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A comprehension of effects of inter-parental violence on children

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Domestic violence includes multiple forms of abusive behavior that takes place within the confines of the domain of “home” such as wife abuse, abuse of children, adults and women in general. Child abuse within family is the most prevalent form of domestic violence according to Giddens (2001). This study focuses on the impact of violence on children in the case of inter-parental violence which may or may not be directed towards the children who are generally exposed to such violence. The issue of effects of violence on the children who are exposed to inter-parental violence has been unfortunately

overlooked according to recent research studies (Blanchard 1993; Mullender *et al*, 2000; Laing 2000). The disregard towards the effects of inter-parental violence on children has led to numerous social issues and problems associated with personality disorders and difficulties associated especially in dealing with difficult and terrifying situations confronted in day to day life. (Laing 2000).

Evidence demonstrates that the incidence of domestic violence is quite high in Sri Lanka (Bulumulle, 2003). According to a UNICEF report most of the violations of the protection of rights of children occur in homes by close family members and the root cause includes marital discord and separations, domestic violence, migrant and therefore absentee mothers etc. (Wijemanna, 2005)

The objective of the current study is to understand the effects of exposure to violence between parents among children in a purposive sample of urban households afflicted with wife abuse through a qualitative research study.

Findings revealed that 88.5% households had children in them and at least 2 or more children in 73% of them. The children are very much equal victims of violence that was perpetrated against their mothers in the sample. Parents, particularly fathers more often manifest their anger against the children by way of scolding or disturbing the peace and quiet in the home by disturbing children's studies. Nearly 38% of children's education had been affected in terms of having never been to school, having dropped out of education without completing and failing grades in schools. Also exposure of children to violence between parents handicapped their personality development and growth, created health issues and resulted in deviant behavior in children. Men's tendency to emulate behavior witnessed and internalized automatically as a child was another very significant finding of this study. In conclusion, the damage to children who are exposed to inter-parental violence is profound particularly during the tender years. Immediate attention should be paid to make adults, parents and relevant authorities aware in bringing its negative outcomes into light and planning to eliminate such unwholesome consequences.