

Male as a Victims: Domestic Violence from a Different Perspective

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Abstract - In the last two years, as a result mostly of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, there has been more talk about domestic violence. There are several types of such deviation that has been the subject of scientific interest in recent years. Contemporary approach to domestic violence differentiated domestic violence as an umbrella term from intimate partnership violence (IPV) because the focus in first is almost always on women and children as victims. Research shows that depending on the type of domestic violence, men are more likely to be victims. The unusual notion of men as victims has been documented in a number of studies, but the attitude of the environment towards the male victim of this type of violence and the rest of the codes of conduct that have traditional value matrices, contributes to the research of this phenomenon. The aim of the paper is to show the causes, as well as all forms of domestic violence in cases where men are victims, to point out the role of the labeling process as a reason for hiding this type of deviation and to point out some of the prevention of victims. Paper examines situation with male victims of domestic violence or intimate partnership violence in several countries and shows the most emerging problems with treatment of such kind of deviance.

Index Terms— domestic violence, male, intimate partnership violence, gender paradigm

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern way of life brings many challenges for every aspect of social life. But probably one of the spheres that changes the fastest is the home and the intimate environment of people's lives. Recent reports from the World Health Organization, relevant research centers, and non-governmental organizations dealing with issues related to family and family life indicate trends that domestic violence is on the rise and the forms in which it is recognized are multiplying. In the last two years, the situation with domestic violence has deteriorated especially as a result of COVID – 19 quarantines and closures that negatively affect the harmonious relations within the family. In addition, legal practice shows that family law cases are one of the most difficult to close because they involve difficult-to-measure aspects of domestic violence such as the level and intensity of marital love, parental commitment, caring for the weak and powerless members of the family. family, etc. Today there are many definitions on domestic violence and intimate partnership violence. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Intimate Partnership Violence as, "any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship" [1]. Additionally, another standpoint defines IPV as any violent offence that occurs "between current and former legally married spouses, common-law partners, boyfriends and girlfriends and other kinds of intimate partners" [2]. Domestic violence was

considered a private issue for decades and discussions regarding domestic violence in public weren't acceptable or viewed as a social issue [3].

As trends over domestic violence resulted with increased awareness in society, mostly women became identified as the victim and one population became marginalized. Campaigns were directed towards women as the victims of domestic violence [4]. In USA in 1994, Violence Against Women Act [5] was passed, that was created to protect women against violence and allocated funds for services to assist women who are victims of domestic violence [6], [7], [5]. Many websites including the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) and the Utah Domestic Violence Coalition (UDVC) display pictures of women as the victims of domestic violence on their home page (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, n.d.-a; [8]). However, victimization through domestic violence doesn't pertain to only one population it can happen to anyone, including men [7].

On the other side there was a different situation with male victims of domestic violence, that have been reported as far back as the 1970s and 1980s, the focus was predominantly on women as the exclusive victims of domestic violence ([9],[6], [10], [11]). In hat line Straus and Gelles stated "Violence by wives has not been an object of public concern. There has been no publicity, and no funds have been invested in ameliorating

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this problem because it has not been defined as a problem" [12]³.

2. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - A DEVIATION THAT IS GAINING MOMENTUM

Bearing in mind that today there is a large number of definition of Domestic violence here we use one of the Merriam- Webster Online Dictionary from 2017 where is defined as "the inflicting of physical injury by one family or household member on another; also: a repeated or habitual pattern of such behavior" [14]. This interes for defining and researching the domestic violence shows that this deviance have growing curses. The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) defines domestic violence as "...the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by one intimate partner against another" [15].

3. MALES AS A VICTIM AND APPROACH TO LEGAL RESOLUTIONS

There are a lot of barriers that male victims of domestic violence have reported that prevent them from contacting law enforcement, such as, fear that law enforcement would not believe that they had been a victim of domestic violence; believing that their reports of domestic violence victimization would not be taken seriously; and/or fear of being accused of perpetrating the violence themselves ([16], [9], [6], [17], [11], [18]).

In other countries around the world, there appears to be a trend among male victims as to why they don't report the abuse to law enforcement. In the Netherlands, Drijber et al. [19] asserted in their study, men don't report the abuse to law enforcement, because men didn't believe law enforcement would act on the report. In the United Kingdom, Hall stated "...male victims of women perpetrators are more often ignored by the police," he continues to state "...women are more often released from police custody in a shorter span of time" [20]. Evans reported the Australian police have told victims to "...grow some balls" [21].

They go on to say, "It includes physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence and emotional abuse" [15] provides a list of abuse as physical, emotional, financial, sexual, digital, and reproductive coercion.

US Government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional' [16].

Authors like Barkhuizen states that evidences of male abused is covered by traditional and ongoing stereotypes over gender roles

"The fact that so many people in general, including some academics and government officials, are so unwilling to accept the unilateral abuse of men by women, is testimony to the deep-rooted stereotypes which are accepted by society. The lack of training regarding this hidden side of domestic violence has fueled the stigmatization of the male victim..." She continues to assert "... and therefore ensure the re-victimisation of men by police officers and criminal justice officials alike" [16].

According to the Crime Prevention Council there are many gaps in the research of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) overall and the issue of male victims in particular. The issue of violence towards women is such a massive one, that the issue of male

³ Some statistic particularly in UK, shows that usually men are less likely to report violence over them: Male victims (39%) are over three times as likely as women (12%) not to tell anyone about the partner abuse they are suffering from. Only 10% of male victims will tell the police (26% women), only 23% will tell a person in an official position (43% women) and only

11% (23% women) will tell a health professional. In 16/17, 13 men died at the hands of their partner or ex-partner compared to 82 women. One in every five victims of forced marriage is a man (20%)(Source: [13]).

victims has being given very little attention. Behind the hidden statistics regarding men’s exposure to IPV, are the stereotypical conceptions of gender roles that influence how we view victims and abusers [22]. Not only does society trivialize and question the issue of male victims of IPV, but many abused men themselves trivialize their experiences. According to Courtenay:

“Men’s denial and disregard of physical discomfort, risk and health care needs are all means of demonstrating difference from women, who are presumed to embody these “feminine” characteristics[23].

4. TYPES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/INTIMATE PARTNERSHIP VIOLENCE AND PLACE OF MALES

Sociological and psychological approach to issues of domestic violence generates a large scale of typologies for classifying different factors of this deviance. Generally speaking, the domestic violence typologies that have been developed recently have attempted to identify groupings of domestic violence offences, or of domestic violence perpetrators (male or female; [24]). As demonstrated in Table 1, domestic violence typologies have typically differentiated between groups of offenders and incidents on a number of factors, including:

- the gender of the offender;
- frequency and severity of the violence;
- type of violence (physical, emotional, sexual etc);
- motivations/underlying causes of the violence;
- physiological responses of offenders to different stimuli;

Table 1 Examples of domestic violence typologies)

- presence of personality/psychopathic/antisocial disorders and symptoms; and
- whether the violence is confined to intimates or includes non-intimates.

Typology	Groupings
Johnson ([25], [26])	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coercive controlling—most severe type of abuse, involves a ‘pattern or emotionally abusive intimidation, coercion, and control coupled with physical violence’ (Kelly & Johnson 2008: 476). • Violent resistance—the offender, usually a woman, uses violence to resist or avoid coercive controlling violence being used against them. • Situational couple violence—the most common type of violence

	<p>occurring among married/cohabiting partners. This behaviour is not about control but particular situations and stressors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separation instigated violence—violence that occurs in the context of a separation. Does not continue afterwards. <p>Mutual violent control—both partners engage in coercive controlling violence.</p>
[27]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing or episodic battering by males—chronic form of violence used to control the partner. The offender is jealous,

	<p>needy, controlling, frustrated and reacts violently to any perceived threat to his masculinity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female-initiated violence—female offender reacts violently to the perceived passivity or failure of the victim. Male victim may become aggressive if provoked. • Male-controlled interactive violence—arises out of a specific conflict or argument. Physical violence may be initiated by either party but typically the man responds with physical aggression in an effort to control the female. <p>Separation or post-divorce violence—uncharacteristic acts of violence that occur in the context of a separation.</p>		<p>Generally violent/antisocial offenders (male)—violent outside the family. Most likely to engage in moderate to severe physical/psychological/sexual abuse and have antisocial personality disorder/psychopathy traits and abuse substances.</p>
		[29]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cobra offenders—heart rate decreases during violent episodes. Severely antisocial, they demonstrate criminal traits and are more emotionally abusive. Female partners are less likely to leave. Motivated by desire for immediate gratification. <p>Pit-bull offenders—heart rate increases during violent episodes. Women appear to be less intimidated by these types of offender. Motivated by fear of losing their partner and are emotionally dependent on them.</p>
[28]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family only offenders (male)—only violent towards their family and are the least likely to engage in psychological/sexual abuse. Demonstrate minimal antisocial/psychopathological behaviours and personality disorders. • Dysphoric/borderline offenders (male)—engage in moderate to severe physical/psychological/sexual abuse, exhibit some extra-familial/criminal behaviour, as well as borderline and schizoid traits. Are more psychologically distressed and emotionally volatile, and tend to have a history of substance use. 	[30]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychopathic offenders (male)—use violence instrumentally/for domination purposes. Tend to be violent outside the home and have a history of substance abuse, unemployment, animal torture and an overall high level of childhood adversity. • Hostile/controlling offenders (male)—angry and controlling, externalise blame and believe they are misunderstood. <p>Borderline/dependent offenders (male)—unhappy, depressed and overemotional, they experience deep fears of abandonment so become very dependent on their partners.</p>

[31]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generalised violent behaviour (female offenders)—violence not confined to the family setting. • Frustration response (female offenders)—demonstrate ‘end of her rope’ behaviours. <p>Defensive behaviour (female offenders)—use violence to get away from a violent incident, or to leave the individual.</p>
[32]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims (female offenders)—both partners

	<p>use violence against one another, but men more so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abused aggressors (female offenders)—female partner uses more physical violence and coercive control against their partner. Motivated by retribution and control <p>Mixed relationships (female offenders)—comprised of two types (1) mixed male coercive relationships—male partner used more coercive control and (2) mixed female coercive—female used equal or more coercive violence.</p>
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Source: [33]

5. EMPIRICAL EVIDENCES OF INTIMATE PARTNERSHIP VIOLENCE OVER MAN IN FAMILY AND HOME

Abovementioned situation with domestic violence and IPV over man in UK is just a piece of mosaic. Some studies in Canada shows broaden horizon of issue. Based on findings from the literature review, it is not clear that men have access to their entitlements under the Canadian Victims Bill of Rights, most importantly, the right to protection. For men who have been dehumanized through violent relationships characterized by physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, the dehumanization can continue when they ask for help.

Wemmers argues that victims rights should be understood as human rights - universal and accessible to all [34].

Table 2 provides a summary of the findings from the literature review. Table was created on research sample with 45 male survivors of IPV in Canada, and conclude with a set of recommendations to improve safety and recourse for male survivors.

Table 2

Karmen’s Methodology	Themes	Literature
Definition of the Problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship” • “Between current and former legally married spouses, 	[1]; [2]

	<p>common-law partners, boyfriends and girlfriends and other kinds of intimate partners”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPV includes survivors of all genders 	
Measurement of the Problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence is higher than reported to police • Government statistics may 	[2], [35], [36], [37], [38].

	not accurately reflect the true number of cases	
Justice System Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers in reporting • Discrepancies in police responses • Negative interactions with CJS • Fear of losing access to their children • Bias in risk assessment tools 	[39], [40], [36], [41], [37], [42], [43],
Service Provider Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspicion towards male survivors • Limited shelter options • Lack of adequate support services • Need to acknowledge violence suffered 	[37], [44], [45], [46], [47].

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment tools are not tailored to men's experiences of trauma • Emerging resources 	
Societal Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male victims perceived as weak • Falling short of gender role expectations • Double standards in responses to male and female anger • Men have difficulty recognizing IPV • IPV often framed as a women's issue 	[39], [36], [48], [47], [46].

Source: [49]

6. LABELING AND SOCIAL REACTION ON INTIMATE PARTNERSHIP VIOLENCE OVER MALES

In sociology, one of the theories that explains the motivations for deviant attitudes and behavior in home settings as well as the intimate partnership violence is the labeling theory. This theory is based on the premise that deviance is not inherent in an act, but instead focuses on the tendency of majorities to negatively label minorities or those seen as deviant from standard cultural norms. Labeling theory attributes its origins to French sociologist Émile Durkheim and his 1897 book, *Suicide*. The theory was prominent during the 1960s and 1970s, and some modified versions of the theory have developed and are still currently popular. Stigma is defined in sociology and borderline (sub)disciplines as a powerfully negative label that changes a person's self-concept and social identity. Labeling theory is closely related to social construction and symbolic-interaction analysis. Labeling theory was developed by sociologists during the 1960s.

Labeling theory is also connected to other fields besides crime. For instance there is the labeling theory that corresponds to homosexuality. In the issue of domestic violence and intimate partner violence there are different approach to homosexual male victims, and this area is underdeveloped for research. Alfred Kinsey and his colleagues were the main advocates in separating the difference between the role of a "homosexual" and the acts one does. An example is the idea that males performing feminine acts would imply that they are homosexual. Thomas J. Scheff states that labeling also plays a part with the "mentally ill". The label doesn't refer to criminal but rather acts that aren't socially accepted due to mental disorders.

Many authors think that males as victims of intimate partnership violence do not report their situation and do not ask for help because of the reaction to the environment. This

type of facility has an exceptionally high number dark rates of males based IPV of issues and poses a problem for its quality research.

There are a lot of literature in this direction, that proves that male victims do not feel that they can approach the police or domestic abuse agencies, and expect to be treated fairly ([50], [51], [52]).

Other studies similarly argues that discourses within society depict domestic abuse as a 'gendered, heterosexual phenomenon that is predominantly physical in nature'[53]. A report from the Home Office [54] also highlights a general lack of understanding about the 'power and control aspects' of domestic abuse. Similarly, Josolyne notes the impact of the construction of domestic abuse as a 'gendered social problem' on male victims, whereby heterosexual males are presumed to be the perpetrators and women as their innocent victims. Dutton and White refer to these prejudices as the 'gender paradigm' under which services are aimed at meeting the needs of female victims, as heterosexual male victims are impeded from reaching victim status ([55], [56]). Dutton and White provide an alternative explanation for the reluctance of male victims to seek help by arguing that men are socialised to suppress pain 'under a private veil'[55]. Similarly, the respondents of both Brogden and Nijhar's and Josolyne's study appeared to struggle to embody a victim, as this would

undermine their masculine identity. Josolyne recommends that further research should 'develop and evaluate new treatment programmes' exclusively tailored for male victims of domestic abuse, as their needs are contrasting to those of female victims ([57], [56]).

Most recommendation of affirmative government policies suggest that Male victims are deserving of the same level of support that female victims receive, both in terms of service provision and advocacy. The Government response to male victims is seriously lacking in the case of the latter, as it has never actively acknowledged male victims through, for example, awareness campaigns, and policy is still oriented towards female victims. On the other side the absence of official recognition for male victims impedes the eradication of society's stereotypes and preconceptions, which have portrayed heterosexual men as the sole perpetrators of domestic abuse, and heterosexual women as the innocent party [56]. Thus, masculinity continues to play a role in the reluctance of male victims to report domestic abuse, approach support services, or to voice that they are a victim to anyone [57] because of the shame they believe they will endure, and the scorn to which they are afraid they will be subjected. It is apparent from this study that the concerns of this nature are not groundless, as participants had experienced unfair treatment towards male victims from other professionals [58].

7. CONCLUSION

Abovementioned and other systematically conducted critical literature review established that issue of males as a victim of domestic violence and intimate partner violence is reported by significant numbers of men in heterosexual relationships, with men experiencing physical, emotional, psychological and sexual abuse, and some subject to severe violence. Analysis showed that this deviance must be treated in several subcategories and dimensions of problem. Such dimension includes attention on the violent relationship, harms and behaviours, risk and seeking help. Findings enabled the first four research objectives to be achieved but did not adequately address the fifth objective regarding male disclosure of abuse. Having in mind the practical value of such research, further steps on eradicating domestic violence over male have to integrate domestic violence typologies into the day-to-day work of domestic violence professionals. This recommendation

probably may facing obstacles but the main warning of this growing problem must be addressed and implemented in practice. There are a number of potential barriers to the integration of domestic violence typologies into the decision-making processes of domestic violence professionals

One of the next steps certainly must be to increase knowledge and awareness of emerging trends over male victims, to develop a qualitative research methodology for approaching male victims, particularly regarding differing male experiences relating to race and ethnicity. In that direction, the issue of homosexual male victims of domestic violence is one of the undeveloped research fields. Aiding identification and disclosure of domestic abuse, research into screening methods for men is warranted exploring efficacy and acceptability of such interventions.

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