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Study Title: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY ON CHILD ABUSE IN SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Children and women are the most vulnerable group of the human species. According to the definition of the United Nation’s Convention on Rights, a child is a human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child.

Due to the immaturity and innocent nature they can be persuaded to take part in immoral activities and many such instances they are forced or cheated mostly by persons known or close to the family. Most incidents are reported from remote villages and disturbed families. There are physical and mental harassments against children. The recruitment of children as child soldiers, Child sex tourism, malnutrition, rape and murders are mostly occurring among them.

In 1999, the National Child Protection Authority was established to address child abuse in Sri Lanka. The Authority is made up of local monitoring and child protection committees. However, child abuse in Sri Lanka is still remains.

Research problem: What factors are mostly affected to child abuse?

Objectives: There are three objectives in this study.

1. To identify the nature of victimized children
2. To explore reasons of child abuse
3. To find out suitable implications to reduce child abuse.

Methodology: This was a descriptive qualitative research based on Abraham Maslow’s Need Theory. Survey method and case study method were used as the main research methods. Survey method was used to collect the basic information of the sample. Semi structured questionnaire and unstructured interviews has used to collect primary data.

Study Area and Sample: Thirty Children from the Salvation Army and twenty convicted prisoners from Welikada Prison in Sri Lanka. Sampling technique was purposive method in non-probability sampling theory.

Findings: The study reveals the main factors that affects to child abuse as sociological, biological, mental and environmental issues. There are some reasons as poverty, social isolation, less caring, family problems and abnormal behavior. Rehabilitation programs are being discussed for victims as well as convicted prisoners.

Key Words: Child abuse, Victimized children, Convicted prisoners