

## War and Children: Sri Lankan Experience

Kumari Thoradeniya

Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya.  
kumari.thoradeniya@arts.pdn.ac.lk

### Abstract

The children can be mentioned as a most vulnerable group due to the Sri Lankan civil war. Even though there are no accurate figures regarding the damage caused to children due to war, according to the UNICEF reports (2005), one million children in Sri Lanka have been affected all over the island by war, and they suffer from the shortage of food, health facilities, clothing, and education, due to displacement. Even though, many studies have been done on war-affected children in many countries, in Sri Lanka the studies concerning this subject is very limited. At the same time, due to the Easter Sunday attack the fear of war and the impact of war on children are again taking in to consideration in the country. Because, due to Easter Sunday attacks in Sri Lanka 46 children were killed (UNISEF, 2019). Therefore, main purpose in this paper is to discuss how war impact on children in Sri Lanka and get clear idea how children can be protected violence activities in future. This study is mainly based on qualitative interviews, supplemented with quantitative and observation method. Secondary data such as books, related articles and research materials was used. Field work was done in three war affected areas in Batticaloa and Vavuniya district in three different periods such as 2004, 2005 and 2016. Data was collected from 30 children, 10 parents of the children and 10 school teachers. According to this discussion, it was observed that within a situation like war, children can be affected mainly directly or indirectly which cause adverse impact on children. Such impacts can be psychological or connection with other health issues or education. At the same time, the impacts of war on children destroy their social life or the trust about the society and simply war can destroy their whole world. Children might on the surface appear to be well adjusted, but deeper examination of their inner world shows the negative effects of war.

**Keywords:** children, war-affects, psychology, health, education, child soldiers