

IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS

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Education is the birth right of every child. It strengthens the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state because it is the first training ground and the foundation for the child, whatever happens at home therefore, go a long way in affecting the behavioral and psychological upbringing of the child. The home environment influences the child's personal and social behavior very much. Consequentially it determines child developmental outcomes such as cognitive ability, school readiness, academic achievement and emotional adjustment. The academic performance of any child cannot be separated from the home environment in which the child grows up because the child observes it from the very beginning. All the positive and negative things happening at home has the direct impact on their personality. This indicates that domestic violence significantly affects child academic performance. The study recommends that domestic violence awareness campaigns should be put in place to educate the public on the dangers of violence. Efforts should be made right from kindergarten, primary school and colleges to inculcate more responsible behavior at a tender age, and to teach and educate young people that violence is never acceptable behavior.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Academic Performance, Children, Students.**Introduction**

The word 'domestic' is derived from the Latin word 'domus' meaning a 'home'. Domestic (Domesticus in Latin) connotes what happens in and around a Family dwelling place. Violence is the use of coercive forms of power: the use of force or the threat of its use to compel someone to do something that the person might not otherwise do. Violence is an essential aspect of dysfunctional behavior for Youth.

According to Domestic Violence Act 2005 Domestic violence means, Causing hurt, injury or danger to life, limb, health, safety or well-being, whether mental or physical. Causing harm, injury, or danger to the woman with an intention to coerce her or any other person related to her to meet any demand for dowry. "Physical abuse" includes hurt of any kind.

Domestic violence has always been a large social issue. In technological era where world is in the reach and people are connected through social media it is considered to be a threat as it creates serious challenges before developing societies. Domestic violence may include but not limited to, sibling abuse, elder abuse, spouse abuse, and child abuse. Domestic violence has many names; family violence, wife or child beating, and domestic abuse. Spouse abuse talks about abuse from a marital or a dating partner in an intimate relationship. Domestic violence is merely not just

physical, but is any behavior that is intended to control another person through the use of verbal assaults. Even though domestic violence can be caused by either male or female it is usually caused by the male due to the large physical advantage. Domestic violence today is very common in households, but little is being done to stop it.

There is a negative association between violence, Academic progress, and appropriate classroom behavior. At the front lines of this issue is the harsh reality of the transferred behaviors from the family and community atmosphere into the classroom environment. Educators play a pertinent role for children who are emotionally sensitive and socially inept by providing a safe haven and learner-centered environment. It is the purpose of this article to highlight the personal, social, and academic factors related to violence and youth involvement, from a parent's perspective.

Forms of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence include various forms:-

Physical Abuse

This is the use of physical force in a way that injures the victim or puts him or her at the risk of being injured. It includes beating, kicking, knocking, pushing, choking, confinement and female genital mutilation. Physical abuse is one of the most common forms of physical abuse.

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Sexual Abuse

This includes all forms of sexual assaults, harassment or exploitation. It involves forcing a person to participate in sexual activity, using a child for sexual purposes including child prostitution and pornography. Marital rape also comes under this.

Neglect

This includes failure to provide for dependents who may be adults or children, denying family members food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and protection from harm or a sense of being loved and valued.

Economic Abuse

This includes stealing from or defrauding a loved one, withholding money for essential things like food and medical treatment, manipulating or exploiting family member for financial gain, preventing a loved one from working or controlling his/her choice of occupation.

Spiritual Abuse

This includes preventing a person from engaging in his/her spiritual or religious practices or using one's religious belief to manipulate, dominate or control him/her.

Emotional Abuse

This includes threatening a person or harming a person's sense of self worth by putting him/her at risk of serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional or mental disorders. Shouting at a partner, which was found to be the most common abuse, is included. Also included in emotional abuse, are name-calling, criticism, social isolation, intimidating or exploitation to dominate, routinely making unreasonable demand, terrorizing a person physically and exposing a child to violence.

Psychological Abuse

Which includes behavior that is intended to intimidate and persecute, and takes the form of threats of abandonment or abuse, confinement to the home, surveillance, threats to take away custody of the children, destruction of objects, isolation, verbal aggression and constant humiliation.

Causes of Domestic Violence

There are many different theories as to the causes of domestic violence. These include psychological theories that consider personality, traits and mental characteristics of the perpetrators, as well as social theories which consider external factors in the perpetrator's environment, such as family structure, stress and social learning. As with many phenomena regarding human experience, no single approach appears to cover all cases.

Psychological

Psychological theories focus on personality traits and mental characteristics of the offender. Personal traits include sudden bursts of anger, poor impulse control, and poor self-esteem. Various theories suggest that psychopathology and other personality disorders are factors, and that abuse observed or experienced as a child lead some people to be more violent in adulthood.

Jealousy

Many cases of domestic violence against women occur due to jealousy when the spouse is either suspected of being unfaithful or is planning to leave the relationship. An evolutionary psychology explanation of such cases of domestic violence against women is that they represent to male attempts to control female reproduction and ensure sexual exclusivity for him through violence or the threat of violence.

Social Stress

Stress may increase when a person is living in a family situation, with increased pressures. Violence is not always caused by stress, but may be one way that some people respond to stress. Couples in poverty may be more likely to experience domestic violence, due to increased stress and conflicts about finances and other aspects.

The Effect of Domestic Violence on Children

Child abuse and domestic violence are not new social problems, nor are they haphazard or deviant activities. Both are considered an accepted part of our culture. However, while domestic violence is now politically recognized as one of the most entrenched and pervasive forms of violence in our society today, child abuse issues have yet to receive the same degree of attention. . Not surprisingly, these issues have essentially been regarded as a private matter. This, together with the fact that the family has traditionally been regarded as a source of love and support, has led to an element of denial at both a community level and an individual level. However, the family, as the most important institution within our society, is extremely complex. It is both an agency of social control and an agency of social support, and that its internal dynamics can have both positive and negative effects on relationships.

The effects on children of either witnessing and/or being victims of domestic violence literature in terms of age, stage of development and gender is discussed as follows.

Infants are reactive to their environment; when distressed they cry, refuse to feed or withdraw and are particularly susceptible to emotional deprivation. They are extremely vulnerable.

Infants, by definition, are the most limited of all children in their cognitive abilities and resources for adaptation. In terms of behaviour, however, infants who witness spousal violence are often characterized by poor health, poor sleeping habits and excessive screaming.

Toddlers, who are beginning to develop basic attempts to relate causes to emotional expressions, can often be seen to have behavioural problems such as frequent illness, severe shyness, low self-esteem and trouble in daycare as well as social problems such as hitting, biting or being argumentative. Gender differences can emerge at this stage. In a study Cummings et al. (1985) targeted children in their third year of life. They found that these children readily distinguished between warmth and anger, and that the children responded to angry adult interactions with significantly greater displays of distress and subsequent increases in aggression with their peers. When the children were exposed a second time to negative emotional exchanges a month later, the researchers found even higher levels of distress and aggressive behaviour. Interestingly, boys showed more aggressive behaviour than girls following the simulation, whereas girls showed more distress than boys during the simulation.

By preschool age, children believe that everything revolves around them and is caused by them. If they witness violence or abuse, they believe they have caused it. Some studies have shown preschool boys to have the highest ratings for aggressive behavior and the most serious somatic difficulties of any age group. Primary school age children, particularly in the latter stage, begin to learn that violence is an appropriate way of resolving conflict in human relationships. They often have difficulties with schoolwork and girls in this age group have been found to have the highest clinical levels of both aggression and depression.

Davis and Carlson (1987) found that, through clinical testing of 77 children, those who displayed their reactions aggressively were pre-school boys. This same group of boys also demonstrated a higher level of somatic complaints, with twice as many pre-school boys as girls showing their emotional difficulties through such symptoms. On the basis of this study, pre-school boys had the highest rating for aggressive and somatic difficulties of any group in terms of age and gender in another comprehensive study.

Adolescents see the violence as their parents' problem and they often regard the victim as being responsible. Ongoing conflict between parents has a profound influence on adolescent development

and future adult behavior, and can be the strongest predictor of violent delinquency.

In another analysis, Widom (1989) revealed that exposure to continued violence was the strongest predictor of violent delinquent behavior. Based on research with other delinquent populations, Wexler (1990) estimates that between 20 per cent and 40 per cent of chronically violent adolescents had witnessed extreme parental conflict. Kalmuss (1984) found that observing aggression and violence between parents was more strongly related to future involvement in severe marital violence than was being the victim of abuse. Furthermore, the problem of marital violence in adulthood increased dramatically when both types of family violence were experienced. Similarly, the study of Miller et al. (1991) indicated that a history of witnessing domestic violence is a very high risk factor for potential child abuse, as well as being associated with increased psychological stress. Also, some adolescent boys handle their frustration with the behavior that has been most clearly modeled for them by assaulting their mother or siblings (Straus et al. 1980).

However, it must be emphasized that, while there is no doubt that children who either witness and/or are victims of domestic violence are all affected in terms of their behavioral, cognitive and emotional adjustment, the research is still not conclusive enough to determine that there is a definitive set response for gender, age or stage of development. The sample sizes of some of the studies are also often not large enough to warrant firm conclusions being drawn. The inconsistencies suggest that there are still many more factors to be taken into account, including: the extent and frequency of the violence; the role of the child in the family; the number of repeated separations and moves; and economic and social disadvantage.

Children's Coping Abilities

One area which needs to be considered in more detail is the specific coping abilities of individual older children. Researchers have begun to investigate reasons which may account for the level of resilience shown by some children. Following from this, a clinical and research consensus is forming in favor of viewing this resilience as being influenced by more than one factor (Jaffe et al. 1990). In a review of the stressors of childhood, Garmezy (1983) found children's coping abilities could be divided into three categories. These are: dispositional attributes of the child (for example, ability to adjust to new situations); support within the family system (for example, good relationship with one parent); support figures outside the family system (for example, peers, relatives).

Conclusion

In conclusion it can be said that domestic violence is a large social issue that is being dealt with on a daily basis, but more still needs to be done to stop it. It will continue to damage our society as a whole by allowing those who are dominant to take advantage of those who are inferior. However, children's responses to witnessing and/or experiencing domestic violence between parents vary considerably. No typical reactions emerge, although there is ample evidence that exposure to domestic violence can and often does influence children's behavior detrimentally. However, at various stages of their development, children are differentially able to understand and cope with what is happening between their parents.

Thus, the experience of domestic violence can impair young children's ability to regulate their own emotions and form healthy relationships. Behavioral difficulties exhibited by children affected by domestic violence include aggression, social incompetence and antisocial behavior, and academic difficulties. As a child grows older, the effects of emotional abuse become worse. They have difficulty paying attention in class, which results in poor academic performance. They have a hard time making friends; their anger increases and they fight a lot.

It is necessary to disclose domestic violence and to enhance children's ability to develop safe, non-violent relationships for a strong and peaceful society.

It is also necessary to heighten the awareness among the parents of the impact of domestic violence on their children and to support them in developing non-violent, nurturing relationships with their children to have a bright future of the nation.

Recommendations

1. Comprehensive and extensive premarital counseling should be given to intending couples on how to manage their marital relationship.
2. There should be public enlightenment through the mass media on the negative effects of domestic violence on children.
3. Religious leaders too should vigorously teach against marital and child violence in their places of worship. Youths should be encouraged and taught to detest and not imitate brutish treatment of wives around them.
4. Schools and institutions should organize seminars and outreach programs where professional counselors are invited to enlighten the people and students on the need for a violence free society with the home as the cradle.

5. Teachers should be trained to identify and to deal with such students patiently.

6. The government should establish and fund counseling centers at the community and Local Government levels and employ professional counsellors to help victims.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there are no significant competing financial, professional, or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript.

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