

## **Men, masculinities, and factors that contribute to the bad behavior of men against women.**

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### **Abstract**

The fight against women perpetrated by men in society has been overrated without looking at factors that contribute. Naturally, men and women are not the same in many aspects but the most important aspect that contributes to the behavior is emotions and emotional intelligence. Men mostly don't talk about how they feel while women can talk. The things that women say to their partners spark anger which could have been avoided if women were able to control their anger. Statistics have shown that most women who have been abused by men have a direct relationship. Few women have been abused, raped, and killed by men that they do not know or never met before. Therefore, ending the violence against women and women abuse is not a responsibility of one gender but a collective responsibility for both genders. Women deliberately provoke men to force men to act and get them arrested. This article is presenting a view that the issue of gender-based violence should be looked at in a microscopic sense that will be objective. Men and women have different ways of showing anger. Women shout when angry while men act physically and society looks mostly at how men act. The objective of this article was to find ways to address women's abuse and gender-based violence. The purpose of this article was to create an awareness to the society of the contributing factors to women's abuse and gender-based violence. The research methodology applied in this study is the secondary research methodology. This study found that the law in many countries favours women more than men, this also contributes to how women behave around men, knowing that the law is favouring them.

**Keywords:** Men, Masculinities, Behaviour, Gender Base Violence, Abuse.

## **Introduction**

Gender-based violence and abuse of women by men remain the major challenge globally. There are two sides to each story and the world is not addressing the issue of women abuse effectively. Most men that are abusive were once good men. This creates a gap in knowledge and a need to conduct a study that looks at the reasons behind the abusive behavior of men. This article is, therefore, presenting the reasons why some men are abusive without condoning their behavior. This study deemed it important to investigate and find reasons why men abuse women. Few factors contribute to how men behave themselves around women. This study has looked at numerous factors that need to be taken into consideration if society and the government intend to successfully stop the abuse of women. The factors will be fully discussed in the theoretical review section where the few models or theories that guide this study are discussed. First and foremost, the emotional factor on how women treat men is the factor. Emotional abuse of men by women has a major impact on how men respond to such behavior. Men that were emotionally abused as boys by their mothers and abused by their wives at a later stage of their lives are likely to be abusive. The study conducted by Hines and Malley-Morrison (2001: 02) has shown that up to 90% of men have previously been victims of emotional abuse in the previous year. This type of abuse led to depression and psychological distress. Secondly, the sense of entitlement by men to own women. Providing for women by men contribute to how men treat women and if women have a disagreement with their partners it creates a commotion between them. Men who do everything for women think that they are owning their partners and feel that they can say whatever they want to say and do whatever they want to do. More details are found in the theoretical review and examples are also provided. Thirdly, the economic condition also contributes to how women treat men especially when the relationship started when men had money when they met.

## **Theoretical review**

The theoretical framework plays a significant role in supporting the findings of studies. This section presents theories that guide the study and the findings of this study. The following theories are discussed in this study; mechanistic theory of personality-dependent movement behavior; The Theory of Planned Behaviour as Predictor of Exercise; The Intelligence of Emotional Intelligence; Trait Emotional Intelligence Theory.

### **Mechanistic theory of personality-dependent movement behavior**

This theory provides a theoretical framework that explains the relationship between human behavior and personality. The way people behave has a lot to do with their personality and the way they see life. This theory is more focused on the co-variation between the history of the individual together with the physiological and behavioural traits. The relationship between all these variables is shaping a relationship a person can have with other people. Individual differences also contribute to how men behaviour amongst themselves and when they are around women. This variable of personality differences and preferences changes over time (Campos-Candela, Palmer, Balle, Álvarez and Alós, 2019: 214). This theory is relevant to the study because it informs the reasons why men mistreat women and this impact is hardly taken into consideration. The personality of men who abuse women is informed by the history of the perpetrators and personal experience. Failure to address this factor will not produce good results and all the efforts of curbing gender-based violence globally are futile and will not produce good and expected results. Judging people based on their behaviour without understanding their history and the reasons that led to their behaviour is not a solution. There is a need to look at the personality trait that leads to a specific behaviour.

### **The Theory of Planned Behaviour as Predictor of Exercise**

The theory of Planned behaviour provides the impact of psychosocial factors in how human beings behave themselves. This theory states that the behavioural intentions of men drive by two parallel cognitive processes. The first one is the attitude of the individual towards the behaviour and considerations of the impact of such behaviour. Secondly, the consideration of the societal and acceptable behavioural norms globally and locally. Therefore, this brings a view that personal attitudes derive from measures of beliefs about the behaviour. These two processes interlink with one another, the behavioural norm is the appraisal of the likelihood that an individual will consider the behaviour of others. Individuals have to be motivated by parents, friends, society, and professionals to conform to the status quo and acceptable standards of the community (Bozionelos and Bennett, 1999: 518). On the other hand, this theory also acknowledges that control of behaviour varies according to circumstances, issues such as individual's mental health, individual's attitude also contribute. This theory is mainly focused on the attitude and behavioural norms of individuals against the norms of the community or society. The attitude and behaviour of men against women contribute significantly to how men treat women. The attitude and

behaviour are most informed by how women themselves behave before men. This study, therefore, presents a view that the behaviour of men that leads to men abusing women can be stopped if women could change their behaviour around men. A typical example is how men think they are entitled to sleep with women after they bought alcohol for them. This is informed by how women portray themselves in front of men. This is abnormal in society but because of how some women behave, it becomes a new normal. This type of behaviour and attitude must be stopped by women themselves. Women should stop creating a wrong impression and expectation from men. When men and women decide to go out for drinks everything must be clearly outlined before anyone starts spending money. The sex parties and group parties make it difficult for men to maintain expected norms and in some cases, women initiate the act and at some point, it does not end well and men become violent.

### **The Intelligence of Emotional Intelligence theory**

The theory of emotional intelligence is a type of theory that looks at social intelligence and involves the ability of the individual to understand his or her emotion and the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence is not only about what a person thinks but also about what a person says and this includes verbal and non-verbal expression of emotions. The theory of emotional intelligence focuses on the individual differences in the capacity to adapt to any situation through effective communication. Many challenges or problems between people contain emotional information that needs to be processed. The important aspect is the individual access to one's feelings, one's range of emotions, and the behaviour thereafter. Intrapersonal knowledge contributes to dealing with emotions and the development of emotional intelligence. Other factors that contribute to emotional intelligence are; self-confidence, social perceptiveness, and low anxiety. People that have more self-confidence tend to have more control of emotions. Self-confidence is sometimes created by circumstances and conditions that determine whether an individual holds good or bad self-confidence. Emotional intelligence is a mental ability to know what another person feels and thinks before talking. Emotional intelligence is also about controlling moods, emotions, personal expectations, environmental realities, and previous experiences (Mayer and Salovey, 1993: 436). Emotional intelligence contributes to how men treat women and the opposite is also true. This theory has to be taken into consideration when looking at the reasons why men abuse women. As it has been stated by the theory, emotions affect men and women. How each individual decides to act on issues depends on emotional intelligence. Men are also emotional and when pushed to act they mostly use physical power to show their dissatisfaction or anger. On the other hand, women mostly show their

emotions by talking. This imbalance between how both genders react under pressure contributes to gender-based violence. This study, therefore, presents a view that how women treat their partners has an impact on how they are treated. Women that can control their emotions can sustain relationships and don't attract abuse from men. When men are emotionally challenged by women, they react with violence. There is no excuse for violence against women but looking at what triggers the behaviour of men is important.

### **Research methodology**

This paper applied a case study research methodology, I used scientific studies that have been conducted by other scholars. The reasoning is illustrated by the examples of case studies found in the findings of this study. The examples of case studies are related to the cases of abuse against women by men and reasons. This process of collecting data serve as the procedure of drawing evidence from the outcome. Outcomes are shown on this procedure and lead to conclusions about the findings of this study. Further, the findings are not only based on theoretical framework but also empirical studies and findings thereof. Case studies allow results to be communicated to a wider audience because the method is more easily and directly understood by the people (Goundar, 2012: 02). The case study research methodology is a scientific approach and it ensures that the studies have a high level of objectivity, reliability, and validity. The reliability, quality, and validity of the findings of this study have been taken into account. Reports from mainstream newspapers, television, governments, conference proceedings were analyzed to reach an objective finding of the study.

### **Findings and discussions**

A study conducted by Hill (2020: 02) shows that the patriarchy must be partially blamed for most abuse of women by men. The study further states that men abuse women because of the societal setting that gives men the power to control the relationship. Perpetrators also become victims because of traumatic behaviour that is informed by the societal response against women's abuse. This is informed by the disturbance in the childhood of men. This disturbance in many cases led to trauma-based entitlement in many abusive people.

A report by Blackburn (2021: 01) shows that domestic abuse is a product of psychological and developmental scars which affect both males and females. Violence has been used by men to keep their intimate partners from leaving the relationship. Violence is used by men to stop their partners from being unfaithful. This could be caused by promises they made together and if promises were not made, the men were not going to be violent. The attitude and the behaviour contribute to how men treat women. This type of abuse can be stopped by ensuring that each partner does not have a feeling of entitlement. When a man feels that he is entitled to control a woman because he does everything for her then that is a major problem. Likewise, if a women feel she is entitled to everything a man owns, that is another problem that leads to violent behaviour. Arresting the abuser is usually a temporal solution because the perpetrator is not treated and the reasons for the abusive behaviour are not addressed. This could even lead to more anger and not solve to stop gender-based violence.

Issues related to domestic violence became an issue and most countries are paying attention to this issue. Many countries have tried to address this issue but the lack of proper understanding of what leads to domestic violence has been the issue. There has been an assumption that gender-based violence is caused by substance abuse and this caused many courts to invite mental health practitioners to look at the mental state of the perpetrators (Goldstein, 2019: 01). Even though there is no blanket approach and single reason for gender-based violence, this study found numerous factors that contribute to bad behaviour by men against women. How women treat men is a factor and this could be influenced by the financial status of the man or status in the community. Society has a collective responsibility to look at the root causes of gender-based violence. This includes training women how to treat their partners and how to be independent and not rely on men to support them financially. Men that financially support their partners feel a sense of power over women, this then compels women to compromise a lot. When women show their true colours when a man can no longer offer financial support that becomes a problem and men become aggressive.

Gender-based violence and unaccepted behaviour of men against women has been a topic for all countries and it attracted the attention of many prominent people in the world and celebrities. (CNN International Edition, 2016: 03) reported that the international icon Oprah Winfrey had a show that allowed men to raise their reasons why they abuse their partners. The show also reported that 1,100 women are killed every year. Most abusers state that they could not express themselves by talking and acting against women was the only option they had.

The following statements are directly made by the men who confessed to abusing women in the show and their reasons: *first case;*

Sir says the first time he laid his hands on his wife, Christy, was just weeks after their wedding. He says he got jealous after a party where she was dancing with someone else.

"It set me off. I remember walking up to her and smacking her full force," Sir says. "I grabbed her by her neck, and I kind of held her against the car. Then, I walked her over to the bushes and threw her in there, and I just started choking her. It was with every bit of rage; every bit of anger I've ever had."

After the first incident of abuse, Sir says he held a gun to his head. "It was very hard for me to come to grips with the man that I was," he says. Sir promised Christy it would never happen again, and she forgave him.

Though Sir swore to his wife that the abuse would stop, it continued for the next two-and-a-half years. Even while Christy was pregnant, she says Sir beat her to the point where she feared for her life. "She didn't want to be intimate with me, she didn't want to have sex with me and I got very furious," Sir says. "I got on top of her and sat on her stomach."

Christy says Sir choked her and covered her nose and mouth so she couldn't breathe. "I was just thinking: 'Oh my gosh, I'm going to die right now.

*Second case;*

Tony is another man who admits to having abused a woman. In an e-mail to Winfrey, he said he beat a previous girlfriend so badly she bled. "I couldn't express myself verbally, so I would take it out on her physically," Tony wrote. "The thing that triggered me was that I was insecure as a person. To see her stare at another man, or to see her have a conversation with another man, or if she confronted me about anything, it enraged me." Though Tony says he knew, even at the moment, that he shouldn't be doing what he was doing, he says he couldn't stop. Today, he says he's trying to make amends for his previous actions by speaking out against domestic violence whenever he can. "[I want] to say, by grace and remorse, that I'm still here today," he says. "I made it through." Tony says it felt like he "blacked out" during the abuse. "You don't understand what's going on," he says. "I completely own up to [what I did], but in that rage, it's like your brain wires, they aren't clicking." He says being in an abusive relationship is like being in drug addiction. "It becomes like your bond in the sense that the woman is like cocaine inside of that relationship. That's the only connection you have because there's no real love," he says. "To

overcome it, it's almost like you have to separate, go to rehab, move out of the dope house and never come back."

This is evidence that the emotional abuse by women to men plays a big role in how men think of themselves and on how they behave themselves around women. A personality trait is informed by how men are treated by their partners. Both case studies show that abuse is not a decision that can be taken by any man but it is because of certain circumstances. Circumstances created by women can lead to abusive behaviour. The focus should be addressing the behaviour of men and women concurrently without favouring one gender against the other. On the other hand, The Centre For Relationship Abuse Awareness (2021: 01) states that relationship abuse is a learned behaviour and a personal choice. There is no single factor that can be seen as the main cause of the behaviour. The contributing factors to the abuse include; Sense of entitlement, a belief they should have power and control over their partner, belief that they can get away with it, learning experience that being abusive gets them what they want, belief that their lives should take priority.

Social conditions also play a significant part in influencing an abuser's values and attitudes, as well as in creating an atmosphere that rewards and condones abusive behavior. The following social forces may influence the decision to abuse by perpetrators:

- Gender-role identity — Restrictive notions of "proper masculine behavior" that promote hostility, violence, and domination.
- Family - Messages that men should be in charge of their homes and/or intimate relationships (e.g., "a man's home is his palace")
- Media – Objectification of women; a celebration of violence and violent, coercive, and non-consensual sex; male and female roles that are constrained.
- Peer pressure — Pressure from peers to conform to a narrow notion of masculinity that devalues women.
- Sports - Competitors are praised for their violence and dominance. Teammates who behave in a sexist or abusive manner are not held responsible.
- Impunity - For their sexist attitudes and harsh conduct, many perpetrators suffer no consequences. When confronted, their excuses are accepted (e.g. blaming the behavior on alcohol use, stress, or being provoked by the victim)

## **Conclusion**

There is no excuse for any gender-based violence and all forms of gender-based violence must be punished. There is a need to look at what triggers the abuse and address all issues equally without being biased and reactive instead of being proactive. When issues are addressed before leading to conflict, this will stop or minimize cases of gender-based violence. Abuse is a learned habit that occurs within a larger context, not a natural result of anger issues or alcoholism. Acceptance of gender-based violence is influenced by ideas, customs, and institutions. A variety of social influences act on individuals to foster sexism and create notions about male supremacy, as well as the marginalization and devaluing of women, transgender, genderqueer, and non-binary people, which can normalize abusive behavior. Dehumanization, sexism, blaming the victim, and gender role demands are just a few of the interconnected cultural issues that make up Relationship Abuse/Rape Culture. Women should also not demand things from men.

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