DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN A CRUEL FORM OF BEHAVIOR WITH CHILDREN: SOME PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS

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Abstract. The problem of domestic violence in the form of child abuse is analyzed. It was determined that children are one of the most vulnerable segments of the population against domestic violence. According to the provisions of Part 1 of Art. 126-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, it is noted that as a criminal act domestic violence can be committed in three forms: physical violence, psychological violence, economic violence. In the article, domestic violence in the form of child abuse is considered precisely from the point of view of these three specified forms. The issue of psychological violence as a form of domestic violence is analyzed in more details. Emphasis is placed on the problem of non-recognition by the victim of a child witness (eyewitness) of cruel treatment. It was concluded that usually such a child receives a psychological trauma (its manifestations may be different, depending on the age, specific circumstances of the commission of the offense), which entails causing damage to his mental health. Therefore, the point of view regarding the need to recognize a child-witness (eyewitness) of domestic violence as the person against whom domestic violence in the form of psychological violence.

Keywords: abuse, children, domestic violence, forms of domestic violence, psychological abuse.

Author contributions

The author made a full contribution to writing the article independently. The author independently selected the literature, analyzed it and drew conclusions.

Disclosure statement

The author does not have any competing financial, professional, or personal interests from other parties.

INTRODUCTION

In Ukraine, domestic violence is one of the four most frequently committed crimes. In the first months of the full-scale invasion of the russian federation (hereinafter referred to as rf) against Ukraine, there was a decrease in recorded cases of domestic violence compared to previous years. In particular, compared to the first half of 2021, in the first half of 2022 there were 27.5% fewer calls to the National Police of Ukraine regarding domestic violence. In the period from 01.01.2022 to 06.30.2022, the Prosecutor General's Office registered 56% fewer criminal proceedings in the context of domestic violence compared to the same period in 2021 (Zmysla 2022). However, if we look at the tendency of complaints about domestic violence throughout 2022, according to official data of the National Police of Ukraine, 244,381 complaints about domestic violence were received this year, which is 40% more than in the previous year (144,394) and 15% more than in 2020 (208,748) and 41% more than in 2019 (141,814) (Zmysla, 2023). In the first half of 2023, law enforcement officers recorded 40% more reports of domestic violence than in the same period of 2022 (More sexual violence ... 2023). So we see that the problem of domestic violence in the conditions of martial law, unfortunately, has

not lost its relevance. We should rather talk about the aggravation of the situation with domestic violence, because the armed aggression has significantly affected the rhythm of life, the prerequisites for stress resistance, which, of course, has a negative effect on people. Which, in particular, entails an aggravation of the situation of child abuse, neglect of their interests, there by causing serious harm to children's health, development and socialization, and in some cases, even endangering their lives.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Numerous works of scientists are devoted to the analysis of various problematic aspects of combating domestic violence against the least protected sections of the population (women and children). Thus, M. Havronyuk and O. Dudorov (2019) consider this problem through the prism of the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). The problems of preventing and countering domestic violence are devoted to the works of A. Blaga (Blaga et al, 2021). The works of L. Alekseev, K. Huseineva, and N. Maksimova are devoted to the issue of domestic violence against children. The relevance of the social and legal foundations of protecting children from violence in the family was studied by such scientists as R. Myronyuk, T. Spirina, B. Tsisar, Ya. Yurkiv.

The purpose of the article is to study some problematic aspects of domestic violence against children in the form of harsh treatment and a more detailed study of the issue of psychological violence against children.

METHOLOGY

To achieve the goal of the scientific work and to solve the tasks, general and special scientific methods of cognition were used: dialectical, systemic-structural, and the method of analysis and synthesis. With the application of the dialectical method, an objective and comprehensive knowledge of the legal reality, the definition of the legal reality, the essence of the phenomenon under investigation (in particular, the consideration of domestic violence in the form of child abuse as a negative social phenomenon, the definition of its signs) in the unity of its material content and legal form is ensured. The systemic-structural method made it possible to characterize the studied negative social phenomenon as a whole and to highlight those elements that are important for further work to combat domestic violence. The method of analysis and synthesis contributed to the disclosure of the problem of recognition of a child who witnessed (eyewitness) domestic violence and received psychological trauma, not just as a witness (eyewitness) of a crime, but directly as a person against whom psychological violence was applied.

RESULTS

Children are the most unprotected category of citizens against domestic violence, as a rule it is seen that they can neither protect themselves nor seek help from law enforcement agencies or other persons. The reasons for this can be different, from not knowing where and how to turn to fear and shame. For example, according to statistical reporting data, in 2022, 71% of appeals regarding domestic violence came from persons who appealed in the interests of the victims. The rest of the reports received by the police are 21% of appeals from female victims, and only 10% of appeals from children (Zmysla, 2023).

Quite often, children suffer from domestic violence in families in the form of abuse. The World Health Organization defines child abuse as all forms of physical and emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation that lead to actual or potential harm to health, development or dignity of the child. There are four main types of abuse: neglect, physical abuse, psychological abuse, and sexual abuse (Gonzalez et al, 2023). It is interesting that in the experience of European countries five types of child abuse are distinguished. For example, in the Netherlands it is physical violence as all forms of physical violence; emotional or psychological abuse as an adult regularly scolds a child, treats him

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with disdain and hostility or intentionally scares him; physical neglect as a child does not receive the necessary care and attention; emotional or psychological neglect as a constant lack of positive attention to the child. Ignoring the child's need for love, warmth and security. This category also covers cases where children witness violence between their parents or guardians; sexual violence is sexual contact to which an adult forces a child (What is child ...). In accordance with the provisions of Art. 1 of the Law of Ukraine "On the Protection of Childhood" any form of physical, psychological, sexual or economic violence against a child, including domestic violence, as well as any illegal agreements regarding a child, are recognized as child abuse. including the recruitment, transfer, concealment, transfer or receipt of a child committed for the purpose of exploitation, using deception, blackmail or the child's vulnerability.

According to the provisions of Part 1 of Art. 126-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, domestic violence can manifest itself in three alternative forms: physical violence, psychological violence, economic violence. Sexual violence, in the context of Art. 126-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, goes beyond the limits of the specified forms and, if there are grounds, should qualify under articles 149, 152–156, 301, 302, 303 of the Criminal Code. So, if we are talking about domestic violence against a child in the form of cruel treatment, then within the limits of Art. 126-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, we understand exactly three forms of such violence as a manifestation of ill-treatment.

Physical violence as a form of domestic violence means slapping, kicking, pushing, pinching, whipping, biting, as well as illegal deprivation of liberty, beating, biting, inflicting bodily injuries of various degrees of severity, leaving in danger, not providing help to a person who is in danger for life, causing death, committing other crimes of a violent nature (Law of Ukraine On preventing and Combating Domestic Violence, Article 1). That is, we are talking about inflicting physical injuries, various physical injuries on the child by parents or persons who replace them, which harm the child's health, disrupt its development and even take life. These actions can take the form of beating, torture, pushing, punching, slapping, burning with hot objects, liquids, lit cigarettes, biting and using various objects as tools of abuse (Domestic violence against children ..., 2023). That is, physical violence manifests itself precisely in the physical impact on the organism (body) of the victim. However, such influence can occur with the help of not only mechanical, optical, electrical, but also chemical, biological or other factors, which can also be considered as a manifestation of physical violence. Therefore, the point of view that involving a child in the use of drugs, alcohol, offering him poisonous substances, or medical drugs that cause intoxication (for example, sleeping pills, not prescribed by a doctor) are also manifestations of physical violence is interesting (Domestic violence against children ..., 2023). It should not be forgotten that, as a rule, the use of physical violence against a child is accompanied by psychological violence.

Economic violence includes intentional deprivation of housing, food, clothing, other property, funds or documents or the ability to use them, leaving without care or concern, preventing the receipt of necessary treatment or rehabilitation services, prohibition to work, forced to work, prohibition to study and other offenses of an economic nature (Law of Ukraine On preventing and Combating Domestic Violence, Article 1). Children, as individuals who need care due to their age, are more likely to become victims of economic violence. In addition, there may be "non-standard" situations in which manifestations of economic violence against a child are possible, when the child becomes a victim of such violence. For example, as noted by O. Dudorov and M. Havronyuk, in cases where one of the child's parents, after the divorce, living separately, deliberately does not officially work in order to pay the minimum amount of alimony and at the same time avoids additional expenses for the child for a long time, such his actions can be considered as economic violence against the child and the ex-spouse. After all, according to the provisions of Art. 185 of the Family Code of Ukraine, the parent from whom alimony was awarded, as well as the parent to whom the demand for alimony was not submitted, are obliged to participate in additional expenses for the child caused by special circumstances (development the child's abilities, his illness, disability, etc.) (Dudorov & Khavronyuk, 2019). As a result of the actions of one of the parents, the quality of life of the child and the other parent with whom the child lives deteriorates.

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As for psychological violence, it includes verbal insults, threats, including against third parties, humiliation, harassment, intimidation, other actions aimed at limiting the will of a person, control in the reproductive sphere, if such actions or inaction caused the victim to fear for own safety or the safety of third parties, caused emotional insecurity, inability to protect oneself or harmed a person's mental health (Law of Ukraine On preventing and Combating Domestic Violence, Article 1). In the context of Art. 126-1 of the Criminal Code, scientists quite reasonably propose to interpret this type of violence broadly. It can be: a threat of physical violence; blackmail, i.e. a threat to divulge compromising or other information that the victim wishes to keep secret (for example, information about past convictions or the presence of a venereal disease), or to expose the person in compromising behavior, or to cause other harm (dismiss from work, divorce, deprive of means of livelihood, evict from home, take away a child, destroy property, cause harm to relatives or loved ones), etc.; intimidation with the aim of creating a favorable situation for oneself, putting the victim in a dependent position (for example, convincing the victim of the intention to sell her into slavery or to pimps to involve her in prostitution or subject her to gang rape) (Dudorov & Khavronyuk, 2019).

Along with the fact that it concerns the use of psychological violence against children, its understanding can be considered in an even broader sense. For example, in the context of the painful question, which has already been repeatedly raised by scientists and practitioners, regarding cases of non-recognition of a child who witnessed domestic violence as a victim. Unfortunately, there are many cases when a child witnesses the use of various forms of domestic violence against a family member (usually against the mother), but the law enforcement officers do not record the child as a victim at all. This approach, at least, contradicts the norms of the law, since a child who has suffered from domestic violence (victim child) is a person who has not reached the age of 18 and has experienced domestic violence in any form or has become a witness (eyewitness) of such violence (clause 2 Part 1, Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine "On Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence"). In addition, even an adult who has become a victim of domestic violence (for example, a mother) deliberately "hides" the fact that a child witnessed a crime, and therefore, the child remains "invisible" to the law enforcement system. An adult's reasons for this behavior can range from fear that child services or law enforcement will take the child away to indifference to the child's mental health. This behavior of adults creates an increase in the latency of domestic violence against children. Note that we must be aware that situations in which a child witnesses (evewitnesses) domestic violence in its various forms cause a very negative, painful effect on the child's psyche, and therefore, as one imagines, affect his mental health. According to the definition given in the WHO Charter, health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. This concept is multifaceted and determined by many factors, therefore there is no clear, universally accepted definition of the concept of "health". It is believed that health is a normal state of the body, which is characterized by optimal self-regulation, full coordination of the functioning of all organs and systems, balance between the body and the external environment in the absence of painful manifestations (Kharchenko et al, 2019). As for the understanding of mental health, it is commonly understood as a state of well-being in which a person can realize his own potential, cope with ordinary life stresses, work productively and fruitfully, and also contribute to the life of his community. From a legal point of view, mental health can be considered as a component of the general health of a natural person, that is, as a state of a person characterized by the integrity and coherence of all mental functions of the organism, which provide, first of all, an inner sense of subjective well-being mental comfort, as well as the ability to purposeful conscious activity and adequate forms of behavior (Stefanchuk, 2007). That is, the feeling of subjective mental comfort is natural for a person. A child who has become a witness (eyewitness) of domestic violence, without any doubt, loses a sense of security and mental comfort. We emphasize that children who witness domestic abuse are at risk of both short-term and long-term physical and mental health problems (Children affected by domestic ...; Gilbert et al, 2015; Plumptre, 2023). In terms of short-term effects, children in families where one parent has been abused may experience fear and anxiety. They can always be on guard, wondering when the next violent event will happen (Domestic Violence Roundtable...). Preschoolers who witness abuse may start doing things they used to do when they were younger, such as wetting the bed, thumb-sucking, increased crying, and whining. They may also

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have difficulty falling asleep; show signs of fear, such as stuttering or hiding; and there are signs of severe separation anxiety. School-aged children may feel guilty and blame themselves for the abuse. Domestic violence and abuse damage children's self-esteem. They may not participate in school activities or get good grades, have fewer friends than others, and get into trouble more often. Adolescents who witness abuse may engage in negative behaviors, such as fighting with family members or skipping school. They may also engage in risky behaviors such as unprotected sex and the use of alcohol or drugs. They may have low self-esteem and find it difficult to make friends. They may start fights or bully others and are more likely to get into trouble with the law (Effects of domestic ..., 2021). In the long term, according to American researchers, children who have witnessed domestic violence are at greater risk of repeating the cycle as adults, entering into abusive relationships or becoming abusers themselves. For example, a boy who sees his mother being abused is 10 times more likely to abuse his partner as an adult. A girl who grows up in a family where her father abuses her mother is more than six times more likely to be a victim of sexual violence than a girl who grows up in a family where there is no violence (Vargas et al, 2005). Children who witness or experience emotional, physical, or sexual abuse are at greater risk of health problems as adults. These can be mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety (Monnat & Chandler). Therefore, each child will be affected differently by the trauma of domestic violence. In the distant future, it is quite possible to assume that such a child will be prone, at a minimum, to antisocial behavior, and at the most, to criminal behavior.

Back in 2010, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe drew attention to the need for more specific actions regarding children who are witnesses of domestic violence. Noting that such children are too often overlooked as victims of the psychological effects of such violence, as possible future victims and as elements in the chain of violence that can help identify potentially violent situations and avoid further violence in the future (Children who witness domestic ...).

Therefore, we believe that a child who has become a witness (eyewitness) of domestic violence, taking into account the negative consequences for his mental (mental) health, can be recognized not just as a witness, but also directly as a person against whom psychological violence has been applied. This approach can facilitate the process of recognizing such a child as a victim, and therefore, simplify the process of providing appropriate assistance.

CONCLUSIONS

The problem of domestic violence in the form of child abuse remains relevant in wartime, and will obviously become even more acute in the post-war period. The negative psychological impact on children, in particular, in the form of psychological violence, will also increase. Therefore, there is a need to develop effective ways to overcome this negative phenomenon. We emphasize that due to the fact that a child who has witnessed (eyewitnessed) domestic violence, beyond any doubt, receives psychological trauma, i.e. harm is caused to his mental health, we can say that such a child is not just a witness (eyewitness) of a crime, but directly acts as a person against whom psychological violence has been applied.

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ДОМАШНЕ НАСИЛЬСТВО У ФОРМІ ЖОРСТОКОГО ПОВОДЖЕННЯ З ДІТЬМИ: ДЕЯКІ ПРОБЛЕМНІ АСПЕКТИ

Анотація. Стаття присвячена дослідженню проблеми домашнього насильства у формі жорстокого поводження з дітьми. Діти, як особи, які з різних причин (вік, страх, незнання, сором тощо) не можуть захистити себе, є найбільш незахищеною від домашнього насильства категорією громадян. Визначено, що відповідно до положень ч. 1 ст. 126-1 КК України домашнє насильство може проявлятися у трьох альтернативних формах: фізичне насильство, психологічне насильство, економічне насильство. Сексуальне насильство, в контексті ст. 126-1 КК України, виходить за межі зазначених форм і, за наявності підстав, може кваліфікуватися за статтями 149, 152–156, 301, 302, 303 КК. Досліджуючи домашнє насильство

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щодо дитини у формі жорстокого поводження в межах ст. 126-1 КК України, розуміємо саме три форми такого насильства як прояву жорстокого поводження. Особлива увага приділена питанню психологічного насильства над дітьми. Наголошується, що його необхідно розглядати у широкому сенсі. Зокрема, звертається увага на питання щодо випадків не визнання дитини, яка стала свідком домашнього насильства потерпілою особою. Зауважується на необґрунтованості такого підходу. Крім того, наголошується, що у ситуаціях в яких дитина стає свідком (очевидцем) домашнього насильства у різних його формах, спричиняється дуже негативний вплив на її психічне (ментальне) здоров'я, оскільки така дитина втрачає відчуття безпеки та психічного комфорту. Відтак зроблено висновок, що дитина, яка стала свідком (очевидцем) домашнього насильства. В цілому такий підхід до розуміння характеру впливу на дитину-жертву домашнього насильства здатен полегшити процес визнання такої дитини потерпілою, а відтак, спростити процедуру наданням психологічної, соціальної, правової та іншої допомоги.

Ключові слова: діти, домашнє насильство, жорстоке поводження, психологічне насильство, форми домашнього насильства.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN A CRUEL FORM OF BEHAVIOR WITH CHILDREN: SOME PROBLEMATIC ASPECTS

Abstract. The article is devoted to the study of the problem of domestic violence in the form of child abuse. Children, as those who for various reasons (age, fear, ignorance, shame, etc.) cannot protect themselves, are the most unprotected category of citizens from domestic violence. It was determined that in accordance with the provisions of part 1 of Art. 126-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine domestic violence can manifest itself in three alternative forms: physical violence, psychological violence, economic violence. Sexual violence, in the context of Art. 126-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, goes beyond the specified limits forms and, if there are grounds, can qualify under Articles 149, 152–156, 301, 302, 303 of the Criminal Code. Investigating domestic violence against a child in the form of cruel treatment within the limits of Art. 126-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, we understand precisely the three forms of such violence as a manifestation of cruel treatment. Special attention is devoted to the issue of psychological violence against children. It is emphasized that it must be considered in a broad sense. In particular, attention is drawn to the issue of non-recognition of a child who has become a witness of domestic violence by the victim. It is noted that such an approach is unfounded. In addition, it is emphasized that in situations in which a child becomes a witness (evewitness) of domestic violence in its various forms, it causes a very negative impact on their mental health, because such a child loses a sense of security and mental comfort. Therefore, it was concluded that a child who witnessed (eyewitness) domestic violence can be recognized not just as a witness, but also directly as a person to whom psychological violence was applied as a form of domestic violence. In general, this approach to understanding the nature of the impact on a child victim of domestic violence can facilitate the process of recognizing such a child as a victim, and therefore, simplify the procedure by providing psychological, social, legal and other assistance.

Key words: abuse, children, domestic violence, forms of domestic violence, psychological abuse.

Cite this article: Pavlenko T. (2023). Domestic violence in a cruel form of behavior with children: some problematic aspects, *Law and innovative Society*, 1 (20), 74-80. doi: https://doi.org/10.37772/2309-9275-2023-1(20)-6.