Analysing Masculinity from the Key Theoretical Lenses and Searching for Linkages with Violence against Women

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Abstract

In recent years, masculinity has become both an important and influential academic discourse in the domain of gender studies. Despite having been explained and theorised from many perspectives, it lacks overall clarity and varies widely across different social and cultural contexts. Keeping that perspective in mind, this study drew on a rigorous review of the literature and reflexive analysis has synthesised prominent and pertinent theoretical issues concerning masculinity with the objective of having a succinct as well as a methodical understanding of masculinity. This study also aims at developing the linkage between masculinity and violence against women. In spite of being viewed as a cause of violence against women; theoretical notions of masculinity and its relation to violence against women remain largely understudied. Overall, the findings of the study confirm that masculinity as a concept is expressed through certain socially accepted ideologies and practices and there are at least three major theoretical developments concerning masculinity. When applied, each of these theories can individually stand as a reason for violence against women. The nexus between masculinity and violence against women is very proximate, and masculinity appears to be a predominating force for perpetuating violence against women. Nonetheless, further wider empirical studies on masculinity and its relation to violence against women can draw new insights and understandings.

Keywords: Masculinity, psychoanalytical theory, sex role theory, hegemonic masculinity, violence against women

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Analizando la Masculinidad desde la Óptica Teórica y Buscando Vínculos con la Violencia de Género

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Resumen

En los últimos años, la masculinidad se ha convertido en un importante e influyente discurso académico en el campo de los estudios de género. A pesar de haber sido explicado y teorizado desde muchas perspectivas, carece de claridad general y varía ampliamente en diferentes contextos sociales y culturales. Teniendo esta perspectiva en mente, este estudio se basó en una revisión rigurosa de la literatura así como el análisis reflexivo sobre cuestiones teóricas importantes y pertinentes relativas a la masculinidad con el objetivo de tener una comprensión clara y metódica de la masculinidad. Este estudio también tiene como objetivo profundizar sobre el vínculo entre la masculinidad y la violencia contra las mujeres. A pesar de ser vista como una causa de violencia contra las mujeres; las nociones teóricas de la masculinidad y su relación con la violencia contra las mujeres siguen siendo ampliamente estudiadas. En conjunto, los resultados del estudio confirman que la masculinidad como concepto se expresa a través de ciertas ideologías y prácticas socialmente aceptadas y hay por lo menos tres desarrollos teóricos importantes concernientes a la masculinidad. Cuando se aplican, cada una de estas teorías puede ser individualmente una razón para la violencia contra las mujeres. El nexo entre la masculinidad y la violencia contra las mujeres es muy próximo y la masculinidad parece ser una fuerza muy dominante para perpetuar la violencia contra las mujeres. Sin embargo, otros estudios empíricos más amplios sobre la masculinidad y su relación con la violencia contra las mujeres pueden traer nuevas aportaciones al tema.

Palabras clave: Masculinidad, teoría psicoanálitca, teoría del rol sexual, masculinidad hegemónica, violencia contra las mujeres

The word masculinity is derived from the Middle English *masculine* and Latin *masulinus,* which means 'male', 'of masculine gender', or 'male person'. It was used in these contexts since the late fourteenth-century. Later on, from the seventeenth century onwards it was further began to be used as 'appropriate' qualities of the male sex such as 'powerfulness', 'physicality', 'manliness' and 'virility' which have been extended in referring to traits or characteristics traditionally thought of suitable for men and showing maleness, manliness or manhood (Mangan & Walvin, 1987 cited in Hearn, 2007, p. 390). Accordingly, in traditional understanding masculinity is associated with dominance, aggression, assertiveness, self-assurance and male characteristics like household head and breadwinner (Boonzaier & Rey, 2003, p. 1020). Although such traits were treated as the constituents of an idealised version of masculinity, there was no absolute and concrete definition or standard of what is being meant by men and what standards are to be followed by men to be treated as real masculine. Until today, the notion regarding masculinity has always been subject to change and varies within and across cultures, social groupings and classes. There is nothing like modern masculinity or a set of determined standard of masculinity (Whitehead, 2002, p. 15-16), and what is being meant by masculine is likely to vary among various racial, ethnic, religious groups, social classes, age groups as well as among people with different sexual orientation and by geographical region (Fischer & Good, 1998, p. 372).

The meanings of masculinity are constantly being changed, and its implications are always subject to be proved, and once proved, it is again questioned and has to be proved again (Kimmel, 1994, p. 122). Masculinity is in no way a fixed entity embedded only in body or personality traits of individuals, it is rather accomplished in social action and differs according to gender relations in a particular social and cultural setting (Connell & Messerschmidit, 2005, p. 835). It is evident that a growing body of research on masculinity is now available, but the conceptual ambiguity of the term still exists till date (Good, Borst, & Wallace, 1994, p. 3). The term masculinity is being used in a variety of ways, and it is one of those terms, which are endlessly being debated. It is applied to be defined as values, ideologies, experiences and meanings that are natural for a man or required

for being real or a proper man in a particular cultural context (Flood, 2002, p. 204). 'Real man' is seen as being able to gratify his sexual needs and controls women. Moreover, he is the protector of women and children; he is the provider, the head of household (Abbott, 2000, p. 1312) and the breadwinner in the family (Boonzaier & Rey, 2003, p. 1020). However, it does not necessarily mean that there are certain human qualities, which are inevitably or inherently masculine since maleness or masculinity might mean different things and might have different meanings to different people and groups (Hoffman, Hattie, & Borders, 2005, p. 76). In general, masculinity refers to certain physical, behavioural and attitudinal qualities that are essential to be a man in a particular historical and cultural context (Mason-Grant, 2000, p. 322). It contains multiple images, behaviours, identities and views, which are often competing, and contradictory and the meanings of masculinity vary in the particular context, culture and time (Cornwall & Lindisfarne, 1994, p. 12).

Masculinity is also a reaction against passivity, powerlessness and repression against all desires and traits that are treated negatively in a particular society (Kaufman, 1987, p. 11). The notion 'woman' has been produced as the negative version of masculinity (Hollway, 1996 cited in Alvesson & Billing, 1997, p. 84). Women are passive and dominated by men are the typical portrayals of femininity (Horowitz & Kaufman, 1987, p. 86). More specifically, traits, meanings, images and values that are associated with women are defined as femininity. Masculinity is viewed as the antithesis of femininity. This notion of the antithesis of femininity is at the heart of contemporary and historical conceptions of manhood (Kimmel, 1994, p. 126). In these circumstances, the discussion of masculinity cannot be done in isolation rather it should and must be in accordance or comparison with femininity (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, p. 84). It is, indeed, challenging to escape from using the term 'men', 'male' and 'masculinity' and 'women', 'female' and 'femininity' without developing a binary notion of gender (Threadgold, 1990 cited in Cornwall & Lindisfarne, 1994, p. 12). The concept masculinity is meaningless without its feminine counterpart; both the concepts are supplementary and complementary of one another (Ahmed, 2006, p. 15). The concept masculinity does not exist without in contrast with femininity; therefore, culture, which does not treat or speak of the relation between men and women, does not have a concept of

masculinity. The concept is, thus, inherently relational with femininity (Connell, 2002, p. 31). More specifically, gender relates to the classification of being masculine and feminine and also refers to how these are socially constructed and sustained (Reid & Wormald, 1982 cited in Walczak, 1988, p. 26). Therefore, the term masculinity is fundamental to understanding gender relations and has significant social and political implications.

Customarily, masculinity symbolises how to become a man and how to become a master of women, and it is often stated that being violent is an accepted and dominant way of being a man. Thus, perpetrating violence is a method of demonstrating manhood or masculinity (Hearn, 1998, p. 37). Men, both in the past and present, have committed majority of the violent acts of the world. Therefore, violence, albeit violence against women, is meant to be a masculine act because there is very little femininity expressed in acts of violence (Edwards, 2006, p. 39). Masculinity, thus, provides the symbolic meaning of violence (Welzer-Lang, cited in Blanchet, Biswas, & Lucky, 2001, p. 11). Nonetheless, men commit most violence against women, but it does not necessarily mean that all men are violent (Connell, 2000 cited in DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2005, p. 356).

Under the contextual premises mentioned above, this paper primarily makes a rigorous attempt to clarify the concept 'masculinity', and analyse as well as synchronise its key theoretical underpinnings. In addition to that, it also examines the possible interconnections between masculinity and violence against women. In preparing this paper, a rigorous review of the literature was sought, and researchers' own reflexive understanding was used in analysing the key problems and issues. This research answered two questions, firstly; what are the major theoretical developments about masculinity, and secondly; how these theoretical issues are associated with violence against women? The following analysis aims to provide directives for empirical researchers to undertake future project about masculinity and violence against women on a wider scale.

Dominant Theories on Masculinity

There are many different explanations and ideas ascribed to the term 'masculinity'. These statements and ideas are stemmed from many thoughts and insights of various scholars. In the following sections, the fundamental

theoretical notions related to masculinity have been discussed, and some criticisms have also been produced.

Freud's Psychoanalytical Theory

The first attempt to make a scientific inquiry into masculinity on both possible and necessary senses was made by the great Austrian medical psychologist Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) in the late nineteenth century. Though Freud nowhere wrote a regular discussion of masculinity, it is one of his recurring themes. His idea regarding masculinity came in the initial statement of psychoanalytical principles, methods and declarations (Connell, 1995, p. 8). Psychoanalytical approach has predominantly focused on the nature and relations of masculinity and femininity by giving emphasis on sexuality, even though its insights have been extended to the analysis of numerous conceptions and phenomena such as; sexual difference, dream life, neurosis, hysteria, perversion and also the existence of the unconscious (Lafrance, 2004, p. 642-43).

Sigmund Freud developed the idea regarding masculinity and femininity in his psychoanalysis by exploring the attachment of boys and girls to their bodies and their relationships with their parents (Flanagan, 1982, p. 64); and particularly with a set of social experiences (Horowitz & Kaufman, 1987, p. 86). Further to note, though fundamentally Freud conceives the idea 'Anatomy is Destiny', but he also holds the presupposition that everything is determined and shaped through a person's interface with social world (Ferrell, 2000, p. 404). Beginning with the body, Freud states that at the age of around four, boys and girls naturally explore their bodies. At this stage, boys start playing with their penises and girls with their clitorises. However, the autoerotic activity for both boys and girls is the same, and owing to this uniformity initially there is no possibility of a distinction between the two sexes (Flanagan, 1982, p. 64). They do not seem to have significant experiences of sexual desires or gratifications at this stage (Horowitz & Kaufman, 1987, p. 86). Moreover, Freud describes the body as 'polymorphosuly perverse', capable of experiencing pleasure from any sensations (Ferrell, 2000, p. 404). His 'oedipus complex' (a concept based on the Greek myth of Oedipus) is instrumental to elucidate how a 'polymorphosuly perverse' is taken to the social world and to have a

separate sexual identity (Ferrell, 2000, p. 404). Oedipus complex is the basis of his psychoanalysis and provides a very complex emotional state for a child that involves the desire for one parent and hatred for another. Freud believed little boys and girls develop a strong sense of attraction towards parents of their opposite sex and a strong jealously of their same sex parents (Flanagan, 1982, p. 64). For a boy, his father stands in his path as a source of fear. In his eyes, his father is bigger, stronger and more sexually potent. The fear father is the fear of 'castration' (loss of penis), and due to that fear, the boy puts aside his identification/sexual desire with his mother, which in turn, makes him capable of sexual union with a mother like replacement; i.e., with another woman. More specifically, through an oedipal state, a boy strives for a secure identity for himself as a man and becomes both masculine and heterosexual at the same time. According to this model, masculinity is inextricably tied to sexuality that resembles the sexuality of his father, which is often oppressive, possessive and punitive (Kimmel, 1994, p. 126-127). The fear of castration is powerful because patriarchal and heterosexual society creates a norm that without possessing a penis one cannot be powerful, active or a lover of a woman (Horowitz & Kaufman, 1987, p. 86). Therefore, for Freud, the whole process is a formative moment in masculinity, and it produces a dynamics in a formative relationship (Connell, 1995, p. 9).

Freud, on the other hand, observes that the farewell to oedipal love for mother helps the boy to move beyond the triangular of family drama and develop a romantic attachment to more appropriate female objects. However, a girl, on the other hand, relinquishes her love towards her mother when she realises that she lacks a penis. This state is known as 'penis envy'. Due to 'penis envy' a girl starts feeling antipathy towards her mother and attraction towards her father (Lafrance, 2004, p. 643-44). Father takes the mother's place in a girl's eye because she knows that the father has what she wants or what she lacks; that is a penis. Such biologically destined genitals make a greater impact on all subsequent psycho-social developments. For example, girls feel highly wounded for not having penis and boys feel highly superior for having a penis (Flanagan, 1982, p. 66-67). It is further to note that, according to Freud, masculinity at a very early stage is a natural state for both the sexes but a girl retreats from masculinity to femininity once she discovers that she has no penis and it leads her to a

very fateful and unhappy situation (Person, 2009, p. 5). However, Freud notes that the feminine condition is established in her only when her wish of having a penis is replaced by the desire of having a child (Friedan, 1963, p. 103). As a matter of fact, 'penis envy' paves the way to typical femininity for a girl while 'castration anxiety' opens the way to traditional masculinity for a boy (Bem, 1993, p. 58).

In feminist theory, the importance psychoanalysis developed by Freud is of great significance since his theory explains the structure of individual or self through the operation of sexual differences (Ferrell, 2000, p. 403). Freud's analysis of masculinity was remarkable since it opened a new window and provided a guiding concept for development of masculinity (Connell, 1995, p. 9). Although as a theory it is both paradoxical and controversial, but it was the first serious attempt and the most interesting one for explaining and analysing masculinity (Connell, 1994, p. 11; Kilmartin, 2004, p. 319). Judith Mitchell (1997 cited in Gardiner, 2002, p. 195) puts a value to psychoanalysis in the sense that it adequately explains the nature of masculinity, femininity, heterosexuality and the social organisation of gender. Its masculine biases should not be seen as a reason for rejecting it totally rather it should be treated as a cause for rethinking the concept and how to make best use of it in development of feminist scholarship (Brennan, 1992; Flax, 1990; Kofman, 1980; Schneider, 1980 cited in Whitford, 2000, p. 1686).

The theory of Freud on psychoanalysis was criticised in many ways by feminist scholars. For example; Thomas (2007, p. 515) finds psychoanalytic accounts as prolonged, complicated, imprecise and incomplete. Irigaray (1985 cited in Ferrell, 2000, p. 404) states that Freud failed to answer the riddle of female desire because he has focused or understood on only one sex (male); other is the negation or absence of this sex, and he has defined women as castrated men. Simone de Beauvoir (1949 cited in Gardiner, 2002, p. 195) criticises Freud for viewing men as only human and women as mutilated men and relegating them to the state of other concerning male self. Kate Millett (1969 cited in Bem, 1993, p. 61) also criticises him for producing confusions. Whitford (2000, p. 1686) states that psychoanalytical theory fosters the desire of men and its central concepts explicitly or implicitly consider women as inferior. Many feminists, therefore, - accuse Freud for coercingwomen in a double standard

such as the typical woman is inferior, passive, masochistic and narcissistic but the woman who lacks these traits are neurotic, abnormal and masculine. These are undoubtedly negative traits attached with women (Gardiner, 2002, p. 195). According to Friedan (1963, p. 93), Freud is the prisoner of his own culture because much of his findings represent only the characteristics of certain middle-class European men and women. Radical feminists, on the other hand, view psychoanalysis as the agent of patriarchal culture and find its sexism contributing to violence against women (Gardiner, 2002, p. 195). According to Judith Butler (1990 cited in Whitford, 2000, p. 1686), psychoanalytical theory divides men and women by biologically determined sex, and in so doing, it has reinforced male primacy and made heterosexuality a cultural norm. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that the original gender is masculine as proposed by Freud. It is rather feminine proposed by Stroller (1968), and innate (both masculine & feminine) offered by Hornby (1924, 1925, 1932, 1933) & Jones (1948/1927, 1948/1933, 1984/1935 cited in Person, 2009, p. 5 &10). Moreover, Hornby (1924 cited in Friedman & Downey, 2002, p. 93) mainly blames Freudfor his misleading interpretation and states women do not feel inadequate because they do not have penis-these biologically determined feminine attributes are virtues, not defects. She further states that men are envious because of women's reproductive capacity.

Despite having many criticisms of Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, it still maintains a strong position in contemporary feminist theory (Gardiner, 2002, p. 199). Freud's psychoanalysis has at least provided a language to define women from an androcentric perspective (Bem, 1993, p. 62), and the distinction between a boy and a girl provides a symbolic meaning of masculinity and femininity (Giddens, 2001, p. 110). Lafrance (2004, p. 644), on the other hand, has provided some critical assumptions based on Freud's theory such as i) men's bodies are perfect and complete; ii) the presence and absence of male phallus/penis determines one's gender identity, sexual development and psychic formation, and iii) masculinity and femininity are based on patriarchal and heterosexual conception of normal sexuality-the only acceptable way of organising sexual congress. There is, thus, no way to fully discard Freud's theory of psychoanalysis in understanding masculinity. His analysis has heralded the theoretical development of the concept in the academia.

Sex Role Theory

A significant attempt in social science in understanding masculinity has been due to the idea of 'sex role', a concept connected to the notion of sex differences. Being a man or being a woman is attached to one's sex-the 'sex role'. There are always two roles: male role and female role (Connell, 1995, p. 21-22). The term 'sex role' not only refers to societal norms regarding appropriate characteristics and behaviours for men and women (Serafica & Rose, 1982, p. 11) but also indicates the social processes and practices associated with masculinity and femininity. The terms 'gender role' and 'sex role' are used interchangeably concerning internalisation of what is masculinity or femininity (Prentice, 2000, p. 223). Notably, the term 'sex role' is used more commonly and frequently than the term 'gender role' (Beere, 1990, p. 21; Turner, 1995, p. 1). Theoretically, the role is a process of learning, a process of socialisation and internalisation through which female character is produced by socialisation into female roles and male character into the male role (Connell, 1987, p. 48-49). Therefore, the relation between socialisation and sex role theory is very close, and the process of socialisation is often called 'role learning', 'role acquisition' or 'sex role socialisation' (Connell, 1987, p. 192). The basic idea of gender role theory is that in a given society men and women are socialised to learn different duties, responsibilities and rules of behaviour (Spence, Helmreich & Sawin, 1980 cited in Martin & Finn, 2010, p. 7). It is true that an individual is socialised in many different ways through different agents throughout his/her life such as school, neighbourhood, community, peer-group, workplace, religious institution but family is the most important institution to attain required roles for developing masculine and feminine personality characteristics (Maccoby, 1992 cited in Adams & Coltrane, 2005, p. 233).

Sex role has been a critical theory in the study of masculinity and femininity since the 1970s. Over the years a good number of theories have given positive inputs in developing sex role theory, but it has its origin in 'Family, Socialisation and Interaction Process' of the work of sociologists Parsons & Balles (1956). They have argued men and women are suited to different types of roles, and men are assigned to more instrumental roles while women take on more expressive roles. These roles are

complementary to each other and are required to meet the functions of society. They have suggested that men and women have an obligation to be socialised to 'appropriate' roles (Pease, 2007, p. 554). Sex role theory suggests that a father must maintain authority in the family. His instrumental role model must demonstrate technical and executive expertise while mother's expressive model provides moral support to the family (Parsons & Balles, 1956-, p. 51). The expressive model includes skills required to be emotional, sensitive, aware of other's feeling, interdependent and tender whereas instrumental model includes skills needed to be aggressive, independent, unemotional, assertive, strong and so on (Sahoo, 2004, p. 203). According to sex role principles, a mother maintains family's sense of taste and decorum. Any deviation from this role pattern may result in sex role dysfunction. If the socialisation or internalisation is perfect, a male child becomes an 'adequate technical performer' and 'cooperator' and a female child becomes a 'willing and accommodative person' (Parsons & Balles, 1956/2002, p. 51). Focusing predominantly on socialisation process the early proponents of sex role theory have provided a level of understating on the course of being acquiring masculine and feminine roles in family and society.

In 1976, Brannon proposed an essential model called 'Blueprint of Masculinity' which is globally recognised as a role model on how to become masculine or how to attain certain necessary qualities of manhood. This model proposes four themes, which are treated as the benchmark for measuring masculinity (Kimmel, 1994, p. 126). The first idea of the model is *No Sissy Stuff*. This refers to the concept that a man should never do anything that is treated to be feminine. Masculinity is the complete rejection of femininity (Kimmel, 1994, p. 125; Pease, 2007, p. 554). This approach belongs to the idea that men and women are two different as well as opposite sexes (Furby, 1983 cited in Kahn, 2009, p. 56). This theme speaks of the stigma associated with feminine characteristics and qualities. Female features and qualities are highly objectionable or threatening to the role of masculinity (Harris, 1995, p. 133). The second theme is *The Big Wheel*. It refers to the idea that men must feel that they are in charge of the situations (Kahn, 2009, p. 56). Masculinity includes dominance and power over others, and it is expressed in success, wealth and status (Kimmel, 1994, p. 125). For example; masculinity correctly is represented in

acquiring success and status in the breadwinning role (Pease, 2007, p. 554). The third theme is *The Sturdy Oak.* According to this theme, masculinity is an expression of toughness, confidence and self-reliance. This theme encourages boys to be tough and self-confident (Harris, 1995, p. 133-134). It also provokes that to be a man one has to shun all emotions and remain calm in crisis to show self-reliance (Franklin, 1988 cited in Kahn, 2009, p. 56; Kimmel, 1994, p. 125). The last theme is *Give'em Hell.* The sole idea of this theme is that to be masculine one has to be courageous and a risk taker (Kimmel, 1994, p. 126). A man subscribes to this issue in a variety of ways to attain masculine ideal (Kahn, 2009, p. 57). For example; this theme encourages a man to be aggressive, violent and daring in showing his masculinity (Harris, 1995, p. 133-134). Sex role theorists argue that these sorts of typical masculine notions are imposed on boys from birth and are reinforced through a different agent of socialisation (Farrell, 1975 cited in Pease, 2007, p. 554).

Inge Broverman who is one of the pioneers of sex role study in the early days of women's movement mentions that sex role definitions are implicitly incorporated into the self-image or self-concepts of both males and females (Mackie, 1980, p. 121). Sex role definitions point out the existence of highly consensus norms and values associated with the process of differentiation of men and women (Broverman et al., 1970 cited in Sahoo, 2004, p. 203). By researching male and female characteristics and their desirability Broverman et al. (1972 cited in Walczak, 1988, p. 29) find masculine traits are more desirable than female characters. It means that people expect men and women to behave very differently and they value male behaviour more highly as shown in the following manner.

Table 1
Sex Roles

a) Masculine pole is more desirable

Feminine	Masculine
Not at all aggressive	Very aggressive
Not at all independent	Very independent
Very emotional	Not at all emotional
Does not hide emotion at all	Almost always hides emotions
Very subjective	Very objective
Very easily influenced	Not at all easily influenced
Very submissive	Very dominant
Dislikes maths & science very much	Likes maths & science very much
Very excitable in a minor crisis	Not at all excitable in a minor crisis
Very passive	Very active
Not at all competitive	Very competitive
Very illogical	Very logical
Very home-oriented	Very worldly
Not at all skilled in business	Very skilled in business
Very sneaky	Very direct
Does not know the way of the world	Knows the way of the world
Feelings easily hurt	Feelings not easily hurt
Not at all adventurous	Very adventurous
Has difficulty making decisions	Can make decisions very easily
Cries very easily	Never crises
Almost never acts as a leader	Almost always acts as a leader
Not at all self-confident	Very self-confident
Very uncomfortable about being aggressive	Not at all uncomfortable about being aggressive
Not at all ambitious	Very ambitious
Unable to separate feelings from ideas	Easily able to separate feelings from ideas
Very dependen	Not at all dependent
Very conceited about appearance	Never conceited about appearance
Thinks women are always superior to men	Thinks men are always superior to men
Does not talk freely about sex with men	Talk freely about sex with men

Table 1
Continued

b) Feminine pole is more desirable

Feminine	Masculine
Does not use harsh language at all	Uses very harsh language
Very talkative	Not at all talkative
Very tactful	Very blunt
Very gentle	Very rough
Very aware of feeling of others	Not at all aware of feeling of others
Very religious	Not at all religious
Very interested in own appearance	Not at all interested in own appearance
Very neat in habits	Very sloppy in habits
Very quiet	Very loud
Very strong need for security	Very little need for security
Enjoys art & literature	Does not enjoy art & literature at all
Easily expresses tender feelings	Does not express tender feelings at all

Source: Broverman et al., 1972 cited in Nicholson, 1984, p. 8.

The traits on women particularly describe how women in a given society behave and prescribe how they should behave (Haslett & Lipman, 1997 cited in Gillem, Sehgal, & Forcet, 2000, p. 55). The social norms regarding expected behaviours of women push them into a double jeopardy. Women are blamed having not feminine qualities if their conduct is found similar with those specified for men, and if they adopt prescribed behaviour that is meant to be feminine, they are inadequate in comparison with the behaviour prescribed for men (Gillem et al., 2000, p. 55).

In the 1970's, Sandra Bem has identified some characteristics, which are considered desirable according to a person's sex. Interestingly, most men and women tend to choose and describe characteristics or traits, which are either masculine or feminine for them. However, individuals also find themselves as possessing both types of characteristics or traits equally depending on the situational appropriateness. People who have both types of characters might be androgynous (Bem, 1974, p. 155). Following this idea, Sandra Bem, has developed a new kind of inventory scale-the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) that is founded on a conception of the sex-typed

person of someone who has internalised society's desirable standard of being masculine and feminine and also a list of neutral attributes equally desirable in a male or a female (Bem, 1974, p. 156).

Table 2
Items on Masculinity, Femininity and Social Desirability Scale of the BSRI

Masculine items	Feminine items	Natural items
49 Acts as leader	11 Affectionate	51 Adaptable
46 Aggressive	6 Cheerful	36 Conceited
58 Ambitious	50 Childlike	9 Conscientious
22 Analytical	32 Compassionate	60 Conventional
13 Assertive	53 Does not use harsh language	45 Friendly
10 Athletic	35 Eager to soothe hurt feeling	15 Happy
55 Competitive	20 Feminine	3 Helpful
4 Depends on own belief	14 Flatterable	48 Inefficient
37 Dominant	59 Gentle	24 Jealous
19 Forceful	47 Gullible	39 Likable
25 Has leadership abilities	56 Loves children	6 Moody
7 Independent	17 Loyal	21 Reliable
52 Individualistic	26 Sensitive to the needs of others	30 Secretive
31 Makes decisions easily	8 Shy	33 Sincere
40 Masculine	38 Soft spoken	42 Solemn
1 Self-reliant	23 Sympathetic	57 Tactful
34 Self-sufficient	44 Tender	12 Theatrical
16 Strong personality	29 Understanding	27 Truthful
43 Willing to take a stand	41 Warm	18 Unpredictable
28 Willing to take risks	2 Yielding	54 Unsystematic

Note: The number preceding each item reflects the position of each adjective as it appears in the inventory.
Source: Bem, 1974, p. 156.

Twenty items reflect the definition of masculinity; twenty reflect the definition of femininity and twenty are the fillers. Bem's instrument was the first attempt to specifically provide independent measures of an individual's masculinity and femininity (Lenney, 1991), and it has produced relatively enduring definitions of masculinity and femininity.

Bem's findings are being used widely in empirical studies on the nature of masculinity and femininity (Choi & Fuqua, 2003, p. 872).

Though sex role theory is an essential one to help to differentiate traits between masculinity and femininity, it is not free from criticism. It was criticised by the feminists for its reliance on biological determinism and its incapability of conceptualisation of gender relations existing in social institutions and reproduced in interpersonal interactions (Smith, 1987, and West & Zimmerman, 1987 cited in Allen, Lloyd, & Few, 2009, p. 8). According to Connell (1987, p. 53-54), sex role theory is abstract in nature as well as it is unable to reflect a complete picture of the differences and relationships between men and women since it lacks a distinct method to theorise gender historically and socially. It lacks in the theorisation of power, social interests or social dynamism. Moreover, in sex role theory, roles are viewed as static and unchanging, and these are more prescriptive (Prentice, 2000, p. 223). Yet, the fact is that roles of an individual are always changeable, and an individual can easily switch his roles in response to various needs and demands. Moreover, the existing assumption of a normative standard of masculinity is seemingly improper and inadequate. The approach, therefore, has been overtaken by other theoretical approaches of masculinity (Pease, 2007, p. 555). Even though it is a very influential theory which identifies or separates the notions and norms regarding masculinity and femininity in gender relations, and in turn, maintains stout relationships in the perpetuation of violence against women.

Theory of Hegemonic Masculinity

Raewyn Connell, an Australian sociologist, is the most influential contemporary theorist of masculinity study and research. In her work, 'Gender and power: Society, the person and sexual politics' (1987), the concept of hegemonic masculinity was constructed. The idea of different forms of masculinities was central as well as crucial to an understanding of how patriarchal social order works (Connell, 1987, p. 183). Connell argues that there are different forms of masculinities, but one form is culturally esteemed above all other. Connell has termed that as hegemonic masculinity or dominant form of masculinity. By using this term, she has developed a process of stratifying masculinities (McCormack, 2012, p. 37).

Specifically speaking, Connell rejects the conceptual singularity of masculinity and views masculinity as masculinities. Her hegemonic masculinity is largely symbolic, legitimate and ideal type of masculinity within the multiplicity of masculinities. This typical and lawful form of masculinity emerges and develops within a particular socio-cultural milieu and acts as a benchmark, which all men must follow in maintaining their gender order (Howson, 2006, p. 3). However, it is also true that hegemonic masculinity is not something, which is fixed or constant. It is a masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given society and pattern of gender relations, and it is always contestable (Connell, 1995, p. 76). It is to note that Connell in some of her influential texts (1987; 1995; 2000) has developed and devised a broad and interdisciplinary theoretical framework for analysing masculinity (Ashe, 2007, p. 143).

Connell selected the idea of hegemony from Antonio Gramsci's (1978) analysis of class relations in Italy. Gramsci's analysis is based on the cultural dynamics by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life (Connell, 1995, p. 77). According to Gramsci, this position is primarily obtained by consent rather than force and also suggests that force may be used if a group does not give permission either actively or passively (Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 82). Hegemony, in fact, refers to a form of dominance, which legitimates and sustains the position of the ruling class over the ruled (Wong, 2000, p. 241). Hegemonic masculinity is defined as a gendered practice that provides explanations of the legitimacy of patriarchy and ensures the dominant position of men and the subordination of women (Connell, 1995, p. 77). It is, thus, a vital tool for feminist analysis of patriarchy since it specifically reflects gender issue (Wong, 2000, p. 241). Connell further argues that the gender dynamics of the idea of hegemony is employed to explain how certain ideals of masculinity justify the unequal relations between men and women in a patriarchal culture (Ashe, 2007, p. 146).

Hegemonic masculinity is indubitably the normative pattern of masculinity and nurturing of this kind of masculinity is the most dignified way of being a man (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). Connell (1995, p. 78) has identified some important features of hegemonic masculinity such as i) hegemony relates to cultural dominance in the society. It represents the dominance of heterosexual men and subordination

of homosexual men, and ii) the majority of men gain from hegemonic masculinity as they benefit from the patriarchal dividend. The patriarchal dividend is regarded as a form of gender practice that entails taking general advantage from the overall subordination of women. Notably, other authors have also used the term hegemonic masculinity. Kimmel (1994, p. 125) opines that hegemonic masculinity refers to a man in power, a man with power and a man of power. The definition of this type of masculinity lies in culture, and that culture promotes of maintaining the power of some men over other men and men over women. Lorber (1998 cited in Flood, 2002, p. 207) sates men who are economically prosperous, racially superior and apparently heterosexual are the true representatives of hegemonic masculinity. Donaldson (1993 cited in Howson, 2006, p. 3) has defined hegemonic masculinity as culturally idealised form of masculinity. It is centrally connected with the institutions of male dominance, not all men practice it, though most men take benefit from it. It is pseudo-natural, tough, contradictory, crisis-prone, wealthy and socially sustained and it often excludes working-class, gay and black-men. Hegemonic masculinity apparently highlights and promotes the practices of authority, control, competitive individualism, independence, aggressiveness, and develops the capacity for condoning violence (Connell, 1990, 1992, and, Segal, 1990 cited in Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 82). Therefore, men who do not conform to the hegemonic definition of masculinity are treated to be feminine (Yeung, Stombler, & Wharton, 2010, p. 149). Hegemonic masculinity fits the contemporary needs of the social and gender order (Duffy & Momirov, 1997, p. 124), and as it is the idealised form of masculinity as it is culturally honoured, glorified and sustained (Connell, 1990, 1992 cited in Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 82).

Beginning from the mid-1980s, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has been widely used in various ways, and it has also been an issue of debate and criticism (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). Mike Donaldson (1993 cited in Hearn, 2004, p. 58) has marked that the concept of hegemony is unclear and contradictory, often vague and ambiguous as it is unable to answer the pertinent questions regarding issues and practices of hegemony (Hearn, 2004, p. 58). The concept is viewed as 'over simplified' since it lacks in producing a subtle relationship between sex and gender. The idea of hegemonic masculinity has particularly come to be negatively

associated with men, and it refuses to recognise anything positive with men (Collier, 1998 cited in Dowd, 2010, p. 53). It also assumes that as men have the power, they cannot have virtue on their side (Seidler, 200, p. 52). Hegemonic masculine ideals and practices play a role in maintaining the current gender order and in so doing it generates barriers to gender equality (Davis, 1997, p. 84).

Even in the facet of criticism, the concept hegemonic masculinity provides rich resources for analysis of issues related to subordination and domination of women including violence against women through the lens of feminist theory and practice. Galdas (2009, p. 70) regards hegemonic masculinity as the most honoured, desired and culturally authoritative form of masculinity in particular given context. It stands as the standard for all other men to follow and also against which other men are measured. Koeing (2007, p. 28) states men who have control and power perform hegemonic masculinity and men who lack power and control perform complicit or subordinated masculinity. Consequently, a hegemonic form of masculinity is the superior form of masculinity.

Revisiting Theories & Interconnecting with Violence against Women

The theoretical and conceptual discussions above provide indications to highlight how masculinity is linked to violence against women. Recognising masculinity or maleness as a resource, feminist researchers have argued that men use this resource through perpetuating violence against women to reproduce and maintain their relative status and authority over women (Adler, 1997, p. 436). Alternatively, various forms of violence against women are the manifestations of a dynamic form of masculinity that separate men's activity from femininity (Kaufman, 1997, p. 41). In short, masculinity is what is made, and violence against women is a resource of making masculinity (Crosset, 2000, p. 155). However, both Connell (1995, p. 83) and Messerschmidt (1993, p. 45) have suggested not to assume that all men use violence to maintain authority over women. It is also to note that besides presuming violence there are other means of showing masculinity (Connell, 2000 cited in DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2005, p. 356). Freud's psychoanalytical theory is significantly relevant to violence against women. The male phallus is the tool and the primary source of power in

heterosexual relationship towards subordination of and control over women. The actual use of the phallus is to threaten women (Stanly, 2000, p. 1535). A man takes pride in his phallus, and this pride demonstrates his assertiveness, aggression and strength through the means of speaking, extending, thrusting, and penetrating. More specifically, the phallus is characterised by self-display, haughty reserve, and an instrument of aggression, recklessness, misogyny, and an excessive need to display one's potency (Diamond, 2006, p. 1101). Haddon (1998 cited in Cossins: 2000, p. 119) states that the key characteristics of masculine sexual ideals are; potent, penetrating, outward thrusting, initiating, forging ahead into virgin territory, opening the way, sword line, able to cut through, able to clear or differentiate, goal-oriented, to the point, focused, directive, effective, aimed, hitting the mark, strong, erect. As a matter of fact, a man uses this powerful tool in a heterosexual relationship to show his manhood in many forms of violence against women such as marital rape, sex without wife's consent, sex as and when he desires, impregnating wife against her desire and obnoxious sexual behaviours. Sexual performance and virility are central to the construction of masculine sexual performances. Conversely, impotence is a matter of shame for men and a great threeat to masculinity. In such circumstances heterosexual men often engage in different types of violence to overcome feelings of shame and dishonour (Higgins, 2006, p. 88). Many forms of violence are perpetuated in heterosexual relations to demonstrate or retain masculinity. For example; Messerschmidt (1993, p. 151) states that marital rape is a specific type of patriarchal masculinity in heterosexual relations targeted towards domination and control of women's sexuality. Hong (2000, p. 272) states that the norm of heterosexuality is to have sex more often with a female partner and this is how the masculinity is also ensured. On the other hand, wife-beating is common not only for her failure of performing essential obligations rightly but also for her challenge to his dominance and control. In such a situation wife-beating is an important tool through which a man tries to re-establish his masculinity (Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 145 & 148). Wenbeirg (1982, p. 16) also comments that the motivation for all male violence is related to attempts of men to reinforce their heterosexual masculinity.

The relation between sex role theory and violence against women is very strong. Many of the traits or constructs developed in different orientations

of sex role theory have direct linkages with acts of violence against women. The sex role theory was theorised to reveal the source of gender oppression and men's domination over women. It has significant implications for feminist theory since it has put particular emphasis on the realities of structural inequalities between men and women (Newton, 2002, p. 185), and on socialising men to be the oppressor and to use force to maintain domination if deemed necessary (Brownridge & Halli, 2001, p. 33). Feminist sociologists point out that the prevailing notion of masculinity and femininity as developed by sex role theory tends not to separate males and females but also infuses into them the framework of conflict and violence (Mackie, 1991 cited in Duffy & Momirov, 1997, p. 133). The socialisation process of assigning sex role behaviour (masculine or feminine) contributes greatly to violence against women. Women survivors of violence are socialised more rigidly to female sex roles (feminine) stereotypes, and violent men are more rigidly socialised to male sex roles (masculine) expectations (Walker, 2000, p. x). Socialisation prepares women to be the legitimate victims and men to be the potential offenders (Weis & Borges, 1973 cited in Scully & Marolla, 2005, p. 17). When these roles are challenged, a crisis in masculine identity may emerge, and a man may use violence against women in response to the perceived loss of, and attack on his masculine identity (Shefer & Ruiters, 1998, and, Simpson, 1992 cited in Boonzaier & Rey, 2003, p. 1020). Hence, every construct developed from sex role theory provides fundamental meanings of masculinity as well as agreeably internment flexible interface with violence against women.

Hegemonic masculinity stands as a compelling ideology that provides justifications that patriarchy is legitimised and must be maintained (Levy, 2007, p. 254). In feminist theory, women's subordination under patriarchal structure is viewed as the cause of violence against women. Therefore, the relation between hegemonic masculinity and violence against women is very close. The practice of hegemonic masculinity attempts to control women's subjectivity so that women provide sexual, practical, maternal and emotional services to men (Hird, 2002, p. 83). Men enjoy the material, physical and symbolic benefits of the subordination of women by practising hegemonic masculinity-the 'ideal-type' masculinity (Levy, 2007, p. 254). In patriarchal culture, men enjoy full control over women because patriarchy gives them the power and authority to do so. Connell (1995, p.

83) views that men use violence against women to sustain and retain their dominance, control and power. In addition to that, men who condone violence are unlikely to view them as deviant acts which are entirely justified; they are exercising a right which stems from the authority by an ideology of supremacy or hegemony. Therefore, the connection between hegemonic masculinity and violence is very intimate.

It is also important to note that the perceived crisis in masculinity also leads to domestic violence against women. Crisis in masculinity is something which is disrupted or in the process of transformation within a system of gender relations (Connell, 1995, p. 85). Kimmel (2003 cited in Ikeda, 2007, p. 116) opines the displacement of men from their traditional roles, responsibilities and power is viewed as the crisis in masculinity. As a matter of fact, deviation from the prescriptions given in each of the theories reflects the crisis in masculinity. The frustration from such a displacement or crisis might lead to the propagation of many forms of violence. Intensifying poverty and inequality, increasing unemployment, changing livelihood system, empowerment of women and greater control over resources by women and ideology have contributed to the crisis of normative masculinity (Batliwala, 1994 cited in Amuyunzu-Nyamongo & Francis, 2006, p. 219). Over the years, men have been facing a gradual erosion of both actual male power and symbolic power of the traditional concept of masculinity (Pfeil, 1995 cited in Robinson: 1997, p. 90). It is evident that women have substantially been empowered and taken up more instrumental roles for household activities which act as contributing factor towards pushing men's masculinity in crisis. In that case, men may strive to reassert their masculinity turning to violence means (Amuyunzu-Nyamongo & Francis, 2006, p. 220). Lindorfer, (2007, p. 32) also opines that due to macro social changes men at times may lose their position as the sole breadwinner, their status and role in the household and community may be undermined. Men, therefore, take violence against women as resort to reinstate their masculinity, on the other hand, traditional male characteristics, roles and responsibilities are also perceived to be linked to social problems and are not viewed as positive characteristics of manhood or masculinity (Gilbert, 1992, and, Levant, 1997 cited in Kahn, 2009, p. 198). MacInees (2001 cited in Kahn, 2009, p. 198) also views that traits like courageous, heroism, independent, rational, virility, strong etc. were once

claimed as masculine virtues; but these have turned into masculine vices like destructive, aggression, abusive and detachment. Apparently, this is a tense situation for normative masculinity, as such, a crisis in masculinity. If women take advantage over gender relations or doubt about men's perceived superiority and act against men's dominant role, it is very likely that men will consider their masculinity to be in a state of crisis. In such a crisis men will make attempts to restore or reinstate their masculinity (Connell, 1995, p. 84). No doubt, violence against women is the most powerful tool for men to restore their destroyed masculinity as the crisis in masculinity brings the risk of losing everything for them (Yekani, 2011, p. 25).

Conclusion

In this paper, attempts have been made to focus on the whole gamut of masculinity and its linkage to violence against women. As the constructs of masculinity vary over time, space and culture, it is challenging to have a unified standard of masculinity. Nonetheless, it is a very relevant analytical tool of gender relations. Masculinity is exactly the opposite notion of femininity. The analysis of masculinity is only perfect when it is compared to femininity. Though the concept masculinity has some meanings and has the certain set of traits but its dominant theoretical sources such as psychoanalysis, sex-role and hegemony provide abundant elements of analysing the concept. Psychoanalytical theory gives a biological framework for showing one's masculinity; sex role theory socialises on how to internalise or practice masculinity and theory of hegemony provides the basis on how to become the perfect and powerful man. The theoretical notions of masculinity further confirm that they are closely associated with the practice of violence against women. Violence is an effective means to dominate women. Men practice violence not only to demonstrate his masculinity but also to safeguard it. If a man feels that his masculinity is in danger or crisis, he may also be violent to reinstate that. Nonetheless, masculinity enables and encourages men to dominate and control women. To become masculine, at times, a man might take up the role of oppressor. Perpetuating violence against women is a demonstration of masculinity in gender relations.

Being a review research, it has certain limitations, which can be compensated by empirical research. It would be interesting to see a country specific broader survey of masculinity, which might include understanding of the construction of masculinity and the implications of masculinity theories in understanding violence against women. Finally, it is strongly suggested that masculinity is a concept that demands systematic and categorical understanding particularly about violence against women so that effective measures can be taken up to bring changes amongst men, and to establish a balanced and mutually respectful society.

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