



## Intentional Injuries in cats, dogs, birds, donkeys & horses and goats: The Violence against animals in Iraq

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### Abstract

*The intended injuries (IIs) animal violence*, and Assaulted Animal's Syndrome (AAS) are terms applied to describe the planned harm

of the animal. These terms involve three types of violence including physical, sexual, and neglect. This study is reported and described 148 miscellaneous cases of nonaccidental syndromes and injuries in dogs, cats, and farm animals. These included fractures, bleeding, contusions, repetitive injuries, burns & scalds, cutting of tail or legs, stab and incised injuries, poisoning, asphyxiation, and sinking, throwing from high places, as well as sexual abuse and wounds specifically caused by weapons. Traumatic skeletal wounds in the cats and dogs were the more commonly found in the head, neck, and anterior part of the skeleton and resulted from nonaccidental syndromes (caused by children). In conclusion, this study reported 148 miscellaneous cases of non-accidental syndromes and injuries in dogs, cats and farm animals. The author recommends community educations regarding animal rights and welfare. More comprehensive study regarding the occurrence of human violence against animal needs to be done in all Iraqi provinces, additional, postgraduate student should be encourage to do their research on this important subject.

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### Introduction

Every day veterinarians in practice are documented and treated a progressively noticeable phenomenon called 'animal cruelty' or 'beaten animal condition,' due to the intended harm. The entire meaning of these terms is difficult to explain and have diverse clarifications (Munro and Thrusfield, 2001a). The non-profit animal welfare organizations around the world is a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCAs) and it was established in England since 1824. This society was working independently to assist in the prevention of cruelty to animal cases, rehabilitation, and settling homeless or maltreated or unwanted animals into a new home.

SPCAs have defined animal abuse as "the planned harm of an animal" These are including deliberate ignoring, imposing wounds, distress, and pain, malevolent killing murder, or killing of animals. According to SPCAs research, there are three kinds of animal abuse: neglect, physical, and sexual abuse. Neglect or ignore is a failure to deliver adequate shelter, food, water, companionship, and veterinary care. Physical abuse is including flinging punching, kicking, throwing, microwaving, burning, asphyxiation, and the administration of poisons or drugs. Sexual abuse involves the use of an animal for sexual enjoyment (gratification).

In Iraq, right now, there is no regulation or any society that works to prevent abuse, violence, and cruelty of animals. Moreover, every day, there are many cases of animal cruelty presented to veterinary clinical; some of these cases suffered from severe violence and were in serious condition. Little is known about animal cruelty, and no previous publications have been found in the literature regarding animal abuse, violence, and cruelty in Iraq; therefore, this study intends to highlight and describe few cases that presented to veterinary hospitals due to intentional animal violence and cruelty. And to determine the situation of violence against animals in Iraq to alarming the level and the impact of this phenomenon.

### **Materials and methods**

One hundred forty-eight animals (cat, dog, bird, donkey, goat) suffering from various types of cruelty, violence, and abuse were presented to different Iraqi veterinary hospital. A complete clinical examination was done on the battered animals, and all affections were reported. The treatment plan was established for each case according to the animal condition, including surgical operations. All treated animals were followed up until complete healing and recovery. Some of these animals were adopted by a student of veterinary colleges.

### **Results**

Various types of injuries were reported in individual cases in 25, 8, 3 and 98 of cats, dogs, birds and donkeys& horses respectively. The details of individual species were recorded in Table.1. A further 10 cases were reported in goats and four birds. These cases were suffered from neglect and Locked in a bad place, shelter in the rooftops at elevated summer temperatures, hunger, thirst, administration of drugs/ poisons, and grazing in the garbage. The real nature of the acts of the violence was not determined precisely, however, the following types of cruelty and violence were expected: Kicking, throwing against wall, outside windows or from rooftop, blows to body (broom, hammer, bottle, bricks), burning & scalding, incised injuries, administration of poisons & drugs, manual strangulation or ligature by elastic band, drowning including inflicted submersion injury, puncture of the eyes, fractures & dislocation of the jaw. Most animals suffered from more than one type of trauma and cruelty and expressed distressed and fear behavioural signs (Figures: 1,2,3).



Figure.1 (A,B,C,D):Shows A&B: cat suffered from violence, this cat was Kicking, throwing against the wall; C: dog kicked and hit by stuck; D: cat suffered from multiple injuries due to violence attempt to remove the teats.

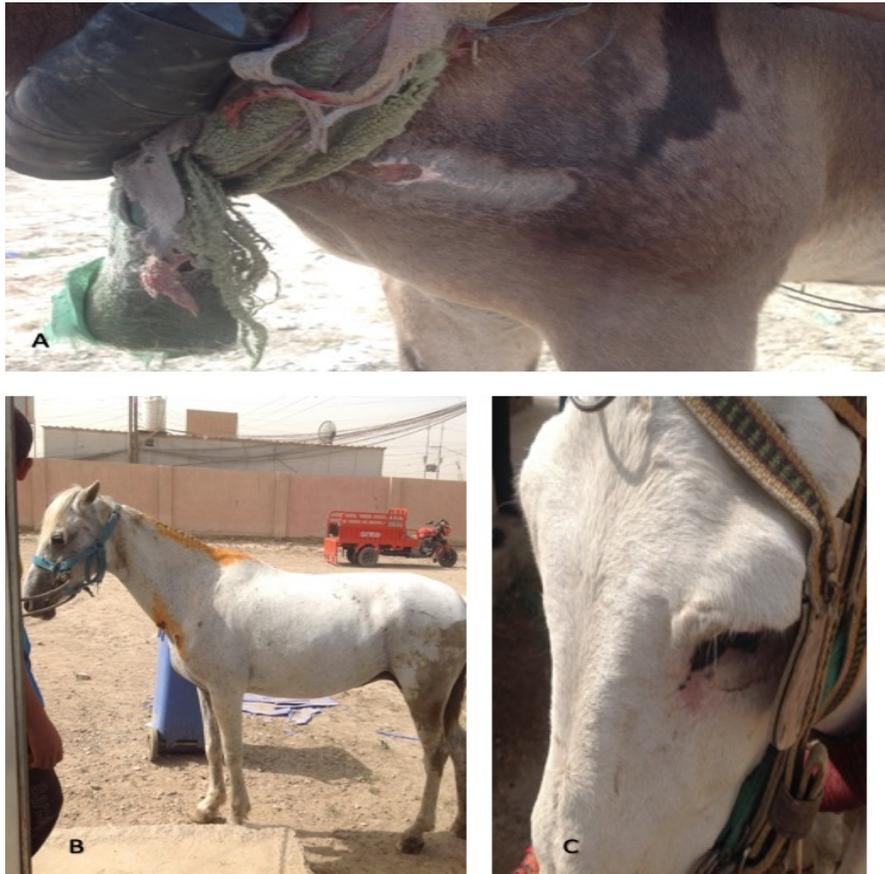


Figure.2 (A, B, C): Show horse & donkey hit from their owners and suffered from multiple injuries



Figure.3 (A, B, C, D): Show horse & donkey hit from their owners the donkey suffered from hematoma and accumulation of blood that drainage by the veterinarian ( A&B) and suffered from multiple injuries (C&D)

The total number of animals included in this study was 148, and the percentage of violence reached to 100%. The number and percentage of violence according to the species of the animal descending were 98 (66.21%), 25 (16.89 %), 10 (6.75 %), 8 (5.40%) and 7(4.72%) for donkeys& horses, cats, goats, dogs, and birds respectively.

Table.1. : Shows the details of individual species of the animals suffered from violence

Animal species	Number of animal	Clinical presentation	Types of mishandling			Total Percent ages (%)
			N (%)	P(%)	S(%)	
<b>cat</b>	25	Severe superficial injuries including destruction of eyes Bruising, Bleeding and haematoma Swelling multiple fractures internal thoraco-abdominal lesions spinal injuries intracranial lesions tail lesions extraction of teeth incised of the nipples cutting of the legs Gunshot Locked in a bad place Hunger Thirst Administration of drugs/ poisons	5 (20%)	20(80%)	0(0%)	16.89 %
<b>dog</b>	8	severe superficial lesions including destruction of eyes multiple fractures internal thoraco-abdominal lesions, spinal injuries intracranial lesions tail lesions cutting of the legs multiple Gunshot Dog shelter in the rooftops at elevated summer temperatures Hunger Thirst Administration of drugs/ poisons	3(37.5%)	5 (62.4%)	0(0%)	5.40%
<b>bird</b>	7	Hunger Thirst Feather plucking Gunshot on the wing of a bird	4(57.14%)	3(42.85%)	0(0%)	4.72%
<b>Donkey&amp; horses</b>	98	severe superficial & deep skin lesions deep infected wounds long, distorted and cracked hoof Thirst, Hunger and Grazing in the garbage	77(78.57%)	98(100%)	0(0%)	66.21%
<b>goat</b>	10	Thirst, Hunger and Grazing in the garbage	10(100%)	0	0(0%)	6.75 %
<b>Total</b>	148		99	126	0.00	100%

N= neglect; P= Physical abuse; S= Sexual abuse

## Discussion

Iraq is the country of Mesopotamian civilization, and the Babylonian was an important component. The Amorites were the founder of this civilization headed by Hammurabi, the great king of Amorites that made this civilization progressive. Hammurabi was the first founder of the law in the history of the world, including writings, literature, religion, art, architecture, and sciences. The contributions of the Babylonians to human civilization were immense. The Code of Hammurabi helped in the building a healthy society. Besides, their contributions in the field of art, architecture, trade & commerce, and science, including animal rights and welfare. Although the earliest law regarding animal rights was established by the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi in Iraq since 1750 B.C.E, nowadays, the situation of animal rights and welfare are very poor, and there are no regulations against animal cruelty, intentional violence, and abuse.

Based on the results of the current study, it can be concluded that IIs and AAS in animals in Iraq is a problem encountered by veterinary practitioners. The existence of IIs and AAS were reported in 148 out of 148 (100%). These observations are extremely similar to those reported previously by Kristina *et al.*, (2005) in Republic of Ireland, who found that the percentage of occurrence of non-accidental injury “NAI” was 92.2 % (106) and in 59% of the cases. The customer was mentioned the non-accidental injury which was 67.2% (39) of 58 reported cases included a single event. Additionally, the reported signs led the veterinarians suspicious of “NAI” involved varying history, untreated injuries, the quietness of the animal, recurring injuries, suspicious behaviours of the owner, and injuries consistent with abuse. Kristina *et al.*, (2005) also reported the types of injuries that included lacerations, gunshot wounds, burns, poisoning, injury to genitalia, bruising, and fractures. Moreover, the Iraqi percentages also are compatible with percentages that reported in other countries (Munro and Thrusfield, 2001b; Gallagher *et al.*, 2008). In addition, the types of injuries, affection and warning signs that recognized in Iraq were also similar to that reported in another country (Munro and Thrusfield, 2001d). The results of this study revealed various types of injuries in individual cases in 25 cats, eight dogs, 3 birds, 98 donkeys & horses, as well as in the groups of goats (10) and birds (4). Moreover, all cases were experienced neglect and locked in a bad place, shelter in the rooftops at elevated summer temperatures, thirst, hunger, administration of drugs/ poisons, and grazing in the garbage. This study also approved the nature of the acts of the violence, which were included Kicking, throwing against wall, outside windows or from rooftop, blows to body (broom, hammer, bottle, bricks), burning & scalding, incised injuries, administration of poisons & drugs, manual strangulation or ligature by elastic band, drowning including inflicted submersion injury, puncture of the eyes, fractures & dislocation of the jaw. Furthermore, most animals included in this study were suffered from more than one type of trauma and cruelty and express distressed and feared behavioural signs. In this study, the percentage of violence reached 100%. Moreover, the highest percentage of violence 98 (66.21%) occurred in donkeys & horses followed by cats 25 (16.89 %), goats 10 (6.75 %), dogs 8 (5.40%) and birds 7(4.72%). The roles of human factors in the occurrence of animal violence are very clear in the results of this study, and most reported cases were caused by human violence against different species of animals. The results of this study reflex the poor and dangerous situation of violence against animal rights in Iraq and alarm need to be raise to show the impact of this phenomenon.

In conclusion, this study reported 148 miscellaneous cases of non-accidental syndromes and injuries in dogs, cats, and farm animals. These cases were suffered from fractures, bleeding, contusions, repetitive injuries, burns & scalds, cutting of tail or legs, stab and incised injuries, poisoning, asphyxiation, and sinking, throwing from high places, as well as sexual abuse and wounds specifically caused by weapons. However, traumatic skeletal wounds were more common in the head, neck, and anterior part of the skeleton of the cats and dogs. The author recommended a more comprehensive study regarding the occurrence of human violence against the animal in all Iraqi provinces; additional, postgraduate students should be encouraged to do their research on this important subject.

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