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Media help escalate honor killings, study reveals

A study titled "Honor Killings in the Media and Their Impact on Students and Parents" conducted by the Ministry of Education has revealed that parents believe the media play a role in increasing the number of honor killings.

The study was conducted in the provinces where the most honor killings in the country were taking place and covered the responses of 440 high school students and their parents. According to the report released by the ministry, 13 percent of the parents and 9.9 percent of students had witnessed an honor killing. The provinces of Batman, Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa and Mardin lead in the number of killings, the report indicated.

Based on the responses of students and their families, the media play a negative role in regard to honor killings. Whereas only 7.3 percent of the parents and 8.7 percent of the students said the media have a positive effect in preventing honor killings, 22.7 percent and 29 percent of them, respectively, think that the media play a role in increasing the number of honor killings. The respondents did not find the programs aired or the stories printed by media to be impartial or close to reality.

On the other hand, the study also showed that 26.2 percent of the parents and 25.9 percent of the students said they support such killings, although 64 percent of all respondents said those who committed such a crime should be punished.

The Ministry's Education Research and Development Unit (EARGED) also released some suggestions to the media. Two of the suggestions drawing attention are to broadcast or publish such news with the utmost prudence so as not to negatively affect children, and to stress the causes -- not the outcomes -- of such killings. EARGED also underlined the importance of the education of reporters who are covering such stories.

24 March 2009, Tuesday

İBRAHİM ASALIOĞLU ANKARA

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