

Domestic Violence in Makoni District of Manicaland Zimbabwe (2000-2010)

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Abstract:-The topic was domestic violence and its impact on children. The aim was to investigate impact of domestic violence on the children in schools. The objective of the study was to examine how domestic violence affects learning of children and assess the long term impact of domestic violence on the children even after school. Some of the research questions include how far does domestic violence affect children in their learning processes, to what extent does domestic violence have long term impact on children in their adult lives. The study adopted qualitative research design. The reason for the choice being that the study discussed feelings and emotions hence these could not be quantified. The respondents were sampled through purposive and the researcher used questionnaires and interviews to collect information from the respondents. The findings indicate that domestic violence is extremely common and has negatively affected both the parents and the children. The children are the worst affected both at school, socially and the impact is long term. The domestic violence has led to children both boys and girls to leave their homes in Makoni District and have resorted to prostitution, drug abuse, and other anti-social activities. This study concludes that schools in the district have lost children due to pregnancies, general drop out from schools. The department of Social Welfare has admitted that the challenges caused by economic meltdown and eviction of commercial farms in the district have completed matters and currently the government has no capacity to handle the challenges. This study therefore recommends government increases budgets for the Ministries of Health and Child Care, Ministry of Labour and Social Services as well as to Ministry of Small to Medium Enterprises so that these can assist several thousands of people who are affected in the district. In addition, the study recommends that Government should work with NGOs to try and improve the situation which is so dire since it has no capacity to handle the situation alone.

Key Words: children, domestic violence, impact

Operational Definitions

Battered spouse is a person who is physically and emotionally abused by the other marriage spouse.

Dissolution refers to a legal way to end a marriage in which the marriage partners decide the conditions for the settlement.

Drug abuse is an overdose of beneficial drugs or the misuse of potentially dangerous drugs. Communication is defined as the verbal and non-verbal sharing of ideas, information and feelings. It can also be defined as a two-way street - "a giving or exchanging of information." **Family** is an institution made up of individuals who by birth, adoption, or marriage or declared commitment share deep personal connections.

Separation is an agreement between married individuals (spouses) to live apart yet remain married, normally when the couple are experiencing problems which they attempt to solve during the separation.

Child abuse refers to maltreatment of children by parents, guardians or members of the society.

Sexual abuse refers to sexual contact between a minor (or a developmentally immature person) and a developmentally mature person regardless of kinship relationship.

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper seeks to discuss the issues of domestic violence and how it affects children socially, economically and cognitively as they go to educational institutions. Ultimately, it will look into long term impact of these children when they are grown up adults.

II. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Domestic violence is not exactly a new phenomenon. It has been a very common here in Zimbabwe and the whole of Southern Africa. The major reason being that family life structure/unity has been affected mainly by civil wars, economic structural adjustment programs, droughts, political instability and underperforming economies.

According to UNDP Report 2002 Volume 1 No. 3, this problem has been exacerbated in Zimbabwe by the current economic, social and political developments. This problem is so widespread in Makoni District area of Rusape in Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe. The main reason is that family breakup due to excessive predicaments, compounded by Fast Track Land Reform program. According to the Herald 25/04/02, the Financial gazette 29/04/02, most farm workers have not benefited from the current land reform program.

The area Makoni District is a high density area with over 80% unemployment, poor, overcrowded accommodation in townships of Rusape, Nyazura and Headlands. To make matters worse, the area is surrounded by farms on one side. These farms have been designated for resettlement through the fast trek land reform, resulting in further unemployment. On the other side, the area is surrounded by communal areas and fast track land resettlement areas. There is minimum or no employment and income generating programs are no able to assist the families to make a decent living. The harsh

economic environment has further compounded the problem which is already the control of authorities.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study came under scrutiny because there is rampant domestic violence in society in particular in the Makoni District of Rusape. Many people are wondering whether the family as a socialization agent is failing in its roles of moulding the family ties and sort out problems of proper rearing of children.

The majority of people are not employed, unemployed, and they are resorting to alcoholism. There are so many broken families and the children are ultimately losers in this context. There have been very serious matters of domestic violence as a result of the above mentioned factors. The violence has negatively affected children's social, emotional, educational wellbeing.

IV. RELATED LITERATURE

Causes of Family Violence

There are a number of reasons why there is family violence. There is no one explanation for all phenomenon. Violence can be defined in several ways. For the purpose of this this discussion, violence will be defined as a situation where quality of life is intentionally reduced both qualitatively and quantitatively such that life expectancy of that individuals is intentionally and negatively reduced. Forms of violence include psychological, cultural, direct and structural violence and these can be perpetrated to individuals differently or simultaneously.

4.1 Marriage –like poles

Problems arise in the families due to a number of problems. There is no one factor which causes these problems. According to Bacchiochi(1991), when a couple marries, “two cultures come together. Each brings to the marriage (his/her) their different upbringing, views, habits, temperament and expectations and cultural traits. In view of the above raised issues, failure to adjust by any one of the marriage partners result in a cracked foundation of the marriage and the effects will be disastrous particularly for the spouses and the children.

In the same vain, American Institute of Family Therapy (1997) has strongly argued that in many cases marriages do fail mainly due to the fact that couples are psychologically incompatible and will not therefore adjust to the new demands of living together in intimate marital relationship and all the responsibilities associated with marriage institution. The end result is violence in one form or the other.

This researcher believes that to avoid the above problems individuals need to study each other before they make serious marriage commitment. Brunt (1982) concurs with the views expressed above. He further argues that some conflicts may develop “when a husband fails to understand and lightens the burdens which may be overwhelming to his wife.”Another

family therapist, Sel (1981) while supporting the above views adds another dimension. He maintains that problems do arise in the family when a spouse is gradually incapacitated by a crippling disease. These unexpected trends of events are likely to cripple the marriage.

Jauncey quoted by Bacchiochi (1992:101) believes that disharmony in a family can be a result of psychological factors and he adds, “conflict in sexual relationship often reflects the attitudes, tensions and moods of the total relationship.”This researcher is of the opinion that the breakdown of the marriage relationship or its instability has far reaching consequences for the society. Therefore, it has to be avoided as much as possible and at all cost.

According to authorities in successful parenting, the home environment is crucial for the proper parenting and production of stable members of a society. Taking this view, Nancy van Pelt (1990:10) says the first six years of a child's life are very crucial to his development as “an emotionally secure and independent adult.”This follows that home environment created by parents when the children are young will have tremendous and lasting impact on a child's future.

This researcher does concur with Broone(1978) that family violence is not restricted to any particular social class, religion, race ethnic group or educational level. It is wrong to think that only black communities are the one which are violent. According to Coetzee (2006) violence takes place in any society and is triggered by numerous factors. Hence, it has nothing racial about it. He goes further that even in affluent South African Suburbs, there is a lot of violence and only that it is camouflaged by high durawalls and security and the outsides have no idea of what takes place inside those durawalls. This view is further supported by Potgieter (2014)who argues that statistics from South African Police Serviceshows many statistics that portray violence in affluent areas. He goes further to argue that violence in poor communities is exacerbated by poverty and unemployment which makes life hellish for all and the people who are caught in between resort to violence as a way of resolving conflicts.

4.2 Communication

Communication has been defined as verbal or non- verbal sharing of ideas, information and feelings with the information being understood by both the speaker and the recipient. It is very important that parents and children develop effective communication network systems within the family. Effective communication minimizes suspicions and improves relationships.

Laing(1964) notes that deficiencies in communication and parenting skills result in disturbed family behaviour. Writing on the same topic Wold(1981) says that communication enables family members to share one's knowledge and resolve family conflict and related problems. Wold goes on to communication is vital in that it does allow the family to “set goals, establish a power structure and effective division of

labour and avoid conflicts...” this researcher strongly supports the above views and also believes that conflicts can easily be avoided if people communicate within the family.

It has further been noted that family members who communicate well with each other tend to build strong family relationships. Therefore, without effective communication, no family can attain happiness and develop emotional attachment. It is necessary to ensure that both verbal and non-verbal communication is well developed. This researcher believes that home environment should be conducive for harmonious discussion. It does appear that most parents are not aware that their non-verbal communication does more communication to their children as these learn more through seeing. (Fieldings2007).

4.3 Divorce

Divorce has severe effects on children. It is critically necessary that parents avoid divorce at all costs. Van Pelt(1990) poses this question, “Do broken homes produce fractured children?”According to various research findings, the answer to this question is largely affirmative.

In a research carried out by White(1989), the results revealed that the younger the child, the more severe were the effects of divorce because “the younger child(ren) is the most dependent on his family for security and protection...”the results showed that children of different age group are affected in a number of ways although there are common effects. White’s conclusion was that children suffered “an acute crisis related to the loss of a parent and the turmoil of divorce as well as long term emotional problems that appeared later on.”It is the view of this of this writer that child development is severely handicapped.

In play therapy interviews conducted by Van Pelt(1990), it was observed that two and a half to three and a half olds experienced severe problems which in turn affected their development. It was not that the children’s play was “joyless” and that these children construed unsafe worlds inhabited which they lived and it shows that they were confused and appeared frightened.

DrF James Anthony quoted by Pelt (1990) quotes a child whose parents had divorced as saying:

I feel as if my mother and father are inside me and are fighting and then they are walking away from each other, breaking up my body so that I would go with them both, but if did that, of course I would die. I would be broken up.

I can only be a real person if they join together again.

The children are the losers in any divorce. They are not likely to win at all. Various research findings on divorce do indicate that children from divorced families have serious problems which will affect them in their future lives. UNICEF Research in Nairobi(1989) found that twenty-nine percent (29%) of those children who appeared to be making correct developmental progress did continue to “show intermittently a

sense of deprivation and feelings of sadness and resentment towards one of both parents.

Mlambo(2015) argues that children from broken families are clearly visible especially in primary schools and these ideas are further supported by Ezewu (1986) who maintains that symptoms of break families are visible through the children. This researcher can safely conclude by saying divorce is difficult enough for adults. Worse still, it has an even more devastating long term effects on the children. It is therefore essential that parents should do everything humanly possible to minimize the damage to the children. Furthermore, even in classes and performance of such children, it shows that things are not well. Class performance of such children is badly affected.(Mwamwenda 1998)

UNICEF Reports (1986) which is also supported by Mitchell etal (1987) argue further that separation, divorce and marriage dissolution create stress within the family and community. Generally, it is accepted that young children are affected most. The above is further supported by several authors who concur that divorce has tremendous negative effects of divorce on children. Mavis Hetherington etal writing in *The Journal of Adventist Education* October 2000: 28 on the above subject has this to say, “when parents’ divorce, most children struggle with emotional issues that may follow for years sometimes into adulthood... . Almost every child experiences a pervasive sense of loss accompanied by grief that may take many years to resolve...”

This writer contends that as a result, an individual’s past experiences, the abuse, individual are likely to abuse others in future. Other effects of divorce are that the children’s physical ad intellectual health and performance is greatly compromised. The findings of 1988 USA National Health interview survey correlates with the above views. Its findings indicate that 49% of the respondent children showed “antisocial behaviour, poor conflict, social withdrawal and dependency.”

Russell etal (1979) holds a different view. They argue that children have choices even those from violent homes area disgusted by their experiences and therefore may completely reject the use of violence.

4.5 Spouse Battering

There is a wide spread cases of spouse battering in Makoni District. Most victims are women. Traditionally, wives avoid washing dirty linen in public and are very reluctant in discussing their domestic problems.

This may effectively account for the fewer cases reported because, the less the number reported the higher the number of unrecorded cases. According Pedro Galcia (2016) with levels of education improving/increasing, women are getting aware of their rights on domestic violence and more so, the civil society is running campaign awareness in most rural areas and as a result, there are many reported cases and thus the dark figure is gradually reducing. Hence the continued

reporting at face value would imply that there is so much abuse yet it's the awareness of rights that has increased resulting in more reporting of abuse.

According to a research carried out in Albertina Province in 1987, forty-six percent of the respondents indicated knowledge of wife assaults among people they know. On the majority of cases, the victims did not report for fear of victimization or retaliation, while others felt that the police could do nothing about their situations.

What effect has spouse battering on children? Most researchers are united in that they agree that children exposed to marital violence such as spouse battering are at risk for the development psychological problems. Fantuzzo et al (1991) go further to say these problems include "anxiety, difficulties with social problems solving skills and low levels of social competence, low self-esteem..." Therefore, the future of such children is doomed to fail before they go any further.

Jewni(1947) cited in Goldin et al(1975) maintain that men have the right to beat their wives if the wives disobey or neglect any duty which is assigned to them. However, he says men must not cause injuries. Unfortunately, Jewni (1947) does not explain the long term effects this beating does to the children. Like many people, he fails to see the long effects that this bartering has on children. This researcher strongly believes that bartering sends the wrong signals to children that the only way of solving problems is bartering.

Maboreke(1986) is against spouse bartering and he argues that the legal position is therefore that violence against women is just as criminal as any other crime."Nothing good may come from unstable families. As a result, violence of any nature cannot be condoned. It therefore follows that if the family is stable; the infants are guaranteed a safe and secure early life and a stable future.

The Manica Post 19 September (2003:4) in an article entitled "Society is Shaped by the Family it Produces argues that "deviance in some societies is a result of unstable, disjointed and broken down families."One can thus deduce from the above statement that emotional disturbances leave children mentally unbalanced and it greatly influences their deviance.

4.6 Poverty

It is advisable that men and women should not shout at the other spouse or even beat them up especially in the presence of children. If this is done, the child(ren) will internalize this and take it to be the norm, if not the best way to deal with an errant spouse. Irene Jabangwe (2003) says, "fighting in the presence of children will lead them into being bully and aggressive and this is not what the society requires" This researcher believes that the society worry is that the children are being brought up under stressful environment and this will create serious problems in the future generations.

On the other hand, concrete aspects of poverty such as lack of money, substandard and overcrowded living conditions, high

crime rate, family disorganization are likely to trigger the onset of abuse. It has also been argued that such a background of serious poverty is more intimately related to neglect. Impoverished parents are not able to provide adequate basic necessities for their children. The result is involuntary neglect of the family. Kamau (2009) strongly feels that poverty negatively produces stress and stressed individuals do not make happy families.

4.7 Alcohol

According to James H Olto et al (1980) it is impossible to estimate how many families have been affected by alcohol. However, research findings have proved that alcoholism hits at the core of family life. It impacts negatively on the welfare of children in that if one or both parents are alcoholic, chances of child abuse and neglect increases. This researcher strongly believes that alcoholism not only affects alcoholics about their families, friends and those they come in contact with. Alcoholism may bring about helplessness to children who turn may be unable to participate effectively in the decision making process.

Poverty and alcoholism are closely related. White (2010) is the strong view that poverty can force individuals to take to alcohol to avoid responsibility. The argument being that individuals think will escape from their worries. Other scholars such as Coetzee (2012) is of the view that alcohol has terrible on family peace and wellbeing of the family. Alcohol and violence are inseparable and have negative effects on children especially the young ones even those in the teenager group are also affected. Alcohol reduces savings that are meant to benefit family members. The resources

V. METHODOLOGY

The researcher used a number of methods in order to establish the extent of family violence in Makoni District in Manicaland Province. It is believed that by nature of the topic –family violence, a number of methods have been used in order to collect sufficient data. Due to political intolerance in Rusape area, most families are not that open for a number of reasons which include fear of victimisation, reprisals as well as fear of unknown.

Qualitative research is "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (Strauss and Cobin: 1990).

This researcher adopted the use of this design because qualitative design seeks illumination, understanding and extrapolation to similar situations. In addition, qualitative research seeks to gain a holistic view of social life through the study of people in natural settings. It goes further to captures expressive information about beliefs, values, feelings, and motivations that underlie behaviors.

Qualitative research methods were used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is known; qualitative research can be used to gain new perspectives about that

which is already known. This approach enabled this researcher to gain empathic understanding of social phenomena. It further enabled facilitation and recognition of subjective aspects of human behaviour and experiences, promotes the development of insights into group's lifestyles and experiences. Accordingly, qualitative research offers rich, varied strategies and methods for investigating social reality such as the issues of domestic under investigation. Qualitative research involves paying attention to the experiences, lives, and cultural worlds of a group;

The researcher mainly used purposive sampling in selecting the respondents. There were key informants who were able to refer the researcher to meet the affected families' children. The school heads, counsellors' social welfare and Better Schools programme were able to provide information which enabled the researcher to reach wide members of the community.

The researcher adopted purposive sampling as the respondents were sampled accordingly and it was also easy through relevant informants to get all the intended respondents. Some of the key informants are headmasters, nurses, counsellors and they had names of affected individuals.

The researcher adopted the use of questionnaires as a way of reaching those respondents who were sparsely populated. The questionnaire is less expensive to use in monetary terms and makes it possible to collect vast amounts of information from a wide geographical area.

The researcher administered all the questionnaires by himself save for those in wards 13, 14 and 16. These were administered with the assistance of the research assistants.

Besides questionnaires, this researcher also adopted the use of interviews. This enabled the respondents to really open up and express themselves on many issues that were asked. The respondents were able to answer questions and give explanations were necessary. In addition, the researcher was able to get more information from verbal and non-verbal language. The respondents were able to give all the information because they had been assured of confidentiality by the researcher. Where they did not want their names to be published they did indicate it clearly.

VI. FINDINGS

The researcher intends to mainly use written descriptions in presenting the findings of the research. Once in a while information will be presented in a tabular form. Furthermore, this researcher will integrate several methods of presentation of data from views given by police officers and or social welfare workers, and discuss the ideas, showing familiarities and differences.

6.1 Communication

This researcher found out that many mothers belied that their children did not know what was going on when they did not communicate with their children. However, one shocking

finding of this research is that children are very much aware. Therefore, failure to talk to children about the situation(s) only served to reinforce the idea that violence was a shameful family secret. The effects of breakdown or lack of communication resulted in some children becoming very protective of either of their parents, while others became verbally and physically abusive too.

Furthermore, seventy-two percent of the respondents said lack of communication had serious impact on children as they don't develop communicative skills to communicate their feelings, fears or hopes. Thus, the majority of children were abused by the people related or close to them but never communicated this information, resulting in stress and other psychological problems. The other twenty percent of the respondents were of the view that lack of communication does not only affect children at home but in all aspects of human life. These children have problems at school where they are not able to express themselves because they are exposed to violence. The violence threatens their independence and their communication ability.

6.2 Spouse Bartering and Neglect

Sixty-seven percent of the respondents are of the strong view that spouse bartering has severe negative effects on both mothers and children. For mothers, the effects include low self-esteem, poor physical health as well as feelings of shame. This in turn affects mothers' capabilities of caring for and dealing with her children. Furthermore, spouse bartering incapacitates the mothers in their maternal duties.

The psychological effects in children are two-fold. Firstly, the parents are likely to abuse their children and also may lead to the neglect of the children by the abused spouse. Thus, family violence resulted in inadequate or dangerous child rearing practice. This was prevalent in Makoni District. Over seventy-eight percent attributed to children dropping out from primary and secondary schools in this district. The above view was corroborated by drop out figures obtained from the district education offices at Makoni District offices in Rusape.

These children who are neglected normally go into vending in Rusape roads, for girls, selling ware in flea markets, working as maids where they are paid very little. In addition, girls aged between 12 and 16 have gone into prostitution and loiter around BP Shell Rusape, Along Headlands and Chiendambuya Growth Points, where they are usually picked up by long distance truck drivers. These anti-social activities are on the rise. HIV –AIDS related cases are on the increased in Rusape.

According to a survey conducted by Rusape District Hospital Outreach programmes, there seem to be no solution in sight on this issue. There are more girls who are affected by this issue. More girls are affected. Rusape District (2015) statistics indicate that thirty percent of girls aged between nine to sixteen of years are severely affected by spouse bartering. The reasons attributed to this they are still very much dependent

on their parents. Furthermore, according to forty three percent of the respondents these are the people who are in the very formative stages of their lives and the dependency on parents and guidance is very critical.

As for boys, they spend the day pushing wheelbarrows carrying language for the shoppers who come to town. They do this to augment family income. What worries most is the effect of exposing children to harsh realities of life at such a tender age. In other parts of the district, they boys end up taking drugs as a refuge from the abusive families. According to Department of Social Services in Rusape, these boys are now committing petty crimes, as well as stock theft because they have nothing else that is keeping them positively busy.

The researcher established that selling of family property was very common and children were ejected into the cold thus exposing them to child abuse and prostitution. This is another form of domestic violence.

6.3 Poverty

According to Mr. Mudzingo of Makoni District Social Welfare Office, Makoni District has the largest number of victims of domestic violence after Chipinge District. In population terms, Makoni has a large population that is over 270 000. As a result, the poverty levels are extremely high and there are no industries that can absorb people from this district let alone other people from surrounding districts which are equally poor.

The only industry available is distribution network of Delta Corporation and a few local banks which have no capacity to absorb people as well. According to the District Administrator for Makoni, there is no industry to talk about in the district. Most retail outlets are even struggling to remain afloat because of the dire economic melt-down. He was supported by ZANU PF District Chairman who was of the strong view that problems of poverty are so serious such that there is no end in sight unless the economy suddenly improves which according to him it appears these challenges of poverty are here to stay.

In the same vein, the church pastors of Adventist Church, Roman Catholic Church, Forward in Faith Ministries were of the same view that poverty levels had gone up and that there were a lot of school drop-outs especially at primary school going age of six to thirteen years. This was supported by all the headmasters who were interviewed who strongly maintained that even form one intakes were severely affected and there has been a drop-out rate of forty-seven percent for girls and thirty-six percent for boys respectively. The reasons attributed for this difference is that traditionally girls are sent to work as maids for those who can afford while according to findings a further fifteen percent are married off too early for their ages.

From the above it can be concluded that domestic violence negatively affected children especially the female gender. According to Zimbabwe Republic Police records in Rusape

the period 2000 up to 2015 witnessed thousands of domestic violence cases and these were affecting the young ones that is the teenagers who are now into drinking and prostitution.

In addition, the rights of boys are being violated by those who are into home sexual activities as they drug the boys and sexually abuse the boys. There is no issue of sexual consent in these matters. Police Chief Superintendent in Rusape Police said there are so many cases such that monthly, cases of abuse go beyond sixty-nine percent for girls below the age of seventeen while for boys it is around forty-nine to fifty three percent respectively.

This study established that domestic violence and poverty are both part of many people's lives and Zimbabwe is not an exception. Makoni District's case has shown that poverty is not a respecter of colour or tribe or ethnic differences. It is indeed relative and for the former White commercial farmers they are experiencing it too but they do not suffer the same domestic violence as their Black counter parts.

Seventy-two percent of the respondents do indicate that poverty has been directly linked to increased rates of domestic abuse and can affect any member of the family, as to who may become the aggressor. The linkages have been closely linked with downturns in the economy which has been directly come as a result of fast track land reform in Zimbabwe and this did not spare Makoni District. Regrettably cause cases of both domestic violence and poverty to increase. With the increasing financial problems around the world, health professionals and domestic violence experts cannot foresee the levels of violence in intimate partnerships improving anytime soon. Systemic and cultural changes are needed to increase intervention to reduce violence as an outlet, but solutions to poverty are also needed for long-term reductions in violence.

Although many people imagine poverty to only affect third world countries, more and more average families in developed nations are experiencing financial stress or facing events that cause extreme levels of poverty in terms of income compared to expenses. Families that are struggling with day to day income and expressing suffer from the strain. But, these suffering families will rarely attract the same media coverage as malnourished and impoverished people in other countries; nonetheless, the problems are real, and family violence often results.

The link between domestic violence and poverty and the cycle that results in many families is grim. When the domestic violence cycle begins under these circumstances, many families begin to live an eternal nightmare that seems unlikely to end. The family of an abusive partner that is also very poor, often see no way of escaping the continuous cycle. And the very financial trap that they are in, continues to cause more anger and lashing out.

Victims of domestic violence can be any age, gender, race or religion, and, unfortunately, if you are poor you are more

likely to experience the abuse. There are many different consequences to being poor and living with poverty on a daily basis, and one consequence is the far higher rate of instability and domestic violence.

Many of the women in domestic abuse relationships end up homeless due to the combination of domestic violence and poverty they have endured. Domestic violence shelters have seen a vast increase in the number of woman, and children, that have turned up on their doorstep.

Women suffering both domestic violence and poverty sometimes feel there is no housing and financial support to help them to move on with their lives. Both women and men perceive that there are barriers to entry and finding a suitable shelter. These perceived barriers are especially felt by those without financial ability to pay for help. In some cases intimate partners will return back to the abusive relationship, as they see no other way out.

6.4 Drug Abuse and Alcohol

This research discovered that because of neglect and abuse in the homes, children age between 13 and 16 ran away from their home. The boys started taking drugs and alcohol. They frequented drinking places in Vengere night clubs, Chiendambuya Growth Point, Murambinda Growth Point, Inyati Mine Compounds, Maparura and Kitsiyatota Bars as well as Dewerwi Growth Points. In these areas there is nothing economically active other than beer halls and prostitutions.

Social welfare office at both district and provincial level expressed serious regret over government failure to assist the domestic violence levels being perpetrated by various sectors of people and the government itself is equally guilty of being the main perpetrator of violence in the form of political violence which has direct relationship with other forms of violence.

According to former Director of Commercial Farmers Union, the surrounding farms threw over 100 000 farm works into joblessness in the district alone. This was the beginning of the challenges of violence

The girls have resorted to prostitution and early, unstable marriages especially from 2001. Statistics at Rusape Maternity Hospital do indicate that 67 cases of teenager pregnancies were attended to between 2000 February and June 2003. One third of these are below 16 years. The research findings indicate that these teenager mothers do harbour suicidal thoughts and actions because of the difficulties they are experiencing, most of them, 31% have resorted to drug dealing and shop lifting.

This research also discovered that both sexes within the 13 and 16 age group developed intense anger towards one or both parents. They showed isolation, loneliness and lack of self-esteem because of their inability to share stress (distress) and other psychological problems with parents and peers. In

addition, they developed extreme anxiety, restlessness and inability to concentrate especially with studies. These research findings were confirmed by teachers at the schools in Vengere.

6.5 Effects of Divorce

This research found out that of the children whose have parents separated or divorced, 15 % formed alliance with one of the parents. Losing spouses in divorce cases tended to force children to spy on their behalf on the activities of the other. Most of the children interviewed said they strongly resented such tasks because they were “painful, burdensome, hideous and humiliating.” Children never recovered from the effects of divorce. Divorce of parents can be likened to tearing a child apart.

In addition to addressing the issues with adult partners living in these situations involving poverty and violence, the children in these circumstances must be addressed with appropriate protections. According to findings in Makoni District, more often than not, the children from violent families are forgotten and left to cope on their own, especially where good social services systems are not in place.

The findings do indicate that exclusion of children from psycho social processes usually leads to depression, self-harming, and violence as they try to cope with their feelings. The family abuse will then be passed down through many generations as the children grow up to become abusive themselves.

Children of families with systemic domestic abuse grow to believe that abuse is normal, and what all families do to control one another. Often families from poverty will only associate with other families in the same situation as themselves. These negative community connections will reinforce and magnify the fact that everyone suffers in the same way, and that domestic violence is not unusual, but accepted.

The education and support systems need to be improve in all of our global communities to provide services to families that include children and enable children to escape the domestic violence cycle. With better understanding and the love given by a community of resources, children can learn that the combination of domestic violence and poverty together is not a normal or necessary as a part of life.

Children that are raised in households with both domestic violence and poverty are very likely to abuse others due to the environment they live in. This is an unacceptable consequence. Other terrible consequences also flow from spending childhood in an abusive home. The education of these children will generally be of a lower standard, and many such children grow up without the ability to read and write or communicate clearly.

Later in life, if any employment is found by these children as they become adults, the jobs will often be very basic, for

minimal wage, and often degrading. This plight of poverty from being unemployable in better occupations can lead young people to resignation from feeling purpose for life and feeling as if nothing they do will get them out of the situation they have found themselves in.

Poverty and the strains that accompany it can make the people living in a poor household feel frustrated, useless, angry, and inadequate. Unfortunately, it is often the other family members who are the outlet for this anger, and through violence a partner prone to aggression and control makes themselves feel better. Often the domestic violence is kept quiet, and the abuser will be full of remorse after every outburst. The wives will blame themselves for the violence, claiming they are not doing enough, or not being supportive of their mate. The environment creates a vicious cycle that many women and men find it difficult to escape from. Going to major cities such as Harare and Mutare or Bulawayo it is even worse and a complete nightmare.

If a woman suffering from domestic violence and poverty does manage to escape, they often face many different problems, and struggles in their future. The physiological effects of the violence may destroy any self-confidence the woman has. This can lead to them not being able to attend a job on a regular basis. According to the research findings, over 70% of women do not ever report their abuse, making it very hard to stop the problem. Without the correct support, and financial network, often women who suffer from domestic violence will drift from one abusive relationship to another.

There needs to be a larger financial support system to allow people who are suffering with domestic violence to be able to break the domestic violence cycle. For very strong women there are several different steps they can take, however, many women live in fear or financial distress and feel they can't leave. For these women it is hard for them to know what policies, and support would assist them in breaking free. Although the safe houses and support networks that are currently in place are invaluable, these programs rarely offer sufficient financial support to help abused women to move forward, and improve their way of life after the initial few weeks or months.

6.6 Negative Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

According to eighty-one percent of the respondents, domestic violence has serious negative on children both at school and in the community. Problems of Fast track land reforms have exacerbated children's risk of exposure to domestic violence ever since 2000 up to date. ZimStat (2014) do show that 75% of domestic violence cases involve women victims of male partners. Matters do worsen because the children of these women often witness the domestic violence.

In this context witnessing means seeing the exact or actual incidents of physical/and or sexual abuse. It can also entail listening or hearing threats or fighting noises from the same room or another room. Furthermore, these children also

witness or observe the aftermath of physical abuse such as blood, bruises, tears, torn clothing, and broken items. In the final analysis children are pretty aware of the tension in the home such as their mother's fearfulness when the abuser's car pulls into the driveway.

According to seventy-three percent of Social workers and headmasters interviewed by the researcher, children who are exposed to battering become fearful and anxious. They are always on guard, watching and waiting for the next event to occur. They are uncertain and never know what usually triggers the abuse, and therefore, they never felt safe at all. They are always worried for themselves, their mother, and their siblings. They may feel worthless and powerless. According to the respondents, it is this fear and anxiety that drives them into alcohol and into homelessness.

Children who grow up with abuse are expected to keep the family secret, sometimes not even talking to each other about the abuse. Children from abusive homes can look fine to the outside world, but inside they are in terrible pain. Their families are chaotic and crazy. They may blame themselves for the abuse thinking if they had not done or said a particular thing, the abuse would not have occurred.

At school the students have no sense of self-esteem. They may also become angry at their siblings or their mother for triggering the abuse. They may feel rage, embarrassment, and humiliation. In other words, domestic violence disempowers them and reduces the sentimental power.

Children of abuse feel isolated and vulnerable. They are starved for attention, affection and approval. Because mom is struggling to survive, she is often not present for her children. Because dad is so consumed with controlling everyone, he also is not present for his children. These children become physically, emotionally and psychologically abandoned. In view of this, these children have not been able to excel at school and cannot even express themselves well.

According to the findings of this research, children exposed to domestic violence show a wide range of emotional responses especially if children do witness domestic violence. The emotional responses include fear, guilt, shame, sleep disturbances, sadness, depression, and anger this is directed at both the abuser for the violence and at the mother or support systems which fail to assist them or which are unable to prevent the violence.

In addition, physical responses may include stomach-aches and/or headaches, bedwetting, and loss of ability to concentrate. Some children may also experience physical or sexual abuse or neglect. Others may be injured while trying to intervene on behalf of their mother or a sibling.

According to Counsellors interviewed, behavioural responses of children who witness domestic violence come in many forms may include acting out, withdrawal, or anxiousness to please. The children may exhibit signs of anxiety and have a short attention span which may result in poor school

performance and attendance. They may experience developmental delays in speech, motor or cognitive skills. They may also use violence to express themselves displaying increased aggression with peers or mother. They can become self-injuring.

According to Chief Inspector of Rusape Police Station, domestic violence has long term impact. It does not matter whether or not children were physically abused, they usually suffered emotional and psychological trauma from living in homes where their fathers abuse their mothers. Children whose mothers are abused are denied the kind of home life that fosters healthy development. Those children who grow up observing their mothers being abused, in particular by their fathers, grow up with a role model of intimate relationships in which one person uses intimidation and violence over the other person to get their way. Because children have a natural tendency to identify with strength, they may ally themselves with the abuser and lose respect for their seemingly helpless mother. Abusers typically play into this by putting the mother down in front of her children and telling them that their mother is “crazy” or “stupid” and that they do not have to listen to her. Seeing their mothers treated with enormous disrespect, teaches children that they can disrespect women the way their fathers do.

All headmasters interviewed by this researcher, strongly believe that children who were raised in abusive homes learn that violence is an effective way to resolve conflicts and problems. They may replicate the violence they witnessed as children in their teen and adult relationships and parenting experiences. Boys who witness their mothers’ abuse are more likely to batter their female partners as adults than boys raised in non-violent homes. For girls, adolescence may result in the belief that threats and violence are the norm in relationships.

Teachers interviewed strongly maintained that children from violent homes have higher risks of alcohol/drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, and juvenile delinquency. Witnessing domestic violence is the single best predictor of juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. It is also the number one reason children run away.

VII. CONCLUSION

The findings do conclude that children’s greatest need is that two parents who have them, but two parents who love each other and them. Abuse of any nature, be it sexual, physical, separation of parents, divorce, spouse bartering affect children of different ages differently and have long lasting social effects on children. They develop warped, personalities and fractured, adulterated society. Pelt (1990) supports this assertion by saying that the “mother as a teacher is responsible for other areas of social development...The first years of a child’s life are crucial to his or her development as an emotionally secure and independent adult.

This research also conclude that home atmosphere created by the parents will have a tremendous impact on their future. The

findings indicate that society’s future is very uncertain. The family as an institution has failed to solve problems. The state has equally failed to carry out its responsibilities. The disintegration of the extended family in Zimbabwe has created a number of problems which are beyond the control of anyone. Government cannot solve problems affecting families regardless of the amount of money used. The situation thought has been unwittingly compounded by some government actions and policies, such as the Fast Track Land Reform. It has led to more problems than solutions as it affects the family setting and its economic base.

The findings do conclude that poverty to only affect more families in the district as all the people are going through or are experiencing financial stress or facing events that cause extreme levels of poverty in terms of income compared to expenses. Families that are struggling with day to day income and expressing suffer from the strain. However, the researcher noted that these suffering families will rarely attract the same media coverage as malnourished and impoverished people in other more urban or affluent districts.

The link between domestic violence and poverty and the cycle that results in many families is grim. When the domestic violence cycle begins under these circumstances, many families begin to live an eternal nightmare that seems unlikely to end. Victims of domestic violence can be any age, gender, race or religion, and, unfortunately, if you are poor you are more likely to experience the abuse. There are many different consequences to being poor and living with poverty on a daily basis, and one consequence is the far higher rate of instability and domestic violence.

Many of the women in domestic abuse relationships end up hopeless and homeless due to the combination of domestic violence and poverty they have endured. Unfortunately, Makoni District has no domestic violence shelters to assist have seen a vast increase in the number of woman, and children, that have turned up on their doorstep.

Women suffering both domestic violence and poverty sometimes feel there is no housing and financial support to help them to move on with their lives. Both women and men perceive that there are barriers to entry and finding a suitable shelter. These perceived barriers are especially felt by those without financial ability to pay for help. In some cases, intimate partners will return back to the abusive relationship, as they see no other way out.

The study notes that domestic violence has dramatic consequences for the entire community. Although the term usually involves violence between two cohabiting adults, this terminology may also include child abuse, and for this reason, some researchers prefer the term partner violence or family violence.

The study concludes that the child does not need to observe the aggression in order to be affected by it. It came out that any child who watched their parents assault each other,

overheard an incident of aggression, saw bruises, or that experienced its aftermath when interacting with his or her parents, the child is exposed to violence.

Violent families constitute a serious risk factor for good developmental outcomes in children especially in educational matters and proper social adjustments. This research results do not imply that all children exposed to partner violence will experience problems, as many are capable of facing these stressful events adequately.

Assessment of school performance in students exposed to domestic violence is vital, since being a good student is a strong protective mechanism. A battered woman is one who is psychologically, physically, and sexually abused by a man in an intimate relationship, without the batterer's regard for the woman's rights, in order to coerce her into a perpetual cycle of demeaning servitude. Battered Wife Syndrome results from the accumulating stress affecting battered women. A lack of decision making, general incompetence, and an inability to weigh the costs and benefits of a situation are typical of Battered Wife Syndrome.

This study found that one of the major psychological effects is the battered women's inability to leave the relationship. This inability stems from a feeling of learned helplessness. This feeling derives from repeat beatings that forces battered women into a mental state of submission, anxiety, and depression.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the research findings, this researcher would like to draw the following recommendations which if taken into consideration will go a long way in helping solve the problem of family violence:

- ✚ Communication should be improved in the homes and communities to ensure that if children are abused they can readily speak up and say the problems affecting them. This also entails support systems have to be availed to those who are affected by domestic violence.
- ✚ There is need for government to improve employment opportunities to enhance better social living conditions to reduce poverty which has ripple effect on poverty and hence causing domestic violence. Furthermore, it is recommended that government should introduce social grants systems to assist those former farm workers, the vulnerable and the sick.
- ✚ The budgetary allocation to social services ministries such as Ministry of Labour and Social Services, Health and Child Care, National Housing should be increased to cater for the numerous people who are in need of basic survival.
- ✚ Churches should be seriously involved in addressing social challenges affecting the people from drug consumption, alcoholism, prostitution and many

other social ices. This is critical because government alone has no expertise and resources to assist in this regard.

- ✚ Furthermore, it is recommended that the government should work with NGOs in establishing counselling centres to assist the majority of affected in this district. This recommendation has come in light of many cases that need post traumatic counselling that has arisen as a result of the financial challenges affecting this Makoni District.
- ✚ The government must involve other stake holders in particular Non-Governmental Organisations and Better School Programme in Makoni and nationwide as well as Teachers Unions in order to improve the welfare of children.
- ✚ The media, especially broadcasting/electronic, should play an active and significant role in enlightening long term effects of domestic violence on children.

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