

## **An Exploration of Parenting By Perpetrator Fathers and Victim Mothers in the Context of Domestic Violence**

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**Abstract :** Research on parenting of both perpetrators and victims of domestic violence (DV) is growing but limited. Further, much of this research in the Asian context is limited to explorations of victim mothers' parenting capacities, not shedding much light on the parenting of the perpetrator fathers. The current qualitative study aimed to explore how both the perpetrators and victims of DV engaged in parenting in the Sri Lankan cultural context. Twenty case studies were conducted with a sample of help-seeking women aged 20 to 40 years representing working to upper-middle social class. Participants have interviewed about their own as well as their partners' parenting behaviors. The majority of women reported that their partners were often aggressive, controlling and authoritarian, less consistent, and engaged in a variety of manipulative behaviors intending to harm the relationship between their child and them. Further, victim mothers' styles of parenting and authority as parents have been severely undermined by their partners through frequent criticism, ridicule, and insulting in front of the children. As a result, mothers experienced great difficulty specifically trying to discipline their adolescent children as the children have started to disregard the mothers' authority. Most of the children also have shown treatment similar to that of their fathers', treating the mother as a personal servant not worthy of being listened to, thereby increasing the mothers' parenting stress. The mothers were often blamed and held responsible for the problems of the children by their partners, encouraging the children to disrespect and blame the mother for their problems leading them to take the side of the father who had more power. Findings are similar to those of the western context. This study highlights the intersection between domestic violence and parenting, and specific implications and recommendations for DV service providers are offered.

**Keywords :** parenting, domestic violence, impact, children

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