

Addressing Glamour Attached to Violent Behaviour among Youth in a Sri Lankan Technical College through a Health Promotion Intervention

N Rathnayake¹, K Abhayasinghe^{2,3}, J De Silva⁴, and GND Guruge^{1,3#}

¹Department of Health Promotion, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

²Department of Nursing and Midwifery, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka

³Institute for Research and Development in Health and Social Care, Sri Lanka

⁴Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayawardenepura, Sri Lanka

#dumindaguruge@gmail.com

Glamourization of violence among youth is a determinant of youth violence and the media plays a key role in it. There is a gap in studies that address this issue among youth in Sri Lanka. This study aimed to address the glamour attached to violence among youth in a Sri Lankan technical college through a health promotion intervention. The participatory action research approach was employed. A purposive sample of 74 students (26 male and 48 female) aged 20–27 years participated in a twelve-month-long health promotion intervention and implemented actions; identifying violence promotions in media, conducting informal discussions, displaying posters, and sharing social media posts to de-glamourize violence. Data was collected until data saturation was reached. Four focus group discussions (FGDs) with students and seven interviews with staff members were conducted at the pre-and-post-intervention phases and analysed using thematic analysis. Under the theme ‘change’, the sub-theme, ‘glamourization of violence’ emerged. Participants changed their views and attitudes of glamourizing violence following the intervention. The attractive image created around the perpetrators and identifying violence as a “*heroic*” act seemed to be reduced. Female students of two FGDs appeared not to appreciate the perpetrators’ strength, courage, or appearance, and the number of students gathering around perpetrators and adding value to their behaviours appeared to be reduced. Students attached a stigma to violence, and considered violence as “*foolish behaviour*”, and “*a disgusting and shaming act*”. This aroused “*fear*” among students to behave violently, making them “*self-disciplined*”. The intervention was successful in de-glamourizing violence among study participants.

Keywords: *glamour, health promotion, violence, youth*