



Long Term Violence in Children’s Family Lead to Potential Harm in Children’s Early Development: A Family Investigation

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Abstract. Family environment is a relevant factor of affecting children’s development in their early ages. Many children are living under domestic violence and their childhood are not healthy. Unfortunately, it is hard to completely end the issue of domestic today and scientists are working hard to find important causes on domestic violence. This study emphasizes on the influence of children’s early development under a violent domestic atmosphere. This study begins with an introduction on analyzing the case numbers of domestic violence comprehensively and reminds audience the severity of using violence in a family. Throughout a brief introduction about the meaning of “domestic violence,” audience will understand more about “right” and “wrong” in family education. The case studies in this general study divided children’s development under a violence into three aspects: Social, emotional, and language. Given the conclusions from different research, domestic violence will make children get anxious on interacting with others, get struggled with controlling their own emotions, and get stuttered with speaking. The research is motivated the authority in solving the issues of domestic violence as soon as possible and ensure that children can grow safely and happily.

Keywords: Domestic violence · Family · Children · Social · Emotion · Language

1 Introduction

Family environment represents the shared space between children and their parents, or sometimes grandparents and it impacts children’s growth in many different ways. Childhood is the most important stage of an individual’s life and the individual intends to receive happiness during that stage. Although that individual may not be good at communication during his childhood, they often have a swift skill on observing their surroundings and their innocent judgement could negatively impact their development if there were no professional guidance. A recent research “The Cost of Domestic Violence” approved that one of four women is likely to experience domestic violence and one of fifty women are likely killed by their former partners or current partners [12]. Under a violent atmosphere, children will be less likely to be motivated opening themselves socially and the children who witness their parents’ violent behaviors are likely to abuse themselves [12]. It is always sad to see that many children are still not being loved in

the world, although officials are working hard on providing different types of support on domestic violence victims. One another study "Domestic Violence" showed that children live under domestic violence are likely to call for support and the research reviewed 139 sample domestic violent cases with injuring results. Researcher Honor Gail concluded that the age of the domestic violence victims ranging from 2 weeks to 17 years old [13]. It is understandable that children are more sensitive with their surroundings at their ages because they are trying to find out about the world. Most of children's harm of domestic violence are mild. According to the statistics, However, there were still 9% of children need hospitalization and 2% of them need surgery [13]. Although the data of hospitalization and surgery were small, it still could reflect that some people disrespect human dignity and the neglect towards the human dignity can sufficiently lead to further life dangerous. Also, it is not efficient to merely solve individuals' issues, but it is crucial to reflect on the entire education system as well. There is a common phenomenon in the world: Many teachers enjoy blaming parents for not taking care of their children when their children make mistakes, and many parents enjoy blaming teachers for not providing sufficient professional guidance when their children get hurt. However, blaming is not going to help children to get out of a violent atmosphere but caring can. Gail emphasized on the following questions which could provide support for the children who live under violent family atmosphere:

What happens when mommy and daddy (or appropriate partner names) argue/fight? Is there any hitting, pushing, etc.?

How do you feel when mommy and daddy (or appropriate partner names) fight?

What happens to you when you get in trouble?

If hitting or other physical forms of discipline occur, ask the following: What are you hit with? Where on your body? Does it ever leave a mark/bruise? Who hits/kicks you?

How often does it happen? [13].

In addition, the following questions are provided for supporting the parents who are addicted into using violence on their children:

Do you ever feel afraid in your home?

What happens when you and ___ (partner's name) argue?

Do arguments ever become physical? (hitting, kicking, pushing, throwing or punching/breaking objects)

Have you ever been threatened with a weapon? (gun, knife, other)

Have you ever felt trapped or like a prisoner in your own home? Does your partner ever lock you in/out of the house or take your car keys?

Have your children ever seen or heard violence in the home?

Have the police ever been involved due to violence in your home?

Is the violence ever directed at the children? Does ___ (partner's name) ever hit, kick, push, or yell at your child when he is angry?

How do you and ___ (partner's name) discipline the children? [13].

For deeper understanding about the impact of domestic violence on children, the study “Children Who Witness Domestic Violence” contained a persuasive methodology to explain the relationship between domestic violence and children’s early development: Researcher selected twenty-nine articles from seven different databases about domestic violence and children’s early development such as Psychlit, Sociofile, ERIC, SWAB, Legaltrap, Infotrap, and Medline CD/Plus [14] and focuses on a recent review. Also, analyzed the methodological measurements in these sample articles:

- a. Definition and measurement of independent and dependent variables.
- b. Reports of sample size, age range, and settings.
- c. Use of comparison groups matched on relevant variables.
- d. Exploration of theoretical framework [14].

Overall, the result of this study showed that there is a difficulty of adaptations in social, behavioral, and emotional and physical aspect, children may have a strong anxiety with being at home or attending schools [15]. However, there is not sufficient evidence to declare a conclusion about children’s adaption in social, behavioral, and emotional aspect [15]. For more information, abuse under alcohol influence towards children is very common in the world. A different study “Alcohol Regulation and Domestic Violence Towards Children” found that alcohol abuse on children focused on working, health, social, and emotional aspect; for the working aspect, for instance, it could be reduction on productivity, absenteeism, or unemployment; for the health aspect, it could be chronic disease due to unusual for the social and emotion aspect, for instance, it could be motor vehicles accidents due to drunk driving. In addition, research also show that there are about 40% of children abuse cases are involved in school abuses too [15]. Many parents think that children are annoying when they want attention from them, but perhaps they are showing their loneliness. Therefore, it is important for parents to be aware of children’s attention and provide them with encouraging words. By learning the cases about children abuse, people would think what makes innocent children to experience this pain, and what are the solutions for the violent family atmosphere. Children should be making friends in and enjoying learning in schools, but many of them are experiencing the pain of being abused. To criticize the cruelty of the abusing atmosphere, this study expressed an attitude of seeking justice for the children who experience abuse by introducing the overall impact of domestic violence, explaining specific impacts on children’s social development, emotional development, and language development, discussing the findings and explaining the research disciplines.

2 A Case Study of Children’s Early Development and Their Living Environment

2.1 Children’s Social Challenges Under Domestic Violence

Violent family atmosphere can impede children from interacting with others normally but many people are not willing to distinguish the terms “punishment” and “violence.” Many parents may put too much attention on children’s test scores and easily ignore

children's social performance such as making friends, communicate with different group cultures, and share their favorite items. The study "The influence of age and experience of unfairness on third-party punishment in children" elaborated on how children could improve the skill of offering third-party punishment, which was a kind punishment for an incorrect behavior. The ability of judging "right" and "wrong" is an important skill for children themselves and they can learn a lot from a meaningful experiment of sharing coins with others: Researcher Young-eun Lee and his colleague selected multiple children and divided them into the following groups: Fair, no fair, and no experience. For the fair group, children received 3 out of 3 coins; for the unfair group, children received 0 out of 6 coins, and the children in the control group did not play any roles. The results showed that children develop a well understanding on the discipline of fairness [8].

In addition, sex differences can also impact children socially. For instance, the study "Heterogeneity of Peer rejected girls" emphasized on characters of peer rejected girls and their ability of adjusting social atmosphere [9]. For a deeper understanding of this theme, researcher Doran C. French selected 46 rejected and 20 popular girls from six classes in two local schools in Shanghai and they were aged 8–10 in this experiment [9]. He used 511 girls as a sample in 3–5 grades and the results showed that the popular and rejected girls were in the same aggressive level [9].

For more information, the study "Depressed Mood in Chinese Children: Relations with School Performance and Family Environment" also showed that family is an important subject matter of living by emphasizing on the relationship between school performances and family environments [2]. During this study, researchers Xinyin Chen and Kenneth H. Rubin randomly selected 261 second-grade children in three different elementary schools in Shanghai: 134 boys and 127 girls. Also, there were 73% of the children's family had received at least high school education background and 27% of the children's family had received at least college degree education background. Furthermore, 84% of the children were the only children in their families and 16% of the children had at least one siblings [2]. The experiment results demonstrated that children were surrounded by a long-term violent family atmosphere and thus could affect their children's mental health and children's depression could lead themselves into further behavior problems such as negative self-cognition perceptive, low self-esteem, and loneliness, even lead to further conduct disorder and psychological issues [2].

In the study "Association between non-maternal care in the first year of life and children's receptive language skills prior to school entry: the moderating role of socioeconomic status," researchers Marie-Claude Geoffrey and his coworkers emphasized on whether or not normal care would benefit or harm children's development by selecting a sample of 2,297 Canadian children with an age range 0 to 11 months on their receptive language skill [1]. The experiment result demonstrated that normal care would advance children's cognitive development by reducing the inequalities between children without and with a proper level of cognitive development [1]. This study helps audiences to understand that child-care services are important for the social policy program in Canada because there are many low-income family who cannot afford their children to receive an education.

Moreover, the study "Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale and the Structure of Interpersonal Closeness" explores the utility of Inclusion of Others in the Self Scale to

put additional insights into others' understanding of closeness and this experiment was conducted for exploring the structure of closeness [16]. To ensure the validity of the experiment, researcher Arthur Aron and his colleagues selected a group of participants who answered a series of questionnaires about their closest ones and another group of participants and their closest ones were communicated by cell phone interviews [16]. However, the result for this study was not representative and persuasive enough without detailed numbers, so the researchers conducted one another experiment with the following scenario: There were 208 voluntary participants selected during an introductory cultural anthropology course and the sample included 150 women, 51 men, and 7 individuals who are declined to identify their genders and aged from 18 to 47 years old. Among these participants, 33 selected closest other, 76 selected a non-romantic friend and 92 selected a non-romantic partner [16]. Also, researchers divided the questionnaires into Part I and Part II. Participants were required to finish part I first and put into an envelope before starting Part II for avoiding participants comparing answers between Part I and Part II. Then, Arthur and his colleagues required these participants to complete the questionnaire for the "Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale" again, and 97 participated in the IOS questionnaire retaking who had taken the first version before [16]. Moreover, the scenario "Follow-up phone interviews" also conveyed information about participants' personal relationships with others. For instance, the researchers made 76 phone calls to the participants who described a romantic relationship three months later and 47 were successfully contacted. For the participants who were not able to be contacted, 7 offered wrong phone numbers, 9 did not have their numbers, and 13 did not answer after repeat attempts [16]. For the participants who were successfully contacted, Arthur and his colleagues asked about their depression level if they have broken up with their partners and they also asked participants about the feelings of being with their partners if they were still with their partners [16]. Overall, the alternate-form and questionnaire retakes assure the validity of this experiment and provides convincing information on closeness in behavioral and feeling aspect [16].

These four studies suggest that social development can lead children to further impact on making friends, interacting, and participating in different activities. When children's self-esteem is being lowered, or living in a long-term mental health issue, they are likely to conceal their thoughts and avoid talking to others in public. In the long run, a damage in their cognitive development will impact their social skills severely.

2.2 Children's Emotional Impact Under Domestic Violence

Moreover, a violent family could also impact children's development by causing anxiety on children's daily performance in schools. Because of anxiety, children can get irritated with their surroundings and thus damage the peace in a family or home atmosphere. The study "Child and Adolescent Social-Emotional Development Within the Context of School" emphasized on how social emotional development impact children's academic outcomes [10]. To test the safety level of children, researchers Ann M. Aviles and her colleagues conducted an experiment and randomly selected a number of participants in different environments such as home, community, and school and observed how the participants behaved during the experiment. The experiment results showed that participants in schools are more interactive because schools contained the professional

resources on emotional management and social interaction [10]. According to Lee's research, students can be more self-conscious with professional guidance in schools [8]. Overall, emotion can impact children negatively, so this case study suggests the experts to pay more attention on children's mental health.

Furthermore, the study "History of Maltreatment and Mental Health Problems in Foster Children: A Review of the Literature, researchers Sylvia H. Oswald, Kathrina Heil, and Lutz Goldback emphasized on children's mental health under the following aspect: neglect, domestic violence, physical abuse, or sexual abuse"[4] more specifically in different possible types of family atmosphere [3, 4]. During the study, researchers Sylvia and her colleagues selected different databases on the theme of psychology and psychiatric with several different researching sources Medline, PsychInfo, PSYINDEXplus, and SCOPUS and they also focused on the term "foster care," "abuse," "maltreatment," "neglect," and "mental health" as a data comparison [4]. In addition, they also randomly selected a time range from 1998–2009 as another measurement. Given the numbers 1508 articles were about "abuse", 439 were about "Maltreatment," 531 were for the theme "neglect", and 612 were for the theme "mental health," it seems clear that violent families are still existing in the world [4]. Overall, this analysis helps audiences to understand that long term action in neglecting, abusing, and maltreating can cause mental health issues on children and criticizes the shortage of resources on supporting violent families with their difficulties.

For more information, this study was conducted on the theme "How problem-solving ability and regiment adherence help children and adolescence to make proper decisions." The passion of researching motivated the researchers in selecting 67 children with Insulin-dependent diabetes mellifluous at ages of 8–17 years old from two different regions in the U.S to participate in this study [7]. The results showed that the individuals with IDDM were more struggled with decision making [7].

Unfortunately, the data about the domestic violence cases show that there are still many victims have not received protection yet although officials are working hard to discover more cases. If children cannot receive professional support on time, they could hardly make right decisions and cause further safety issues in public. However, the challenge about children's mental trauma is that mental trauma is not always seen on appearance: Many children could pretend to be happy in public, but they could feel an intense pain when they are alone. Perhaps children are afraid of being revenged, they are less likely to share their traumatic experience with others. Therefore, children's mental health is a significant aspect for expert to take care of.

2.3 Children's Language Skill Under Domestic Violence

For more information, children's language disorder is often depended on their family atmosphere. For instance, the study "Language Disorders in the Victims of Domestic Violence in Children's Home" emphasized on whether a violent family atmosphere could bring children language difficulties [11]. Researcher Martha Cobos-Cali and her colleagues selected 104 participants and divided them into two groups: A group of children have experienced domestic violence and the other group have never experienced

domestic violence. The test method included metalinguistic, oral, written comprehension, and expression skills and the result showed that a violent family environment is a crucial factor of harming children's development [11].

In addition, Li emphasized on the relationships between family investment and physical capital in children's second language learning in his study and tested his hypothesis in the following experiment: He used four Chinese families in two different neighborhoods in University town in Western Canada as a sample [3]. Two fathers in these families were graduate students in a local university and two fathers were restaurant owners in an inner city. He observed these families based on their language environment, their interactions with their own children, and their interactions with the people in their community for eight months. He observed these participants in different places and every observation lasted for two or three hours and the experiment result demonstrated that higher parental education backgrounds, career categories can support children learn second language learning in a faster way and it displayed a major difference in social stereotype in China and Canada [3].

One another scientific study "The Effects of Early Neglect on Cognitive, Language, and Behavioral Functioning in Childhood" used the term "cognitive development" to describe children's comprehensive development and the researcher Eve. G. Spratt and his coworkers stated that neglect would impact children's development negatively [5]. To test their hypothesis, Dr. Spratt and his colleagues divided 60 children into three groups: Children with neglect history, adopted children from international institution and they were aged from three to ten years old, with the testing atmosphere of cognitive functioning, language functioning, parenting stress level, and Child Maltreatment – Neglect [5]. Overall, the experiment results demonstrated that children had a history of neglect are likely to have language disability and their disability would impact their future development [5].

Given the information of this study, children's language skill is related to social and emotion aspect as it is discussed in previous research. For instance, the study "How problem-solving ability and regiment adherence help children and adolescence to make proper decisions" elaborated on how domestic violence can cause children have difficulty on expressing themselves and difficulty on emotion management [7]. When children start to encounter expression difficulty and emotional management, they are likely to become aggressive in public places and therefore they speak inappropriate languages. Many people would think that it is inappropriate for children to speak aggressive languages in their lives, but children can hardly escape from a violent growing atmosphere. Similarly, Spratt's study demonstrates that language is a part of social and emotion. It is not a simple task to treat children by merely telling them to watch their language, but to provide them with professional guidance.

3 Discussion

3.1 Deeper Understanding About Victims of Domestic Violence

In the study "Ethical and safe: Research with Children About Domestic Violence," researcher Anita Morris and his colleagues described the importance of exploring the cause of domestic violence on children and follow up some legal policies, which was

known for “ethical planning” [17]. “Ethical planning” included methodologies, context, and if there is a name for the form of violence and the consent procedures, confidentiality and the development of protocols for disclosure, distress, safety and risk assessment, which support ethical and safe research with children. For instance, children are being protected by the children protection service could expose to further abuse if their parents realize that their inhuman actions are revealed [17]. Before researchers started their research, they are required to form a team called “research ethics committees” and it was known as “REC.” REC was responsible for understanding the potential risk and challenges in children's relationships with their families and what they have suffered in their lives in this study [17]. After understanding what to research and understand the legal policies, REC started to focus on the theme of “ethical issues and the provision or lack of adequate care and protection of children.” For instance, REC interviewed children from age 8–18 years old about their experience of being abused from a counseling conference. REC did not force the children to speak in front of them, but offered them a peaceful space to say what they want to say instead. Not only receiving permission from children themselves, but REC also have to get the permission from children's parents for interviews. With a declaration on the motivation of research for children and their parents, children and their parents will understand that the consequences of domestic violence and the value of love. The significant goal for this experiment is to ensure that children realize that there are still people loving and caring about them.

In one another instance, REC chose to follow the disciplines of passive consent procedure to interview 2077 school children. Similarly, REC also selected 117 children as a sample but the children rejected to identify themselves to the REC so the REC had to asked the children's parents for permission. While REC was exploring more information about their trauma on being abused, REC also shared their distress and disclosure during their observation: Many children participants became quiet, looked distracted, or focused on something else in the room and REC realized that their experiment might have brought up the sad memories in which they would never wanted to do so. In addition, REC realized that disclosure was an effective way that could guide children to be open minded with sharing their stories. However, the goal of “disclosure” is not to have children to finish sharing their traumatic stories at one, but to share them in the strategy of “step-by-step.” With a proper listening attitude, children gradually gained the courage to see justice for themselves [17].

Overall, ethical research can help children to feel safe from experiencing trauma and help them to see that there will still be individuals paying attention to their unhealthy growth and listening to their perspectives. Also, ethical research help the researchers to understand more about the severity of “domestic violence” and motivated them in finding out proper solutions.

4 Conclusion

Given the information of this study, many people see “abuse” as an entertainment and it is sad to see that children become victims of domestic violence. If domestic violence became a long-turn circumstance, children would have been impacted by social, emotional, and linguistic aspect. The data in this study did not contain all the victims of

domestic violence and there are more children are experiencing domestic violence in fact. Therefore, it is the time for everyone to think about their education quality on their children. In nowadays, the world is rarely suffering from wars anymore and people own their healthy lifestyle. Perhaps they do not understand their children's perspective and many times they blame their children exaggeratedly. Childhood is always a significant start point of learning different knowledge, make new friends, and find their future. Children are the individuals under 18, so it is not the legal age for them to take responsibilities yet. However, parents are responsible for guiding their children to understand the term "responsibility" and learn to take responsibilities. Children can grow effectively only if their parents can provide a safe and happy living atmosphere.

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