الصلة بالأسرة، إلى جانب الدور التنسيقي من خلال التعاون مع الجهات المعنية بحماية الأسرة، إلى جانب تعزيز الدور التوعوي والوقائي والتوسع في إجراء البحوث الكمية والنوعية، مع الحرص على تفعيل الميداني لكافة التشريعات والأنظمة الحامية لأفراد الأسرة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** حماية الأسرة، سياسة الأسرة، سياسة حماية الأسرة في دولة الإمارات، العنف الأسري.

\* وقع المؤلفون على نموذج الموافقة والموافقة الأخلاقية الخاصة بالمساهمة البشرية في

البحث