

When Men Cry

A Study on Violence Against the
Male Gender in Iranian Society

Kameel Ahmady and Colleagues



AVAYeBUF

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Publication Information

Title:	<i>When Men Cry</i> <i>A Field and Analytical Study of Violence Against Men</i>
Author:	Kameel Ahmady and Colleagues
First Edition:	2026
Publisher:	AVAyeBUF, Denmark
ISBN:	978-87-93926-40-0
Cover & Page Design:	Sirvan

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Note to Readers and Acknowledgements

This volume represents a concerted effort to redefine and re-examine social issues pertaining to the male gender (men and boys), specifically within the context of violence and social harm. It employs a methodical approach to critique prevalent stereotypes regarding masculinity, as well as social and gender inequalities.

It must be stated at the outset that the aim of this research is not to diminish or negate the undeniable and acute phenomenon of violence against women. Rather, it intends to complete the puzzle of understanding violence, thereby laying the groundwork for a movement towards a genuine and inclusive 'gender justice,' under the aegis of which all groups and sexual orientations may attain sustainable security.

The impetus for this research stems from the intersection of two analytical planes: the micro-level of lived experience and the macro-level of social structures. At the micro-level, my personal experiences—previously documented in my autobiography *Resistance is Life*—served as the initial entry point into the question of violence and its mechanisms. However, this lived experience, upon confrontation with a complex social field—namely, Evin Prison (2019)—transformed into an urgent and fundamental sociological enquiry. Observing the plight of prisoners detained for non-payment of *Mahr* (nuptial financial commitments) and analysing the discourse of men's rights groups confronted me with field data that defied conventional theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, individuals influenced by movements such as MeToo—attacks from whom I was also subjected to at one juncture—inadvertently aided me in uncovering the hidden and lesser-known angles of men's issues.

It was here that the dominant paradigm, which defines violence and sexual oppression predominantly as a unidirectional phenomenon from men against women, appeared insufficient to me. This framework is incapable of explaining the profound harms that men and boys themselves suffer within this very structure; harms such as circumcision, child marriage, and sexual abuse, which have been deliberately marginalised and silenced due to imposed stereotypes of 'masculinity'—expectations of stoicism, power, and the suppression of weakness. Consequently, in this research, by reviewing the limited resources available in the field of men's studies, we have endeavoured to reach a deeper understanding of the problems facing this group and to contribute to the enrichment of literature in

this domain. Beyond an academic and theoretical exercise, this research is an attempt to bridge this theoretical and practical chasm, bringing a silent suffering into the text—a suffering which, if ignored, renders any attempt to achieve gender justice incomplete and futile.

The findings of this research refute the false belief that men are invariably in positions of power and dominance. It posits that only a minority of men possess wealth and power, and this minority frequently exercises oppression not only upon women but also upon other men. The common perception that men, as a class, possess power, wealth, and dominance is misleading. In reality, only a minority—predominantly male, though coincidentally including some women—control the vast majority of global resources. This minority inflicts oppression not only upon women but specifically upon other men, such as factory and industrial workers, employees, and other subordinate labour forces, a situation stemming from the unequal distribution of power and wealth globally.

The present research, through an analysis of power structures, examines how this powerful minority—predominantly male—exerts pressure on the majority of both men and women through the control of resources. This analysis opens a new vista onto social inequalities. A review of social statistics such as workplace mortality, incarceration rates, substance abuse, mental illness, war casualties, the countless boys subjected to sexual abuse and harassment, and the suicide rate among men, demonstrates men's vulnerability to certain social issues that are habitually overlooked.

Given the points outlined above, the necessity of conducting such research in the future appears vital for the following reasons:

- The research findings, by exposing hidden realities, demonstrate that the prevailing conception of men as a group always in a position of power and dominance is inaccurate.
- This study seeks to reveal realities that have remained concealed behind gender stereotypes. By highlighting the shared pain of women and men, creating a common understanding can provide the grounds for a more humane dialogue and better collective solutions to assist in the reduction of social harm.
- This research attempts to amplify the voices of men who, due to gender stereotypes, have been deprived of expressing their suffering. By raising awareness and enlightening managers and policymakers, it highlights the need for action focused on the issues of men and boys, including attention to

matters such as circumcision, child marriage, and support for men exposed to social harm.

- The results indicate that to achieve social justice, the issues of both sexes (women and men) must be addressed simultaneously.
- This study seeks to create balance in gender discourses, which have typically addressed women's issues in a unilateral manner.
- The research hopes that by highlighting the issues of men and boys, it can offer solutions to reduce social suffering, including imprisonment for *Mahr*, workplace fatalities, high rates of circumcision, substance abuse, mental illness, war casualties, the sexual abuse of boys, and male suicide rates.

This research is significant from several perspectives: 1. Filling the Literature Gap: Given the scarcity of resources in the field of men's studies, this work is a significant step towards bridging this deficit. 2. Challenging Stereotypes: By challenging gender stereotypes, this study assists society in gaining a more precise understanding of social realities. 3. Creating Humane Dialogue: By emphasising the shared pain of women and men, this research seeks to foster empathy and cooperation between different gender groups. 4. Impact on Policymaking: By offering suggestions for policymaking, this study can contribute to improving social conditions for men and boys.

This research endeavours to describe and explain the prevalent issues and problems while offering collective solutions and policy proposals to managers and relevant agencies, thereby taking a step towards the advancement of social justice. This process, through balancing the gender discourse and highlighting shared human pain, can lead to a deeper and more humane understanding of social issues.

The findings of this research are the outcome of the collective efforts of a group of colleagues, field researchers, scholars, hundreds of participants who responded to the study's questions, and those whose advice and guidance were drawn upon at various stages of the research. I am deeply grateful for the efforts of everyone involved. Although some participants and contributors requested that their names not be mentioned for personal or professional reasons, their role in bringing this study to fruition deserves recognition. It is impossible to name every participant, yet even more difficult to leave certain individuals unacknowledged.

I am grateful to all those who generously shared their expert views throughout the various stages of the research. First, I would like to express my

sincere thanks to Dr Ardeshir Bahrami, Dr Mohsen Maroufi, and, in particular, a dear friend who, for personal and professional reasons, preferred to remain unnamed. From the outset of the research, they provided constant support in collecting the initial sources, conducting and analysing the first round of field interviews, and repeatedly reviewing the work.

I am grateful to Dr Fatemeh Mousavi Mirak for her advice, unstinting assistance in the initial formulation of the theoretical literature and field-data analysis sections, and her many valuable recommendations; to Dr Ardeshir Bahrami for helping to establish the initial coherence of the fieldwork sections and for conducting supplementary interviews that enriched the study; and, once again, to Dr Mousavi Mirak for her repeated readings and consultations, her assistance in completing and organising the sections, editing the field analyses, and formatting the references. I am also grateful to Dr Bahrami for his advice and assistance in revising and rewriting several of the headings, as well as the analysis and recommendations sections.

My sincere thanks also go to Dr Shahrzad Mirani Asl, Dr Shahrokh Yazdani, and Ms Somayeh Ezzati for reading the whole text or parts of it and offering valuable advice towards its completion. I am grateful to the colleagues and field researchers who assisted with interviews conducted inside and outside Iran, including Dr Susan Rezaei, whose meticulous attention and professional ethics I greatly appreciate.

I would also like to thank the various awareness-raising groups and online pages for sharing and providing resources and information related to violence against boys and men.

Finally, I offer my deepest gratitude to a longstanding friend, colleague, and the project's principal researcher, who carried the main burden of collecting, compiling, and analysing the material for this study, but modestly requested that their name not be mentioned because of professional considerations.

Kameel Ahmady

January 2026

London, United Kingdom

Preface

Breaking the Silence and Shedding Light on the Hidden Half of Violence

Within the lexicon of social studies and public discourse, 'violence' stands as one of the most frequent, yet most harrowing, terms. For decades, researchers, activists, and policymakers have rightly wielded the sword of awareness against the darkness of domestic, social, and structural violence, succeeding significantly in bringing the vulnerability of women and children from the margins to the centre. This sacred endeavour has been a monumental step towards making societies more humane. However, within this very illumination, a long and heavy shadow has invariably been cast upon the ground, one that has received scant attention: the shadow of 'violence against the male gender in Iranian society'. The research before you is an attempt to stand within and search this very shadow, to break the silence that envelops it, and to shine an analytical light upon this hidden, denied, and often ignored half of social reality.

This book departs from a radical yet simple premise: violence is a human phenomenon that knows no gender. Violence is born of asymmetrical power relations, stifling cultural stereotypes, flawed social structures, and untreated psychological wounds. In such a context, any human being, regardless of gender, can be both a perpetrator and a victim of violence. Nevertheless, the deeply rooted cultural archetype of the 'man' as a powerful, dominant, breadwinning entity devoid of emotional vulnerability is so interwoven into the fabric of our collective mentality that imagining him in the position of a victim appears difficult, unfamiliar, and for some, impossible. This book possesses the audacity to challenge this very archetype.

The 'non-problematic' nature of the issue is perhaps the most tragic dimension of violence against the male gender. A man who falls victim to psychological, economic, verbal, physical, or sexual violence not only bears the heavy burden of injury but also faces a high wall of cultural and social obstacles to expressing his pain. The fear of labels such as 'weakness', 'incompetence', and 'unmanliness' on the one hand, and the absence of legal refuges, support institutions, and even a sympathetic ear in society on the other, condemns him to a corrosive silence and painful isolation. This silence sets a vicious cycle in motion: the denial of the victim leads to the concealment of the injury, and concealment fuels the reproduction of violence in other forms and levels. This research is a cry to break this cycle.

The aim of this book is by no means to trivialise or negate the widespread violence against women; rather, it seeks to complete the puzzle of understanding violence and to move towards a genuine and inclusive 'gender justice' so that all gender groups may attain security together. True gender justice is not achieved merely by protecting one gender against the other, but is contingent upon dismantling the very structures and stereotypes that allow one gender to dominate and impose the role of victim upon the other—a process that wounds and restricts both in different ways. Ignoring the lived experiences of injured men leaves our understanding of the dynamics of power and violence incomplete and one-dimensional, leading to ineffective policymaking that ultimately fails to create a safe and healthy society for anyone.

To overcome this cognitive and theoretical void, this research has employed the Grounded Theory methodology. Given that existing theories appear insufficient to explain this phenomenon within the cultural context of Iran, we required an approach that, instead of imposing preconceived frameworks, would allow the phenomenon itself to speak, 'grounding' the theory directly in field data and the lived narratives of individuals. Consequently, we sat down to converse with dozens of male victims of violence, experts, specialists, and even individuals who had experiences of perpetrating violence, to achieve a deep and multidimensional understanding of this phenomenon through their experiences.

The analytical journey of this book is organised into ten chapters, each completing a piece of a larger puzzle.

- Chapter One, titled 'Problem Statement', serves as the gateway to this complex world. This chapter argues why violence against the male gender is a 'social problem' and what cultural, social, and discursive obstacles (including traditional norms of masculinity and certain reductionist feminist readings), as well as legal and social policy barriers, prevent its recognition. This chapter cries out for the necessity of moving beyond uni-gendered perspectives on violence.
- Chapter Two, through a review of 'Literature and Research Background', defines the scientific standing of this inquiry. In this section, whilst examining the scant domestic and foreign studies, we identify existing cognitive and theoretical gaps and demonstrate how this research intends to fill these voids and offer a novel conceptual framework suitable for

Iranian society. One of the innovations of the present research is the deep and comprehensive study of the social issue from the viewpoints of social activists, specialists in psychiatry, psychology, medicine, law, and sociology, as well as the silent victims of violence (LGBTQ groups) and diverse groups of individuals and strata subjected to the violence in question.

- Chapter Three elaborates on the 'Research Methodology'. Here, the logic behind selecting Grounded Theory, the process of theoretical sampling, the data collection tool (in-depth interviews), and the three stages of coding (open, axial, and selective)—which form the heart of the analysis—are explained in detail so that the reader is transparently informed of the scientific process of knowledge production.
- Chapter Four enters the heart of data analysis and the presentation of findings. This section is organised based on the Strauss and Corbin paradigm model, which seeks to explain a phenomenon within its full context. This chapter is dedicated to defining and delimiting the 'Core Category': 'The Perception and Experience of Violence', showing how the lived experiences of participants guided us to a deeper and more abstract understanding of violence against the male gender; an understanding that extends beyond physical violence to include hidden and normalised dimensions such as the suppression of male emotions, psychological neglect, and pressures arising from gender roles. This category, like the thread of a rosary, connects all other components of the theory. Violence against men in Iranian society, based on narrative and theoretical evidence, is a multidimensional, interpersonal, and structural phenomenon encompassing a spectrum of actions, deeds, or even omissions that lead to humiliation, exclusion, invalidation, emotional suppression, portrayal of incompetence, coercion, comparison, and psychological, economic, emotional, sexual, social, or spiritual abuse in men's lives. This phenomenon includes both active behaviours (such as direct humiliation, insult, threat, assault and battery, economic abuse, sexual rape, accusation, and repeated comparisons with others) and passive behaviours or omissions (such as emotional neglect, ignoring needs, denial or constant belittling of men's status and desires, rejection and isolation, prevention of social support or expression of feelings, and lack of support for or recognition of men's efforts and successes); such that

victimised men continuously face feelings of inadequacy, frustration, shame, and social and emotional isolation. In this definition, not only overt and practical actions but also inaction and the abandonment of support and care (by the family, society, or institutions) threaten the health and dignity of men, placing them in a cycle of psychological, emotional, and social wounds, and even chronic physical and spiritual injuries.

- Chapter Five dissects the 'Contextual Conditions'; that is, the general bed and situation in which the phenomenon of violence occurs. In this chapter, we show how contexts such as the socio-cultural structure based on gender stereotypes (man as the hard sex, men do not cry, silence in the face of violence) and the crisis of masculinity, crime-ridden urban neighbourhoods, high-pressure work and economic contexts (poverty, unemployment, deprivation, high prices, inflation, economic crisis, retirement and old age, social class), unilateral legal-judicial contexts (imbalance between rights and responsibilities of women and men, conflict between traditional and modern rights), political contexts (lack of civil institutions, ignoring violence against men in political discourses), and dysfunctional family contexts provide fertile ground for the emergence and growth of this type of violence.
- Chapter Six addresses 'Intervening Conditions'. The aim of this chapter is to identify and analyse those specific situations of time and place that directly influence the intensity, direction, and quality of violence against men or their reaction to it. Factors at various levels including individual (such as low self-confidence, emotional deprivation, high volume of psychological pressure, angry mindset), family (such as faulty upbringing patterns), economic (such as poverty and unemployment, job insecurity, and inflation), cultural conditions (gender taboos), and legal-political (such as supportive vacuums) are examined in this chapter.
- Chapter Seven deals with 'Causal Conditions' or the primary sparks of violence. This chapter analyses the direct and immediate stimuli that lead to the occurrence of a violent act, including interpersonal conflicts, acute psychological pressures, and frustrations, distinguishing between individual causes (physical, sexual, psychological), personality traits (stubbornness and approval-seeking, bullying, perfectionism), interpersonal/social causes (normative pressure on men, social labelling),

and family causes (authoritarian spouse, insecure emotional attachment, and abandonment by a partner or family, low resilience).

- Chapter Eight, titled 'Strategies', answers the key question: what do individuals do in the face of violence? This chapter is the beating heart of the paradigm model and categorises men's actions and reactions into two main spectra: 'Passive', where men's reactions are often reactive, internal, and sometimes self-destructive (subgroups include 'violence against another' via transferred aggression, and 'violence against self' via internalisation, guilt, or self-harm); and 'Active', encompassing three main approaches: 'Problem-solving' (dialogue, negotiation), 'Aggressive' (various forms of aggression, defence, or revenge), and 'Defensive' (flight, denial, bargaining, or adopting the victim role).
- Chapter Nine is dedicated to 'Consequences', detailing the devastating effects and results of violence at multiple levels: individual (psychological-emotional damage, physical and sexual injuries, feelings of helplessness, ruin, depression), family (collapse of relationships and family disintegration), social (rejection and isolation, reduction of social support), and economic and ethical (injustice, discrimination, and unethical behaviours). This chapter shows how the consequences of violence can themselves become causal conditions for a new cycle of harm.
- Finally, Chapter Ten, the climax and ultimate fruit of this research, addresses 'Solutions'. Transcending description and relying on the findings of the entire study, this chapter proposes a set of multifaceted and practical solutions. These include educational and public awareness measures (life skills training like anger management, authoritative parenting, sexual education), supportive and therapeutic measures (mental health screening), structural and institutional reforms (legal reforms regarding dowry, custody; political development of counselling systems; establishment of civil organisations), and cultural-religious solutions (acceptance of LGBTQ identities) to prevent and combat violence against the male gender. This chapter is a roadmap for moving from cognition to change.

The research before you is an invitation to rethink. It is an invitation to hear voices that have hitherto been unheard. It is an invitation to a more comprehensive, just, and humane understanding of the phenomenon of violence. It is hoped that this work may be a small step towards breaking the

silence, reducing suffering, and building a society where human security and dignity are regarded as the undeniable right of all, regardless of their gender.

1. Problem Statement

1.1. Introduction

In recent decades, public and scientific discourse surrounding the phenomenon of violence has rightly focused on the vulnerability of women and children, succeeding in bringing the hidden layers of domestic and social oppression to the level of public consciousness. This significant achievement, whilst a vital step towards justice and the humanisation of societies, has inadvertently cast a long shadow over the other half of reality: violence against the male gender. This phenomenon is not only absent from media discourse and macro-policymaking but is also scarcely recognised as a 'social problem' within the collective mentality. The deeply rooted cultural archetype of the man as a powerful, dominant entity and the perpetrator of violence, and the woman as a passive victim, is so pervasive that it renders the reversal of this equation difficult, if not implausible, to imagine.

This research departs from the premise that violence is a human phenomenon that knows no gender; rather, it takes shape within the context of power relations, cultural stereotypes, and social structures. As the documents in this chapter demonstrate, men, too, fall victim to diverse forms of psychological, verbal, physical, economic, and sexual violence in various arenas including the family, the workplace, and even in interactions with the legal and judicial systems. However, the most significant obstacle to recognising and combating this phenomenon is its status as a 'non-problem'. The silence of male victims, stemming from the fear of being labelled 'weak', 'unmanly', and social shame, coupled with the silence of supportive and legal systems, has created a vicious cycle of concealment, denial, and the reproduction of harm.

This chapter argues that disregarding violence against the male gender is not merely ignoring a part of social reality but carries deeper consequences for society as a whole. Overlooking the lived experiences of injured men renders

our understanding of violence incomplete and one-dimensional, leading to ineffective policies incapable of realising true gender justice. Furthermore, a man who is himself a victim of violence and finds no way to express or treat his injury potentially possesses the capacity to reproduce this harm in his relationships, perpetuating this vicious cycle.

Therefore, this research enters the field with the aim of breaking this structural silence and disrupting the unilateral balance of violence studies. In this chapter, an attempt is made to examine the various dimensions of violence against the male gender in Iranian society by citing limited yet significant domestic and international evidence. Furthermore, the key obstacles preventing the construction of this phenomenon as a social problem—including patriarchal norms, the unintended consequences of certain feminist approaches, legal-juridical weaknesses, and the reduction of the issue to physical violence—will be scrutinised. The ultimate goal is not to trivialise violence against women, but to complete the puzzle of understanding violence and to take a step towards presenting a realistic, comprehensive, and humane image of this complex social phenomenon, thereby paving the way for a healthier and more peaceful society for all genders.

1.2. Problem Statement

Prior to the first decade of the 21st century, research was generally focused on violence against women; however, in recent decades, investigations into violence against men have also increased (Hosseini et al., 2021). Violence against men is a relatively emergent phenomenon, largely commencing when profound changes occurred in the structure and relations of families, causing the home and family to lose their traditional form. The family is recognised as a sanctuary and refuge against external threats and stresses, where relationships and interactions should be supportive and caring of its members; yet, the flip side of reality is that the most severe and shocking violence may occur within such a 'presumed safe' environment (Kazemi, 2021). It is perhaps helpful to add that because the dominant masculinist culture and relations of ownership and power within the family conceived of the lives of women, children, and powerless members as the property of the man, any event within the family was considered a private sphere subject to his discretion; these very factors contributed to the hidden persistence and reproduction of violence.

Violence by women against men is a tragedy that has long existed but has never received attention comparable to violence against women, as this form of violence has been downplayed under the influence of social gender stereotypes that view men as heads of households, powerful, protectors, and even breadwinners. For instance, the emergence of domestic violence as a public concern is relatively late, as it was previously considered a private matter to be resolved at home, prohibiting any external intervention (Pizzey, 1975). This form of violence was excluded from the British Crime Survey (BCS) until as late as 1996 (Mirrlees-Black, 1999). Prior to this, domestic violence was regarded as a 'family problem' which barred police action (Wright, 1998). It is only in recent years that the attention of some researchers and social commentators has been drawn to domestic violence against men as well (Puchert, Jungnitz, Lenz, Puhe, and Walter, 2004). From society's perspective, family violence—that is, violence in a space expected to be a font of affection and kindness—is more unacceptable than violence perpetrated by a stranger outside the family. Therefore, family violence is recognised as a dysfunction of the family requiring attention. How such dysfunction arises requires analysis and investigation... The reaction to violence and its intolerability for progressive sections of society creates the hope that the traditional approach to violence is fading; in its stead, a progressive and humane approach is forming that pursues ways to eradicate violence. Indeed, the most significant change emerging in Iranian society regarding the issue of family violence is that what was once a private and hidden issue is moving towards visibility, and the necessity of confronting it is gradually becoming apparent. However, the traditional approach to family violence, which remains the dominant and official stance, has yet to adopt an appropriate response or solution to this issue.

Although the high prevalence of male violence against women cannot be denied, it appears that today other dimensions of violence, including violence by women against men, cannot be ignored. While women are themselves victims of violence from men, their empowerment in contemporary society has moved them out of a passive state to the point where, for whatever reason, they too exert violence against men. The world today addresses women's rights and issues such as violence against women, whilst according to existing statistics in various countries, many men are victims of sexual violence and, due to cultural and legal reasons, lack the possibility of declaring and pursuing

judicial recourse. A point worthy of contemplation is that a significant portion of sexual violence against men is perpetrated by women. For example, in the United States, 79% of men who have been victims of sexual violence and forced intercourse were coerced by women. Similarly, research conducted in July 2017 in the UK led to the startling conclusion that one-fifth of men subjected to sexual violence were victims of blackmail and threats by women.

Various forms of sexual discrimination against men/boys remain largely unrecognised. Few people take seriously the idea that men are also victims of serious forms of sexual discrimination, whereas forms of discrimination against women are widely acknowledged. Women are usually exempt from compulsory military service, but men are systematically forced into combat zones, exposed to injury, disability, emotional consequences, and death (Benatar, 2003).

Mistreatment and violence against men, particularly boys and young men, are not limited to conflict, war, and prison environments; they also suffer violence at the hands of society members, employers, teachers, or family members. The duties placed upon men in various world cultures since ancient times, such as providing for women and fighting, expose them to various dangers, such that the statistics of victims of work-related accidents and war are dozens of times higher for men than for women. Furthermore, research has shown that men, due to work involvements stemming from family obligations, attend less to their health and thus fall victim to many fatal diseases more than women, generally living shorter lives. Men are even more frequently victims of violent crimes as well as legal violence such as corporal punishment. Sexual assault against men is often taken less seriously. Fathers are less likely to gain custody of their children after divorce. The list of instances of discrimination against men, which also lead to violence against them, is extensive. Men have historically always been compelled to participate in wars. Many, against their will, faced and continue to face punishment (even execution) for refusal. Additionally, social pressure against them has been immense. As an example, during World War I in England, women would hand white feathers—symbols of cowardice—to men and even teenagers who did not participate in the war. Millions of men have been killed in history's wars, a vast number injured, or suffered mental and psychological problems due to war conditions. Moreover, military service in most countries is restricted to men, and in countries where



Figure 1 No to Violence

women must also serve, the nature of their duties and tasks is simpler (Benatar, 2003).

According to some international organisations active in this field, domestic violence knows no borders, race, education level, or ethnicity. They believe it is a public problem that has evolved from a social issue into a public health concern (International Rescue Commission, 2012; World Health Organization, 1996; Salinsky, 2017; Smith et al., 2017; WHO, 2014). Outside the home environment, both men and women act with greater violence when confronting stranger men compared to stranger women (especially boys between the ages of 16 and 24). Corporal punishments such as flogging have historically been applied with greater severity to men or have been exclusive to them. Even in schools, the punishment of boys is stricter than that of girls, and sometimes physical punishment is limited solely to boys. Boys are physically punished at home more than girls. Furthermore, capital punishment in some countries is exclusive to men, and in others, the probability of a death sentence for men compared to women in similar cases is much higher (Benatar, 2003).

Violence as a social issue requires intervention in the social sphere and should be raised as a public health issue, with international organisations demanding governments plan and strive to control it. However, this concern has primarily been voiced in criticism of patriarchy, entirely in favour of women, in some cases children, and in complete negligence of oppression against men. This one-sidedness, referred to in 20th-century human rights

literature largely as 'positive discrimination' (affirmative action), despite its very significant achievements for women, has made the space for critique regarding violence against men extremely narrow and in some cases impossible. That women protest against injustices in the world and support one another is inherently positive, but excessive emphasis on female victimhood risks ignoring men's rights. In at least the last century, feminist, gynocentric, and misandrist concepts have seriously entered the dominant global paradigm, and addressing women's rights, rather than being substantive, has in many instances been merely a political show and a symbol of intellectualism. Radical feminism and its approaches have blocked the path for discussing forms and methods of violence exerted against men, and have even cast doubt on the critique of such violence in the social mindset and public opinion, despite the abundance and certainty of forms of violence against men.

Most feminists speak of systematic and institutionalised sexual violence and discrimination against women. In their view, patriarchal power institutions have made discrimination against women pervasive. Such an approach has caused sexual discrimination against men/boys to be ignored or a substantial difference to be assumed between these two types of discrimination, resulting in the formation of another sexual discrimination, this time against men/boys (Benatar, 2003). Different forms of violence and sexual discrimination against men/boys remain generally unrecognised, and cultural hegemony has prevented them from being perceived as violence and discrimination even by those who suffer them; while forms of sexual discrimination against women are widely acknowledged, few people take seriously the exertion of multiple forms of sexual discrimination against men. Studies show that differences between the two sexes, rather than indicating fundamental differences between men and women, reflect the influence of gender stereotypes and the 'self-reinforcing' nature of these stereotypes (Elmi & Elyasi, 2009). However, the reality is that the factual inaccuracy of gender stereotypes does not prevent their detrimental effects (Baron & Byrne, 1997).

Violence against men in today's world may seem strange, but it is entirely real. Estimated data on marital violence show that men and women are equally aggressive and abusive towards spouses, sparking a perpetual debate among some gender sociologists (Straus, 1993) as to whether family violence is bilateral and familial or dependent on the male gender (Gortner, 1997). This

type of violence in its various forms has created difficult and painful experiences for men/boys in the world we live in. Gender-based and non-gender-based violence, sexual, physical, emotional, economic, and legal violence represent only a part of the various types of violence mentioned in surveys. Mentioning all forms of violence inflicted upon men is neither possible nor necessary. However, mentioning some of the most common types can bring us somewhat closer to the reality of this phenomenon.

Finneran and Stephenson (2013) argue that gay men experience significantly higher rates of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) than heterosexual men and women, and this rate is far higher among gay men of colour, those with lower education levels, those living with HIV, and young gay men. According to studies, 26% to 33% of gay men experience some form of IPV during their lifetime (Walters, Chen, & Breiding, 2013), and 47% of those who reported hate crimes in 2016 were gay men (NCAVP, 2016). Furthermore, it appears men are more often victims of violent crimes as well as legal violence such as corporal punishment. Sexual assault on men is often taken less seriously, although this rape is often perpetrated by men (Benatar, 2003).

Among types of violence, gender violence is likely the most familiar in the public mind. From this perspective, this type of violence, which may arguably be the most significant, is an issue rooted in a type of social inequality termed *gender inequality*. Gender inequality refers to treatment or action that humiliates, excludes, disparages, and stereotypes individuals based on their gender, indicating unequal access for women and men to opportunities, facilities, and societal resources. These are soft and hidden methods of segregation and exclusion that prevent individual integration into groups. The acceptance of gender ideology and stereotypes by women and men within a context of gender socialisation provides the ground for reproducing inequality in family and social spaces and becomes a bed for hostile behaviours and negative competition aimed at reproducing macro-structures of discrimination and distinction.

One of the most discriminatory types of violence is gender-based violence (GBV). GBV is a serious violation of human rights, and international documents and conventions call for its prevention and redress. The roots of this discrimination also lie largely in the legal and juridical structure, a structure imagined as masculine but which in its underlying layers has constructed rules that facilitate the exertion of violence and discrimination

against men. These rules have created negative and unpleasant feelings, such as various fears of formal marriage, among men. Some laws in different parts of the world, such as heavy *Mahr* (dowries) in Iran or the requirement for men to give half their assets to women in case of divorce (even if the woman did nothing to generate income), constitute discrimination against men. However, the extent to which these cases correlate with structural foundations and legal and cultural bases of societies, and how much they relate to the desires of men/boys themselves under conscious or unconscious pressures of collective action, can be explored within the framework of constructionist and interpretive theories.

In such conditions, speaking about violence against the male gender in a society like Iran, where patriarchy is a cultural characteristic in its structure and history, is a very difficult and costly task, akin to deconstruction and standing against all stereotypes that have shaped the Iranian understanding of gender. Ancient cultural beliefs and what governs the belief and behaviour of the Iranian citizen to this day all tell of the mastery and lordship of men in power relations between women and men. Under these circumstances, raising a discussion about inequality, discrimination, and violence against men is not easily possible. Added to this is the fact that the rightful and egalitarian struggles of women in recent decades, occurring under the conceptual umbrella of feminism and yielding very important achievements in explaining male oppression of women, have multiplied the difficulties of raising such discussions. That women protest against injustices in the world and support one another is inherently positive, but excessive emphasis on female victimhood risks ignoring men's rights. Carney, Buttell, and Dutton (2007) argue that although we do not have different laws for women and men, the criminal justice system has been more lenient towards women. In Iran, too, despite the argument that laws favour men, in the issue of violence against men, because this issue has not yet been established for society and the judicial system, judicial procedures in such cases largely operate in favour of women.

All this while any exploration regarding justice and equality depends on the development of human resources and the fruition of societal talents in the light of eliminating discrimination and creating an atmosphere of peaceful, reconciliatory, and egalitarian interaction between all social groups and their advocacy. Many men are more oppressed than many women, and any feminist determined to support women in all circumstances will certainly encounter

cases where her unconditional support for women against men increases the level of injustice in the world (Richards, 1994).

Therefore, it seems that beyond the existence of the issue of violence against men, a far more important issue is the obstacles to stating the problem of 'violence against the male gender' and society's reluctance to regard it as a social problem. In more sociological terms, why has violence against the male gender not been constructed as a problem by society? Briefly, since the social construction of this problem is an inseparable part of it, and any attempt to understand and solve it without attending to the mechanisms of its construction will be futile, a significant part of the problem statement regarding violence against men must be dedicated to explaining the factors that act as barriers against the social construction of this issue. Addressing such an issue entails significant costs, and thus research in this area is often removed from researchers' priorities, deepening the poverty of literature on violence against men. In the following sections, an attempt is made to first establish the reality of the issue of violence against the male gender by presenting statistics, and then to offer an account of the obstacles to the social construction of violence against men.

1.3. Statistics of Violence Against Men Worldwide

Statistics, as one of the most common and accepted reasons for establishing a social reality or problem, do not enjoy much richness in the field of violence against men. This is while the statistical literature on violence against women is very rich and pervasive. Reliable and comprehensive global statistics on violence against men are few and far between, regional and national statistics on this matter are very scarce, and statistics on violence against men in Iran are almost non-existent. Nevertheless, the limited information available in this field, mostly derived from limited research projects and student dissertations around the world, is sufficient to place violence against men as a social issue on the agenda of social science researchers. However, this sufficiency should not blind us to the stark reality that the vast majority of existing statistics in this field are limited to physical and sexual domestic violence, and almost no statistics are available on violence men experience outside the home or non-physical violence. In this section, an attempt is made to show, by presenting some available statistics, that violence against men is not a figment of the imagination of those involved in this research but a real issue. To this end, an

attempt is first made to present statistics published by international organisations such as the World Health Organization, followed by a report of regional and national statistics, and finally, an attempt is made to draw a statistical picture of the situation of this phenomenon in Iran as much as possible.

Global statistics on violence against men, although not sufficiently available, are adequate to demonstrate the issue of violence against men. For example, a survey conducted by Maendeleo ya Wanaume (Development for Men) in 2012 showed that the frequency of cases of male abuse increased from 160,000 in 2009 to 460,000 (Thobejane & Luthada, 2018).

Numerous studies indicate a high prevalence of violence against men. Global studies of domestic violence (DV) estimate that domestic violence affects 25% to 35% of men during their lifetime (Kigaya, 2021). Globally, at least one in six men has experienced some form of gender-based abuse in their lifetime (Nicholls & Dutton, 2001). Another survey indicates that 10% to 15% of men have experienced some form of gender-based physical abuse by an intimate partner in their lifetime (Kessler et al., 2001). Initial results from a WHO multi-country study on men's health and domestic violence show that in some parts of the world, 20% of men have experienced domestic violence (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005). Kumar et al. (2015) confirmed that 25% to 30% of all violence arising from intimate partners relates exclusively to violence by women against men, and Ménard, Anderson, and Godboldt (2008) also reported that each year approximately 1.3 per 1,000 men, versus 3.8 per 1,000 women, fall victim to abuse by their female partners.

Sexual violence, as a clear instance of types of violence against men, has been the focus of many organisations and researchers. For example, between 1998 and 2008 alone, sexual violence against men was confirmed in existing reports in twenty-five conflict-affected countries (Sivakumaran, 2007). Since then, further reports have been published from major conflict zones, including Libya, Syria, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and the Central African Republic (CAR). The UN Security Council recognised men and boys as victims of sexual violence in conflict for the first time in Resolution 2106 in June 2013. Historical examples of countries and regions where conflict-related sexual violence against men has been recorded include Argentina, Burundi, Cambodia, Chechnya, Chile, Croatia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Greece, Iran, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Libya, Northern Ireland, Rwanda, South Africa, the

former Soviet Union, Sri Lanka, Turkey, the former Yugoslavia, and Zimbabwe (Sivakumaran, 2007). Countries and regions affected by contemporary conflicts where the law does not protect male victims of sexual violence include Afghanistan, Colombia, CAR, DRC, Egypt, Kashmir, Iraq, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia and Somaliland, Syria, and Yemen (Dolan & Luedke, forthcoming).

Some household surveys on male sexual victimisation in conflict-affected environments indicate varying prevalence rates. A 2005 survey in two districts in Indian Kashmir showed that 17% of men reported 'violation of modesty' since the start of the conflict in 1989 (de Jong et al., 2008). In Liberia, 32.6% of former male combatants reported being victims of sexual violence (Johnson et al., 2008). A 2008 study showed that in Yei County, a conflict-affected county in present-day South Sudan, 46.9% of men reported experiencing or witnessing sexual abuse of a man (Nagai et al., 2008). Johnson et al. (2010) found that 23.6% of men in selected conflict-affected areas in eastern DRC suffered from sexual violence. In six conflict-affected regions in Ivory Coast, 2.2% of men reported experiencing sexual violence during armed conflicts from 2000 to 2007 (Hossain et al., 2014).

At the regional level, a number of surveys have been conducted indicating the existence of violence against men. According to one report, the overall prevalence of domestic violence arising from intimate relationships in English-speaking societies—the US, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand—ranges from 5% to 20%, with much higher rates among young, single, dating, cohabiting, or separated individuals, and lower rates among married and older individuals (McKeown & Kidd, 2002). Thobejane and Luthada (2018) also noted that violence against men in some regions of Africa has increased exponentially (citing Dahir, 2012). Additionally, it is reported that over 21,000 residents of England and Wales are involved in domestic violence: results of a survey by the UK Home Office showed that 7% of women and 4% of men are victims of domestic violence (Smith et al., 2011). Also, according to a BBC report in 2010, in England and Wales, about 100 women and 21 men are killed annually by their partners (BBC, 2011). In 2008, in France, 156 women and 27 men were killed by their intimate partners (Povey et al., 2009; BBC, 2011). Women often experience higher levels of physical or sexual violence from their current partner (44%), compared to 18% of men who experienced gender-based violence resulting in injury. A 2010 survey of over 21,000 residents of

England and Wales conducted by the UK Home Office showed that 7% of women and 4% of men were victims of domestic violence in the past year (Smith et al., 2011).

National surveys and research in the field of violence against men are numerous, and mentioning all of them is not possible. However, presenting some results helps our understanding of the issue. For example, the British Crime Survey shows that about 40% of domestic violence victims in 2004-2005 were men. In 2006-2007, 43.4% of all those abused by their intimate partner in the previous year were men. This figure rose to 45.5% in 2007-08 but fell to 37.7% in 2008-09. Cook (1997) also indicated varying percentages over the years. Based on results from this survey, more than one in four women (28%) and one in six men (16%) had experienced domestic violence at least once since age 16. These figures equate to 4.5 million female victims and 2.6 million male victims of domestic violence. Furthermore, 6% of women and 4% of men reported experiencing domestic violence in the past year, equating to one million female victims and 600,000 male victims (Thobejane & Luthada, 2018). Results from Watson and Parsons (2005) on domestic violence conducted for the National Crime Council indicate that in Ireland: 15% of women and 6% of men suffer from severe domestic abuse; when severe abuse and minor incidents are combined, 29% of women and 26% of men suffer from domestic violence; 13% of women and 13% of men suffer from physical abuse; 29% of women (1 in 3) and only 5% of men (1 in 20) have experienced reporting gender-based abuse to the Gardaí. This study shows that 88,000 men and 213,000 women in Ireland have been severely abused at some point by a partner.

In the United States, reports indicate a similar situation. According to a report on a survey of 16,000 Americans published by the US Department of Justice, 22.1% of women and 7.4% of men reported being physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabiting partner, boyfriend, or girlfriend at least once in their lifetime (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Also, according to statistics published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2020), approximately 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men experience intimate partner violence (IPV) in the US. Straus (1999), in a survey on family violence, estimated that annually at least 12% of men are targeted by various forms of physical violence by their female partners, and 4%—or over 2.5 million men in the US—suffered from severe violence. Additionally, Tjaden and Thoennes

(2000) stated that violence perpetrated by women results in 40% of all injuries from domestic violence in a year, and 27% of all injuries require medical care. Matczak et al. (2011) also stated that 15% of men and 26% of women aged 16 to 59 have experienced some form of domestic violence since age 16, equating to 2.4 million male victims and 4.3 million female victims. However, two out of every three domestic violence victims will be female and one male. One in four women and one in six to seven men suffer from domestic violence in their lifetime. Based on Matczak et al.'s findings (2011), 4.3% of men and 7.5% of women surveyed stated they had experienced domestic violence, equating to 713,000 male victims and 1.2 million female victims. Also, according to studies by Stets (1991), Sugarman and Hotaling (1989), violent behaviours in married couples have a high rate (between 10 to 15 percent). According to a national estimate in 1995, about one-quarter of women and one-tenth of men in the US had been abused or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabiting partner, or fiancé during their lifetime. Statistics have shown that those killed in intimate partner violence (IPV) are about three-quarters female and about one-quarter male. In 1999, reports from the US showed 1218 women and 424 men were killed by their intimate partners (US Department of Justice, 2003), and 1181 women and 329 men were killed by their intimate partners in 2005 (CDC, 2013; Chong et al., 2013). According to the National Violence Against Women Survey, 48.8% of white American Christian men experienced violence, while according to a study by Jyoti Srivastava, about 86.7% of Hindus have experienced violence against men (Salimi & Chitsaz, 2020). It is said that in the US, approximately 300,000 to 400,000 men experience violence by their wives or girlfriends (Bensley, 1998).

Based on a self-report survey conducted in Canada in 2014, the proportion of men victimised physically or sexually by a partner was 6% and women 7%. According to these results, the frequency of violence resulting in serious injury to male partners by women was significantly higher. 23% of women versus 15% of men faced the most serious forms of violence, including beating, choking, threatening with a gun or knife (Conroy & Cotter, 2017). A 2004 Canadian survey yielded similar proportions (6% men vs 7% women). However, women reported higher levels of frequent violence and were more likely to experience serious injuries compared to men. This survey showed 23% of women versus 15% of men faced the most serious forms of violence.

Also, 21% of women versus 11% of men reported a probability of more than 10 violent incidents.

Violence against men in Australia has also been noted by researchers. Among the works, the Personal Safety Survey (PSS) in 2012 conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is the most comprehensive quantitative study on interpersonal violence in Australia. The questionnaires were completed by 17,000 women and men. The Australian Human Rights Commission tracks specific cases of workplace violence through *Working without Fear: Results of the Sexual Harassment National Telephone Survey* (2012). This report shows that 25% of women experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the past 5 years, 90% of whom said they were harassed by a man. But sexual harassment as a target was not limited to women: one in six male respondents (16%) experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the past 5 years. There has also been a significant increase in the number of people experiencing victimisation as a result of formally reporting or complaining about harassment.

It appears violence against men in African countries has higher averages and a more pervasive scope than other regions. A researcher notes in their report that in Kenya, domestic violence against men is no longer rare, but a reality. Based on the Kenya Demographic Health Survey (KDHS, 2014), the rate of domestic violence against men is nearly equal to women, at 44% versus 45%. Over the past few years, social and mainstream media in Kenya have showcased shocking stories of men brutally injured or killed by women (Wanambisi, 2015; Muhindi, 2018).

1.4. Statistics of Violence Against Men in Iran

If we correctly assert that statistics and data in the field of violence against men globally are inadequate and scarce, the situation in Iran is far worse. In Iran, too, most research has been conducted on violence against women (Mazlum Khorasani & Mirzaei Mehr, 2012; Bagher Rezaei et al., 2017; Ahmady et al., 2015; Sadeghi et al., 2017; Moeini et al., 2016; Hemmati, 2004; Arefi, 2003; Sohrabzadeh & Mansourian, 2017). Only in recent years have men also received attention, with a limited number of empirical studies addressing violence against men. Searches for this research did not yield access to a national survey on violence, and the empirical studies conducted are all with very limited statistical populations. Therefore, whilst it seems the level of

violence against men in Iran should not be less than other parts of the world or global averages, any generalisation regarding these figures must be made with extreme caution. Below, results from a few reports and studies are mentioned to provide a picture of the situation.

In a study conducted in Tehran, 59% of men admitted to suffering from psychological violence by their partner, 26.5% reported physical violence, and 19.1% reported sexual violence (Mohammadkhani et al., 2017: 215). In another study in Babolsar, 17.7% of men reported moderate violence by their partner and 3.1% high violence, with the highest rate related to the psychological dimension (Firouzjaeian & Rezaei Cherati, 2014: 120). Also, according to results from Hosseini et al. (2021), the overall mean of domestic violence against men on a scale of 0 to 100 was 16.18, and overall, 75.4% of men were subjected to low violence, 21.3% moderate, and 3.3% severe violence.

Findings by Mohammadkhani et al. (2017) in the study 'Prevalence of Domestic Violence Patterns, Perpetration or Experience in Men and Women' reported that men estimated experiencing domestic violence higher than women reported perpetrating it in all dimensions. This means that unlike women's reports of experiencing violence, which were close to men's reports of perpetration, men overestimated their experience of violence. According to these findings, men's reports of experiencing violence were 72.6% psychological aggression, 69.1% physical assault, 46.5% sexual coercion, and 62.6% physical injury; in contrast, women's reports of perpetrating violence were 59% psychological aggression, 26.5% physical assault, 19.1% sexual coercion, and 13.5% physical injury. Additionally, findings show that based on reports from victims of domestic violence (men and women) regarding the experience of violence: physical violence for men was 69.1% and for women 74.3%, psychological aggression for men 72.6% and for women 73.5%, sexual coercion for men 46.5% and for women 53%, injury for men 62.6% and for women 63%, and negotiation in conflict resolution for men 73% and for women 73.5% (Mohammadkhani et al., 2017).

Violence against men suffers from severe literature poverty, but when we turn to official sources, the situation is far worse, and in the few cases where statistics are announced, their reliability is unclear. For example, the Asriran website claims that in 2018 in Iran, files for 4,700 cases of violent male abuse by wives reached the Legal Medicine Organization. Or Salimi and Chitsaz (2020), quoting the deputy of criminal investigation of the police, state that in

2009, the rate of uxoricide (wife-killing) by men was 16% and ranked first in family murders, remaining relatively constant compared to previous years. The share of mariticide (husband-killing) was 56%, doubling compared to previous years. Based on these statistics, wife-killing by men ranked first in family murders, and husband-killing also had an upward trend. Given the increasing trend of wife-killing by women, the phenomenon can be considered a serious issue.

1.5. Obstacles to the Social Construction of Violence Against Men as a Social Problem

It would not be amiss to claim that the most significant issue in the field of violence against men is its 'non-issue' status in the public mind. In such a situation, the most important question is how this has become possible, and the problem statement involves introducing and explaining the obstacles to the social construction of the problem of violence against men in today's society. This section attempts to examine the most important obstacles facing the construction of this issue. Masculinity and patriarchal values, feminism and its unintended effects, legal obstacles, and reductionism are the most significant recognised obstacles, which we will introduce and explain below.

1.5.1. Masculinity and Patriarchal Beliefs

A proverb common in many cultures says 'Men never cry'. Based on patriarchal values, men should not show signs indicating their weakness or fear. Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) believe there are very few signs of domestic violence against men in some cultures. It has become a common belief that in the vast majority of cases, men are the sole perpetrators of domestic violence and women the sole victims. The problem of domestic violence against men relates to gender issues that turn into silence, fear, and shame for most men, as their masculine nature causes violence against men to go largely unreported. This view has deep cultural roots in our understanding of men and women and has shaped our thinking about violence, which in turn influences research, policy analysis, and service provision.

Violence by women against men has been largely ignored for multiple reasons. Firstly, based on social values, men being victims of violence perpetrated by women is considered shameful, and secondly, based on patriarchal cultural beliefs, women are expected to be humble, weak, and

obedient (Thobejane & Luthada, 2019). According to Anyuor (2012), due to cultural norms and the dominance of patriarchal culture, statistics regarding male abuse are not well documented due to very low reporting.

A male-centric society identifies the male gender with power and agency, and sexual rape/assault is defined within the framework of gender-based power relations. That is, the possibility of rape is conceived for the man/strong sex towards the woman/weak sex. Therefore, rape of boys or men is not definable with such a presupposition. In a society where masculinity values are sanctified, a male who has been raped has fallen from that pedestal of masculinity and bears the stigma of unmanliness; thus, attempts are made to hide or ignore rape of boys. On the other hand, protecting boys is seen as a negation of their masculinity and placing them in the position of girls as the powerless sex. Hence, by default, boys are left unprotected. In a society where relationships between men and women are scrutinised by custom and religion, but the possibility of abuse of young boys is ignored, boys in single-sex environments are exposed to assault by individuals in positions of authority, like coaches or teachers. Thus, sexual abuse of boys repeats and is not remedied because all restrictions and strictures concern male-female relationships, and the assumption exists that single-sex environments are safe. Furthermore, there is a notion that intervention and protective measures for children against sexual abuse lead to breaking taboos or spreading these issues, a notion which is incorrect and harmful (Kazemi, 2022).

Domestic violence is a gendered issue based on the understanding that most violence is perpetrated by men against women and children (Poon et al., 2014; Puchert et al., 2004). Such an understanding prevents the acceptance of men as victims of domestic violence, assuming heterosexual men as perpetrators and heterosexual women always as harmless victims (Josolyne, 2011). This construction also marginalises victims of gay domestic violence, despite prevalence rates being comparable (Elliot, 1996). Research on gender violence is abundant, but problematic is that most researchers (Bowman, 2003; Richardson et al., 2002; Ellsberg et al., 2002) pose the problem as a battle of men against women where men always harm women. However, this is not always the case as many men are victims of various forms of domestic violence globally (WHO, 2012). An Irish campaign noted that male victims worry no one will believe them if they report abuse. Moreover, since admitting

victimhood challenges men's traditional ideological position, doing so causes them shame.

One problem this creates is the reluctance of victimised men to report incidents. Inadequacies in the judicial system, patriarchal cultural norms, and resulting social expectations make men unenthusiastic about reporting emotional, psychological, and physical abuse by wives, perpetuating violence against them. Additionally, men are reluctant for other reasons. For instance, men experiencing IPV are less likely than women to report it. Some men have not reported violence due to fear of social stigma, cultural stereotypes about men, and the idea that men as the stronger sex should not succumb to violence (Ayodele, 2017; Clark et al., 2014; Drijber et al., 2013; Melchiorre et al., 2016; McCarrick et al., 2016; Mongare et al., 2018; Sebastian, 2018; Obeji et al., 2017; Rakovec-Felser, 2014; Ashouri & Moazzami, 2002).

Compared to female IPV victims, male victims rarely report abuse or seek medical care unless sustaining severe injuries (ONS, 2018). Reporting rates are lower the more patriarchal the society. For instance, in Kenya, Obeji et al. (2017) found 67% of male interviewees abused by women took no action to report or seek help. This is largely due to predetermined social gender norms and power asymmetry, mainly affecting men who do not want to appear weak (Morgan & Wells, 2016; NCRC, 2014). In the dominant male-centric cultural order, systematic violence governs all structures dialectically, perpetuating the dominance of the weak by the strong. Cultural beliefs that men should not show weakness under female pressure are a major barrier (Tsiko, 2016; Thobejane et al., 2018). Men in such studies endure suffering in silence due to fear of ridicule by partners, extended family, friends, law enforcement, and even church leaders (Ayodele, 2017; Gathogo, 2015).

1.5.2. Feminism and Unintended Consequences

In a context where feminism has become a global value in social relations, speaking of domestic violence against men signifies a confrontation with feminist ideology, which speaks of 'men's domination over women' and conditions driving men to murder female partners. While in reality, many men have also been killed by female spouses. Feminist theories, emphasising gender inequality, believe women are vulnerable to men's use of power and control due to their subordinate position in broader social structures (Arnold, 2009). They also state that abusive men's beliefs are supported by society

(Gremillion, 2011; Rankine et al., 2017). While various feminist theories exist regarding abuse of women in heterosexual relationships, most hold that men abuse women to maintain power and control (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2007).

Feminist theory, while acknowledging the reality of gender violence against men in places, generally does not view this issue as a serious social problem comparable to violence against women, deserving similar attention or support (Kwaramba, 2000). Proponents acknowledge women can be violent, yet simply do not see female abuse of men as a serious social problem meriting equal attention.

1.5.3. Weakness of Legal Infrastructures

Today's world addresses women's rights and violence against women while statistics show many men are victims of sexual violence and cannot pursue legal action due to cultural/legal reasons. Cultural stereotypes and beliefs still significantly impact upbringing and gender violence. In the US, 79% of male sexual violence victims were coerced by women. A July 2017 UK study found one-fifth of male sexual violence victims were victims of female blackmail. Additionally, many men are beaten annually by wives, often remaining passive due to physical weakness or adherence to 'not hitting women' culture.

A problem here is legal infrastructures defending women's rights. Iran's legal system validates inequality between men and women, perpetuating violence. Positive discrimination policies for women in recent decades have provided grounds for excess. For example, research in India (Sebastian, 2018) states that 'domestic violence' is often assumed to relate to a male aggressor, while research shows violence against men is more common than imagined. Unfortunately, current laws often provide no protection for abused men. In a society where men are considered superior, male victimhood is unbelievable. Conversely, if a woman is abused, severe consequences await the man. Do laws ignore violence against men? It seems all laws, including the Domestic Violence Act 2005, aim to protect women. The problem becomes acute when women misuse the law, exaggerating minor issues, leading to men being accused. Under women's empowerment policies, whatever a woman says is accepted, whereas men should be equally protected and heard.

In the UK, research has instilled the belief among social workers and police that domestic violence against men is not serious, assuming female offenders

must have a good reason. In Australia, research shows men's evaluation of 'husbands' is far more negative than 'wives', with greater sympathy for women. Husbands committing violence are deemed deserving of harsher punishment. In Ireland, a small-scale study found the majority believed women are the main victims, and female aggression towards men is not nearly as serious, despite men generally being the main victims of violent crime (McKeown & Kidd, 2002).

According to research in Kenya, limited access to legal services and resources like shelters is another barrier (Obeji et al., 2017; Ayodele, 2017). Nationally, politicians are reluctant to acknowledge male victimisation or allocate resources (NCRC, 2014; Zanchetta et al., 2017). Existing programmes are mostly local. The LGBT community faces even less support due to discrimination (Brown & Herman, 2015). Legal definitions do not fit this population, making reporting difficult.

Lack of trust in law enforcement is another barrier (Ayodele, 2017; Drijber et al., 2013; ONS, 2018). McCarrick et al. (2016) explained that male IPV victims suffer double injury: they are harmed and not believed. Some victims are identified as perpetrators by both partners and an unfair justice system. In a Wales survey, only 17% of male IPV victims reported to police (ONS, 2018). Of reported cases, few offenders were charged. In Kenya, corruption means accusations may not be processed if bribes are paid. Mongare et al. (2018) cited weak law enforcement and lack of political will as factors perpetuating violence against men.

According to Allen-Collinson (2009), men routinely do not report abuse; even if they do, no action is taken. Sarantakos (2004) found women often threaten male victims that they will report self-defence. Carney, Buttell & Dutton (2007) argue the criminal justice system is softer on women. Stigma prevents men from reporting (Du Plat-Jones, 2006).

Some male victims claim they cannot defend themselves if accused. Fathers fear losing access to children. Many worry about having nowhere to go, as there are no male shelters in places like Ireland. Elderly and disabled men may not report due to limited access and fear of retaliation (Melchiorre et al., 2016). In some cases, men stayed silent to protect children, avoid divorce, or prevent loss of assets (Ayodele, 2017; NCRC, 2014).

1.5.4. Reduction of the Issue to Physical Violence

Some men tend to underestimate non-physical behaviours, or think such violence is private and trivial, especially non-physical types (O'Campo et al., 2017; ONS, 2018). Some researchers, simply because they do not observe high rates of female-on-male physical violence compared to male-on-female, downplay the issue without investigating other forms like verbal, psychological, social, financial, legal, and sexual violence (Salimi & Chitsaz, 2020; Dobash & Dobash, 1980; Kheirkhahzadeh, 2011). Some view violence by women against men merely as reactive or defensive (Sadeghi, 2010).

Narratives surrounding domestic violence focus mainly on female victims, constructed in society as a gendered, heterosexual phenomenon, primarily physical in nature (Donovan & Hester, 2010). This construction marginalises male victims (Donovan & Hester, 2010: 279) and prevents them from being viewed as victims (Josolyne, 2011). Thus, compared to women, men are less recognised as victims, and support services are tailored to women.

1.6. Significance and Necessity of the Research

Social studies on violence suffer from the same affliction as pre-feminist social studies. Just as feminists considered social science patriarchal, violence studies are matriarchal. Feminists argued for including women's perspectives; proponents of male violence studies argue for including the male perspective. This study seeks to address the imbalance caused by focusing on violence from women's perspective and neglecting the male view. While much attention has been paid to violence against women, increasing evidence points to rising violence against men. It is crucial to note that domestic violence affects both sexes, and equality requires focusing on men's issues without bias. Knowledge restricted to violence against women is distorted and partial (Hill-Collins, 1990). Correcting this requires attending to men's daily experiences.

Despite long-standing confirmation of violence against men in various settings, research has been ignored (WHO, 2012). Governments focus on violence against women as a crime, trivialising violence against men such that police are reluctant to arrest abusers (Brown, 2004). Policies and laws lag behind. Social research reveals the need for legal reform and better policy for gender justice. This study challenges treaties ignoring male victimisation.

Since the rise of feminist movements, gender discrimination has been central; however, discrimination against men remains poorly understood,

with fewer support resources. Men are one of two elements responsible for human evolution; denying their exploitation leads to the rearing of children with suppressed existences, reproducing a vicious cycle. This research, citing empirical evidence, examines contexts of gender discrimination to analyse symbolic violence against men/boys in Iranian society, recommending changes to active support systems and aiding peace. Results will benefit researchers, sociologists, social workers, and policymakers.

Adinkra (2012) shows men in Ghana commit suicide more than women because they prefer death to losing their status as men. Understanding masculinity determines how men face difficulties. Male victims are like orphans, receiving less attention (Cook, 1997). Recognising male victims requires social workers and health professionals to change society's attitude, encouraging men to break the silence.

Research on the economic cost of violence against men makes the necessity of addressing it tangible. For example, the 2014 EIGE survey estimated the cost of violence against men in the EU at €225 billion. Research helps reduce economic consequences.

Domestic abuse profoundly affects health and finances. It is a pattern of abusive behaviours. Understanding power mechanisms helps improve interactions. Iranian society faces pressure from traditional patriarchal patterns and women's increasing participation, causing role displacement and conflict.

Spousal abuse has negative consequences for children and society. Exposure causes developmental problems in children. Violent individuals often were victims or witnesses in childhood ('cycle of violence'). Violence in the family relates to societal violence. Some anthropologists link domestic violence to private property (Reed, 2001) and power (Foucault, 1999). Eric Fromm believes violence manifests as benign or malignant aggression. Research on violence against men helps modify family tension levels.

This research is a step towards enlightening public opinion and institutions to play a fairer role, guaranteeing individual freedoms and removing inequality. It aims to understand how denying violence against men benefits power structures executed by men who have internalised discrimination. Supporting women unconditionally against men increases injustice (Richards, 1994), leading to internalisation of sexist attitudes, depletion of human resources, and threats to peace.

1.7. Research Objective

The main objective is to pave the way for peace in micro and macro spheres between women and men by scientifically understanding and raising awareness about violence against men/boys and negating stereotypes. It attempts to understand beliefs enabling discrimination, identify forms and contexts of violence, and discover methods of execution in Iran, providing knowledge for policymakers. This objective will be achieved by recognising the forms, contexts, reasons, and legal, political, economic, social, cultural, and psychological consequences of violence, discrimination, and inequality against men/boys in Iranian society.

1.8. Research Question

The question this research seeks to answer is: What are the forms, contexts, reasons, and legal, political, economic, social, cultural, and psychological consequences of violence against men/boys in Iranian society? And based on the answers, what suggestions can be offered to improve the situation?

2. A Review of the Problematic and Extant Literature

Introduction

Having elucidated in the preceding chapter the sociological imperative of addressing the hitherto neglected phenomenon of 'violence against the male gender' as a pressing social problem, we now turn our attention in Chapter Two to a review of the existing literature. However, it is incumbent upon us to clarify that this review is not undertaken with the aim of codifying a pre-determined 'theoretical framework.' Rather, it is conducted in strict adherence to one of the fundamental tenets of Grounded Theory: the cultivation and fortification of Theoretical Sensitivity.

In this methodological tradition, the researcher does not approach the field armed with ready-made theories, seeking merely to test hypotheses or force data into existing moulds. On the contrary, the objective is to engage with the raw data with a mind that is both open and inquisitive, thereby allowing concepts and theories to be extracted directly from the lived experiences of the participants and the realities of the field. Consequently, the prior literature is viewed not as a prescriptive or binding template, but as a heuristic tool—a means of acquainting oneself with the vocabulary, concepts, and perspectives prevalent in this domain. This equips the researcher to identify the nuances and encode the hidden layers of meaning with greater precision when strictly confronting the raw data.

Accordingly, this chapter does not seek to provide a definitive answer to the primary research question through the synthesis of other scholars' works. Instead, it endeavours to heighten our conceptual sensitivity towards the study's central enquiry: *What are the forms, concepts, conditions (causal, contextual, and intervening), strategies, and consequences of violence against the male gender within Iranian society?* This exploration of the literature serves to equip

us with a richer lexicon and a profounder interpretive capacity for the subsequent analysis of fieldwork data.

Our intellectual journey in this chapter commences with a significant conceptual challenge: the definition of violence itself. A critical examination of existing definitions reveals that many are constrained, failing to fully capture the structural, cultural, and unconscious dimensions of the phenomenon. This critical review is not intended to settle upon a single, final definition, but to sensitise the mind to the manifold dimensions that may surface in the participants' narratives.

Subsequently, we shall examine the specific morphologies of violence against men identified in prior studies. Familiarity with existing taxonomies—spanning physical, psychological, sexual, and economic violence—enables us to operate with a broader aperture during the process of open coding, whilst remaining vigilant for the discovery of categories hitherto absent from the literature. This section serves less as an exhaustive catalogue and more as a point of departure for discovery.

We then proceed to scrutinise the conditions under which violence occurs, as postulated in other research. Acquaintance with factors that others have categorised as causal, contextual, or intervening heightens our ability to discern these conditions within our own dataset. This review compels us to ask, during the analytical phase: 'Does a factor identified as causal in the literature play the same role in this specific context? Or has it acquired a distinct meaning and function?' It is this interrogative stance that constitutes the very essence of Grounded Theory.

Ultimately, this chapter functions not as the 'beating heart' or the theoretical foundation of the research, but as a 'conceptual lens.' It allows us to view the field of inquiry with greater clarity and rigour. It prepares the researcher's mind to discover, compare, and eventually construct a substantive theory rooted in the social reality of Iran, safeguarding the study against the danger of unconsciously reproducing existing concepts.

2.1. Defining Violence

Violence is a concept notoriously resistant to simplistic definition. Nevertheless, offering a preliminary and operational definition is not merely a methodological requisite for research; it is a fundamental necessity for social policy. Violence stands as one of the most critical afflictions of contemporary

human society, and any endeavour to research, legislate against, or prevent it requires a lucid and consensual definition. To achieve a relative understanding of violence, it is instructive to distinguish between two forms of definition: the lexical (etymological) and the applied (operational). The following section endeavours to interrogate these two forms before synthesising them into a more operational definition suitable for this study.

In the realm of lexical or terminological definitions, one witnesses a considerable degree of homogeneity and consensus. For instance, in the canonical Persian lexicon, the *Loghat-nameh-ye Dekhkoda* (1383: 593), violence (*khoshunat*) is defined as coarseness, roughness, the antithesis of softness

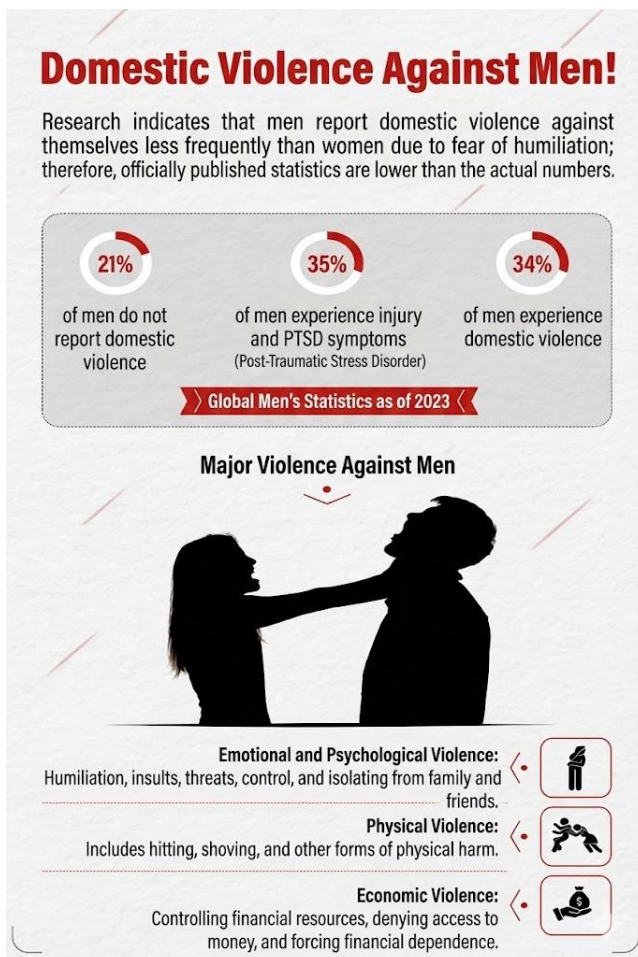


Figure 2 *The Silent Statistics: Understanding Domestic Violence Against Men*

(*khelaaf-e no'umat*), and severity (*gholzat*). Similarly, the *Farhang-e Farsi-ye Moein* (1384: 476) defines it as harshness, unevenness, irascibility, and cruelty. In the Anglophone sphere, the term 'Violence' is derived from the Latin root *vis*, signifying force and power, and conceptually pertains to the imposition of constraints and physical supervision or control over another individual (Casique & Furegato, 2006: 95).

However, when we turn to definitions based on application, we encounter far greater diversity and plurality. According to definitions provided in dictionaries such as Merriam-Webster (2009), Oxford (2009), and Heritage (2009), violence is broadly characterised as the use of physical or verbal force to place others in a situation contrary to their will. Legal lexicons, such as *Black's Law Dictionary* and *Collins Dictionary*, expand this to include the abuse of power, the improper and unauthorised use of force—which is in most cases accompanied by intensity, irreverence, or extreme anger—as well as the misuse of power against public rights or civil liberties, and finally, the application of force with any physical means to cause injury, damage, or abuse (Campbell, 1988; Collins, 1988).

According to the definition provided by the World Health Organization (as cited in Krug et al., 2002), violence is described as 'the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation' (p. 89). Similarly, Enemaku (2020) posits that violence encompasses any act or action that causes physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, emotional, or economic harm to individuals, whether in the private or public sphere, and whether in times of peace or conditions of war.

Furthermore, the US National Academy of Sciences defines violence as: 'Behaviour by an individual that intentionally threatens, attempts, or inflicts physical harm on others.' Violence is the unlawful or unauthorised use of power, typically characterised by severity, hatred, and anger. A consultative session of the World Health Organization (WHO) refined the operational definition to the intentional use of physical force, intimidation, or threat that results in, or is likely to result in, physical harm, death, psychological trauma, developmental impairment, or deprivation (Salimi & Chitsaz, 1999).

In other definitions, violence has been described as 'the use of force' (Marcuse & Neumann, 1390), 'the abuse of power' (Allen, 1378), or 'any illegal

attack on the freedoms that society formally or implicitly grants to its members' (Mosaffa et al., 1366; Marcuse & Neumann, 1390). The definitions in this field possess such range and diversity that listing them all is neither within the scope of this text nor, due to the repetition of themes, would it bring us closer to the research objective. Nevertheless, some of these definitions include: 'any physical aggression against human existence accompanied by the motive of inflicting injury, suffering, or damage' and 'the use of physical force or the threat arising from the use of physical force that can leave physical or spiritual damage on a person or persons' (Eftekhari, 1378). From a personal and psychological perspective, violence is 'irascibility and a rigorous character or the sudden and explosive manifestation of a force that takes on a threatening, destructive, and sometimes lethal form.' From a social aspect, violence refers to religious intolerance, 'intellectual exclusion,' or 'the use of force and power in a destructive manner by institutions or social identities to achieve the desired ends of those institutions.' From a political perspective, it is 'non-appeasement of political rivals, decisiveness, and the refusal to overlook the faults and errors of the accused and executors,' or 'a type of political behaviour containing the element of the improper exercise of power' (Hanaee, 1377).

In summarising this section, one must conclude that violence is a multidimensional and labyrinthine concept; any definition is inherently relative. Yet, given the necessity of relying on an acceptable and inter-subjective definition for conducting research, policy-making, or action, we must proffer a definition that is relatively comprehensive and exclusive.

Accordingly, the definition of violence must be as broad as possible, considering aggression beyond mere physical aggression. The definition offered must be based on the common denominator of the majority of existing definitions. Based on this, and upon the definitions reviewed, violence in the contemporary world possesses at least two dimensions: the material and the semantic, and any definition must encompass both. The application of force and the infliction of physical and economic injury can be considered the most distinct manifestations of the material dimension, while psychological, verbal, and emotional trauma can be considered the distinct manifestations of the semantic dimension.

However, it appears that the prevailing definitions of violence suffer from a serious deficiency. They are predominantly 'voluntaristic' and heavily

psychologised definitions. This is problematic because many forms of violence—and indeed, often the most critical and destructive among them—are structural and unconscious, such as those rooted in cultural and social structures. To achieve a genuine understanding of violence, reliance on psychological and voluntaristic definitions is insufficient; it is essential to attend to the structural dimensions that produce violence. Some definitions have approached this understanding to a degree. For example, Mir-Khalili (1379) offers a general image of violence as 'action against the body, life, honour, property, and the natural, social, and spiritual rights of an individual, individuals, identities, and social norms.' The components and elements used in this definition are necessary for any comprehensive definition, yet they remain insufficient. The absence of structural and unconscious elements that produce violence is starkly evident.

To this end, we shall rewrite this definition to include the structures that produce violence. Accordingly, and from the perspective through which this research views the phenomenon, violence is defined as: 'Any individual or collective action, whether conscious or unconscious, against the body, life, honour, property, or the natural, social, and spiritual rights of an individual, individuals, identities, or social norms, by individuals or socio-cultural structures, which causes physical or psychological harm to individuals.'

2.2. Forms of Violence Against Men/Boys

Just as identifying forms of violence against women in the contemporary world is feasible and relatively straightforward, identifying forms of violence against men is complex and arduous. The reluctance of men to report violence against themselves, or the impossibility of doing so, contributes most significantly to this difficulty. The fear of fear itself, the dread of being labelled weak, the disgrace associated with being beaten by a woman, despair regarding legal protection, and various other reasons constitute the most significant barriers to reporting violence against men.

Research by Adinkrah (2012) demonstrated that men in Ghana prefer to die rather than be disrespected or seen as cowards; consequently, many men prefer to remain silent when physically abused by their partners. This theme has been corroborated in a multitude of studies (Tobjin & Lotada, 2019; Anyuor, 2012; Jaden & Tones, 2000; Poon et al., 2014; Puchert et al., 2004; Joslin, 2011; Elliott, 1996; Idle, 2017; Clarke et al., 2014; Drijber et al., 2013; Melchior

et al., 2016; McCarrick et al., 2016; Mungai et al., 2018; Sebastian, 2018; Abiji et al., 2017; Rakovec-Felser, 2014; Ashouri & Moazzami, 1381). Under such conditions, identifying the forms of violence against men reaches the height of difficulty. To achieve even a minimal understanding, there is no escape but to refer to the few studies conducted, which themselves suffer from distorting biases in their approach to violence against men. The scant classifications produced by researchers in this field also suffer from such problems. Often, these categorisations lack the qualities of being comprehensive and mutually exclusive. Categories such as 'naked violence, covert violence, symbolic violence,' 'conscious violence, unconscious violence, unintended violence,' and 'psychological violence, physical violence'—which have garnered attention in general sources like the Persian Wikipedia—are counted amongst such classifications.

Many researchers (see, for example: Kigaya, 2021; Drijber, Reijnders & Ceelen, 2013; Gathogo, 2018; National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2015; Adebayo, 2014; Straus, 1999; Barber, 2008; Lewis & Sarantakos, 2001; Save, 2010; Swaroop Sarkar, Rudolph Dsouza, & Amitabh Dasgupta, 2007; Dini & G-Benevol, 2009; Kumar, 2012) have focused solely on one of the common types of violence against men in a specific society without offering a comprehensive and exclusive classification. While such works may have a reductionist or limited approach, by implicitly stating certain instances of violence against men, they provide the groundwork for conceiving more comprehensive morphologies. It appears that by reflecting upon the forms of violence examined in these studies, one might arrive at a useful and applied typology of violence against men.

The reality is that within the sphere of violence, the greatest quantity of research has been conducted on the subject of domestic violence. In other words, it seems that from the perspective of the community of violence researchers, domestic violence has possessed the highest degree of importance and allure; accordingly, there is no way to identify forms of violence against men without examining the research conducted on this specific topic. The research literature in this domain, for better or worse, is largely limited to this area. Within the framework of this report's objective, it is no exaggeration to state that the literature on violence against men has been largely reduced to Domestic Violence, and this reductionism has even permeated the realms of policy and law.

Although there are undoubtedly many violences that occur outside domestic spaces, domestic violence is likely the most important type of violence in the world today. This is perhaps even more true regarding violence against men, given that men are more frequently present in spaces outside the home. Many researchers, disregarding other forms of violence against men, have focused solely on this form, paying no heed to other types, or have deliberately limited the scope of their research to one of these forms. Of course, it must not be forgotten that had this research been conducted several decades ago, one would have had to add 'physical violence' to these reductionisms; however, at present, there are few who are unfamiliar with the non-physical dimensions of violence or who limit violence merely to the physical. Hence, the endeavour of this research to recognise forms of violence against men is primarily focused on examining this type of violence, because we believe the most significant discourse regarding violence has been articulated within this form. By concentrating the review on this type of research, it is probable that nothing significant will remain hidden from the eyes of this study. It appears that by examining this form of violence, a preliminary and relatively comprehensive typology of violence against men can be achieved, which will be useful and effective for the commencement of this research. However, this does not imply that other forms of violence have been excluded from the circle of this study's examination. As we shall see, wherever discourse in other studies aids in the refinement or expansion of the typology of violence against men, it will be attended to in this research. Gender-Based Violence is among the forms of violence against men that, like domestic violence, acts as a conceptual umbrella and, like domestic violence, encompasses almost all significant forms of violence against men. We now turn to an examination of the typologies of violence against men presented in these studies.

Research conducted by Thomas (2015) regarding domestic violence against men/boys falls into this category. According to his report, out of 216 respondents, 82.4% had heard about various forms of physical violence against men in their communities. The majority of respondents believed that women sometimes commit physical violence against their male partners. These instances included slapping (53.2%), pushing (48.1%), throwing objects at them (43.5%), and biting (35.6%). This finding is similar to research conducted in Ireland, which showed that men being slapped by female partners is the

most common type of physical abuse men endure from their female partners (George & Yarwood, 2004).

According to the same report, 93% of the men studied believed women frequently abuse their male partners through methods such as insults (55.6%), shouting (33.8%), using aggressive gestures (29.9%), refusing to cook food (23.6%), and ignoring them in the presence of others. Furthermore, 79% of respondents had heard about the sexual abuse of men by their female partners in various forms. The majority believed that women sometimes commit sexual abuse against their male partners in forms such as forced kissing (32.4%), playing with their genitals against their will (35%), refusing sex (50%), and having sex on the condition of financial support (44.4%). The situation in which women request financial support for sex was also confirmed in a study conducted in Durban, South Africa, where it was termed 'survival sex' (Suzanne, 2008). Some men were sexually abused by their female partners in the form of being asked to use sexual enhancement medication to improve their sexual performance, as strong sexual performance was seen as indicative of their masculinity (Cornwall & Lindisfarne, 1994).

According to the *Domestic Violence Act* of 2007 in India, physical abuse is the most common form of domestic violence. Under this law, 'physical abuse includes acts or threats to commit acts such as physical assault or using physical force against another person, including forced confinement or detention of another person and depriving another person of access to adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, rest, or subjecting another person to torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment' (Bini, 2010).

According to research conducted in the United States by Du Plat-Jones (2006), men who are victims of domestic violence experience shattered teeth, damage to genitals, and other forms of physical abuse. Henning and Feder (2004) estimate that many women use weapons to attack their partners. A study conducted by Hines, Brown, and Dunning (2007) showed that men/boys who have been physically abused by their partners may feel 'emasculated' (stripped of manhood) and develop a phobia of their partners. George and Yarwood (2004) noted that most male victims of physical abuse received kicks to the genital area. Some had suffered varying degrees of burns or had been struck with heavy weapons.

Sexual abuse is another type of domestic violence common among individuals aged 35 to 44, with Southeast Asia accounting for the highest rates (World Health Organization, 2013). According to the World Health Organization (2014), domestic violence can occur in various forms such as psychological, physical, sexual, or stalking, and affects all genders. Based on the *Domestic Violence Act* (2007), sexual abuse is forcing an individual to perform a sexual act against the will of their partner. Therefore, attacking the sexual parts of the partner's body, treating the sexual partner like an object, threatening physical violence in case of refusal to sexually satisfy the other party, and knowingly infecting the partner with sexually transmitted diseases or the HIV/AIDS virus are considered instances of sexual abuse. However, not only non-consensual sexual contact, such as rape and fondling (sexual assault), but also having sex with a spouse or husband without their consent constitutes sexual abuse. Domestic violence is a type of sexual harassment focused on the use of words, looks, and body movements to sexually influence a person.

The final form of domestic violence is psychological and emotional abuse. According to the *Domestic Violence Act* 2007, psychological and emotional abuses are acts committed with the aim of humiliating an individual in public or in private. The goal of emotional or psychological abuse is to destroy the individual's sense of self-worth and independence; this form of abuse also includes verbal abuse (Kumar, 2012; Kernsmith, 2006).

According to other authors, such as Bassuk, Dawson, and Huntington (2005: 33), Danis and Lee (2003: 28), and Riger, Bennet, Wasco, Schewe, Frohmann, Camacho, and Campbell (2002: 15), as well as Slabbert and Green (2013) and McKeown and Kidd (2002), domestic violence generally occurs in the forms of physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse.

This classification has also been confirmed, with slight modifications, by other authors. Bollen, Artz, Vetten, and Louw (1997) noted that the range of abuses women may suffer is extensive and can include physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse, as well as stalking, forced isolation in the home, and other controlling behaviours. The *Domestic Violence Act* (1998), in Section 116, utilised this classification by adding the category of 'stalking, forced isolation in the home, and other controlling behaviours'—which can be interpreted as social violence. The World Health Organization (2014) also listed stalking as a type of violence, stating that domestic violence can occur in forms such as psychological, physical, sexual, or stalking.

Kumar and Devi (2019) emphasised this classification with changes that appear more formal than substantive. In their article, they used the categories of psychological violence and emotional violence separately and independently, whereas most researchers in the field of domestic violence often place these two under a single category.

The *National Office for Prevention of Domestic, Sexual, and Gender-Based Violence Against Men* (2017), in a booklet titled 'Male Victims of Domestic Violence' for their campaign 'What You Should Do,' offered a relatively comprehensive classification of types of domestic violence. In this classification, they added 'social violence'—which in some research is also referred to as 'socio-environmental' (Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Strategic Group, 2010)—to the four categories previously mentioned. Based on this classification, domestic violence is divided into five categories: Physical Violence, Emotional Violence, Financial Violence, Social Violence, and Digital Violence.

Beyond domestic violence, another macro-concept of violence against men/boys, which can also be named as a conceptual umbrella, is 'Gender-Based Violence' (GBV). Gender-Based Violence includes various violent acts committed against victims due to socially imposed gender roles (Wirtz, Perrin, Desgropes, Phipps, Abdi, Ross, & Glass, 2018). This type of violence exists in various forms including physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse, economic abuse, intimidation, as well as harassment. Gender-based violence can also manifest in damaging the victim's property and forced entry into the victim's home or residence (Tobjin, Mogorusi & Lotada, 2018).

Among other forms of violence that have possessed less importance and prevalence in the literature on violence against men compared to physical and sexual violence, but have nevertheless garnered the attention of researchers in this field, one can point to Sexual Violence, which is briefly mentioned below.

Obaje (2020), in his research, pointed to a number of forms of sexual violence against men. According to this research, wartime sexual violence—which itself can be applied in multiple forms—includes castration, forced nudity, and torture of the genitalia as observed forms of this violence.

The Swiss Agency of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, in a report titled 'Sexual Violence Against Men and Boys and the LGBTIQ+ Community' (2022), explains that sexual violence against men/boys and members of the LGBTIQ+ community takes various forms, but the most common forms

include: anal and oral rape and sexual assault (including with objects); violence towards the genitalia including beating, burning, cutting, electric shock; forced circumcision and mutilation; amputation of testicles and/or penis; forced rape of others; and sexual humiliation such as forced nudity or forced observation of sexual violence.

In some studies, references have also been made to sexual violences that can be employed by women against men. According to Moradi and Zandi (1386: 32), women's sexual violence against men ranges from the micro-level—meaning ignoring, silence, and withholding from the spouse either for punishment or out of shyness and reserve—to the meso-level, meaning lack of observance of hygiene and cleanliness of the body and sexual organs (whether intentionally or out of indifference) and disregarding the spouse's words and desires, and lack of observance of points desired by the husband during intercourse and foreplay; and at the macro-level, sexual satisfaction outside the sanctity of the home (marital infidelity). None of these types of violence mentioned against men have been criminalised, with the exception of sexual satisfaction outside the home (adultery). Sexual violence is characterised by pressuring for sex, sex with threat and coercion, unwanted forms of sex, sex at inappropriate times, and sex with force and pressure (Moradi & Zandi: 1386, p. 32). Furthermore, according to the report provided by the United Nations Security Council (2015), rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, and forced sterilisation have been introduced as forms of sexual violence.

Although the classifications provided under domestic violence and gender-based violence regarding violence against men are satisfying to a necessary degree, they are not sufficient. In these classifications, some forms of violence against men, such as social violences, have been spoken of very little and rarely; some violences such as cultural violences, which possess a very long history, and emerging violences such as those arising from the development of the internet and new communication technologies, have been completely neglected.

In summary, one can say that five forms of violence (Physical, Sexual, Psychological, Economic, and Social) against men have found the most application in social research within the field of violence. However, to arrive at a typology that encompasses almost all performed typologies of violence against men, the number of these types must be increased. To this end,

Morishita et al. (2023), in their classification of violences committed against men in Japan, added Neglect to these five main forms. On this same basis, the Gender, Health and Justice Research Unit at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, in a declaration published in the 2022/2023 academic year, names seven types of violence that can also be used in studies of violence against men. Economic, Political, Institutional Violence, Cultural, Religious, Cyber-bullying, and Information Violence are the seven types of violence referred to in this document.

Going beyond this seven-fold classification, one can point to the nine-fold classification provided by the *Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Strategic Group* (2010), upon which it seems a more comprehensive typology of violence against men/boys can be presented. According to this article, Economic Violence, Sexual Violence, Emotional Violence, Psychological Violence, Spiritual Violence (or Religious Violence), Cultural Violence, Verbal Abuse, Financial Violence, and Neglect are the various forms that violence has taken and takes in the real world.

The report provided on the forms of violence against men, although—and without doubt—does not offer a flawless picture of the existing diversities, can be an acceptable image thereof. It is highly probable that further searching in this field would not yield results significantly greater than what has been presented in this report. Furthermore, based on a methodological principle in qualitative research, a review of literature must always stimulate the researcher's sense of inquiry, not saturate the need for search. It appears that this typology is sufficient for the objective this section pursues. Hence, we halt further searching in the published works and documents in this domain here, and defer the continuation of the search to the empirical field investigations that have been placed on the agenda of this very research.

2.2.1. Conditions of Violence Against Men/Boys

Violence against men and boys, akin to any other complex social phenomenon, does not occur in a vacuum; it precipitates under specific, identifiable conditions. Within the methodological framework of Grounded Theory, these conditions are categorised into three distinct tiers: Causal Conditions, Contextual Conditions, and Intervening Conditions.

- Causal Conditions denote those categories that are antecedent to the core phenomenon and exert a direct influence upon its generation.

- Contextual Conditions refer to the specific set of circumstances that influence the strategies adopted by actors.
- Intervening Conditions encompass the broader, general structural conditions that influence strategies, acting either to facilitate, constrain, or circumscribe them.
- Strategies are the specific actions or interactions employed to manage, handle, or respond to the core phenomenon.
- Consequences are the outcomes resulting from these actions and interactions (Danaee Fard & Emami, 1386).

In the following sections, we shall critically review these conditions as they have been articulated in the extant scholarship and published works within the domain of violence against men.

2.2.1.1. Causal Conditions

Constructing a definitive report on the causal conditions of a phenomenon as multifaceted as violence against men/boys is fraught with epistemological difficulties. The challenge of distinguishing true causality from mere correlation—or 'concomitant variation'—in the empirical sciences has led many scholars to abandon the pursuit of causality altogether. Furthermore, even assuming one can surmount this obstacle, identifying causality within qualitative research—which primarily aims to interpret the phenomenon through the discovery of meaning rather than the measurement of variables—presents its own methodological complexities.

Beyond these theoretical hurdles, compiling a report from existing studies is complicated by the significance of biographical conditions and the immense diversity of narratives in this field. However, since the progression of this research is contingent upon identifying and reporting prior scholarly endeavours, this task remains unavoidable. The sheer diversity of causes cited in the literature, coupled with a lack of theoretical rigour in many studies, necessitates a critical re-reading. Our objective is to categorise the causes presented in prior studies into more abstract, manageable clusters to formulate a coherent account of the causal conditions of violence against men/boys.

Theoretical ambiguity in the categorisation and nomenclature of conditions surrounding violence against men is most prevalent in quantitative studies conducted outside the Grounded Theory framework. In many such studies, authors fail to distinguish between causal, contextual, and intervening

(or mediating) conditions, conflating them under vague, overarching titles. For instance, Ghazizadeh et al. (1397), in their study titled '*A Conceptual Model of Predisposing Factors of Marital Violence by Women Against Men from the Perspective of Men/Boys*,' posit that predisposing factors are divided into four general classes: individual, couple-based, familial, and extra-familial factors. In this taxonomy, the researchers, for whatever reason, paid no heed to the necessary differentiation between causal, contextual, and mediating factors.

Elsewhere, researchers focus solely on the *rationales* for violence. According to one view, three common reasons women cite for their violence against men are: to resolve a problem, to respond to a family crisis, and to prevent him from harming her. Self-defence is noted as one of the least common reasons given by women for initiating beatings (Corry et al., 2002, as cited in Firoozjaeian & Rezaei Cherati, 1393). In another report, researchers limit themselves to merely listing causes and factors. They suggest that husband abuse stems from causes such as a lack of understanding of duties and responsibilities, the weakening of religious beliefs, and psychological causes such as loneliness, depression, hallucinations, anxiety, fear, lack of interest, and the manifestation of hatred (Gholamzadeh et al., 1397).

Such theoretical conflations are abundant in the literature regarding the causal conditions of violence against men. Consequently, the utilisation of existing literature requires extreme caution and meticulous selection. Much of what is presented under this banner in prior studies is not of the nature of 'causes' or even 'factors,' but rather 'justifications,' and must be excised from the review at the outset. Furthermore, employing existing taxonomies is fraught with difficulties; one must engage with the literature within a framework of adapted and rectified categorisations.

Based on the experience garnered in this research, it is only in studies utilising Grounded Theory that one can—by overlooking errors in determining specific instances—speak of 'causal conditions' proper. We shall review the literature produced in this area, whilst attributing responsibility for the findings to the original researchers. Nevertheless, it is essential to note that the literature utilised in this section is not restricted to Grounded Theory studies; keeping critical considerations in mind, we shall examine any relevant discourse wherever it appears.

The catalogue of causes cited for violence against men is extensive. Without applying a form of conceptual ordering, any scientific utilisation of

them is either impossible or exceedingly arduous. To this end, and to bring conceptual order to the plethora of causes cited in domestic and international research, our first task is to organise these diverse causes into primary categories. In this research, based on the categorization of 86 causes identified in the literature, all were subsumed under four principal categories: Individual Causes, Familial Causes, Ethical/Moral Causes, and Economic Causes. A detailed report of these follows.

2.2.1.1.1. *Individual Causes*

Individual causes constitute the most prolific category of causes for violence against men in the studies reviewed. Out of 70 specific causes identified, 31 (nearly 50 per cent) pertained to individual factors. In the studied literature, individual causes appeared in two main sub-categories: Psychological/Emotional Causes and Physical/Somatic Causes..

A) Psychological and Emotional Causes:

Of the 16 psychological causes identified, 14 fell under the category of mental illness (or psychopathology) and 2 under personality disorders.

A-1) Mental Illness: Mental illnesses:—or perhaps more accurately, clinical symptoms thereof—possess the highest frequency among the psychological causes of violence against men. It is not hyperbolic to suggest that this constitutes one of the most critical causes of the phenomenon. Mental illness may exacerbate the risk of intimate partner violence (IPV) in both perpetrators and victims, influencing behaviour and destabilising relationships.

Traits and conditions such as dominance, narcissism (being self-satisfied), negativity, vindictiveness, sadism, hopelessness, feelings of frustration, stress, irreverence, and humiliation are cited in the literature as drivers of violence against men.

Jyoti Srivastava (2016) (as cited in Salimi et al., 1399), in a study entitled '*Domestic Violence Against Men/Boys*' conducted on 30 married men in an urban area, demonstrated that the majority of men faced mild to moderate domestic violence. The most prominent cause was dominant behaviour and attention-seeking behaviour by the spouse. This theme is corroborated in the research of Salimi et al. (1399).

Among the psychological conditions cited as causes is negativity. According to psychologist Firestone (2012), two emotional dynamics lead to domestic abuse. One is a destructive thought process (or the 'critical inner

voice'), while the other is a harmful illusion of connection between a couple, referred to as the fantasy bond. The destructive thought process involves abusers harbouring malicious thoughts towards themselves and their partners. This 'voice' is destructive because it tells people negative things about themselves and their sexual partners (PsychAlive, 2009a). These negative thoughts affect the individual by undermining positive feelings about the self and others. Consequently, when a man is abused by his partner, he may feel shame and anger, triggered to act on violent impulses. Conversely, the fantasy bond is the illusion that the couple cannot survive without one another (PsychAlive, 2009b). These two beliefs create fertile ground for abuse. The creation of a fantasy bond supports behaviour where one individual can victimise another, believing they possess the power to control them.

Other psychological pathologies cited by researchers include vindictiveness (Dauda et al., 2017, as cited in Hosseini et al., 2006) and the sadistic nature of some men towards women—a point noted by Charles et al. (2002) and Mousavi (1388), though less frequently discussed in the reverse context. Furthermore, investigations have clarified that domestic violence against men is linked to various mental health problems in men/boys, such as stress, depression, psychosomatic symptoms, and psychological distress (Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2001; Stets & Straus, 2017).

Researchers have also pointed to hopelessness as a catalyst. Ghazizadeh et al. (1397) write that in a state of frustration, individuals feel hopeless and dead-ended, seeing no hope for their future. Global research indicates that the feeling of failure leads to experiencing other emotions such as hopelessness, depression, and suicide.

Fiebert and Gonzalez (1997), in a study titled '*Women Who Initiate Assault: The Reasons for Such Behaviours*,' identify a psychological state cited by women as the cause of their abusive behaviour towards men. This state can be termed disregard and belittlement. According to this study, the most common reasons women gave for violence against their male partners were: 'my partner was not sensitive to my needs,' 'I wanted my partner to pay more attention to me,' and 'my partner does not listen to me.' This situation is described somewhat differently in Zolfaghari's (1382) research, which lists the provocation of women by men/boys, indifference to moral values, and the denigration of female roles as factors in female-on-male violence.

Bipolar disorder is also frequently linked to violent and irrational behaviour. Although restoring an individual's lithium balance is well-recognised in treating bipolar disorder, it is rarely applied in the context of domestic violence management. In reality, individuals are often incarcerated and denied their medication, exacerbating the problem (Charles et al., 2002).

Drug Abuse: Women's addiction to drugs and alcohol is considered by some researchers as a cause of violence committed against men. This has been confirmed in various studies (Simmons et al., 2008; Stith et al., 2004, as cited in Ghazizadeh et al., 1397). Hosseini et al. (1400) also concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between alcohol consumption by women and violence against men.

Nisonoff and Bitman (1997) argue that alcohol intoxication is associated with spouse beating, although the precise causal nature of this relationship remains ambiguous. The *British Crime Survey* revealed that one-third of assaults occurred while the assailant was under the influence of alcohol. However, the author of the study notes that 'it cannot be said whether alcohol caused the violence, whether it played a role in its occurrence, or whether it simply reflects a correlation effect (alcohol consumption may be higher among the group more likely to commit assault)' (Mirrlees-Black, 1999).

Some researchers believe a strong correlation exists between drug use, alcoholism, and intimate partner violence (IPV) across the globe, for both genders as perpetrators and victims. Many scholars have reported aggressive behaviour by women against their partners (Burnett, 2018; Drijber et al., 2013; Ismayilova, 2015; Obiji et al., 2017; ONS, 2018). Other research results corroborate this relationship, linking alcoholism, drug use, and mental illness with aggressive behaviour in women (Ismayilova, 2015; Obiji et al., 2017; ONS, 2018). Such aggressive behaviours are also observed among LGBT partners (Baker et al., 2013; Buller et al., 2014).

Habitual substance use and intoxication can escalate arguments, increase neglect of roles (including childcare), exacerbate financial problems, infidelity, and legal issues, and heighten the risk of IPV. Tsiko (2016) documented this phenomenon among African men suffering from alcoholism. In recent media coverage of male victims and interviews with female perpetrators in Kenya, alcoholism and the neglect of marital roles—including intimacy—were cited as primary factors for aggression (Gathogo, 2015; Kalki, 2018; Mongare et al., 2018; Obiji et al., 2017).

Of course, significant ambiguities remain regarding the causal link between alcohol and violence. Researchers suggest it is better to view alcohol as a means of gaining 'liquid courage' to commit violence or as a convenient excuse post-factum (see Morley & Mullender, 1994). It is also worth noting that whilst alcohol plays a role in many domestic assaults, the majority occur without its 'assistance.' in the British MORI survey, men were far more likely than women to cite the influence of alcohol as one of their reasons for using violence against their partners (Carrado et al., 1996).

A-2) Personality Disorders: Among the psychological causes of violence against men, personality disorders have garnered attention in several studies. Antisocial and Borderline Personality Disorders (BPD) are the specific disorders most frequently highlighted. Of the numerous symptoms of these disorders, antisocial behaviour is the most prominent. For instance, Sugarman emphasises two factors: antisocial and borderline personalities in perpetrators. This research suggests a different personality and relational profile for abusers compared to non-abusers. Carlson, Gundolf, and Russell, in presenting one of the most famous typologies of aggressors, placed them in three classes: the antisocial abuser, the sociopathic abuser, and the typical aggressor, declaring the first category the most dangerous (as cited in Ghazizadeh et al., 1997).

The Edmonton Survey in Canada also indicates a strong link between committing domestic violence and the presence of psychopathological characteristics. The results of this survey, which support a pathological rather than a sociological explanation of domestic violence, indicate that high rates of violence are seen in those with alcohol addiction combined with antisocial personality disorder and/or recurrent depression (80 to 93 percent).

Some studies explicitly list Borderline Personality Disorder as a cause. For example, Dutton (1988, pp. 140-155) and Gelles (1997, p. 80) have linked BPD to domestic violence. It is estimated that BPD affects 2% of the population, and 75% of diagnosed cases are women.

2.2.1.1.2. Physical/Somatic Causes

Medical problems, heredity and genetics, body size, and reciprocal defence constitute causes that are rooted in the soma (the body) and are distinct from emotional and psychological dimensions.

Dauda et al. (2017), in a quantitative and qualitative study of 120 male victims of domestic violence in the Ibadan North Local Government Area of

Oyo State, Nigeria, revealed that one of the characteristics facilitating partner abuse by women was the physical size of the female aggressor (as cited in Hosseini et al., 1400). These findings suggest that women with larger physical dimensions—particularly if this characteristic is relative to their partner—are more likely to commit violence against men.

Another study by Ghazizadeh et al. (1397), aimed at finding predisposing factors for marital violence by women against men from the men's perspective (using a qualitative Grounded Theory approach on 17 men in Tehran), confirmed the hypothesis of physical dimensions. Based on their findings, physiological and biological issues were introduced as causal conditions affecting violence against men.

Genetic characteristics are another factor cited in explaining the causes of violence against men. Ghazizadeh et al. (1397), in explaining their results, write that in analysing the codes obtained regarding female-on-male domestic violence, they concluded that genetic factors are a cause; in other words, women who have aggressive parents are more likely to resort to violence, a finding consistent with biological and bio-social theories.

Another physical cause can be found in the illnesses from which the perpetrator suffers. Salimi et al. (1399) consider the woman's constant complaints of physical illness as one such cause. Straus et al. (1980, p. 239) clearly identified that family violence and abuse are often the result of treatable medical problems. Elliott (1988) looked at neurological factors. Rosenbaum et al. (1994) and Warnken et al. (1994) examined the tendency towards violence in men who had suffered head injuries, which they believe is also applicable to women with head injuries.

The use of medical drugs (Ghazizadeh et al., 1397) and substance misuse have also been noted. In a study by Shams Esfandabad (2004) and colleagues, it was determined that the rate of spouse abuse is higher in individuals who use alcohol or drugs than in those who do not. The study noted a significant frequency of addiction and a history of drug, tobacco, and alcohol use in individuals. Notably, there was a high frequency of drug and tobacco use history among women; this claim was confirmed by Kazemian et al. (2009). Researchers found a strong relationship in victims of violence with chronic psychological and medical issues such as hypertension, depression, and HIV, necessitating further investigation by medical professionals through inquiry into IPV (Buller et al., 2014; Clarke et al., 2014).

Another cause of domestic violence against men/boys can be termed avoidance of pain or physical injury. In this scenario, women commit violence against men either through self-defence or reciprocal abuse. References to this subject appear in numerous studies. Some research even suggests that this type of violence contributes significantly to domestic violence rates. According to these studies, with few exceptions, reciprocal violence is significantly more common than unidirectional domestic violence by men against women or women against men. Research findings indicate that between one-third and one-half of domestic violence involves mutual abuse.

For example, data from the *US National Family Violence Re-survey* in 1985 shows that 'of the 825 respondents who experienced one or more assaults, both parties were involved in violence in 49% of cases... These results are similar to those found in the *First National Family Violence Survey* (Straus, 1980).' Similar results were found in a 1981 study in Calgary, Canada; a 1987 study in Alberta, Canada; and a 1996 survey in Australia. According to the Australian research team: 'Violence happens in couples. In over 50% of couple relationships where violence occurred, both partners hit each other.' Other surveys report similar or higher statistics. For instance, a survey of couples seeking marital therapy showed that '86% of aggression reported by couples in this sample was reciprocal.'

The reality of mutual domestic violence is itself highly diverse and may be referred to in three types. 1. There are likely cases where reciprocal violence is almost exclusively male-driven, and the woman retaliates in self-defence only rarely. In these cases, violence against the woman is likely more severe, and her reciprocal defence is justifiable within the context of the violence inflicted upon her. 2. There are couples whose violence resembles 'mutual combat.' In this form, both parties use similar acts and are initiators as often as they are responders. 3. In other couples, there is likely a much greater use of violence by women. In these couples, the male partner responds rarely and perhaps with less intensity. Thus, it is clear that mutual domestic violence is a relatively heterogeneous category (McKeown & Kidd, 2002).

Salimi et al. (1999) also seek the causes of domestic violence in women's self-defence behaviour, and others have found that most female perpetrators have experienced violence from their partners, thus they view violence against men as a form of self-defence (Neil & Edwards, 2017; Swan et al., 2008).

2.2.1.1.3. *Familial Causes*

According to the studies reviewed, three categories of causes are rooted in the familial conditions of the individuals involved. This category is distinct from causes rooted in the individual's family of origin (which are discussed under contextual conditions). Based on this classification, power inequality, the increasing power of women, and inappropriate marriage are the most significant familial causes of violence against men.

Power inequality is a component of analysis in many studies of violence, particularly against children and women; however, the footprint of this factor is clearly visible in investigations of violence against men. According to the authors of the *First National Family Violence Survey* in the US (1975-1976), 'violence is used by the most powerful member of the family as a means of legitimising their dominant position... Less powerful family members often use violence as a reaction to their lack of participation in the family decision-making process.' According to results from a study by Coleman and Straus (1986) (as cited in Ghazizadeh et al., 1397), couples who are egalitarian (29%) and make decisions together had the lowest rates of conflict and violence, whereas in cases where the man (9.4%) or the woman was dominant (7.5%), this figure reached its highest. When couples agreed that one of them should be the decision-maker, conflict and violence decreased. However, when conflict *did* occur in such families, the risk of violence was much higher compared to egalitarian families.

Power can be exercised through controlling behaviours such as jealousy or constantly questioning the partner's whereabouts. According to one study, 'both women and men are equally likely to experience these two forms of controlling behaviour.' Other studies suggest, 'The use of controlling behaviours and verbal abuse in intimate relationships appears to be bidirectional' (Kasian & Painter, 1992).

McKeown and Kidd (2002), in addition to the aspects of power mentioned, point to others. In their view, relationships where one partner is dominant—sometimes the man, sometimes the woman—are more at risk of domestic violence than democratic and egalitarian relationships. They also believe that while victims of domestic violence invariably experience powerlessness, perpetrators may also act out of a similar sense of impotence. Furthermore, they posit that while power can sometimes have a personality dimension, it almost always has an economic dimension, and male and female victims are

usually in a weak economic position within the relationship. Power also has a physical dimension, where people with physical disabilities are more vulnerable than those without. Children and the elderly may also be subject to abuse based on this power dynamic.

Moving beyond inequality, another familial cause cited in the literature is financial independence (Hosseini et al., 1400) and the empowerment and education of women in recent decades. According to Kigaya (2021), over time, the role and status of women in society have elevated from domestic confines to the working class and even political representation in Kenya and globally. This shift has been driven by the movement for educating female children and encouraging women to fight for gender equality in social, legal, and political arenas.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) reaffirmed the necessity of recognising women's rights as human rights, ending all forms of discrimination against women, and rights to development agreed upon by 189 countries. This progressive transition has economically empowered women, strengthened families and nations, agitated gender norms, and challenged male supremacy, particularly in patriarchal countries like Kenya (Ismayilova, 2015; Tsiko, 2016).

According to Kigaya (2021), the increase in intimate partner violence against men as a result of women's empowerment in Kenya has been rarely documented. In this report, male victims of female violence cited low levels of education and unemployment as predictors of violence by their wives (Mongare et al., 2018; Obiji et al., 2017). However, when Tsiko (2016) examined 12 African countries with similar patriarchal traditions, different results emerged.

According to Tsiko's results, educated women in Liberia showed more violence towards their spouses and partners than their counterparts in other countries, and educated men reported higher rates of IPV. Tsiko (2016) argued that educated men are more open-minded and may not retaliate when faced with their violent female counterparts, thus placing them at higher risk of physical abuse. On the other hand, women may use violence to balance power against an educated or wealthy, yet controlling, partner (Ayodele, 2017).

2.2.1.1.4. *Ethical (Moral) Causes*

'Ethical causes' refer to conditions determining the rightness or wrongness of affairs in the eyes of society members, which are cited in the literature as causes of violence against men. In the reviewed studies, the ethical actions of perpetrators can be reported in two general categories: relationships outside the framework of marriage (euphemistically termed *infidelity* or *betrayal*) and the violation of women's rights in various forms.

In results obtained from research by Kheirkhahzadeh (1390), Gholamzadeh (1397), and Carlyle et al. (2014), alongside other causes, moral problems—primarily referring to infidelity—are listed as causes in this field.

This cause is cited in some studies as the *primary* cause of violence against men. According to findings by Obiji et al. (2017), presumed or actual infidelity is often cited by interviewees as the main cause of IPV against men. They found that 61% of their studied victims had been accused of infidelity, and 57% pointed to their female partner's aggressive behaviour when they interacted with other women. Other studies found similar results, pointing to extra-marital sex and jealousy as predictors of violence against men in rural India (Kalokhe et al., 2020) and Europe (Drijber et al., 2013), among others. In Thomas's (2015) study, 85.1% of respondents identified having sex outside marriage as a cause of violence against men.

Disregard for women's rights is also a factor noted in several studies. Salimi and Chitsaz (1399), in their research titled '*Identifying Factors Affecting Domestic Violence Against Men*,' write in their results section that the failure to observe women's rights, and the feelings women harbour regarding this issue, is itself a major cause of domestic violence against men. Hosseini et al. (1400), Ghazizadeh et al. (1397), and Salimi et al. (1399) have also pointed to the violation of women's rights as a cause. Similarly, Thomas (2015) found that 85.1% of respondents agreed that men having extra-marital relations provokes their wives to commit violence against them.

2.2.1.2. *Contextual Conditions*

Contextual conditions refer to the specific set of circumstances and structural environments within which the phenomenon of violence occurs. In the reviewed literature concerning violence against men, a diverse array of influential contexts has been identified. These can be broadly categorised into Cultural, Social, Historical, Educational, Media-related, Political-Legal, and

Economic contexts. Each of these spheres exerts a distinct pressure, shaping the contours of violence against the male gender.

2.2.1.2.1. Cultural Contexts

Culture constitutes a vast and multifaceted domain; however, within this expanse, the dimension of beliefs emerges as one of the most critical determinants. The extant literature underscores this point significantly, with numerous studies discussing the profound impact of belief systems—in their various manifestations—on the perpetration of violence against men. For instance, Winton (2004) posits that there is little doubt that issues such as intellectual dogmatism and prejudice play a pivotal role in the incidence of violence within society (as cited in Salimi et al., 1399). Similarly, Ghazizadeh et al. (1397) identify irrational thoughts and cognitive distortions as key causal conditions contributing to violence against men.

Furthermore, cultural beliefs surrounding the institution of marriage often impose a burden on couples to maintain the façade of a 'good marriage.' Couples frequently remain together 'for the sake of the children,' and may internalise the belief that conflict and violence are natural, inevitable components of any marital union (Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Strategic Group, 2010). Such deep-seated beliefs foster an environment of silence; they discourage the reporting of violence against men and may inadvertently embolden female perpetrators, thereby perpetuating the cycle of abuse.

Another significant cultural context influencing violence against men is the prevalence of prejudice against homosexuality. Hate speech represents a specific form of violence widely directed against gay men in many contemporary societies. It has been argued that the expression of hatred has a more deleterious impact on its victims than other forms of victimisation (Ehrlich, 1990). The victim's reaction to anti-gay violence includes a range of psycho-physiological indicators, such as elevated stress levels, depression, withdrawal or social isolation, sleep disturbances, anxiety, and a profound loss of self-confidence. For some lesbians and gay men, violence may exacerbate existing vulnerabilities related to their sexual identity (Ehrlich, 1992; Garnets, Herek & Levey, 1992).

According to Ehrlich's report, a significant number of victims complain of serious interpersonal difficulties. Many lesbians and gay men do not disclose

their sexual orientation to family members, friends, or colleagues, or do so only to a select minority. To elicit support, the victim is often forced to 'come out,' yet this very act of disclosure can render the post-assault situation more difficult and stressful. While verbal harassment may appear to be a trivial offence, the use of insults by bigoted individuals in the context of racial or anti-gay violence serves as a mechanism to subordinate these populations. Insults function as a reminder of the perpetual threat of physical violence, challenging the victim's sense of security and invulnerability, and rendering the world a more hostile and unpredictable place (Garnets, Herek & Levey, 1992, p. 215). Verbal abuse and the threat of physical assault play a critical role in constraining the behaviour of many lesbians and gay men. These constraints include avoidance strategies such as not approaching certain areas, altering one's dress, and avoiding physical presence in public spaces. Such limitations and avoidance strategies significantly reduce the level of control that many gay men can exercise over their own lives.

Religious contexts also represent a common cliché regarding the conditions influencing violence. While religious support for the subordinate position of women has often been cited as a factor in violence *against women*, one must ask: does it play a similar role regarding men? Quantitative research on this specific intersection is sparse. Existing studies have largely focused on the stigmatisation of divorce in Christianity, the compulsion for women to endure difficult life circumstances, and the impact of this on violence against women. However, some studies have touched upon the influence of religion on violence against men. Gathogo (2015), in his research, notes that while there is no scriptural indication promoting or endorsing the beating of men, within the Kenyan populace, Christians have been described as more violent than Muslims.

The situation regarding the influence of geographical location (residence) on violence against men follows a similar pattern, appearing only in a minority of studies. Edwards (2015) conducted a comparison across different regions and found no significant difference in the rates of intimate partner violence (IPV) among rural, urban, and suburban women. However, this pattern differed regarding chronic and severe incidents, which were more prevalent among rural perpetrators compared to other regions (Edwards, 2015). In Kenya and Africa more broadly, only a few small-scale studies have been conducted in rural areas that highlight male victims of IPV, and these lack

comparison with urban populations (Obiji et al., 2017; Tobjin et al., 2018). There is virtually no data generated by major medical institutions—which are predominantly located in large cities—nor data from law enforcement agencies indicating help-seeking behaviour by abused men in these areas.

In addition to the aforementioned cultural contexts, we must also consider Educational and Media contexts as vital facets of cultural influence.

Undoubtedly, systemic weaknesses in the educational system play a significant role in the occurrence of violence in society (Winton, 2004; as cited in Salimi et al., 1999). The issue of violence, particularly against sexual minorities, has been placed on the agenda of many nations. For example, research conducted in Australia and elsewhere considers school educational curricula an inseparable part of the issue of anti-gay violence (Berrill & Herek, 1992; Cox, 1990; GLAD, 1991; New York State Governor's Task Force on Bias-Related Violence, 1988). According to Cox, two main approaches are required. The first involves curricular content that provides accurate information about homosexuality and affirms positive images of lesbians and gay men (Cox, 1990). The *Streetwatch Implementation Advisory Committee Report* (New South Wales) recommends that this strategy must include in-service training for educational staff and counselling to combat negative attitudes towards lesbians and gay men.

Specific programmes to combat homophobia have also been endorsed. In 1990, such a programme was implemented in a New South Wales school where a group of students had been accused of murdering a gay man, and the level of overt homophobia was high. This programme involved an intensive one-day session designed to challenge and confront anti-lesbian/gay sentiments among students, and its implementation among those involved in violence was deemed successful (Michels, 1991).

Specific programmes such as these are recommended to counter attitudes that justify and encourage violence against lesbians and gay men. Schools across Australia have begun to educate students about prejudice, yet they often fail to specifically address prejudice or violence against the LGBT community. Consequently, the myth that certain minority groups are 'acceptable targets' for bigotry and violence is reinforced and perpetuated. School curricula regarding homosexuality are often controversial; however, educational institutions can no longer ignore their responsibility to provide course materials that challenge discriminatory judgements and behaviours.

The *Streetwatch Implementation Advisory Committee Report* (1992) further recommends that tertiary training courses for relevant professionals—such as teachers, health workers, social workers, and psychologists—must include appropriate sections on homosexuality, homophobia, and anti-gay violence.

Media contexts also play an undeniable role in the quality and quantity of violence against the male gender. Researchers argue that the growth and proliferation of violence in mass media plays a significant role in the occurrence of violence in society (Winton, 2004; as cited in Salimi et al., 1399). Media can condition the environment for violence against men in both negative and positive dimensions.

Critics of media policy argue that violence against lesbians and gay men is consistently ignored by mainstream media. While this may be due in part to the under-reported nature of the crime and the hesitation of many victims to approach the media for fear of reprisals, the silence is palpable. Conversely, media has been utilised by public health agents for health-related campaigns and disseminating information on emerging threats. Owusu-Addo et al. (2018) have cited media as an effective factor in the fight against domestic violence. Media types include print, radio, television, SMS, or social media via the internet. The advantages of mass media communication lie in the ability to reach a vast population in a short time with the latest news or educational programmes.

However, to the media's credit, coverage of domestic violence has transformed it from a private matter into a public issue, provoking reactions from those indirectly affected, politicians, and professionals (Comas-d'Argemir, 2015). Generally, research on media coverage of male victims remains scant. Carlyle et al. (2014), in their study on news media portrayals of male and female perpetrators, noted a form of media bias regarding the frequency of physical abuse and the reasons for crimes committed by women.

2.2.1.2.2. *Social Contexts*

Based on the results derived from the reviewed reports, familial conditions, membership in minority groups, and the quality of peer groups are among the most important social contexts influencing violence against men. For instance, Capaldi et al. (2012) (as cited in Salimi et al., 1399), pointing to the impact of social factors on the emergence of violence, state that membership in a

minority group can predispose individuals to acts of violence directed against them.

Another social context for violence against men is familial dysfunction (viewed here as a social unit). Numerous factors in this area can be candidates for fostering violence against men. Firoozjaeian, Razeghi, and Rezaei (1394: 105) point to the factor of disorder in the family (lack of consensus, synchrony, shared fate, and empathy), and Mirshafieian (1395) (as cited in Ghazizadeh, 1397), in referring to the causes of female-on-male violence, believes that one such factor is the lack of stability in family life.

Dauda et al. (2017) conducted a quantitative and qualitative study on 120 male victims of domestic violence in Nigeria. The results showed that the characteristics triggering violence against partners by women included the influence of peers on their spouses. Capaldi et al. (2012) also emphasise that the type of friends and peer groups can set the stage for violence against members of these groups.

2.2.1.2.3. Familial Contexts (Historical Antecedents)

'Familial contexts' in this section refers to the historical dimension: all experiences or events that occurred in an individual's past—specifically childhood—that may pave the way for violence against men. These experiences are largely categorised as childhood experiences.

Today, individuals are easily influenced by situational and individual factors (Goldsmith, 2016). Abusers may learn violent behaviour from the environment in which they grow up, such as the family, community, and broader cultural influences. Children who have repeatedly witnessed violence or have been victimised themselves may come to believe that violence is a rational action for resolving interpersonal conflict. Research has highlighted the role of observing violence in childhood in the genesis of abuse in adulthood (Stith et al., 2004). A meta-analysis of 52 past studies confirmed that witnessing parental violence during childhood leads to the manifestation of violence in the adulthood of both men and women (Ghazizadeh et al., 1397).

Boys who witness domestic violence against women may, upon reaching adulthood, be more likely to abuse women because they learn that women need not be respected. Conversely, girls who witness domestic violence in their families are more likely to be abused by their husbands (Mahyut &

Dhillon, 2017). Swan et al. (2008) have stated that some women are aggressive due to fear and trauma stemming from past experiences.

Furthermore, the existence of inappropriate familial experiences has been identified by some studies as a precursor to violence against men. Ti-Navd and E-Person (2008) examined the status of domestic violence against women of reproductive age in several Asian countries and reported that in Bangladesh, if a pregnant woman's mother or mother-in-law had suffered violent acts from their spouses in the past, the likelihood of her experiencing this condition during her own pregnancy increased. This study also showed that the woman being under 19 years of age, the man having low education, insufficient dowry, and low support from the woman's family increased the probability of violence.

Additionally, the humiliation of daughters by fathers (Ghazizadeh et al., 1397), inappropriate familial experiences (Hosseini et al., 1400), the experience of child abuse and association with violent parents, family upbringing (Salimi et al., 1399), educational problems (Salimi & Chitsaz, 1399; Hosseini et al., 1400), and the power structure within the family are among the factors that have garnered researcher attention and are counted among the contextual conditions conducive to violence against men.

2.2.1.2.4. Legal Contexts

The legal context constitutes one of the problematic factors or conditions that profoundly affects the domain of violence against the male gender. Researchers have pointed to numerous issues in this regard, with certain aspects receiving greater attention. These include: weak or non-existent support from current laws for male victims; the law's tendency to favour women when violence against men is raised; men's more limited access to legal services; men's lack of trust in law enforcement; and finally, the poor implementation of existing laws. These factors demonstrate the extent to which the law and its executors act with bias regarding the issue of violence against the male gender (McKeown & Kidd, 2002; Obiji et al., 2017; Ayodele, 2017; NCRC, 2014; Zanchetta et al., 2017; Brown & Herman, 2015; Drijber et al., 2013; ONS, 2018; McCarrick et al., 2016; Mongare et al., 2018; Allen-Collinson, 2009; Sarantakos, 2004; Carney, Buttell & Dutton, 2007; Du Plat-Jones, 2006).

While legal problems in this domain are pervasive, they appear to be particularly acute in the realm of unconventional sexual orientations. The

behaviours of adult lesbians, when consensual, have historically never been illegal in many jurisdictions (unlike male homosexuality). However, it is only in recent years that male homosexual behaviours have been decriminalised in certain jurisdictions. Despite this, relations between the police and the gay and lesbian communities remain fraught. Lesbians and gay men report alarming levels of harassment, entrapment, and violence by the police (Cox, 1990). In the GLAD survey, 24% of lesbians and 35% of gay men reported problems ranging from inadequate or inappropriate responses regarding non-gender-related matters to actual harassment and violence by the police (GLAD, 1991).

The capacity of the criminal justice system to deter crime through the imposition of harsh penalties has been a controversial topic for decades. Nevertheless, to prevent anti-gay violence, the criminal justice system must deal with such violence seriously. Hamner (1992) argues that this can be achieved by ensuring that the costs of such violence outweigh its benefits.

2.2.1.2.5. *Economic Contexts*

Principal research findings indicate that reciprocal family violence is more prevalent among lower socio-economic groups. Both National Family Violence Surveys in the United States have confirmed this assertion.

The *British Crime Survey* also indicates a strong association between reciprocal domestic violence and families experiencing financial difficulties: 10% of women and 12% of men living in such households had been subjected to violence in the preceding year. The British MORI survey similarly showed that the perpetration of offences was higher in lower socio-economic groups (albeit marginally) than in higher groups.

Other studies report similar results. These findings do not imply that reciprocal domestic violence is confined to lower socio-economic groups, but rather that the prevalence rate is higher in these groups than others. As the Calgary survey demonstrates, 'domestic violence is not limited to the lower classes.' For instance, the results of a survey based on a non-random sample of university students in the United States showed that students from high-income families experienced more violence than others.

Unemployment, often a symptom of poor economic status, is frequently a factor influencing violence in society. Research conducted by the National Institute of Justice (2021) stated that unemployment increases the risk of domestic violence. In the USA, this study showed that for couples where men

had permanent employment, the rate of domestic violence was 4.7%. When men experienced a period of unemployment, this rate rose to 7.5%, and when men experienced two or more periods of unemployment, the rate of intimate partner violence increased to 12.3%. According to the results obtained from this research, the husband's unemployment at the time of violence was the main reason for violence against men in 60.1% of cases.

2.2.1.3. Intervening (Mediating) Conditions

In the studies reviewed, intervening or mediating conditions appeared in five categories: Emotional-Psychological, Familial, Economic, Socio-Cultural, and Physical intervening conditions.

2.2.1.3.1. Emotional-Psychological Intervening Conditions

Depression, social stigma, isolation, and suicidal tendencies (or a history of failed suicide attempts) are among the most critical conditions that, if present in men/boys, influence the violence directed against them.

Numerous studies have pointed to depression as a facilitator of violence against men (McKeown & Kidd, 2002; Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2001; Stets & Straus, 2017; Ghazizadeh et al., 1397; Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Strategic Group, 2010). In the booklet *Behind Closed Doors* published by the Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Strategic Group (2010), it is stated that individuals suffering from severe depression are often rendered incapable of taking any action. Since the abuser often behaves violently only towards the depressed individual, the male victim may conclude that he must indeed have a problem. Depressed individuals may accept the abuser's excuse that they 'deserve punishment' or that the abuser was too drunk to know what she was doing. They believe that if they can improve or avoid making mistakes, the abuse will stop—because this is what they are told after every violent episode. However, another study found that domestic violence was associated with patients suffering from personality disorders and schizophrenia, but not with depression (McKeown & Kidd, 2023).

Social stigma is another reason that prepares the ground for violence against stigmatised men. Individuals who have received a shameful label from their society and whose self-esteem has been damaged become one of the easiest targets for abusers. These individuals may be ashamed to admit that abuse is occurring and continue to stay in an abusive relationship. Such

individuals lack the power to change their situation (Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Strategic Group, 2010).

Isolation, which psychologists identify as a symptom of mental illness and which is counted in reviewed studies as a cause of violence against men, can be a highly influential factor when men fall victim to it. In a state where the individual is isolated, the abuser is often the only psychological support system for the victim. This situation occurs when the abused individual has systematically driven away other friends. In such a situation, others may feel uncomfortable about the violence inflicted on the victim but simply pass it by. Isolated men, having no concept of support services or facilities around them, feel trapped. The abuser frequently threatens the victim that she will kill him if he reports it. Often, relatives of the abused individual become tired of repeated calls for help and are unwilling to assist further. In such conditions, the victim has access neither to anyone to talk to nor to a system that supports him (Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Strategic Group, 2010).

2.2.1.3.2. Familial Intervening Conditions

In research accessible under the title '*Domestic Abuse Against Men in Kenya*' (Kigaya, 2021), men's marital status is introduced as a factor influencing violence. In this study, the author believes that while intimate partner violence is common in most unions, men who are separated, divorced, or single are victimised more frequently than men who are married or in cohabiting relationships (Melchiorre et al., 2016; Office of National Statistics, 2018).

However, this report also points to polygamy as another cause. Unlike many developed countries, polygamy is legal in Kenya, allowing men to marry multiple wives. Although previously accepted under customary law and in religions such as Islam, this law was formally enacted in 2014 to allow for spousal support and other benefits (National Council for Law Reporting, 2017). Under an amendment to this law, men were permitted to marry other women without consulting or obtaining approval from the first wife, contrary to previous practice (National Council for Law Reporting, 2017; Obiji et al., 2017). Since then, this law has caused an outcry from women who view it as humiliating and a source of domestic disputes, with some religious groups claiming it violates marital principles. These husbands, if unable to meet the demands of multiple wives and families, become exposed to violence from their partners. Tsiko (2016) also confirmed the occurrence of this phenomenon;

based on results from several African countries studied, a positive correlation was found between intimate partner violence and polygamy.

Results from McKeown and Kidd (2002) display another facet of the impact of marital status on violence against men. According to their report, an individual's marital status may be single, married, cohabiting, separated, divorced, or widowed. One of the key findings regarding mutual domestic violence is that the rate of such violence is highest among cohabiting couples and lowest among married couples or those in dating relationships. Based on these findings, the rate among divorced couples occupies an intermediate position.

In the Calgary study, it was found that the rate of violence for cohabiting couples was double that of married couples. Similarly, in the *General Social Survey on Victimization* in Canada, 'four percent of those living in common-law unions reported spousal violence, compared to only one percent of those who were married. This was true regardless of the victim's gender.'

Results from the *US National Family Violence Re-survey* (1985) also indicated that cohabiting couples had the highest rates of violence overall, significantly higher than married and dating couples. This study also showed that the *severity* of violence was greater among cohabiting couples: 'Not only are cohabiting couples at the greatest risk of violence, but they are also at risk of the most dangerous forms of violence.'

Although few surveys had data on separated and divorced individuals, other research has shown that cohabiting couples have relatively high rates of mutual domestic violence. One explanation offered for the high risk among cohabiting couples is that 'cohabiting couples may be more isolated than dating and married couples... which may foster an environment conducive to violent behaviour.'

Some researchers have pointed to the link between having children and the level of violence. Unlike marital status, the relationship between parenthood and domestic violence is not straightforward, and research results are somewhat contradictory. For example, in the Calgary study, childless couples showed higher rates of domestic violence than couples with children, although this may be 'more a function of age and length of marriage than parenthood.' In contrast, the *First National Family Violence Survey* in the US (1975-1976) showed that 'spouse abuse was low for men and women without children, increased with each additional child up to six children, and was non-

existent in households with six or more children.' The British Crime Survey also concluded that perhaps children sometimes increase tensions in relationships.

Beyond marital status, some studies have addressed the impact of marriage quality on violence against men. A factor mentioned in fewer studies is inappropriate marriage or mate selection. Rahimi, Arefi, and Moradizadeh (1394) (as cited in Ghazizadeh et al., 1397) concluded that there is a significant difference in marital satisfaction between individuals who selected their spouse through friendship despite family opposition, compared to those who selected via introduction and family consent, and those who selected via introduction but under compulsion. Those who chose their spouse through introduction and family consent possessed higher marital satisfaction.

Some researchers (Salimi et al., 1399) have also pointed to a demographic characteristic: the youth of the couple. Results suggest that reciprocal violence is significantly higher among younger couples than older ones. For example, the MORI study in the UK showed that 'reports of persistent or coercive victimisation were highest for the youngest age group and decreased with age.' In the *First National Family Violence Survey* (US), violence was higher in younger families, especially those under 30 (Straus et al., 1992). The Calgary survey showed that mutual violence 'is particularly evident among younger couples and among those married for less than eight years' (Brinkerhoff & Lupri, 1988). These findings led some researchers to suggest that 'the origins of spouse abuse and the weakening of marital bonds appear to be rooted in the formative stages of marriage' (O'Leary & Curley, 1986). Straus et al. (1980) offer four possible explanations for higher violence among young couples: (1) young people are more prone to violence; (2) younger marriages involve two people learning to live together and experiencing frequent, often intense changes; (3) younger marriages are more likely to break up; and (4) violence in the family is increasing. However, the second cause appeared to be refuted by the *Second National Family Violence Survey* (1985), which showed prevalence rates significantly similar to the first survey.

Nevertheless, other researchers analysing data from the two US national surveys could not explain the relationship between age and marital violence. The only exception to the strong link between youth and mutual domestic violence is that retired couples also show relatively high aggression towards one another. The Calgary survey performed a separate analysis of older

couples and found that couples in the retirement stage had significantly higher incidence rates than those in the pre-retirement stage. Thus, 'there is evidence that age and couple violence have a curvilinear relationship.' Similar results from the *British Crime Survey* showed that 'although risks of partner assault decrease with age for men and women, they do not disappear—about one percent of people over 45 had been assaulted by a partner in the last year.' However, the preponderance of evidence suggests that mutual violence is far greater among young men and women.

McKeown and Kidd (2002), reviewing the literature on marital status, youth, and violence against men, propose a combination of the link between marital status and parenthood with violence: 'The myth that 'all married couples are at equal risk of violence' has been replaced by data showing that partner violence is highest among single young men and women who live together and have children at a young age. Particularly young men and women with a history of developing behavioural problems.... The rate of partner violence doubles among young couples who move from dating to cohabitation and have children at a young age.'

In addition to the aforementioned factors, some research points to another factor influencing the quality of violence against men: poor management by the male in the family (Hosseini et al., 1400). This can degrade the man's social status within the family, marginalise him, and create conditions conducive to female violence against him.

2.2.1.3.3. *Economic Intervening Conditions*

In some research, economic and livelihood problems are reported as the root of violence against men (Salimi et al., 1399; Hosseini et al., 1400). These studies state that the unfavourable economic status of men leads to a decline in their economic importance within the family, making the space suitable for female violence against them.

According to results from Thomas (2015), 188 of the studied individuals (82.4%) confirmed that women abuse men who do not contribute to household expenses. He believes that men's inability to provide for living costs is the main reason for their abuse by women; this claim was confirmed by 87% of the individuals in his study. A report published on June 4, 2015, in the *Daily Graphic* illustrates how a woman attacked her male partner with a knife due to his unemployment and inability to provide living expenses.

Abused men may be economically dependent on the perpetrator and have no real alternatives. Their partner may control all their finances and cut off their access to cash, cheques, or important documents. In such conditions, abused men may worry that if they report violent behaviour, their partner will lose her job—often the family's sole source of income (Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Strategic Group, 2010).

The issue of men's financial dependence, largely influenced by socio-economic status, is directly linked to increased rates of violence against men (Firoozjaeian & Rezaei Cherati, 1393; Gholamzadeh et al., 1397; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020; Ismayilova, 2015; Kalokhe et al., 2015; Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015; WHO, 2015). Given the high levels of male unemployment in Kenya, reported at 9.39% (Global Economy, 2019), and many other men engaged in temporary work, a large group of these men are dependent on their female counterparts and are at risk of intimate partner violence.

Obiji et al. (2017) and Mongare et al. (2018) confirmed this claim in their studies, where men with low socio-economic status susceptible to female crime in Western and Central Kenya were studied. Furthermore, Tsiko (2016) and Edwards (2015) confirmed the increase in violence against men associated with unemployed or low-income men in several other African countries.

A study by Swan et al. (2008) shows that increased violence against men is associated with increased alcohol dependence among men aged 25 to 34. Based on this survey, these are desperate men struggling to provide for their families. Dahir (2012) also emphasised that husband beating has become very common in Kenya. With men returning to a vicious cycle of drunkenness and unemployment, women have replaced them in the workforce. Men who fail to provide for their families as expected by African society and culture may be subjected to economic, physical, and even psychological abuse.

2.2.1.3.4. Socio-Cultural Intervening Conditions

Capaldi et al. (2012) (as cited in Salimi et al., 1399), pointing to the impact of social factors on violence, state that the quality and quantity of social support for an individual can set the stage for violence against group members. Accordingly, it appears that men who lack social support from those around them are more likely to be targets of violent behaviours by women.

It is also crucial to note that when cultural values and social norms regard violence as a predominantly 'male issue' and deem men who are targets of female violence as worthy of blame, the space for increased violence against men expands. Silence and non-reporting can be a significant reason for violence against men. When most men experience violence, they remain silent and withdraw into solitary isolation. Furthermore, due to their specific social status and fear of ridicule and mockery, men are reluctant to articulate their experiences; consequently, crimes committed against them remain hidden (Ghazizadeh et al., 1397).

Male-on-male violence follows a somewhat similar rule. Some studies suggest that the reasons why violence by men against other men has been overlooked must be found in the reasons why such violence remains ostensibly hidden from society's view. The consensus among researchers and laypeople is that domestic violence and sexual assault remain hidden because most incidents are not reported to the police (Frieze & Browne, 1989; Herzberger, 1996; Pagelow, 1984).

Coxell et al. (1999) believe that male victims of male violence are ashamed of narrating their ordeal. It seems that narrating or reporting violent incidents in which men are the objects of abuse damages their patriarchal self-esteem; thus, every man feels compelled to zealously protect it. Furthermore, sexual assault of men by women is often not taken seriously, as there is a belief that women lack the biological structure for rape. Consequently, it is generally accepted that there is under-reporting of male rape and sexual violence against men. This claim has been confirmed in many other studies (Bachman & Taylor, 1994; Sivakumaran, 2007; Stanko & Hobdell, 1993; Felson & Pare, 2005; Ashworth, 1981; LaFree, 1980; as cited in Dube et al., 2018).

2.2.1.3.5. Physical Intervening Conditions

In addition to the conditions mentioned, some researchers point to conditions in the occurrence of violence against men that are directly dependent on their physical state. Among these, sexual impotence and addiction to alcohol and drugs have received more attention than other conditions.

Salimi et al. (1399) pointed to men's sexual impotence and its impact on female violence against men. Furthermore, according to results from Hathaway's research (2015), 80.1% of respondents believed that men's poor performance in bed is a factor in the harassment of men by female spouses.

Most respondents stated that men involved in these activities were more likely to be harassed by their female partners.

Some studies (Ghazizadeh et al., 1397; Stith et al., 2004; Simmons et al., 2008) have also discussed the effects of alcohol consumption and drug addiction on violence against men. In their view, men who have suicidal tendencies or a history of failed suicide attempts are suitable prey for female abusers. According to results from Thomas (2015), 87% of studied individuals agreed that women abuse male partners who use drugs and abuse alcohol. Other significant causes increasing the risk of intimate partner violence in men, cited in the reviewed literature, include: physical dependence on the partner (Burnett, 2018; ONS, 2018), old age (Melchiorre et al., 2016), and a new diagnosis of HIV (Burnett, 2018).

2.2.1.4. Action Strategies

In the lexicon of Grounded Theory, Action Strategies—or strategic interactions—are defined as purposeful, intentional acts undertaken to resolve a specific problem or manage a prevailing set of circumstances; it is through the enactment of these strategies that the phenomenon takes shape and evolves (Strauss & Corbin, 1400). In the context of this study, strategic interactions refer to the conscious, deliberate choices made by individuals involved in the phenomenon of violence against men/boys. It is the execution of these choices that gives the phenomenon its distinct morphology.

Within the dynamic of violence against the male gender, two primary categories of actors are discernible: the Perpetrators (predominantly women in this specific context) and the Victims (men/boys). Based on this bipartite division of actors, the strategies themselves can be bifurcated into two distinct classes: Aggressive Strategies, typically adopted by female perpetrators to exert power or control, and Defensive Strategies, which male victims employ in an attempt to navigate, survive, or mitigate the violence.

2.2.1.4.1. Aggressive Strategies

The repertoire of actions employed by female perpetrators to actualise violence against men is extensive and multifaceted. The literature teems with varied manifestations of this aggression; however, an exhaustive, unstructured listing would prove unwieldy. Therefore, synthesising the findings from the reviewed studies, we can categorise the literature on this

subject into five principal domains: Physical, Psychological/Emotional, Sexual, Economic, and Social Violence. These categories represent the primary moulds within which women's aggressive strategies against men are cast.

2.2.1.4.1.1. Physical Strategies

Contrary to essentialist assumptions, women do perpetrate physical violence against their husbands, although the frequency and intensity may differ from male-perpetrated violence. This category encompasses a spectrum of assault and battery, ranging from the infliction of bodily injury, breaking of limbs, and burning, to pushing, slapping, and scratching. The most prevalent forms of physical abuse reported involve the use of fists and kicks, though the utilisation of instruments to inflict injury is also documented (Aghabiklo & Aghakhani, 1386).

Research by Puchert et al. (2004) in Germany provides a granular analysis of this phenomenon. Men reported experiencing physical violence from their most recent female partner at least once, and in some cases, repeatedly. The morphology of these assaults was reported as follows: pushing (18%), slapping (9%), beating or scratching (7%), painful kicking, squeezing, or severe pinching (5%), and throwing objects (5%). Crucially, the results indicated that respondents had suffered an injury from a domestic violence incident at least once, underscoring the tangible physical toll of these encounters.

Physical violence or maltreatment by an intimate partner is operationally defined as intentional actions capable of causing physical pain, injury, disability, or death (Breiding et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2017). Perpetrators may employ brute force, objects, weapons, or restraints to execute the act. The taxonomy of these acts includes hitting, choking/strangulation, hair pulling, burning, shooting, cutting with sharp objects, or physically restraining the victim.

The severity of these strategies should not be underestimated. Male victims in Kenyan media have reported egregious instances of physical violence, including major lacerations to the face and body, and severe burns inflicted by fire or scalding liquids (Muhindi, 2018). This report aligns with existing literature suggesting that female perpetrators often inflict severe physical injuries compared to their male counterparts, potentially due to the use of weapons or surprise attacks (Swan et al., 2008). In their investigation in Nyamira, Kenya, Obiji et al. (2017) demonstrated that over 65% of male victims

suffered significant injuries, including deep lacerations, bone fractures, ocular injuries, and broken teeth.

Furthermore, a study by Tobjin and Lotada (2018) in Africa highlights a fatal intersection of culture and violence. Given that cultural norms strictly prohibit an African man from crying out for help when beaten by a woman, a man may remain silent during an assault, ultimately leading to his death from the beatings. Other recorded forms of physical aggression include slapping, pouring hot water on a sleeping or unsuspecting man, severing the male genitalia, verbal insults escalating to physical attacks, mutilation, dousing the victim in petrol and setting him alight, whipping, and hurling household objects—chairs, benches, stools, utensils—at the man, particularly following intense domestic disputes.

A striking finding by Corry et al. (2002) reveals a gendered inversion regarding the use of weaponry. Studies consistently show that women are significantly more likely to use weapons in their assaults than men (80% for women versus 20% for men), arguably as an equaliser for physical strength disparities. Women are also more inclined to throw objects, slap, kick, bite, and strike with fists or objects. Physical violence manifests on a continuum from mild to severe; signs may be visible or, due to their mild nature, negligible and invisible. In some instances, violence is enacted via body parts (hands, feet), while in others, damaging instruments such as whips, sticks, and stones are employed. In the most extreme cases, perpetrators utilise light or even firearms. Consequently, physical strategies encompass a grim array of acts: shoving, slapping, hair pulling, throwing, biting, kicking, burning, poisoning, strangling, choking, and ultimately, homicide or uxoricide (Salimi et al., 1399).

Bagshaw et al. (2000), collecting qualitative data on men in South Australia, found that men reported enduring abuse that included direct assault, spitting, scratching, hair pulling, throwing crockery, sudden attacks, kicking, and threats with knives. In the United States, statistics from the *National Coalition Against Domestic Violence* (NCADV, 2015) indicate that 1 in 4 men have experienced physical violence, with 1 in 7 reporting severe violence by an intimate partner. Furthermore, 5% of male homicides are committed by intimate partners.

In the Indian context, a study revealed that the most common type of physical violence was slapping (98.3%), while the least common was beating with a weapon (3.3%). The *National Family Health Survey* (NFHS) estimated that

60,000 women committed physical violence against their husbands without any provocation. Verma and Kafaltiya (2021) corroborate this, noting that physical violence includes slapping, pushing, hitting (by the partner or her relatives), or throwing items like mobile phones and dishes. While serious physical attacks constituted only one-tenth of cases, the prevalence of 'minor' violence remains high.

Providing a forensic perspective, Wörmann et al. (2021) in Germany reported that, according to victims, physical violence was non-instrumental in over half the cases (55.7%), whereas instrumental violence (using a weapon/object) or a combination thereof was reported in 43.7% of cases. Full-body examinations revealed injuries in 94.6% of victims. Regarding the *modus operandi*, violence with blunt objects occurred in 79.0% of cases, while sharp objects were used in 12.0%. Rarer forms included thermal injuries (boiling water, hot wax, electric shocks), chemical burns (cleaning agents), and firearms.

Wörmann et al. (2021) also analysed the distribution of injuries, noting that blunt force injuries were three times more common in the upper body (skull, face, neck, chest, arms) than the lower body. The arms (40.0%) were the most frequent site of injury—indicative of defensive posturing—followed by the face and neck. Sharp force injuries also predominated in the upper body, particularly the arms (35%) and chest (12.5%). Specific injury types included scratches (predominantly caused by fingernails), bite marks, and fractures. Alarming, 13 cases involved strangulation, a highly lethal form of assault, though none reported loss of consciousness.

2.2.1.4.1.2. Sexual Violence Strategies

Sexual violence or abuse by an intimate partner is defined as any completed or attempted unwanted sexual act, including rape, sexual coercion, or unwanted sexual contact directed towards a male or female partner (Smith et al., 2017). Recently, non-contact experiences such as sexting and the weaponisation of social media platforms have been recognised as potential and actual avenues for sexual coercion and IPV, particularly among young adults (Bauermeister et al., 2014).

In the Iranian context, Moradi and Zandi (1386: 132) classify women's sexual violence against men across a multi-level spectrum:

1. Micro-Level (Interpersonal)

Forms of sexual violence at this level include:

- Emotional withdrawal
- Silence
- Withholding affection as a form of punishment or due to shyness

2. Meso-Level (Relational)

At the relational level, sexual violence may manifest as:

- Deliberately poor personal hygiene
- Indifference to the partner's sexual needs and desires
- Disregarding the husband's preferences during sexual intimacy

3. Macro-Level (Extra-Marital)

At the macro level, sexual violence is identified as:

- Sexual gratification outside the marital home (adultery)

Legal and Conceptual Notes

- With the exception of **adultery**, none of the above acts are criminalised in many legal jurisdictions.
- Sexual violence is further characterised by practices such as:
 - Pressuring for sex
 - Sexual relations under threat or duress
 - Unwanted forms of sexual activity
 - Sexual relations occurring at inappropriate times

Findings from the *Refugee Law Project* (RLP) at Johns Hopkins University indicate that sexual violence against men can take grotesque forms, including anal and oral rape, genital torture, castration, forced sterilisation, gang rape, sexual slavery, and being coerced into raping others.

Prevalence studies are equally concerning. The *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (CDC) reports that in the US, approximately 1 in 6 men have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime (Smith et al., 2017), and nearly 1 in 3 men have been raped by an intimate partner (using a broad definition including 'made to penetrate'). Cook et al. (2016) found that 6% of men aged 18 or older reported being victims of forced sex by a woman. These men were often characterised by having multiple female partners and substance use issues.

Forensically, Wörmann et al. (2021) documented cases where male victims were beaten and then subjected to anal or oral rape. Similarly, Malik and Nadda note that men can be forced into sexual activity; sexual abuse occurs

when men are denied the right to refuse sex, with 0.4% of men in their study reporting such experiences.

2.2.1.4.1.3. Psychological or Emotional Violence Strategies

Psychological violence is defined as verbal or non-verbal communication with the intent to harm, exert control over, or isolate another person (Smith et al., 2017). It may occur directly or be mediated through other forms of violence (Chirwa et al., 2018). In the US, approximately 48% of men experience psychological aggression from an intimate partner in their lifetime, including stalking, verbal abuse, threats, and humiliation (NCADV, 2015).

Aggressive strategies in this domain are characterised by control: blackmail, isolation from family and friends, withholding affection, financial control, and exploitation (Kalokhe et al., 2020). A particularly insidious strategy involves the weaponisation of children; women may use their children to exert psychological pressure by threatening to deny custody or by inciting the children to commit violence against their fathers. In Western Kenya, Obiji et al. (2017) found that 55% of male victims expressed genuine fear of their wives.

From a psychological perspective, 'hurtful words' constitute violent behaviour. This includes profanity, humiliation, ridicule, and sarcasm (Salimi et al., 1399). Psychological violence manifests as undue criticism, verbal abuse, constant threats of divorce, and threats to take the children (Ezazi, 1380: 62). Sometimes, a woman's behaviour is calculated to turn the extended family against the man, leaving him feeling alienated and unsafe within his own home. Ganley and Schechter (1996) expand this to include attacks on pets and property. In a broader sense, psychological domestic violence encompasses controlling behaviours—dictating what a man can or cannot do, withholding information, and restricting movement (Santzman et al., 2000, as cited in Zandi, 1395). The public humiliation of a man before his children, friends, and family is a potent strategy to erode his self-esteem.

2.2.1.4.1.4. Economic Violence Strategies

Economic violence represents a deviation from 'classical' definitions of violence but is no less coercive. Although economic resources are traditionally viewed as being under male control, there are men who are subjected to economic violence by their wives. Strategies include demanding a separate car

or a house in a more expensive area beyond the husband's means, demanding money for household expenses in excess of actual costs and hoarding the surplus, refusing to contribute financially despite having the means, and the destruction of the husband's property.

Legally, a woman who disposes of her husband's property without permission commits an illegal act. 'Destruction' (*takhrib*) implies causing intentional damage to property belonging to another (Walidi, 1376, as cited in Zandi, 1395). A woman who deliberately damages her husband's property commits the crime of destruction, which serves as a prime example of economic violence (Salimi et al., 1399).

Social Violence Strategies (often overlapping with psychological/economic): This form involves hindering the cultural, social, and educational growth of the partner. Manifestations include restricting social relationships leading to social isolation, preventing the continuation of education or skill acquisition, and forbidding participation in social associations. Essentially, social violence is the woman's use of her power—or societal mechanisms—to control and exploit the man (Salimi & Chitsaz, 1399).

2.2.1.4.2. *Defensive Strategies*

In the corpus of research regarding violence against men, attention is disproportionately focused on aggressive actions; the reactions and coping mechanisms of men—their Defensive Strategies—have received comparatively scant attention. However, existing research indicates that men employ diverse strategies when confronted with abusive behaviour, contingent upon variables such as the duration of the marriage, age, education, occupation, income, and cultural background (Firoozjaieian & Rezaei Cherati, 1393).

A pervasive strategy among men is silence and non-reporting. Studies indicate that zero percent of men who experienced physical violence reported it to the police, even though some believed their partners deserved punishment. Furthermore, less than 50% stated that they ever reacted physically or defended themselves in such situations. This passivity is often rooted in complex psychological rationalisations; about 19% of men attributed the abuse to their partner's jealousy, interpreting controlling behaviour (monitoring calls, emails, movements) as a sign of affection or insecurity rather

than abuse. Other reactive behaviours included submitting to loss of decision-making power (5%) and accepting isolation from friends (7%).

Thomas (2015) provides a statistical breakdown of male responses to the question: *'What do men do when abused by their partner?'*

- Retaliation: 76.4% claimed men eventually retaliate.
- Social Reporting: 77.3% believed men report to religious leaders; 64.4% said they report to family/friends.
- Institutional Silence: Crucially, 77.3% believed men do not report to the police or Victim Support Units.
- Secrecy: 69% believed men keep the violence hidden.
- Exit Strategies: 63.4% agreed that violence leads to the termination of the relationship, and 60.2% stated men stop providing financial support.

Interestingly, in the context of Ghana where polygamy is practiced, men who felt uncomfortable with an abusive partner often employed the strategy of entering a new relationship (marrying another wife) as a means of escape or respite (Ofei-Aboagye, 1994).

The reluctance to engage with state apparatuses is a major theme in defensive strategies. Barber (2008) found that men in the UK find it arduous to report abuse to the police due to a fear of ridicule and perceived police bias. The study revealed a deep-seated belief that the police would not listen, or that reporting was a futile expenditure of time and resources. Research findings consistently show that men hold a negative view of how police handle domestic violence, perceiving the approach as inherently biased against them. Consequently, when abused, they feel no impetus to seek legal recourse (Robert, 2007).

In summary, as illustrated by Thomas (2015), the defensive repertoire of abused men is characterised by a tragic sequence: Retaliation, Secrecy, Religious Appeal, Informal Reporting (Family), Relationship Termination, and Financial Withdrawal. The absence of 'Legal Reporting' from this primary list underscores the structural alienation of male victims from the justice system.

2.2.1.5. The Consequences of Violence Against Men

The extant body of scholarly literature has painstakingly delineated a vast, labyrinthine, and multifaceted spectrum of deleterious effects resulting from violence against men. These consequences, spanning both the immediate

short-term and the enduring long-term, manifest across various fundamental strata of human existence. The literature categorises these impacts into several distinct and critical domains, including:

- **Psychological Functioning**
 - Profound depression
 - Debilitating anxiety disorders
 - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
 - Sociogenic burden of stigma
 - Pervasive feelings of guilt
 - Deep-seated shame
 - Uncontrollable, chronic anger
- **Behavioural Level**
 - Unemployment
 - Abuse of illicit substances and alcohol
 - Pathological tendency towards self-blame
 - Other maladaptive coping mechanisms
- **Relational Level**
 - Deep-seated issues related to trust
 - Deficits in emotional intimacy
 - Sexual dysfunction
 - Disorders of attachment
 - Difficulties in establishing and maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships
- **Self-Concept**
 - Damage to the core of individual identity
 - Self-deprecation
 - Severely diminished self-esteem
 - Crises related to gender identity
 - Internal conflicts regarding the construct of masculinity (Purnell, 2019; Lowe & Rogers, 2017; Wilson & Scarpa, 2016; Ferrales et al., 2016; Forde & Duvvury, 2016; Christian et al., 2011)

To provide a necessary conceptual distinction, if we posit that the *conditions* of violence against men are those situational antecedents that exist prior to the occurrence of the act, then the *consequences* must be understood as the post-event realities—those altered landscapes of existence that emerge in

the wake of violence and which fundamentally impact the quality and essence of life for the victims and those in their immediate periphery. Much like the forms of violence itself, the consequences of violence against men can be systematised into distinct, overarching categories. Based on a critical review of the findings presented in the studies under examination, these consequences are classified into four principal domains: Physical and Somatic Consequences, Psycho-Emotional Consequences, Economic Consequences, and Social Consequences.

2.2.1.5.1. Physical and Somatic Consequences

Researchers have catalogued a diverse and harrowing array of physical sequelae resulting from violence against men in their scholarly works. According to the seminal findings of the World Health Organization (2002), exposure to violence can significantly escalate the risk of adopting harmful behavioural health practices, such as cigarette smoking, alcohol dependence, and substance misuse, whilst concurrently increasing susceptibility to mental illness and suicidal ideation. Furthermore, violence acts as a potent catalyst for chronic organic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer; it increases vulnerability to infectious diseases such as HIV; and it fosters broader social pathologies like criminality and further cycles of violence. Based on this report, Deshpande (2019) posits a grim trajectory wherein unreported and neglected violence against men may, in severe and desperate cases, culminate in the tragedy of suicide.

Other scholars have established robust correlations between violence against men and a general deterioration in physical health, citing substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), increased incidence of cardiovascular events, obesity, cancer, and even premature mortality (Nayak, 2021; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020; Holman et al., 2016; Kalokhe et al., 2020; Rakovec-Felser, 2014; Smith et al., 2017; Wong & Mellor, 2014; World Health Organization, 2014). Costa et al. (2016) further articulate that the terminal consequences of such violence include death resulting directly from injuries, suicide, homicide, or the fatal exacerbation of acute and chronic illnesses.

In a phenomenological inquiry concerning violence against men, Yagi et al. (2022) documented participants' complaints regarding a litany of somatic symptoms that underscore the physical toll of abuse. These included persistent

cephalalgia (headaches), lumbar pain, generalised body aches, and chronic, unremitting pain. Furthermore, participants reported physical debility such as weakness, loss of equilibrium, and a significant loss of physical strength. Specific medical symptoms included epistaxis (nosebleeds), gastric sensitivity, anorexia, urinary incontinence, haematuria (blood in the urine), and haemorrhoids. Crucially, the study also noted a reduction in sexual potency within their marital relationships and severe physical alterations such as genital mutilation (specifically, forced circumcision).

A significant number of researchers have also emphasised the long-term somatic impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) related to domestic violence, highlighting how early exposure inscribes trauma onto the developing body with lasting physiological effects (Chirwa et al., 2018; Richards et al., 2017; Swan et al., 2008; Tsiko, 2016).

According to research by Durham (2020), one of the primary consequences of violence against men and boys is the profound and devastating impact it exerts on their sexual and reproductive health. Durham asserts that increased fertility issues and a general decline in health are direct outcomes of this abuse. The physical toll is visibly manifest in traumatic injuries such as bone fractures, lacerations, and incisions; the contraction of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS; and irreversible reproductive damage such as sterilisation due to castration. These physical ravages are inextricably linked to mental illness, depression, and suicide, forming a complex web of destruction that is visibly evident in the male and boy population.

2.2.1.5.2. Psycho-Emotional Consequences

Empirical investigations consistently demonstrate that domestic violence against men is inextricably bound to a plethora of mental health challenges in men and boys, including chronic stress, depression, psychosomatic symptoms, and severe psychological distress (Stets & Straus, 2017; Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2001). Many men who are subjected to psychological maltreatment by their spouses exhibit symptoms of profound, deep-seated depression and mental anguish, conditions which, in turn, condemn them to a life characterised by misery and elevated stress levels. Other studies have drawn direct correlations between violence against men and chronic depression, as well as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020; Holman et al., 2016; Kalokhe et al., 2020; Rakovec-Felser,

2014; Smith et al., 2017; Wong & Mellor, 2014; World Health Organization, 2014).

Follingstad et al. (1991), regarding the psychological sequelae for men who have experienced domestic violence, reported outcomes such as significant emotional trauma, deep-seated shame, fear, and anger resulting from female-perpetrated violence. This research highlights that men today are exposed to traumatic events engineered by their spouses or sexual partners, which frequently drives them towards maladaptive coping mechanisms such as alcohol and substance misuse (Loranger et al., 1994).

Furthermore, Jacobsen et al. (2001) point to the secondary damage caused by the use of alcohol or other faulty substances as a flawed strategy for managing the negative emotions arising from the traumatic event. Wiehe (1998) argued that being a victim of domestic violence is fundamentally destructive to self-esteem and self-image; a man beaten by his wife or partner is likely to be a man psychologically broken. Barnett (2001) elucidates further long-term effects on men who have been abused, identifying a syndrome characterised by pervasive guilt, anger, anxiety, extreme shyness, nightmares, agitation, irritability, and profound difficulties in relating to others.

According to a report published by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA, 2022), the convergence of intense shame, humiliation, anger, and fear can precipitate escalated anxiety, self-harm, depression, and substance abuse. Victims may lose the capacity to connect emotionally with others or to place trust in them. Crucially, male victims sometimes displace this aggression, becoming violent towards others, including their own family members, thereby perpetuating the intergenerational cycle of abuse.

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is also recognised as a critical national public health crisis. Researchers have found that Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) significantly affects male victims of intimate partner violence. The findings of one study indicated that 16% of victims stated that during arguments with their female partners, they engaged in minor acts of psychological and physical abuse—a reactive behaviour often stemming from their own underlying PTSD.

According to the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey* (2010), children who witness domestic violence learn that violent behaviour is an acceptable form of communication; upon reaching adulthood, they are liable to replicate domestic violence with their own intimate partners. Furthermore,

they may develop behavioural problems such as alcohol or drug abuse in adulthood. Nayak (2021) notes that domestic violence can cause physical and mental trauma, low self-confidence, aggressive behaviour, and psychosis in children and adolescents, effectively transmitting the pathology to the next generation.

Men who are victimised in abusive relationships may suffer from a multiplicity of problems directly resulting from such abuse. Intimate partner violence can severely impact the victim's sense of control, fostering dependency and isolation, and instilling feelings of guilt, shame, helplessness, hopelessness, despair, and a distorted sense of responsibility for the abuse (Nayak, 2021). Violence against men erodes their self-esteem, diminishes their ability to function effectively and make decisions in most instances, and damages their social development. Boys exposed to such environments may struggle to reach their full potential and may fail to contribute positively to society. Such traumatised boys may become desensitised to suffering, and many may come to rely solely on violence to solve problems and satisfy their needs in the future (Mphatheni & Mlamla, 2022).

2.2.1.5.3. Social Consequences

Men who have been subjected to abuse are exposed to significant risks that can negatively impact their future and effectively dismantle the fabric of their lives. Participants in the research by Yagi et al. (2022) pointed to the enduring impact of the violence experience on their marital lives, citing problems such as spousal dissatisfaction, deep-seated trust issues, divorce, physical abuse, role reversal, and infertility. They also highlighted feelings of discomfort, humiliation, shame, sadness, impotence, constant pain, weakness, and genital mutilation as obstacles interfering with a regular and healthy sexual life, which is central to marital stability.

According to Deshpande (2019) and Nayak (2021), unreported and neglected violence against men may lead to family disintegration and divorce. In their view, any form of violence—whether physical, mental, emotional, or psychological—impacts life and constitutes a violation of basic human rights. The World Health Organization (2002) believes that exposure to violence can exacerbate social problems such as crime and further violence. Furthermore, the report published by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA,

2022) suggests that the way victims view themselves and others profoundly affects their relationships with family members and the broader community.

The social effects of victimisation constitute an unpleasant and alienating experience, likely occurring due to a power struggle between men and women. Moreover, there is a close association between victimisation and delinquency, as it is claimed that those who are victims of crime are highly likely to commit crimes themselves (Turanovic, 2019). Violence against men destabilises the institution of marriage and the family structure, including the welfare of children. This eventuality may lead to separation or divorce, homelessness, and general tension between the extended family and community members (Office of National Statistics, 2018). In their study on male victims, Obiji et al. (2017) found that 51% of them had experienced divorce.

2.2.1.5.4. *Economic Consequences*

Research results regarding the specific economic consequences of violence against men are not abundant; thus, to obtain a comprehensive picture of this consequence, one must inevitably refer to reports that, by referencing the economic consequences of gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence generally, indirectly allude to the specific costs of violence against men.

Domestic violence has negative consequences for social welfare, children, families, and society at large (Tobjin, 2010). Based on results from the research by Yagi et al. (2022)—titled '*Characteristics and Effects of Sexual Violence Against Men in the Democratic Republic of Congo Conflict: A Phenomenological Research Design*'—participants pointed to problems related to unemployment, which interfered with their ability to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as providers for their homes and families. They also spoke of the inability to educate their children due to financial constraints. According to these results, participants could not resume work due to 'constant pain,' 'lack of strength,' 'vulnerability,' and 'weakness.' They also mentioned the experience of being paralysed by the fear of re-victimisation. The fear of being victimised again was particularly acute for participants who had been abused on their way to or from work, effectively trapping them in economic inactivity.

According to Mphatheni and Mlamla (2022), gender-based violence contributes to the perpetuation of gender inequality (Durham, 2020). Furthermore, GBV has a significant economic impact on the country and the

individuals involved. According to a KPMG report titled *'Too Expensive to Ignore,'* the annual financial loss resulting from gender-based violence ranges from 28 billion to 42 billion Rupees. This figure represents approximately 1.3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Kigaya (2021) believes the economic cost of intimate partner violence is immense. These costs may range from poor productivity and job loss to the management of injuries and chronic medical and mental health issues. Other costs include expenses incurred by relatives, criminal investigations, legal fees, security services, loss of property, and the rehabilitation of female offenders and male survivors (National Crime Research Centre, 2014). The estimated cost related to domestic violence in the United States was \$3.6 trillion in 2014, or approximately \$23,000 per male victim over a lifetime, compared to \$103,377 for women (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2015). For comparison, in Kenya, the estimated cost of domestic violence related to a female victim is \$500 in a public hospital (National Gender and Equality Commission, 2016). The estimated 5-year cost (2014-2019) for GBV-based services nationwide was \$121 million, with 70% of these costs used for legal purposes and without dedicated government funding for these services (National Gender and Equality Commission, 2016).

2.2.1.6. Proposed Solutions

Most of the studies reviewed dedicate a concluding section to offering suggestions or recommendations. To render these recommendations more comprehensible and actionable for policy and practice, we have categorised them into four distinct classes: Legal Recommendations, Provision of Social Services and Support, Awareness Raising and Social Education, and Research Proposals.

2.2.1.6.1. Legal Recommendations

The domain of law and legislation is one area that has significantly contributed to the impossibility of the social construction of the problem of 'violence against men.' Therefore, attention to legal reform is one of the most striking features in the proposals of the conducted research. Drijber et al. (2013) posit that men must possess exactly the same rights as women, including the right to live in safe houses. All statutory services (such as the Gardaí, courts, and social services) have a duty to provide services to everyone, regardless of

gender. Men should be protected by exactly the same laws as women—anyone who has raped another person, regardless of gender, should be liable to prosecution. Salimi et al. (1999) also believe that society must review laws and regulations related to women to provide grounds for the realisation of their rights, thereby removing the feeling of inequality and rights violation that often fuels female-perpetrated violence.

According to Deshpande (2019), the need to enact laws that are gender-neutral is absolutely essential. He believes that in cases where men are falsely accused of violence or dowry demands, the law must be able to address these false accusations. Human rights and gender equality must encompass both men and women. Domestic violence should be treated as spousal violence and should not be segregated by gender, as investigations demonstrate that men are also victims of female violence. Hence, necessary reforms to address violence against men are imperative.

According to Adebayo (2014), effective laws must be enacted and enforced to curb domestic violence against men. Law enforcement officers must also accept that husband battering and other forms of domestic violence against men are a reality from which men need protection. Brutality against a man by his wife should not be treated as a trivial domestic matter. The prosecution of women who beat or kill their husbands should be widely publicised to act as a deterrent to others who might harbour such tendencies.

Charles et al. (2002) offer a more radical critique, arguing that to reduce the impact of domestic violence and the abuse of men, women, and children, it is essential to treat these as human problems, not merely gendered issues. They critique current practices such as warrantless arrests—often with scant or no evidence or probable cause—forcing men to leave their homes and children with only the clothes on their backs, warrantless searches, seizure of property without legal compensation, forced arrests based on hearsay, the presumption of guilt until proven innocent, denial of the right to confront the accuser and call witnesses in defence, punishment and imprisonment occurring before or without trial, and public condemnation for crimes men have not committed. They argue that above all, this represents the imposition of a police state and tyrannical policies that jeopardise liberty. Historically, such tyranny has dramatically increased the level of violence in a society. There is no precedent to suggest that despotism and oppressive laws solve social problems. Pizzey explicitly states that any country attempting to create a political solution for

human problems eventually faces concentration camps and gulags. Therefore, many of our current laws and practices are not only unjust but profoundly wrong. To protect men and women, we must restore their civil liberties, for free individuals clearly react against violence and the abuse of anyone, whether by domestic partners or foreign states. Whatever action is taken, it must be acknowledged that the family is the cornerstone of our civilisation, and children need both parents.

Based on the claim raised in the research by Big-Alabo (2022), domestic violence against men has transitioned from a rare occurrence to a grim reality. This study, which addresses the importance of ethics in human relationships, believes that men and women, as rational beings, should live in peace and harmony, not in adversarial relationships. The study recommends that professionals such as social workers, psychologists, and counsellors should be present among court officials assisting the judge to understand the type of abuse victims might be experiencing and to aid in the issuance of appropriate verdicts.

Gay rights is another area that has received attention from researchers in recent years, with emphasis placed on the necessity of legal reforms and attention to the rights of these individuals. One tool allowing courts to take a firmer stance against anti-gay violence (male or female) is the enhancement of penalties for this crime. It has been suggested that convictions for hate-motivated crimes should carry more severe penalties than when the crime is not motivated by prejudice. For example, the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board (1992) recommended legislation requiring courts to increase the sentences of offenders when prejudice is a factor. Finn and McNeil (1988) argue that sentence enhancement sends a formal message to the public that hate speech and violence are serious crimes, not harmless jokes.

According to Adebayo (2014), gender activism must guarantee a balance of power in relationships so that excessive power is not surrendered to women, preventing them from using such power to oppress men. Just as we advocate for women's rights in marriage, men's rights must also be preserved. Furthermore, just like women, men deserve protection against violence and abuse from an intimate partner and have the right to a better life as married men.

2.2.1.6.2. Provision of Social Services and Support

Scholars argue that a purely cultural approach to addressing male victimisation is, by itself, insufficient. Julie et al. (2021) observe that the United Kingdom government's approach to intimate partner violence is overtly situated within the strategic framework of 'Violence Against Women and Girls' (VAWG). Collectively, the cultural message disseminated by this framework is that victims of intimate partner violence are inherently female, whilst perpetrators are inherently male (Hine et al., 2020; Hogan et al., 2012; Huntley et al., 2019). Consequently, services in the UK specifically designed for men experiencing intimate partner violence are exceedingly scarce (Bates & Douglas, 2020). Cook (2009) argued that this paucity of services for men reflects a broader lack of public recognition of the problem—a structural silence that may render the act of seeking help even more difficult for male victims (Perryman & Appleton, 2016). Research findings to date suggest that the lack of visible, dedicated services for male victims, combined with the often sceptical response received when men do summon the courage to report victimisation, may act as a formidable barrier to disclosure and the pursuit of support (Lysova & Dim, 2020; Machado et al., 2016; Mansfield et al., 2003; Perryman & Appleton, 2016; Tsang, 2015; Wright, 2016). It appears that prevailing cultural narratives have often served to delegitimise the lived experience of abused men.

Adebayo (2014) emphasises the moral imperative that male victims of domestic violence deserve recognition, empathy, support, and institutional services comparable to those provided to female victims. Domestic violence predominantly renders the victim—regardless of gender—depressed, anxious, and psychologically destabilised. Victims may resort to maladaptive coping mechanisms such as alcohol or drug abuse, or engage in high-risk behaviours like unprotected sex. In its most severe manifestations, domestic violence can even provoke suicide attempts. Consequently, it is incumbent upon society to listen to and care for male victims.

However, male victims must also be prepared to articulate their conditions. Since traditional gender norms dictate that men are physically stronger than women, they may be less inclined to speak about or report domestic violence in their heterosexual relationships due to a profound sense of embarrassment or the fear of social ridicule. It is essential that men feel empowered to report this violence, whether to a trusted friend, a relative, a

healthcare provider, or other effective authorities. While reporting this violence may initially be arduous due to the constraints of 'male pride,' ultimately, it is likely to bring necessary relief and facilitate access to support systems.

McKeown and Kidd (2002) advocate for the establishment of dedicated helplines for victims of violence against men. The creation of telephonic lines for victims to request assistance has become a ubiquitous and highly effective aspect of service provision, not only within social services but also in the commercial sector. These helplines provide victims of domestic violence with immediate, anonymous, and confidential access to critical information—a resource that becomes particularly vital when circumstances reach a crisis point. Furthermore, these lines serve a dual purpose: they act as a resource for referral and access to services for the individual, and for policymakers, they function as a statistical indicator to gauge the extent of the community's need for such services.

McKeown and Kidd (2002) also discuss the creation of support groups in this domain. In their view, despite the limited research available, there is evidence suggesting that, apart from helplines, the most significant source of therapeutic aid for male victims is the peer support group. A study conducted in the United States on abused husbands demonstrated that their basic service needs were most effectively met through such groups (Minnesota Department of Corrections, 1979). Other commentators similarly suggest that every community should provide support groups for all victims of domestic violence, noting that 'sharing common experiences truly works wonders to help individuals rebuild shattered lives' (Cook, 1997).

Based on the research by Big-Alabo (2022), it is recommended that more campaigns be organised to raise public awareness regarding the causes and consequences of domestic violence, as well as the locations that provide services to victims. This study further recommends that victims themselves form support groups to assist abused men in coping with the challenges of domestic violence; if such trauma is not handled professionally and communally, it can lead to severe, long-term consequences.

Given that psychological problems, behavioural issues, and educational difficulties are significant causes exacerbating domestic violence against men, utilising the counselling services of specialists in this field is of paramount importance (Salimi & Chitsaz, 1399). According to the perspective of

McKeown and Kidd (2002), the rationale for counselling—as lucidly explained by the Task Force on Violence Against Women—likely applies with equal validity to male victims, even if originally formulated for women: 'Living with abuse can lead to depression, low self-confidence, and other psychological effects for both women and their children. It is important that women have access to personal counselling and support to help rebuild their self-confidence, heal their trauma, and empower them to create a new life... In addition, access to individual counselling is often required' (Task Force on Violence Against Women, 1997). Designing interventions within the framework of such logic for abused men is both entirely logical and socially necessary.

It appears that with the empowerment of women at the macro-societal level, a lack of social order at the micro-level—which was historically tolerated by women—can today manifest as a cause of female violence against men. While women's status in the fields of science and the economy is rightfully progressing, if this process is not accompanied by a parallel growth in the arena of ethics and communication skills—including moral commitment, respect for the rights of others, the ability to persuade and be persuaded, social tolerance, and overall emotional intelligence—then their empowerment may inadvertently lead to the emergence of violent behaviours (Firoozjaieian & Rezaei Cherati, 1393).

Finally, given the critical role of experiencing and observing violence in childhood in the perpetuation of violence against men, the implementation of life skills classes, pre-marital counselling, and counselling during marriage—with the active intervention and mediation of social workers—seems essential. In effect, parents must be educated to refrain from any violent behaviour against children and against each other in the presence of children. Furthermore, schools and media can play a pivotal role in transmitting these vital life skills to children, who represent the future generation of couples (Hosseini et al., 1400).

2.2.1.6.3. Awareness Raising and Social Education

Mahyut and Dhillon (2017), in their recommendations regarding domestic violence against men, posit a crucial starting point: 'Today, the public still holds the misconception that violence against men is not a serious issue; however, in reality, violence is a grave matter regardless of the victim's gender.

First and foremost, we must educate individuals and society to become familiar with the potential signs and symptoms of domestic violence, enabling us to assist victims effectively.' There are various types of physical signs and symptoms that often go unnoticed. The subsequent step toward resolving domestic violence is to ensure that a broader demographic understands the phenomenon, is familiar with its deleterious effects, and learns how to intervene in a positive and helpful manner. Domestic violence shelters and women's organisations can collaborate with the community, local institutions, or corporate entities to organise talks, awareness-raising campaigns, town hall meetings, and group sessions. The objective is to foster open dialogue and ensure that the community engages in a robust discourse regarding domestic violence.

The study conducted by Adebayo (2014) demonstrated that religious leaders play a vital role in addressing issues of domestic violence. However, a significant problem persists: most of these leaders lack the necessary skills and professional capacity to deal with this complex subject effectively. Instead, they rely predominantly on the traditional teachings of the Bible, the Quran, and other religious texts—documents which are often patriarchal in nature and interpretation. Therefore, it is recommended that they undergo specialised training to ensure their counselling aligns with constitutional rights and modern legal standards. According to Adebayo (2014), more concerted actions must be taken by government organisations, religious groups, and civil rights organisations to enlighten public opinion regarding the evils of domestic violence against men. Such actions will assist in balancing the gender discourse regarding domestic violence and contribute to the creation of healthier families within society.

Numerous research findings indicate the profound effect of life satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and the feeling of injustice on the incidence of violence against men. In this regard, it appears that the more men and women are aware of their rights and duties within marital life—and the more they respect them—the more the feeling of injustice decreases and life satisfaction increases. Consequently, the role of socialisation institutions such as schools, mass media, and counselling services in transmitting normative social knowledge appears to be of critical importance. Key educational initiatives should include: educating families, especially parents, regarding the necessity of observing gender equality in the upbringing and socialisation of both male

and female children; educating young couples at the time of marriage regarding the dissemination of a culture of gender equality; and striving to propagate this culture through the enactment of appropriate laws by statesmen (Bokharaei, 1394).

Radio and television, as national media, possess a significant capacity for informing and educating the populace. Although the policies of the national broadcaster (*Seda va Sima*) in recent years have engendered a degree of distrust among segments of society, the education and counselling sectors of this institution continue to play a functional role and can serve as a credible reference for families to consult (Salimi & Chitsaz, 1399).

The media also bears a responsibility to report on anti-gay behaviours and violence against homosexuals (Mason, 1993). As Berrill and Herek (1992) point out, the systematic reporting of this form of hate violence clarifies the problem for the public and aids in the development of necessary policies. Furthermore, the media plays a pivotal role in redefining social norms that currently permit or even encourage anti-lesbian/gay violence and other forms of victimisation.

Pinecrest (2019) observes that mass media in sub-Saharan African countries has evolved dramatically over the past few decades, diversifying from print to new technologies, including the internet and instant messaging. These avenues for disseminating health information and socio-economic campaigns have been effectively exploited by local governments. For example, Babalola et al. (2017) found that through mass media communication in Africa, sexual health and HIV programmes (Ippoliti & L'Engle, 2017; Odine, 2015) and vaccination uptake initiatives achieved positive results (Head et al., 2015; Jung et al., 2015; World Health Organization, 2016).

According to Carlyle et al. (2014), developing countries have utilised mass and social media on a very large scale in areas such as destigmatisation, violence prevention, and peace campaigns. Media plays a major role in portraying the nature of intimate partner violence to the public and shaping public opinion regarding the prototypical characteristics of the victim or perpetrator. Often, incidents related to intimate partner violence are framed as private, personal issues rather than broader social and public health concerns. Such a limited understanding of the problem further distorts public perception regarding the reality of intimate partner violence (Comas-d'Argemir, 2015; Owusu-Addo et al., 2018).

Jesmin and Amin (2017), who examined the impact of media on changing attitudes regarding violence against women in Bangladesh, found that women who watch television show greater agreement with gender equality norms compared to those who do not. Similarly, a study on survivors of child sexual abuse showed that while the trajectory of disclosure and help-seeking varies greatly, awareness of other victims through media narratives—reading bibliographies and viewing stories on television—encouraged survivors to disclose the event (Garnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016).

2.2.1.6.4. Research Proposals

While research in the field of violence against men is increasing, a critical gap remains. Based on the research conducted to date, it is highly probable that specific experiences and nuances currently remain hidden from the view of academic literature (Hines & Douglas, 2011; Morgan & Wells, 2016; Simmons et al., 2016; Adebayo, 2014).

Future research on men as victims of intimate partner violence must incorporate a qualitative approach. A mixed-methods design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches, helps to provide the necessary statistical data relevant to intimate partner violence while simultaneously capturing the rich explanations and subjective perspectives of respondents. This furthers a more holistic understanding of the subject. Rust et al. (2017) emphasised that qualitative research is essential when there is a need to extract explanations and gain deep insight into a specific, complex phenomenon. Accordingly, the subject of domestic violence against men requires understanding the perspectives and rationalisations of respondents regarding the reasons for the existence of specific beliefs, practices, and attitudes. This type of study is also particularly well-suited to exploring the more subtle dynamics of emotional or psychological abuse. Furthermore, scholars should undertake longitudinal studies to assess the long-term, cumulative impact of intimate partner violence over the life course.

Future studies should also employ the methodological strategy of triangulation to address the limitations associated with small sample sizes often found in quantitative research on this topic. Noble and Heale (2019) discuss triangulation as a robust method to increase the validity and confidence in study findings. According to these authors, triangulation involves a combination of theories and methods to address potential biases

that can arise from a single method or observer. Therefore, triangulation is particularly important in situations where the quantitative dataset contains missing values. To reduce the rate of missing values, future researchers might also revise questionnaires or rephrase questions to elicit more accurate and complete responses from men.

Future researchers should also leverage technology and utilise digital media to conduct surveys. This approach allows researchers to reach a larger, more diverse audience and, hopefully, bolster transparency regarding intimate partner violence compared to face-to-face interviews, where stigma may inhibit disclosure.

Researchers should also actively seek to speak with older men who can share their experiences within organisations, particularly those who are incarcerated due to direct or indirect involvement in partner abuse. Furthermore, the perspectives of female perpetrators and queer men—groups often marginalised in mainstream studies—must be examined by future researchers to provide a complete picture.

The unique nature of men in societies that are patriarchal and where polygamy is tolerated provides a specific opportunity for researchers to examine the impact of polygamy on vulnerability to intimate partner violence. Research should investigate whether men involved in such complex marital structures employ different negotiation tactics with their perpetrators.

Regarding the subject of media and abuse reporting, future researchers should examine in detail the type of content men consume in mass media. This inquiry may assist in developing targeted awareness information, education, and resources on intimate partner violence. Reporting on different types of abuse should also be evaluated separately to understand distinct causal mechanisms. Furthermore, cultural influences on patriarchal practices that are assumed to limit reporting by men should be investigated by future researchers.

Based on the study conducted by Adebayo (2014), most research by the WHO, the IRC, and other major bodies considers domestic violence exclusively a women's problem. He recommends that researchers must also pay attention to the male aspect of the narrative to enable authorities to deal fairly with abused men. Furthermore, there are other forms of domestic violence—such as economic abuse, emotional abuse, and legal coercion—that have not been adequately addressed. There is a pressing need for further

studies to investigate issues related to these non-physical forms of domestic violence, and it should be recommended that subjects of violence and abuse be treated with greater nuance when conducting studies.

Finally, a profound point mentioned by Salimi et al. (1399) in their research can serve as a guiding principle for future inquiry. They believe that since the lack of observance of women's rights—and the feelings of resentment women harbour regarding this issue—is itself one of the main structural causes of domestic violence against men, the role of men as the cause of this feeling in women, and also society as the context for its emergence, must be thoroughly analysed and investigated. This suggests a dialectical approach where violence against men is understood not in isolation, but as part of a broader cycle of gendered injustice.

3. Methodological Framework; A Grounded Theory Approach

The present inquiry is dedicated to outlining the methodological terrain upon which this study stands. Predicated upon rigorous empirical research, the primary objective is to construct, to the greatest extent possible, a substantive theory regarding the phenomenon of 'Violence Against the Male Gender in Iranian Society.' Through the systematic conceptual ordering of data derived from empirical enquiry, this study aims to facilitate a profound comprehension of the phenomenon under scrutiny.

The Grounded Theory (GT) methodology—occasionally referred to as data-driven theory—is employed in this research design with a specific justification: there exists a significant epistemic void regarding violence against the male gender. Either no coherent theory currently exists to investigate and interpret this phenomenon, or the extant theories remain fundamentally deficient. It appears that 'violence against the male gender among Iranians' is a problematic issue for which, if one refrains from asserting the total absence of a suitable theory, one can definitively argue that existing theoretical frameworks lack the necessary sufficiency and competence to adequately interrogate the matter.

Research concerning violence against men in Iran has been undertaken only sporadically, for reasons elucidated in the problem statement. Furthermore, the paucity of studies that do exist have largely relied upon non-qualitative methodologies. It must also be noted that previous scholarship has predominantly focused on merely one or two isolated facets of the phenomenon. Consequently, if we posit that a deep understanding of the problem is the necessary prerequisite for any corrective action or reformative programme, then the execution of research utilizing the GT method constitutes one of the most efficacious strategies for comprehending and resolving issues in this domain. It is only through the lens of Grounded Theory that one may achieve a comprehensive report detailing the causal conditions, interactional

strategies, and the ultimate consequences and ramifications of violence against the male gender among Iranians.

This chapter does not seek to serve as a pedagogical introduction to GT methodology per se, as the originators of this approach have expounded upon it with precision and detail in their seminal works. Given that Strauss and Corbin have exhaustively clarified the theory, techniques, and procedural stages in their monographs, this text shall eschew the superfluous reiteration of technical definitions. Instead, satisfying itself with a brief introduction, the chapter will focus on the explication and refinement of those specific elements that inevitably vary from one study to another. Researchers are obliged to clarify these distinct operational particulars to provide the scholarly community with the means to adjudicate the quality and rigour of the research undertaken.

Accordingly, the thematic headings of this chapter are as follows: A Brief Introduction to the GT Method; The Study Population; Data Collection Instruments; Sampling Methodology; Sample Size; General Characteristics of the Sample Groups; The Conceptual Framework; The Conceptual Model; Sensitive Concepts; and The Guide for Conducting Interviews with Participants.

3.1. A Brief Introduction to the GT Method

Grounded Theory is a methodology rooted in induction, wherein the researcher attempts to formulate a theory derived directly from the field by collecting empirical data. The data utilised in this mode of inquiry are predominantly obtained through interviews or field observations. In this approach, researchers endeavour to first achieve a conceptual ordering of the data through meticulous examination, ultimately arriving at a theory that enhances our comprehension of the phenomenon under study.

The domains of data collection in this research method encompass the conditions (comprising causal, contextual, and intervening conditions), the strategies or modes of interaction employed by actors in shaping the phenomenon, and finally, the results and consequences of the phenomenon under study.

In this method, concepts utilised in interviews or conceptual implications and field observations are first identified and extracted through Open Coding. Open coding refers to an analytical process through which concepts are

initially discovered within the data; subsequently, these concepts are compared to discern similar phenomena and are classified under a common heading known as a 'category' (Corbin & Strauss, 1400).

In the subsequent stage, known as Axial Coding, the extracted codes that can be aggregated under a more comprehensive conceptual axis are organised. This form of coding is a process whereby categories are related to their sub-categories; it is termed 'axial' because the coding occurs around a single category, linking categories at the level of properties and dimensions (Ibid).

Finally, through Selective Coding, the extracted categories are utilised to refine and integrate the grounded theory. This is the stage that Strauss and Corbin (1400) refer to as the integration and refinement of the theory.

3.2. The Study Population

The study population—or the statistical universe of this research—comprises Iranian male individuals who have encountered at least one form of violence against the male gender within the past year. This encounter may manifest in various modalities: the direct endurance and lived experience of violence; the perpetration of violence against the male gender; or the provision of assistance to victims of violence within medical, psychological, emotional, or legal and juridical frameworks.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

The primary instruments for data collection in this research are semi-structured and unstructured questionnaires. The interrogation protocols (questions) for these instruments will be formulated in the initial stages of data collection based on the conceptual framework of violence against the male gender. Subsequently, following the conduct of the first interview, the questions will be adjusted and refined based on the content analysis of completed interviews and the comparative analysis of the data.

3.4. Sampling Methodology

The sampling strategy employed in this research is Theoretical Sampling. According to Strauss and Corbin (1400, 219), theoretical sampling is a mode of data collection driven by concepts in the process of evolution. Theoretical sampling is founded upon the concept of 'comparison.' The purpose of such

comparison is to investigate locations, individuals, and events that maximise the potential for discovering variations, thereby enriching the categories in terms of their properties and dimensions.

Theoretical sampling implies that the sample is not predetermined prior to the research; rather, it takes shape during the flow of the inquiry and is contingent upon concepts that emerge from analysis—concepts that appear relevant to the evolving theory (Ibid, 220). The quality and quantity of the theoretical sample will be determined based on the analyses performed on each interview. In this research, following the precepts of Strauss and Corbin, data collection and analysis are conducted interchangeably: analysis commences with the first interview or observation, which leads to the subsequent interview or observation; this subsequent interview, in turn, is followed by further analysis and subsequent fieldwork. In our method, it is the analysis that directs the data collection (Strauss & Corbin, 1400: 64).

The selection of the initial sample will be based on the principle of accessibility (convenience sampling). However, subsequent samples will be selected based on data analysis and the requirements of the nascent theory to obtain the data necessary for saturation.

Theoretical sampling is cumulative or aggregative. Every event selected as a sample originates from previous data and analyses and is added to the corpus. Furthermore, as sampling progresses, it becomes increasingly specific, for the emerging theory guides the analyst and provides direction. In the initial stages of sampling, the researcher's interest lies in arriving at as many categories as possible; hence, data are gathered from broad arenas deemed relevant to the work. However, once a number of categories have been secured, sampling becomes purposive (targeted), continuing specifically to develop and saturate those categories (Ibid, 221).

In this method, the sample size is determined by a rule known in the literature of qualitative research as 'Theoretical Saturation.' Sampling in the GT method concludes only when theoretical saturation has been achieved. In this context, saturation refers to reaching a point in the development of a category where further analysis yields no new properties, dimensions, or relationships (Strauss & Corbin, 1400: 165).

According to Strauss and Corbin, the three fundamental types of coding also dictate the logic and objective of theoretical sampling. During Open Sampling, the selection of interviewees is 'open' in the sense that any person

or location can be selected from a list in a systematic manner for interview or observation. At this stage, no theoretical conceptual link has yet been proven; therefore, it is not yet clear where one must go to find variations in terms of properties and dimensions (Ibid, 224). In Axial (or Relational) Sampling, sampling proceeds based on related theoretical concepts (categories), but the focus shifts. During relational sampling, the researcher seeks incidents that demonstrate the range of dimensions or variations of a concept and reveal the relationships between concepts (Ibid, 228). However, in Selective (or Discriminative) Sampling, the researcher selects locations, persons, and documents that facilitate the maximisation of comparative analysis (Ibid).

3.5. Sample Size

In theoretical sampling, the rule for the sufficiency of sample size is determined by theoretical saturation. Based on this rule, the researcher must continue data collection until the categories are saturated. This signifies the point at which: (a) no new or relevant data regarding a category emerges; (b) the category is well-developed in terms of properties and dimensions, demonstrating its variations; and (c) the relationships between categories are well-defined and their validity established (Ibid, 230). The basis for the sample size of this investigation will strictly adhere to the aforementioned rules.

The most general characteristics of the sample groups studied in this research are presented as follows:

As elucidated in the sampling methodology section, the sample is formed during the research process rather than being fixed beforehand; it is grounded in concepts emerging from analysis that appear relevant to the theory in formation. Notwithstanding this fluid nature, and based on our current understanding of the problem and GT theory, the sample must be pursued across four general categories: Male Victims (Men/Boys), Victimized Sexual and Gender Minorities (*Digarbashan*), Perpetrators of Violence, and Experts.

It appears that the most general framework for the sample of this research—which inevitably contains many ambiguities—will accord with the general exigencies of the GT paradigm model and the research problem statement, as detailed in the table below. The expansion of the sample and the grounded theory of violence against the male gender in Iran will proceed in accordance with the general framework of sample data outlined in the following table.

Table 1-3: Categorisation of the Research Statistical Sample Based on the Exigencies of the GT Paradigm Model

Initial Samples Commensurate with Information Needs	Sources of Data Collection	Type of Data Required
Victimized Boys	Victims	Data elucidating the <i>Conditions</i> of violence
Victimized Men		
Victimized Sexual & Gender Minorities (<i>Digarbashan</i>)		
Social Workers	Experts	
Physicians & Health/Sanitary Experts		
Lawyers & Judicial Experts		
Counsellors		
Violence Psychologists		
Violence Sociologists		
Female Perpetrators	Perpetrators	Data elucidating the <i>Action Strategies</i> of violence
Boy Perpetrators		
Male Perpetrators		
Perpetrator Sexual & Gender Minorities		
Social Workers	Experts	
Physicians & Health/Sanitary Experts		
Lawyers & Judicial Experts		
Counsellors		
Violence Psychologists		
Violence Sociologists		

Initial Samples Commensurate with Information Needs	Sources of Data Collection	Type of Data Required
Victimized Boys	Victims	Data elucidating the <i>Consequences</i> of violence and remedial measures
Victimized Men		
Social Workers	Experts	
Counsellors		
Physicians & Health/Sanitary Experts		
Lawyers & Judicial Experts		
Violence Psychologists		
Violence Sociologists		

3.6. The Conceptual Framework of the Research

'Violence against the male gender among Iranians' is a construct whose intelligibility is contingent upon the explication of its constituent elements and dimensions. These elements may be encapsulated within a tripartite structure comprising conditions, strategies, and consequences. Within this framework, violence against the male gender—akin to any other social phenomenon—is the progeny of specific circumstances, which may be categorised as causal conditions, contextual conditions, and intervening conditions. Through their influence on the interactional strategies adopted by perpetrators in practice, these conditions give shape to violence against the male gender in its various typologies and manifestations. This, in turn, yields distinct results and consequences for the individual, their immediate circle, and the broader society in which they reside. Accordingly, the conditions, strategies, consequences, and phenomenological forms of violence constitute the structural components of the conceptual framework for violence against the male gender, which shall be elaborated upon in the following sections.

3.6.1. Structural Components of the Conceptual Framework

1. Conditions: The term 'conditions' refers to a template for the conceptual grouping of responses to the questions of 'why,' 'where,' 'how,' 'how it comes to pass,' and 'when.' Collectively, these responses form the structure, which consists of the total set of circumstances or the situation in which the phenomenon is situated (Strauss & Corbin, 1400: 150). In this research, the conditions—or the phenomenological structure of violence against the male gender in Iran—comprise causal conditions, intervening conditions, and contextual conditions.

In the ensuing discussion, we shall elucidate the conceptual framework of violence against the male gender based on current knowledge derived from the literature review. However, it is imperative to caveat that the framework delineated here is preliminary and tentative; its primary utility lies in identifying initial leads for the questionnaire. It is highly probable that following data collection and analysis, this framework will undergo significant modification.

Violence against the male gender, like any other social phenomenon, occurs under specific conditions. In the Grounded Theory approach, these are:

- **Causal Conditions:** According to Strauss and Corbin, causal or precipitating conditions are those events and incidents that influence phenomena. For instance, being present at a party where narcotics are offered constitutes a causal or precipitating condition. In the categorisations derived from prior studies reviewed in the literature chapter, causal conditions encompass **individual causes**, **familial causes**, and **moral causes**. Based on the literature review, individual causes can be further bifurcated into **physical-somatic factors** and **psychological-emotional factors**. Regarding familial causes of violence against the male gender, extant research points to three principal factors: inequality in power dynamics, the increasing power and awareness of women, and maladaptive or unsuitable marriages. Concerning moral causes, the reviewed studies report these in two broad categories: extramarital relations (colloquially termed 'betrayal' or infidelity) and the violation of women's rights in various forms.
- **Intervening Conditions:** As articulated by Strauss and Corbin, intervening or mediating conditions are those that mitigate or alter the causal conditions. An example would be an adolescent who suddenly

feels that drug consumption is detrimental to their well-being.

Intervening conditions often arise from unexpected and contingent circumstances that require a response through action/interaction. For instance, an adolescent might intentionally attend a party knowing drugs circulate there, intending to experiment. However, if the parents of the host unexpectedly arrive, the plan may change (Strauss & Corbin, 1400: 153-154). In the studies reviewed, intervening or mediating conditions manifest in five categories: **emotional-psychological intervening conditions** (such as isolation and suicidal tendencies); **familial intervening conditions** (such as the nature of relationships or the presence/absence of children); **economic intervening conditions** (such as the man's income status or financial dependence on the family); **socio-cultural intervening conditions** (such as the level of social support for the individual and patriarchal beliefs); and **physical intervening conditions**, among which sexual impotence and addiction to alcohol and narcotics have received greater attention than other factors.

- **Contextual Conditions:** According to Strauss and Corbin, contextual conditions refer to a specific set of conditions (forms of conditions) that converge at a particular time and place to create a set of circumstances or issues to which individuals respond through their actions/interactions. Contextual conditions explain why a phenomenon such as 'experimenting with drugs' remains 'limited' for some adolescents while becoming 'heavy' or severe for others. Contextual conditions are rooted in causal (and intervening) conditions and are the product of how these conditions intersect and combine to shape various patterns with diverse dimensions (Ibid: 154). A review of existing research indicates that several contexts are more frequently cited by scholars in this field. **Cultural contexts, social contexts, familial contexts, educational contexts, media contexts, politico-legal contexts, and economic contexts** are among the influential environments identified in studies regarding violence against the male gender.

2. Strategic Actions: Action/Interaction are terms employed to refer to strategic tactics, routine practices, and the manner in which individuals manage situations when confronting issues and affairs. These tactics or routine behaviours are things that people, organisations, societies, or nations do or say.

Strategic interactions are purposeful and deliberate actions undertaken to resolve a problem; through their execution, the phenomenon takes shape (Strauss & Corbin, 1400). Routine practices, conversely, are habitual actions/interactions performed in response to daily life occurrences. An example is an agreed-upon procedure in a situation where staff numbers fall below a certain threshold. In organisations, these routines are codified as rules, regulations, policies, and bylaws (Ibid: 156).

In the phenomenon of violence against the male gender, two distinct categories of actors are discernible: perpetrators (predominantly women) and victims (all men). Based on this division, two categories of strategies are also identifiable: offensive strategies, typically adopted by female perpetrators, and defensive strategies, adopted by male victims in the face of violence.

The actions undertaken by perpetrators to actualise violence against the male gender take myriad forms, as noted in the studied literature. Summarising the findings of previous research, the diverse forms of these strategies can be classified into five categories: physical or somatic violence, psychological or emotional violence, sexual violence, economic violence, cultural-religious violence, legal-political violence, and social violence. The defensive strategies adopted by men when confronting violence also exhibit significant variety. The most prominent among them include: retaliation, concealment (keeping it hidden), reporting to religious leaders, reporting to family and friends, terminating the relationship, and cessation of financial support.

3. Consequences: Whenever a specific action/interaction is performed (or omitted) in response to an issue, or to manage or maintain a situation, consequences ensue. Some of these consequences are intended, while others are unintended. A consequence may be singular or multiple; short-term or long-term. Consequences can be immediate or gradual; reversible or irreversible; predictable or unpredictable; and their impact may be narrow or widespread (Strauss & Corbin, 1400, 156-157).

The consequences of violence against the male gender, akin to the forms of violence itself, can be grouped into several main categories. In the literature review, the consequences cited in the studied research fall into four categories: physical-somatic consequences (such as the risk of smoking, alcohol addiction, and substance abuse; mental illness and suicide; chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer; infectious diseases like HIV); psychological-

emotional consequences (such as stress, depression, psychosomatic symptoms, and psychological distress); economic consequences (unemployment, reduced productivity, costs of treating injuries); and social consequences (violation of human rights, family disintegration, and increased crime rates in society).

4. Phenomenological Forms of Violence: Based on findings from the literature review regarding forms of violence, emotional-psychological violence, physical-somatic violence, economic violence, and emotional violence are the most recurrent and somewhat pervasive forms cited in existing research. However, it appears that if the identification of violence typologies is to constitute a significant component of this research, one must employ maximal typologies rather than minimal ones within the conceptual framework. This ensures that researchers possess the necessary sensitivity during data collection from the outset. Accordingly, and based on the maximal utilisation of the various forms of violence referenced in the studied research, the distinct forms of violence manifested against the male gender include: economic violence, sexual violence, emotional violence, psychological violence, spiritual or religious violence, cultural violence, social violence, verbal violence, informational or cyber violence, and neglect.

3.6.2. The Conceptual Model of the Research

Strauss and Corbin (1400: 150) posit that possessing a schematic design to organise and order the emerging relationships can be immensely helpful. They term such designs 'paradigms,' which in this research we have designated as the Conceptual Model of Violence Against the Male Gender. The components of this paradigm or conceptual model are conditions, strategies, consequences, and the core phenomenon, which is 'violence against the male gender in practice'.

In the conceptual model, an attempt is made to present a visual representation of what will serve as the basis for our understanding of the phenomenon of violence against the male gender in this study. By illustrating the forms and dimensions of the phenomenon under study and the interrelationships between its components, this model provides a preliminary statement of our agenda for data collection.

3.6.3. Sensitive Concepts in the Research

Sensitive concepts function as critical heuristic instruments designed to heighten and refine theoretical sensitivity within the realm of qualitative inquiry. In the specific context of the present study, a deliberate effort has been made to elucidate these sensitive concepts, thereby sharpening the research's receptivity to salient and utility-laden data. Key constructs such as Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), Domestic Violence (DV), Gender-Based Violence (GBV), sexual violence, physical-somatic violence, emotional-psychological violence, economic violence, social violence, and digital violence constitute the paramount terminology that necessitates a degree of clarification within qualitative research on violence against the male gender; these concepts serve as the primary stimuli for the collection of data.

Although these concepts are inextricably imbricated—frequently co-occurring in practice and possessing significant semantic overlaps—an attempt has been made in this exposition to introduce them as independent constructs, temporarily setting aside their commonalities and intersections for the sake of analytical clarity. A detailed yet concise explication of each of these concepts follows below.

3.6.3.1. *Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)*

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) refers to violence occurring between two individuals engaged in an intimate relationship, a phenomenon that is ubiquitous across all nations, cultures, and societal structures (Ellsberg et al., 2014). This specific modality of violence constitutes a grave public health issue, one that precipitates extensive physical, psychological, and economic consequences for both men and women. The World Health Organization (2010) defines Intimate Partner Violence as 'behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours' (p. 11).

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2010) further delineates the scope of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) as encompassing any behaviour occurring within the context of a current or former intimate relationship. This includes a

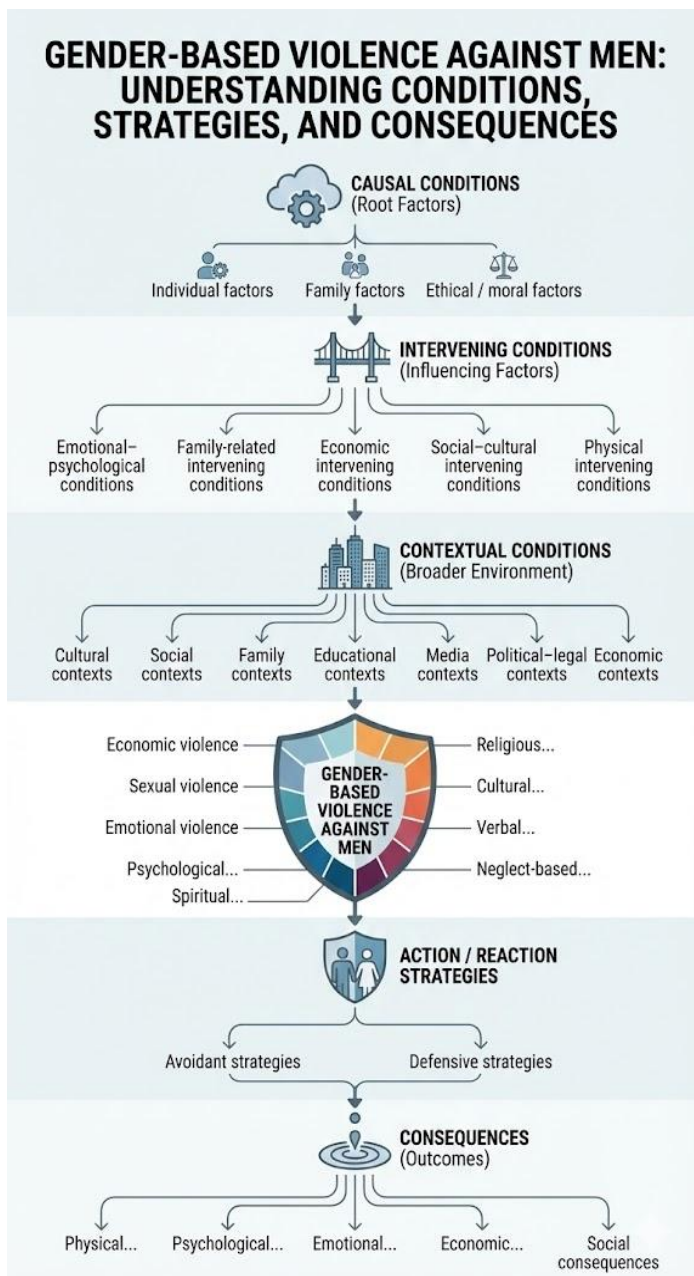


Figure 3 Conceptual Model of the Research

broad spectrum of behaviours, such as kicking or slapping, forced sexual contact, humiliation, intimidation, and the monitoring or restriction of a partner's activities. This terminology is instrumental in distinguishing IPV from other forms of domestic abuse, such as child maltreatment and the abuse of the elderly. Furthermore, the term explicitly acknowledges that such violence may be perpetrated by both men and women, and is not confined to marital unions, occurring within both heterosexual and homosexual relationships (Anderson, 2002; Archer, 2000, 2002; Brown, 2004; Capaldi, Kim, & Shortt, 2007; Capaldi & Owen, 2001; Hamberger & Potente, 1994; Straus & Gelles, 1986).

Prevalence estimates in New Zealand, as well as on an international scale, indicate that one in every three women who have ever been in a relationship reports experiencing physical or sexual violence; when emotional or psychological violence is factored into these statistics, the figures escalate to over 50 per cent (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2017; Fanslow & Robinson, 2004; World Health Organization, 2010). Although data regarding male victims of IPV is historically more limited, research has demonstrated that men also experience comparable rates of IPV (Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018; Lien & Lorentzen, 2019; Powney & Graham-Kevan, 2019). Indeed, results from the most recent New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey indicate that victims of psychological abuse are equally likely to be male or female (Ministry of Justice, 2019).

Beyond the immediate physical injury, the experience of IPV is associated with a wide spectrum of psychological sequelae, including depression, anxiety, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Ansara & Hindin, 2011; Murphy, Norwood, & Poole, 2014; Próspero, 2007). In broader terms, the economic burden associated with providing intervention services and the loss of workforce productivity has been estimated to exceed one billion dollars in Aotearoa New Zealand alone (Snively, 1994).

Over the course of the past two decades, various typologies of Intimate Partner Violence have been proposed. Some are predicated on the specific characteristics of the violence itself (Abbott, Johnson, Koziol-McLain, & Lowenstein, 1995; Johnson & Ferraro, 2000; Johnston & Campbell, 1993), while others focus on the individual characteristics of the perpetrator (Gottman et al., 1995; Hamberger, Lohr, Bonge, & Tolin, 1996; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Miller & Meloy, 2006; Swan, Gambone, Caldwell, Sullivan, &

Snow, 2008; Swan & Snow, 2002). Still others propose a synthesis of these approaches (Chase, O'Leary, & Heyman, 2001; Ross & Babcock, 2009).

An IPV typology is essential for comprehending the complexities of the phenomenon (Cavanaugh & Gelles, 2005; Pence & Dasgupta, 2006), as well as its causes, correlates, and negative outcomes (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). It is plausible that recognising the multifaceted nature of IPV will facilitate the implementation of more appropriate, targeted interventions and a more sensitive assessment of their outcomes. Given that distinct typologies of Intimate Partner Violence may stem from divergent aetiologies (Boxall, Rosevear, & Payne, 2015; Capaldi & Kim, 2007; Cavanaugh & Gelles, 2005; Jacobson & Gottman, 1998; Johnston & Campbell, 1993; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994), differential and appropriate therapeutic approaches enable us to refine our definitions and understanding of IPV, alongside the empirical development and evaluation of preventative strategies (Johnson, 2010; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2010a, 2010b; Huss, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, & Ramsey, 2000a; Pence & Dasgupta, 2006).

The development and comprehension of IPV typologies may prove instrumental in devising precise screening tools for assessing IPV risk (Beck, Anderson, O'Hara, & Benjamin, 2013; Johnston & Campbell, 1993; Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Wangmann, 2011). Considering the type of IPV and its impact on the victim-parent and children (Beck et al., 2013; Johnston & Campbell, 1993; Kelly & Johnson, 2008; Wangmann, 2011), such differentiation can also inform family law decisions regarding post-separation parenting.

For the past 40 years, the scientific and clinical community has been engaged in a dialectic regarding the optimal conceptualisation of, and response to, domestic violence or IPV. A plethora of literature and research has concluded that IPV is fundamentally a problem of male violence against women, stemming from broader social laws and patriarchal beliefs that encourage male dominance and female subservience (e.g., Abrahams, Jewkes, & Laubscher, 2000; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Yllö, 2005). Thus, from this perspective, patriarchy is viewed as a direct causal factor of IPV (Bell & Naugle, 2008), rather than merely a potential factor interacting with other causes (Dutton, 2006). Some authors posit that gender is the single most significant determinant of whether one becomes a perpetrator or a victim of IPV (e.g., Respect, 2008b).

A common corollary derived from such research is that if women exhibit violence towards their male partners, it must be understood as self-defence, retaliation, or a pre-emptive measure against his aggression; consequently, violence against women must always be studied within a broader context. Thus, from this gendered perspective, treatment in the short term entails educating men to understand that their aggressive behaviour originates from their gendered beliefs regarding women. Ultimately, however, there is a perceived need to alter the root cause of male aggression by dismantling patriarchal social structures to prevent, reduce, and/or eliminate violence against women (Dutton, 2006).

This theoretical stance has been influential in shaping responses to IPV against women in Western societies (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2020; Graham-Kevan, 2007). Nevertheless, this approach has faced robust criticism for being a theory born of ideological motivations rather than methodological empirical evidence (Graham-Kevan, 2007; Hamel, 2005; Dutton & Nicholls, 2005; Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Gelles & Straus, 1988). Indeed, there exist hundreds of research findings that undermine the exclusivity of the gendered perspective (e.g., Archer, 2000, 2002; Stith, Smith, Penn, Ward, & Tritt, 2004; Sugarman & Frankel, 1996; O'Leary, Slep, & O'Leary, 2007). Based on this body of research, Intimate Partner Violence is a phenomenon prevalent across all genders, and restricting it solely to female victims is inconsistent with reality. IPV is a trans-gender form of violence, the consequences of which can afflict both women and the male gender. Hence, it appears that any conceptualisation, policymaking, or planning in this domain must encompass both sexes.

3.6.3.2. *Domestic Violence (DV)*

Studies on domestic violence commenced in the late 1970s and early 1980s with investigations into physical and sexual violence within the context of intimate partner relationships (Straus, 1990). Physical violence is typically defined as the intentional use of force with the potential to cause death, disability, injury, or harm (Roopnarine, 2003). Definitions of sexual violence include the use of physical force to compel an individual into sexual activity against their will, as well as attempting or performing sexual acts with an individual incapable of understanding the nature of the act, declining participation, or communicating unwillingness.

Domestic violence against men is a nomenclature describing violence perpetrated by an intimate partner against men (Sugg, Thompson, Thompson, Majuro, & Rivara, 1999). This form of violence constitutes a pattern of behaviour involving the abuse of one party by another within an intimate relationship or family unit. It manifests through physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, economic abuse, and acts of abandonment (UNICEF, 2000). This modality of violence may entail a constellation of deliberate actions—including sexual, psychological, emotional, and verbal abuse—that negatively impact an individual's health and perception of personal identity. When a spouse or intimate partner employs physical violence or escalation to control their partner's behaviour, they are committing domestic violence (Tobijin, 2012).

Domestic abuse is a significant issue that profoundly affects the physical, emotional, social, and financial well-being of individuals and families. It is perpetrated by a spouse, intimate partner, former partner, other family members, and/or another person within the household against an individual. Domestic violence is not an isolated event but a pattern of repeated abusive and controlling behaviours occurring within an intimate or familial relationship, which may persist even after the relationship has terminated (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2015).

'Violence in the private sphere' signifies any act or action committed by a family member, relative, neighbour, or community member that causes, or may cause, physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, emotional, or economic harm to any individual (Enemaku, 2020). Gelles and Straus (1979: 534), two scholars who have dedicated years to the field of family violence, posit that domestic violence is behaviour with a clear intent (or behaviour with a covert but comprehensible intent) to inflict bodily harm upon another individual. One of the most robust definitions of domestic violence is offered by Susan Schechter and Anne Ganley (1996), as well as Barnett, Miller-Perrin, and Perrin. Broadly, they define domestic violence as a pattern of aggressive and coercive behaviours, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion and threats, utilised by individuals against their intimate partners (cited in Firoozjaeian & Rezaei Cherati, 1393 [2014]).

According to a clinical definition, 'domestic violence is a pattern of aggressive and coercive behaviours, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic pressures, that adults or adolescents

use against their emotional or sexual partner' (Ganley & Schechter, 1996; cited in Vameghi et al., 1394 [2015]).

The effects and ramifications of domestic violence against men, akin to other forms of domestic violence, can be examined across individual and social dimensions (Kheirkhah-Zadeh, 1390 [2011]). Family violence is an economic, social, cultural, political, and geographical phenomenon, the causative factors of which are not uniform across different societies. These disparities can be observed across different regions and even neighbourhoods within a single city. In every society, a concatenation of factors such as environmental conditions, housing quality, economic status, type of occupation and activity, family status, and prevailing mindsets and attitudes governs the milieu, each of which exerts influence on individual behaviour (Yaghobi-Dost, 1391 [2012]: 193).

3.6.3.3. *Gender-Based Violence (GBV)*

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is recognised as a global human rights concern, given its prevalence in both developed and developing nations (Bradbury-Jones, Appleton, Clark, & Paavilainen, 2019; Russo, 2019). The demarcation of the category of Gender-Based Violence from general violence is a pivotal distinction, as it explicitly acknowledges gender inequality—specifically the historical domination over the subordinate status of men, women, and girls in society—which serves to maintain an unequal balance of power (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2019; Russo, 2019; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002). In Western cultures, this dominant position of men is often specific to white men, as men from racial minorities, indigenous populations, sexual minorities, and individuals with disabilities are frequently victims of gender-based violence. Accordingly, it appears that the majority of GBV victims are women, girls, and members of equity-seeking groups (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2019).

The conceptualisation of Gender-Based Violence is influenced by historical and cultural perceptions and, therefore, cannot be understood or represented uniformly (Hayhurst & del Socorro Cruz Centeno, 2019). Brackenridge et al. (2010, p. 6), in their writings on violence against children in sport, also noted that 'countries approach the issue of violence against children in different ways (including child labour, prevention of sexual/economic exploitation, health promotion, cultural or educational development).'

The most common forms of Gender-Based Violence are physical, psychological, and sexual violence (Russo, 2019). Crucially, these forms of GBV may occur in isolation or may overlap and co-occur. Psychological violence frequently accompanies neglect, physical violence, and sexual violence, but may also manifest as an independent form of abuse. Some authors consider economic violence as a distinct category, encompassing the withholding or concealment of funds, underpayment, or the prevention of a partner from earning income (Russo, 2019). Occasionally, cyber violence is also treated as a separate form of violence, whereas often it is regarded as a medium through which other forms of violence may be perpetrated. Cyber violence may include acts such as threatening or derogatory comments, the non-consensual sharing of sexually explicit images, and stalking in online environments (Al-Alosi, 2017).

Utilising the typology of violence presented by the World Health Organization, Gender-Based Violence encompasses self-directed violence (such as self-starvation, e.g., anorexia nervosa, and cutting) (Pickard, 2015), interpersonal violence (such as domestic abuse and intimate partner rape), and violence against women and girls as a group (such as female genital mutilation and collective 'honour killings') (Krantz & Garcia-Moreno, 2005, p. 821). Given the historical and socio-cultural dimensions of GBV, establishing a universally accepted definition is far from simple (Henry, 2018; Mergaert et al., 2016).

Gender-Based Violence includes micro-aggressions, or those repetitive experiences and behaviours that reinforce stereotypes, prejudices, and structural violence (Strunk & Locke, 2019). Examples of micro-aggressions include ridicule, insults, and the expression of sexual or racist comments or jokes. These behaviours, which may superficially appear trivial, are significant because they leave residual consequences (Krug et al., 2002; Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 2013; WHO, 2002). Conversely, due to their cumulative, persistent, and pervasive nature, these effects can exert devastating and significant impacts on individuals' physical and mental health (Sue et al., 2007). Furthermore, the effects of these experiences may spill over into other domains. For instance, the receipt of repeated derogatory comments by a parent/guardian can extend to diminished self-confidence in school or relationships outside the family.

The harm caused by the *threat* of violence is as damaging as the actual injury itself (Russo, 2019). Moreover, potential psychological and physical injuries, whether bruising or depression, must be accorded equal

consideration (Russo, 2019). Many forms of GBV—such as jokes, media representations, and wage scales that are embedded within social practices and thus normalised, legitimised, and rendered invisible—constitute various forms of structural violence (Russo, 2019). This is particularly true for girls, women, and members of other equity-seeking groups (Government of Canada, 2022).

3.6.3.4. *Sexual Violence*

Sexual violence encompasses a broad spectrum of coercive acts, ranging from rape and the unwanted touching of private anatomical areas to the compulsion of an individual to engage in sexual intercourse, forcing an individual to witness the rape of another, compelling nudity, and numerous other violations. Specifically, sexual violence constitutes a modality of violence wherein non-consensual sexual contact occurs; this includes, but is not limited to, vaginal or anal penetration, oral sex, and the tactile molestation of the breasts or genitalia. In the perpetration of this form of violence, the aggressor frequently employs threats, psychological pressure, and other mechanisms of coercion to secure compliance.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), sexual violence is defined as 'any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work' (World Health Organization, 2002: 149).

Another definition, which closely aligns with the framework established by the WHO, posits that sexual violence refers to 'any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting. It includes rape, defined as the physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration of the vulva or anus with a penis, other body part or object' (Jewkes, Sen, & Garcia-Moreno, 2002: 149). Implicit in this definition is the understanding that sexual violence is ubiquitous and not confined to specific locales such as the domestic sphere or the workplace; rather, it may manifest in any context.

One of the most acute and egregious forms of sexual violence occurs within the context of warfare and regional conflicts, a phenomenon termed Conflict-

Related Sexual Violence (CRSV). In this regard, the Report of the United Nations Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence elucidates that the term refers to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls, or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict (UN Secretary-General, 2019).

Other scholars, in their definitional frameworks, emphasise emergent forms of sexual violence that are influenced by nascent digital spaces and media technologies. According to these perspectives, sexual violence extends to include sexual harassment, exposure to indecent sexual acts, cyberstalking, the non-consensual distribution or dissemination of intimate images (often referred to as 'revenge porn'), and other modalities of cyber-violence.

The utilisation of the elements of coercion and humiliation stands as a common denominator across the various definitions provided. If one accepts coercion and humiliation as integral components of the definition of sexual violence, then a multitude of relationships between intimate partners—including sexual relations occurring within the legal framework of marriage—may fall within the ambit of sexual violence if one party does not consent. As articulated by the World Health Organization (2014), sexual abuse or violence involves the physical forcing of a partner to engage in sexual relations, or compelling a partner to perform an act that they find humiliating or degrading, thereby inflicting harm upon them.

Furthermore, with increasing sensitivity in this domain, some scholars now classify the act of forcing an individual to engage in unprotected sex (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005) as a form of sexual violence. Salimi et al. (1399 [2020]), while noting the use of physical or psychological coercion to compel a partner to participate in a sexual act against their will, also highlight a critical dimension wherein any sexual contact with individuals with disabilities or children is automatically categorised as sexual violence. According to their view, sexual acts performed with someone incapable of granting informed consent constitute sexual violence by definition.

Definitions of sexual violence possess highly diverse dimensions and forms, yet the most critical element uniting them is the deployment of force and pressure to consummate the relationship. The use of physical force to compel an individual into sexual activity against their will, pressurising a

partner for sex, engaging in sex through threats and coercion, unwanted forms of sexual contact, sex at inappropriate times, and sex obtained through force and duress (Zandi, 1395 [2016]: 32)—all these instances point to this pivotal element in the commission of sexual violence. Sexual violence is a capacious term describing behaviours and actions of a sexual nature that are unwanted, coerced, and non-consensual. It may also be recognised under various nomenclatures such as rape, sexual abuse, exploitation, incest, and human trafficking.

3.6.3.5. *Physical.Somatic Violence*

Physical violence refers to the intentional application of physical force or the use of objects to inflict pain, injury, or somatic suffering upon a victim. Acts such as slapping, beating, kicking, pinching, biting, shoving, pulling, stabbing, battering, scratching, striking with a fist or any other object capable of causing harm, inducing burns, strangulation, and the act of threatening with or utilising a gun, knife, or any other weapon constitute clear exemplars of physical violence (Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2005).

The target of such physical violence or mistreatment is typically defined as a sexual partner, spouse, or any other individual, with the ultimate outcome being bodily injury, disability, or death (Breiding et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2017).

Physical violence may be perpetrated with the specific intent of instilling fear or exerting control over another individual. Accordingly, physical violence encompasses any physical action taken to harm, intimidate, or control a spouse—that is, actions that cause physical injury, somatic and psychological wounding, and in some extreme cases, the death of the victim. Physical violence can range in severity from mild to severe; its signs and symptoms may be overtly visible or, due to their mildness, negligible and invisible. In some instances, it is inflicted through striking with hands or feet (kicking), while in others, it involves injurious instruments such as whips, sticks, and stones. In certain scenarios, perpetrators of violence may even employ light weaponry or firearms (Salimi et al., 1399 [2020]).

Fundamentally, physical violence is an action undertaken to generate pain or physical damage. In this modality of violence, as with all forms of violence, the perpetrator's primary objective is not merely the infliction of physical pain, but the curtailment of the other's self-determination. Physical violence transmits a lucid message from the perpetrator to the victim: 'I have the

capacity to do things to you that you do not wish to happen.' Such violence underscores disparities in social power, or it may be intended to promote specific goals, sometimes systematically, through the mechanism of coercion. Physical violence within intimate relationships—often referred to as domestic violence—remains a pervasive phenomenon in the majority of nations globally.

3.6.3.6. Emotional-Psychological Violence

Psychological violence refers to the deployment of various behaviours with the aim of humiliating and controlling another individual, whether in public or in private. Examples of psychological violence include: verbal abuse, constant criticism, blackmail, saying things or performing actions designed to induce a sense of shame in the other party, threatening to beat women or children, monitoring and restricting movements, limiting access to friends and family, and curtailing economic independence and access to information, assistance, or other resources and services such as education or healthcare (Follingstad & DeHart, 2000; WHO, 2002).

Psychological or emotional abuse is defined as verbal or non-verbal communication intended to harm or control the other person (Smith et al., 2017). Psychological violence may be inflicted directly or may occur as a consequence of other types of violence (Chirwa et al., 2018; Smith et al., 2017). As a result of psychological violence, men are placed at a heightened risk for developing chronic health problems, as well as mental health issues such as depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and chronic anger. Psychological violence contributes significantly to the cycle of violence, wherein partners repeatedly separate and reconcile following violent incidents (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2015; Richards et al., 2017; McCarrick et al., 2016).

Psychological violence is a violent behaviour that tarnishes a man's honour, reputation, and self-confidence. This behaviour manifests itself through undue criticism, humiliation, foul language, mockery, insults, verbal abuse, sarcasm, constant threats of divorce, and persistent threats to take away custody of the children (Ezazi, 1380 [2001]: 62).

3.6.3.7. *Economic Violence*

Another category of harassment and abuse is rooted in economic factors and primarily involves the unauthorized seizure, destruction, and annihilation of a husband's property. In such forms of abuse, a woman may cause her husband dissatisfaction through excessive and extravagant consumption; she may place him in such severe economic straits that he is compelled to double his efforts to provide for living expenses, thereby experiencing physical and mental exhaustion (Gholamzadeh et al., 1397 [2018]).

Economic violence constitutes a form of violence that has diverged from the classical definition of violence. Although this type of violence is predominantly perpetrated against women—due to the fact that in many parts of the world, women constitute an unpaid labour force expected to care for their families for life without economic security or access to economic resources, thus remaining dependent on the male head of the household—there are also men who are subjected to violence by women. For instance, demands for a separate automobile or the purchase of a house in a more affluent district, despite the imposition of excessive financial pressure on the individual; demanding money from the husband for household expenses in excess of actual costs and saving that money for oneself while refusing to assist the husband; the destruction (vandalism) of the husband's property; and the unauthorized seizure of land or income—actions where only destruction and seizure are generally criminalised—are all examples of this phenomenon (Salimi et al., 1399 [2020]).

While economic abuse was previously recognised merely as a subset of emotional or psychological abuse, recent research has demonstrated that it is a distinct form of abuse with unique results and consequences. There is substantial evidence indicating that economic abuse rarely occurs in isolation; rather, it typically takes place within the framework of coercive control. Therefore, it requires distinct forms of measurement and understanding to fully comprehend and identify the experiences of victim-survivors. The United Nations statement on violence indicators emphasises that economic violence is a distinct entity. This statement highlights the importance of conceptualising economic violence separately from emotional violence or controlling behaviours.

One of the conceptual confusions in this field is the use of the term 'financial abuse' in lieu of 'economic abuse.' While these two terms are

frequently used interchangeably, they are, in fact, distinct (Littwin, 2012). For example, Sharp-Jeffs argues that financial abuse refers specifically to control over money and financial affairs, whereas economic abuse encompasses control not only over money and finances but also over the economy in its broader sense—including resources such as employment benefits, welfare, housing, or transport. Thus, she posits that financial abuse is a 'feature' or subset of economic abuse (Sharp-Jeffs, 2016; Sharp-Jeffs, 2022). However, in some instances, victims do not always identify the behaviour they have experienced as abuse. Some victims perceive it as 'gendered financial management' (Postmus, Hoge, Breckenridge, Sharp-Jeffs, & Chung, 2020) or are more likely to utilise the term 'financial abuse' rather than 'economic abuse.'

One of the prevalent definitions in this field is provided by Adams et al. In their seminal paper, they elaborate on the scale of economic abuse. In this work, Adams and colleagues devised the Scale of Economic Abuse (SEA), which utilises criteria of economic control and exploitation (Adams et al., 2008).

3.6.3.8. Social Violence

This type of violence involves the obstruction of cultural, social, and educational growth, manifesting in various forms among family members. Its prominent examples include the imposition of restrictions on establishing social relationships and enforcing social isolation, limiting the continuation of education and skills training, preventing participation in social associations, and restricting social interactions and fraternisation. Social violence or mistreatment against men signifies the use of power by women in society to control and exploit men (Zandi, 1395 [2016]: 36).

Social violence is a significant consequence of the abuse of political and economic power. The manifestations of social violence encompass a wide range of possibilities, from a disproportionate increase in theft and crime, and mob rule, to riots and guerrilla warfare, which may eventually escalate into revolutions and civil wars. One of the critical factors driving social violence is rapid technological change; as it accelerates social transformation, it disrupts society, fostering processes of deculturation that trample upon traditional norms and create a vacuum.

An exemplar of social violence is the caste system, which compels individuals to accept a humiliating role from birth. In such systems, what forces individuals to accept degrading patterns of life is a structure maintained by dominant groups in power.

3.6.3.9. Digital Violence

Digital violence refers to harassment facilitated by technology—the use of mobile phones, computers, social networks, and other electronic devices to stalk, bully, intimidate, frighten, harass, or harm others. Cyberstalking is an example of threatening behaviour conducted using the internet and other online and computerised forms. These harassments constitute intentional and repeated harms inflicted upon individuals through the use of computers, mobile phones, and other electronic devices.

The term ‘digital violence’ is a relatively novel nomenclature that has gained currency over the last twenty years, with its usage currently on the rise. Depending on the types of digital harassment or forms of digital violence, various definitions exist. Broadly speaking, digital violence denotes the utilisation of digital technologies with the aim of annoying, humiliating, or harming another person or persons. There are numerous synonyms for this term, such as cyber-harassment, electronic violence, online violence, digital stalking, and so forth. Digital violence can manifest in a variety of forms and is most prevalent among students. However, this type of violence can also occur between adults and students or children, as well as amongst adults themselves.

The forms of digital violence can vary significantly: flaming (mostly in the form of insults exchanged via email), harassment (sending offensive or malicious messages or emails to an individual or group), phone stalking (malicious messages or calls), exclusion (intentional removal from a group), outing (sharing and exposing photos, video recordings, or other types of data), masquerading (creating a fake identity), sexting (sending messages, photos, or videos with sexual content), and similar activities.

Although digital violence represents a social problem alongside classical violence, there are significant differences between them. Firstly, digital violence entails a high level of anonymity for the violent individual, individuals, or group. Digital technologies enable constant access to the victim or victims twenty-four hours a day. Furthermore, digital violence involves the

participation of a large number of people, as news spreads at high velocity (via likes, shares, tweets, or other means) (Ignjatović, 2018; Kuzmanović et al., 2016).

The misuse of digital technologies by adults is predominantly targeted and intentional, whereas young people and children also misuse digital technologies with intent, but are largely unaware of the full ramifications of their actions. Today, various 'weapons' exist for the perpetration of digital violence. Low prices and the high availability of various digital technology products (computers, laptops, mobile phones, tablets, drones, etc.) significantly increase the probability of various types of digital violence. Digital violence is frequently perpetrated via social networks, various platforms, messages, emails, telephone or Skype calls, chat rooms, various online video games, forums, websites, and the like.

3.6.3.10. Cultural Violence

Galtung (1990), in an article titled 'Cultural Violence,' writes: 'By 'cultural violence' we mean those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence—exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics)—that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence.' Stars, crosses, and crescents; flags, anthems, and military parades; the omnipresent portrait of the leader; inflammatory speeches and posters—all these are examples of the symbolic aspects of culture.

According to Galtung (Ibid), cultural violence makes direct and structural violence appear correct, or at least not wrong, and allows it to be felt as such. Just as the subject matter of political science is the use of power and the legitimacy of the use of power, violence studies are concerned with two issues: the use of violence and the legitimacy of its use, the psychological mechanism of which is internalisation.

He posits (Ibid) that the study of cultural violence investigates the mechanisms of legitimising the act of direct violence and the reality of structural violence, as well as the methods of their acceptance within society. One of the ways cultural violence operates is by changing the moral colour of an act from red (wrong) to green (correct), or at least to yellow (acceptable). For example, justifying that 'murder by the state is a right, whereas murder by an individual is wrong.' Another method is to obscure reality so that we do

not see the violent act or reality, or at least do not perceive it as violent. Obviously, this is easier to achieve with some forms of violence than with others. Galtung summarises all the major types of structural and direct violence in a table.

Table: Galtung’s Typology of Violence

	Survival Needs	Well-being Needs	Identity Needs	Freedom Needs
Direct Violence	Killing	Maiming	Desocialization	Repression
			Resocialization	Detention
			Secondary Citizen	Expulsion
Structural Violence	Exploitation A	Exploitation B	Penetration	Marginalization
			Segmentation	Fragmentation

3.6.3.11. *Guide for Conducting Dialogues with Participants*

Introduction This guide is intended solely to provide a structural framework for conducting dialogues and to introduce initial heuristic leads for commencing the interview process. Frequently, the trajectory of an interview may diverge into alternative avenues; in such instances, while the interviewer must listen with keen interest to the interviewee’s narrative, they must simultaneously refer back to this framework, endeavouring to encourage the participant to articulate their experiences across all potential axes of violence.

The dialogue must encompass all conceivable forms of violence. Accordingly, whenever the conversation is initiated regarding one specific modality of violence, it is imperative to eventually cover all other thematic axes. Given that discussions pertaining to physical and sexual dimensions can prove challenging and arduous for participants, it is strongly recommended to commence with ‘softer’ and more accessible forms, such as emotional or religious violence, before gradually introducing other axes into the discourse. The various forms of violence to be explored include: economic violence, sexual violence, emotional and psychological violence, spiritual or religious violence, cultural violence, verbal violence, economic violence, and so forth.

1. Essential Protocols Prior to Commencing the Interview

Pre-Interview Ethical and Procedural Protocol

1. Self-Introduction

- Introduce yourself formally to the interviewee.
- Clearly explain the primary objective of the research.

2. Explanation of the Interview Process

- Describe the methodology and structure of how the interview will be conducted.
- Guarantee confidentiality and the protection of personal privacy.
- Clarify the purpose and significance of conducting the interview.

3. Right to Withdraw

- Explicitly state that the interviewee has the right to withdraw from the interview at any stage.
- Emphasise that participation in the research is entirely voluntary.

4. Consent for Audio Recording

- Explain the necessity of recording the interview for research accuracy and analysis.
- Assure the participant that access to recorded data will be strictly limited to the research team and managed responsibly.

5. Data Confidentiality and Anonymity

- Emphasise that all collected data will be used anonymously.
- Confirm that no identifying personal information will be disclosed at any stage of the research.

6. Responding to Ethical Questions

- Acknowledge that the interviewee may have ethical or procedural questions.
- Express readiness to provide clear, accurate, and thoughtful responses.

7. Use and Dissemination of Research Findings

- Explain how the research findings will be used (e.g., academic articles, reports, dissertations).
- Clarify how confidentiality and anonymity will be preserved throughout dissemination.

2. Initial Questions to Commence the Interview

Interview Structure and Question Design

A. Baseline (Background) Information *(Optional for non-expert participants)*

Collect basic demographic information as appropriate:

- Name:
- Gender:
- Age:
- Education:
- Ethnicity:
- Marital Status:

- Number of Children:
- Employment Status:

B. Substantive Interview Questions Pose questions related to the interviewee's experiences and knowledge in the field under investigation, using the following approach:

1. Open-Ended Questions

- Begin the interview with broad, open-ended questions.
- Aim to create a comfortable atmosphere and encourage free expression.

2. Familiarisation Questions

- Ask questions that allow the interviewee to speak more fully about themselves.
- Use these questions to build rapport and deepen engagement before moving to more sensitive topics.

3. Principal Axes of the Dialogue

I. Causal Conditions

These conditions refer to the attributes possessed by the individual committing the violence. In other words, these are the qualitative characteristics and traits of the perpetrator themselves, which exert a direct and immediate influence on the occurrence of violence. Individual causes, familial causes, and biographical causes constitute the most significant of these causal conditions; other causal factors may be unearthed during the course of the interviews.

- **Suggested Opening Question:** 'In your opinion, how does it come about that a person behaves violently towards another? For what reasons are these behaviours enacted? Could you tell me what the causes of such violent behaviours might be?'
- **Note:** Subsequently, the interviewer must follow the leads provided by the interviewee, utilising more precise questions (if necessary) to discover the individual, familial, and biographical causes of the violence perpetrated. By encouraging the interviewee to elaborate further, the interviewer should ascertain whether other causes were also at play in the occurrence of the violence under discussion.

Types of Causal Conditions:

- **Individual Causes:** These encompass factors such as mental illnesses, addiction, the physical condition of the perpetrator, etc., which precipitate an individual's resort to violence against another. In

discovering these factors, the primary focus should be on the perpetrators—those from whom the violence originates and is enacted. However, uncovering a portion of these causes is also possible through dialogue with victims. In cases where the interlocutor is a victim, one must explore the victim's perception of the causes behind the perpetrator's violent behaviours.

- **Familial Causes:** These include factors such as inequality in power dynamics, the increasing power of women, maladaptive marriages, etc. To discover these causes, particularly in cases of domestic violence or intimate partner violence, the interviewee—whether perpetrator or victim—should be asked to describe the causes within the shared familial environment that led to the violence. In non-domestic cases, the focus should be more on the perpetrator or the victim's perception of the familial roots of the violence.
- **Biographical Causes:** These refer to factors such as violent and humiliating behaviours experienced from parents or significant others in the past, often during the individual's childhood. These experiences remain effectively present in the individual's memory and, by influencing the perpetrator's current state, precipitate the enactment of violence.
- **Other Causes:** This refers to undiscovered causes that may emerge during the dialogue. The discovery of these causes is highly contingent upon the degree of the interviewer's theoretical sensitivity during the interviews.

II. Contextual Conditions

Contextual conditions are supra-individual circumstances that, while related to the individual, operate independently of them. They exert an indirect influence on the occurrence of violence against men and manifest in various forms and types, the most significant of which are cultural contexts, social contexts, legal-judicial contexts, and economic contexts. Other contexts influencing violence against men may be discovered and emerge during the interviews.

- **Suggested Question:** 'In your view, apart from the causes you mentioned, what other things might make the ground favourable for violent behaviour?'
- **Note:** Care must be taken to guide the flow of the dialogue such that, following the responses to the previous question, the interviewee spontaneously proceeds to articulate the contexts, negating the need

for a separate question. However, if contextual explanations for the violence are not offered, posing such a question encourages the interviewee to articulate the contexts of violence across various dimensions.

Types of Contextual Conditions:

- **Cultural Contexts:** Cultural contexts are often supra-individual value and belief characteristics that facilitate conditions for violence against men. These include traditions, values, norms, beliefs, etc., which may be rooted in sources such as religion, ethnicity, race, media, education, and so forth.
- **Social Contexts:** Social contexts refer to social entities such as the individual's parental family, kinship networks, colleague networks, peer groups, etc., with whom the individual interacts and by whom they are influenced, while also influencing them in return.
- **Legal-Juridical Contexts:** These refer to contexts where either the absence of appropriate laws has created a legal environment conducive to violence against men, or the existence of certain inappropriate laws has prepared the ground for such violence.
- **Economic Contexts:** These refer to certain supra-individual economic conditions that prepare the ground for violence against men. Inflation, poverty, and similar factors are examples of such conditions.
- **Other Contexts:** This refers to undiscovered contexts that may emerge during the dialogue. The discovery of these contexts is highly contingent upon the degree of the interviewer's theoretical sensitivity.

III. Intervening Conditions

Intervening conditions predominantly refer to qualities existing within the victimized individual, the presence of which has become a pretext or medium for the perpetration of violence against them by aggressors. These conditions may relate to the emotional-psychological, physical, moral, or financial qualities of the victim themselves, or be connected to their family life circumstances.

- **Suggested Question:** 'Could you explain a little about the characteristics of the victim (yourself)? For example, what are their (your) psychological, physical, and moral traits? In your opinion, could these characteristics be the reason for the violent behaviour against the victim (you)? Could you explain?'

- **Note:** By posing this question, the interviewer must ascertain whether the victim possesses specific psychological, physical, moral, or familial problems that could serve as a pretext for violent behaviour by the perpetrator. Furthermore, what other potential problems existing within the victim might pave the way for violence from the aggressor?

Types of Intervening Conditions:

- **Emotional-Psychological Intervening Conditions:** This refers to all emotional-psychological conditions, such as mental illnesses and problems, diseases, and habits like substance and alcohol abuse, which are not direct causes of violence themselves but provoke the perpetrator to commit violence and facilitate its occurrence.
- **Physical Intervening Conditions:** This refers to all physical conditions, such as illnesses, disabilities, specific physical states, etc., which are not direct causes of violence themselves but provoke the perpetrator to commit violence and facilitate its occurrence.
- **Moral Intervening Conditions:** These conditions pertain to the moral qualities of the victim and include issues such as infidelity, the violation of women's rights by the victim, etc., which are deemed unacceptable based on the moral standards of the perpetrator or the society to which the perpetrator belongs. These conditions are not direct causes of violence themselves but provoke the perpetrator to commit violence and facilitate its occurrence.
- **Familial Intervening Conditions:** These relate to the individual's familial qualities or status and are discussed when the violence is domestic or intimate partner violence. 'Family' here refers to the victim's own family unit, not their parental family. Characteristics such as the number of children, cohabitation status with a sexual partner, polygamy, etc., shape the familial intervening conditions in the occurrence of violence against the male gender.
- **Other Intervening Conditions:** This refers to undiscovered intervening conditions that may emerge during the dialogue. The discovery of these conditions is highly contingent upon the interviewer's theoretical sensitivities.

IV. Action Strategies

Action strategies represent the various forms of violence occurring against the male gender or the diverse forms of reactions that victims exhibit in response. These strategies can be categorised into two general forms:

offensive and defensive. Offensive strategies are actions undertaken by perpetrators that give shape to or crystallise the violence. Accordingly, the most significant action strategies or templates shaping violence against men include: physical and somatic violence, sexual violence, emotional or psychological violence, social violence, and economic violence.

- **Suggested Question:** 'How did you experience the violence? That is, what did the other person do to you that caused you harm and distress? Can you explain exactly what happened?'
- **Note:** Whether the interviewee is a perpetrator or a victim, they must be questioned about both offensive and defensive strategies. For instance, if the interviewee is a victim, after explaining the form of violence, one might ask: 'Well, when this happened, what did you do? And generally, what do you do in such situations? What was your reaction to the violence?' If the interviewee is a perpetrator, after explaining the form of violence, one might ask: 'Well, when this happened, what did the other person do? And generally, what do they do or used to do in such situations? What was the other person's reaction to this behaviour?'

Types of Strategies:

- **Offensive Strategies of Violence Against Men:**
 - *Physical and Somatic Offensive Strategies:* These strategies crystallise in behaviours such as breaking limbs, burning body parts, shoving, slapping, beating or scratching, painful kicking, severe squeezing or pinching, throwing objects, strangulation, hair pulling, burning, shooting, cutting with a sharp object, restraining using the body, pouring hot water, severing the male genitalia, mutilation, pouring petrol on male victims and setting them on fire, whipping, throwing chairs, benches, stools, dishes, and other household objects at the man, etc.
 - *Sexual Offensive Strategies:* These strategies also manifest in various forms, the most significant being rape, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, and all sexual behaviours performed against the will of the assaulted individual.
 - *Emotional or Psychological Offensive Strategies:* These encompass behaviours ranging from neglect, silence, and withholding from the spouse (whether as punishment or due to shyness and social inhibition), to the middle ground of

poor hygiene and lack of cleanliness of the body and sexual organs (whether intentional or due to indifference), disregarding the spouse's words and desires, failing to observe points desired by the husband during intercourse and intimacy, and extending to sexual gratification sought entirely outside the sanctity of the home, etc., all of which give shape to emotional-psychological violence against men.

- *Social Offensive Strategies*: The most significant forms of these strategies include creating limitations on establishing social relationships and social isolation, restricting the continuation of education and skills training, preventing participation in social associations, restricting social fraternisation, etc.
- *Economic Offensive Strategies*: Demanding a separate car, purchasing a house in a better part of the city, demanding money from the husband for household expenses in excess of the actual cost and saving that money for oneself while refusing to help the husband, destroying (vandalising) the husband's property, unauthorized seizure of land, income, etc.

- **Defensive Strategies against Violence against the Male**

Gender: These strategies are reactions that assaulted individuals exhibit when confronting violence against men in order to cope with this undesirable situation. Some of the most significant examples of these reactions include: concealment, lack of defence and retaliation (non-reciprocation), revenge, reporting to family and friends, reporting to religious leaders, cutting off financial support to the woman, quickly entering a new relationship, etc.

- **Other Strategies:** This refers to undiscovered strategies that may emerge during the dialogue. The discovery of these strategies is highly contingent upon the interviewer's theoretical sensitivities.

V. Consequences of Violence Against Men

Consequences are the outcomes—whether intended or unintended, overt or covert—of acts of violence against the male gender. These results may manifest at the individual level or at the supra-individual level (i.e., social or economic).

- **Suggested Question:** 'In your opinion, what impact can violence have on the victim, the victim's family, and society? What consequences has it had for you personally?'

Types of Consequences:

- **Individual Consequences:**
 - *Physical-Somatic Consequences:* Disruption in sexual function, alcohol addiction and substance abuse, suicide; chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer; infectious diseases, sexually transmitted diseases, increased cardiovascular incidents, obesity, cancer, and even death; headaches, back pain, body aches, persistent pain, weakness, loss of balance, loss of strength, nosebleeds, stomach sensitivity, anorexia, urinary incontinence, blood in urine, haemorrhoids, reduced sexual potency with spouses, penile circumcision [forced/mutilation], increased fertility issues and reduced reproductive health. Physical injuries include bone fractures, lacerations, cuts, sexually transmitted diseases (HIV/AIDS), sterilisation due to castration, etc.
 - *Psychological-Emotional Consequences:* Depression, anxiety, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), stigma, guilt, shame, self-blame, anger, substance abuse, trust issues, intimacy issues, attachment problems, difficulties in establishing and maintaining relationships, low self-esteem, low confidence, gender identity issues, masculinity issues, headaches, back pain, body aches, persistent pain, weakness, loss of balance, loss of strength, etc.
 - *Economic Consequences:* At the individual level, economic consequences predominantly revolve around problems related to unemployment and its impacts on the individual or their family.
- **Supra-Individual Consequences:**
 - *Social Consequences:* Numerous social consequences can be envisaged regarding violence against the male gender, some of which include: an increase in social problems such as crime and violence, family disintegration and divorce, the perpetuation of gender inequality, etc.
 - *Economic Consequences:* Violence against men possesses certain economic consequences, the most overt being the economic cost of violence against the male gender in the form of treatment costs, costs of dealing with perpetrators, control

and prevention costs, costs of educating society and social/state agents, etc.

- **Other Consequences:** This refers to undiscovered consequences that may emerge during the dialogue. The discovery of these consequences is highly contingent upon the interviewer's theoretical sensitivities.

VI. Suggestions and Solutions for Reducing Violence Against the Male Gender

In this domain, believing in the value of the interviewee's opinions, they are asked to offer their suggestions.

- **Suggested Question:** 'In your opinion, what should be done—or not done—to reduce violence in society? For example, what should husbands and wives do? What should the government do? etc.'
-

4. At Every Stage of the Interview

- Ensure you have accurately understood the interviewee's experiences and opinions by requesting further clarification.
- Verify the accuracy of the information and the precision of the interviewee in presenting data.
- Resolve any ambiguities in the interviewee's statements by posing supplementary questions.

5. Concluding the Interview

- Inform the interviewee that the interview has concluded and thank them for their trouble.
 - Explain the subsequent stages of the research, such as the analysis process and how the interview results will be published.
 - Reiterate the guarantee of confidentiality and data protection.
-

6. Appendix: Suggested Questions for Starting the Dialogue

A. Questions for Victims

1. Nature of Marital Conflicts

- Your arguments with your spouse regarding life issues mostly revolve around which axes?
 - Emotional issues
 - Sexual issues
 - Financial issues
 - Welfare/livelihood
 - Social interactions

-
- Mistrust
 - What form do these quarrels usually take?
 - Verbal conflict
 - Psychological insults
 - Physical fighting
 - Other (please specify)
- 2. Physical Violence**
- Have you ever experienced any type of physical violence from your spouse (e.g., being beaten)?
 - To what extent did this occur, and with what instrument (if any)?
- 3. Spousal Abuse (Non-Physical)**
- Have you experienced unkindness or spousal abuse from your spouse?
 - To what extent and in what form (verbal, emotional, psychological, etc.)?
- 4. Sexual Coercion**
- Has it ever happened that you were forced to have sexual relations with your spouse against your will?
- 5. Coercion in Social Activities**
- Has it ever happened that you were forced—through your spouse's coercion—to attend a party, travel, go shopping, or engage in other activities against your will?
- B. Questions for Perpetrators**
- 1. Sources of Marital Upset**
- What is the main cause of your upset with your spouse?
 - Emotional issues
 - Sexual issues
 - Financial issues
 - Welfare/livelihood
 - Social interactions
 - Mistrust
 - What form do these conflicts usually take?
 - Verbal conflict
 - Psychological insults
 - Physical fighting
 - Other (please specify)
- 2. Reaction to Adversities**

- In the face of personal and social life adversities (in both public and private spheres), what is your initial reaction?

3. Expression of Upset

- How do you usually express your upset with your spouse, friends, or acquaintances?
 - Verbal expression of anger
 - Aggression
 - Profanity or cursing
 - Physical violence (e.g., beating)
 - Other (please specify)

C. Questions on Structural Violence and Discrimination against Men

1. Social Violence

- Have you ever faced violence from society?
- How, to what extent, and by which institution or group?

2. Perceived Discrimination

- What instances do you consider to be discrimination against men?

3. Cultural Violence

- What forms of violence has the cultural structure of society imposed upon you?

4. Legal Discrimination

- What discrimination and violence against men exist in the legal structure of current laws in Iran?

5. Governmental Violence

- What violence does the Iranian governmental system inflict upon you and the broader male population?

6. Religious Structure

- What forms of violence have you experienced from the religious structure of society?

7. Economic Structure

- Has the ruling economic structure in Iran exercised discrimination against you?
- How, and to what extent?

8. Types of Violence Experienced

- What types of discrimination or violence have you experienced from society?
 - Discursive
 - Physical

- Sexual
- Gender-based
- Psychological
- Occupational
- Financial
- Other (please specify)

9. Agents of Violence

- Who, or which groups and institutions, are the main agents of violence and discrimination against men?

10. Confronting Violence and Discrimination

11. In your opinion, what is the most principled way to confront violence and discrimination against both men and women?

3.6.3.12. Demographic Characteristics of Research Participants

	Name	Age	Education	Marital Status	Occupation	Experience of Violence Type
1	Alireza Moradi	43	PhD in Cultural Studies	Married (1 child)	Researcher	<i>Mehrieh</i> and Violence
2	Akbar	45	Middle School	Single	Unemployed	Exclusion and Rough Sleeping
3	Ali Aghasi	33	Middle School	Single	Addiction Rehab Centre	Experience of HIV
4	Ali	43	2nd Year Middle School	Divorced (2 children)	Tailor	HIV and Violence
5	Faraz	40	Diploma	Divorced (1 child)	Unemployed	Addiction and Rough Sleeping
6	Gholam	48	Primary School	Divorced (2 children)	Tradesman	Addiction and Exclusion
7	Hamid	34	2nd Year Middle School	Married (1 child)	Unemployed	Domestic Violence
8	Hossein	40	MA	Married (1 child)	Welfare Org. Employee	Divorce, <i>Mehrieh</i> , and Prison
9	Mohammad Amin	24	Middle School	Single	Drug Dealer	Addiction and Prison
10	Vahid	40	Diploma	Divorced	Tradesman	Violence
11	Ali Nour Mohammadi	38	BA	Divorced	Software Engineer	Emotional Violence from Partner
12	Hassan	62	BA	Married (4 children)	Retired	<i>Mehrieh</i> and Violence Against Men
13	Ashkan	17	High School Student	Single	Freelance (Sales)	School Violence
14	Hossein	17	High School Student	Single	Freelance (Sales)	School Violence
15	Erfan	17	Student	Single	Student	School Violence
16	A. Kh.	18	Diploma	Single	Unemployed	School Violence
17	Davood	33	BSc Mathematics	Single	Unemployed	Unemployment and Domestic Violence
18	Sahar	36	MA Psychology	Divorced (1 child)	Social Emergency	Violence Analysis

Name	Age	Education	Marital Status	Occupation	Experience of Violence Type
19 Farhad Azizi	45	MA	Married (2 children)	Welfare Org. Employee	Domestic Violence Against Men
20 Mohammad	38	Diploma	Married (2 children)	Hospital Assistant Nurse	Domestic Violence
21 Mojtaba Mardani	36	MA	Married (1 child)	Health Network Expert	Domestic Violence
22 H. N.	60	Diploma	Married (4 children)	Retired Army	Violence in Military Environment
23 A. A.	30	BA Social Work	Married (1 child)	Employee	Domestic Violence
24 Rasoul Golriz	30	BA Social Work	Single	Unemployed	Sexual Violence / Heterosexual
25 Amir Mokhtari	44	BA Social Work	Married (1 child)	Addiction Expert	Addiction and Violence Against Men
26 M. F.	47	Diploma	Married (1 child)	Freelance / Construction	Violence in Workplace
27 Colonel M.	50	BA	Married (2 children)	Police Force	Violence in Military Spaces
28 M. R.	40	Diploma	Single (Trans Woman)	Unemployed	Sexual Violence Against Trans Person
29 Ehsan	20	Diploma	Single	Conscript Soldier	Violence in Military Service
30 Reza R.	38	Diploma	Single	Factory Worker	Emotional Violence by Partner
31 Sh. M.	20	Business Student	Single	Student	Sexual Violence / Heterosexual
32 Zahra Jiriyaee	38	MA	Divorced (1 child)	Social Emergency	Violence Against Elderly
33 Shayan	30	BA Social Work	Divorced	Trans Man (TS)	Experience of Violence
34 K. M.	30	BA	Single	Homosexual	Experience of Violence
35 M. F.	48	Diploma	Married (1 child)	General Public	-
36 M. B.	32	BA	Married	General Public	Experience of Male Violence
37 Gh. D.	-	BA	Single	Homosexual	Sexual Violence
38 A. R.	75	Middle School	Married (4 children)	Elderly	Violence in Old Age
39 Ahmad Nazari	40	BA	Married (2 children)	School Counsellor	Violence in School
40 R. M.	44	MA	Divorced (2 children)	Domestic Violence	Violence Against Spouse, Divorce
41 H. M.	30	MA	Married (1 child)	General Public	Domestic Violence
42 Mehdi Javadi	45	MA	Married	Psychiatric Centre	Violence Against Psychiatric Patients
43 A. R.	41	BA	Married (1 child)	General Public	Violence in Workplace
44 A. M.	33	MA	Married (1 child)	General Public	Violence Against Men
45 Maryam Panahandeh	34	MA	Divorced (2 children)	Clinical Psychologist	Clinical

Name	Age	Education	Marital Status	Occupation	Experience of Violence Type
46 Mehdi Mehdkhani	35	BA	Single	Clinical Psychologist	Clinical
47 Sh. S.	19	Student	Single	Homosexual	Violence Against Gay Men
48 A. M.	38	Diploma	Married (2 children)	General Public	Sexual Violence Against Boys
49 M. H.	45	BA	Married (1 child)	General Public	Workplace and Economic Violence
50 M. J.	33	BA	Single	General Public	Violence Against Boys in School
51 S. Sh.	33	MA	Single	General Public	Violence in Public Space
52 V. R.	30	Diploma	Divorced (3 times)	General Public	Violence in Indefensible Urban Spaces / Addiction
53 A. R.	41	BA	Married (3 children)	General Public	Violence Against Men / Criminal Behaviours
54 A. M.	50	MA	Married (2 children)	Retired Colonel	Military Violence
55 M. K.	40	BA	Married (2 children)	Narcotics Police	Violence Against Men
56 Taheri Nasab	38	MA	Single	Psychologist	Work in Child Labour Centres
57 Hamta Barzagari	32	BA Social Work	Married	Social Worker	Work in Psychiatric Centres
58 Hossein Haghighi	46	MA Counselling	Married	Employee	Trainer at Street/Child Labour Centre
59 Abbas Barghamadi	50	MA Accounting	Divorced	Employee	Divorce and <i>Mehrieh</i> Payment
60 Elnaz Safaei	38	MA Psychology	Married	Psychologist	Work in Psychiatric Centres
61 M. Z.	66	5th Grade Primary	Married	Driver	Elderly Violence
62 Sirvan Delaram	35	MA	Single	Child Labour Centres	Violence in Rural Men
63 Ahmad Bokharaei	62	PhD Sociology	Married	University Lecturer	Research in Violence
64 Samira	45	Diploma	Married	Housewife	Perpetrator
65 Masoumeh	60	Diploma	Married	Housewife	Perpetrator
66 Azin	55	MA	Married	Counsellor	Clinical Work
67 H. Espania	60	PhD Engineering	Married	Freelance	Violence
68 Hosseini	50	BA	Divorced	Housewife	Perpetrator
69 Dr. Afshar	52	PhD Psychology	Married	Clinical Psychology	Clinical Work
70 Jalilian	48	PhD	Married	Psychologist	Counselling
71 Dr. Marghati	49	PhD	Married	Psychologist	Clinical
72 Masih	45	MA	Married	Psychologist	Clinical
73 Dr. Mehrabi	50	PhD	Married	Clinical	Clinical
74 Shiva	48	PhD	-	Counselling	Counselling Clinic
75 Maryam	38	BA	Divorced	Housewife	Perpetrator
76 Dr. Vahabi	46	Psychiatrist	Married	Therapist	Clinic
77 Dr. Naserbakht	47	Psychiatrist	Married	Therapist	Clinic

Name	Age	Education	Marital Status	Occupation	Experience of Violence Type
78 Ardeshir Bahrami	46	PhD Sociology	Married	Researcher	Social and Research Activity in Suicide
79 Saberi	55	PhD Psychology	Married	Therapist	Active in Trans Field
80 Dr. Tayebi	50	PhD Psychology	Married	Therapist	Therapy in Psychological Clinic
81 Mousavi Viayeh	42	PhD Sociology	Married	Researcher	Research in Family Policy
82 Allah Reza	47	MA	-	Lawyer	Work in Divorce Field
83 Mehdi Momeni	46	PhD	Married	Psychologist & Counsellor	Clinical Activity
84 A. H.	56	MA	Married	Employee	Experience of Violence
85 F. Gh.	48	BA	Married	Freelance	Experience of Violence
86 J. Sh.	66	BA	Married	Employee	Experience of Violence
87 S. T.	38	Diploma	Single	Freelance	Experience of Perpetrating Abuse
88 T. Kh.	45	Diploma	Married	Freelance	Experience of Violence

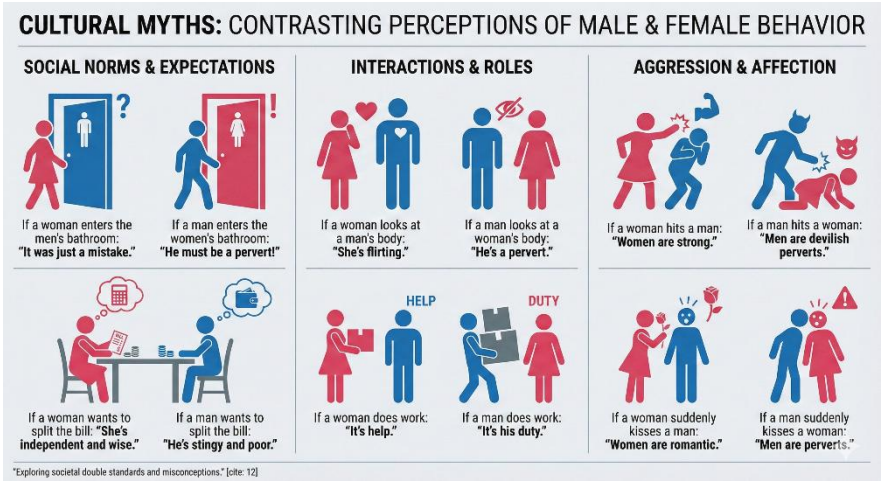


Figure 4 Cultural Myths of Masculine and Feminine Action

4. The Perception and Definition of Violence Against the Male

Introduction

In research predicated upon Grounded Theory (GT), the Core Category constitutes the very heart of the theorisation process; it is the central element around which all other themes and sub-categories are organised, and through which the profound meaning of the phenomenon under study can be unveiled. In qualitative studies, and specifically within the GT approach, the discovery and explication of the core category is invariably achieved through the rigorous analysis of the experiences and definitions provided by participants and experts. It is only through the meticulous re-reading of lived data that one can attain a level of abstraction and depth capable of elucidating the problem within its indigenous, cultural, and structural context.

The present inquiry, centred on 'Violence Against the Male Gender in Iran,' serves as a paradigmatic exemplar of this qualitative trajectory. The core category in this study does not denote merely physical or overt violence; rather, it delineates a far broader horizon rooted in bitter experiences, complex narratives, and the diverse definitions offered by men and experts. As the attached data corpus demonstrates, the comprehension of the phenomenon of violence against men is by no means restricted to traditional manifestations such as injury, assault and battery, or financial abuse. Instead, it encompasses a vastly more extensive domain, ranging from repressed emotions, spiritual and psychological neglect, hidden and normalised humiliations, repeated disregard, invidious comparisons, slander, the pressure of gender roles, and imposing social structures (such as mandatory military service), to the harrowing experiences of sexual abuse and profound isolation in childhood and old age.

In Grounded Theory investigation, the core category is not merely a word or an abstract concept, but is deeply rooted in various strata of experience. As

is lucidly evident in the data, Iranian men are subjected from childhood to the pressure of norms and stereotypical beliefs that strip them of their sense of humanity, the capacity to express emotion, the right to suffer, to weep, or to harbour hope. This 'existential repression' (as articulated by one interviewee, No. 63, Pos 11) can serve as the root of future cycles of more overt or even more covert violence in their lives.

In this vein, the collection of narratives and qualitative analyses gathered identifies distinct layers of violence: from 'being misunderstood' and familial or marital neglect, to verbal humiliations, a sense of inadequacy stemming from endless comparisons, mockery, and even structural and economic pressures such as *Kulbar* labour (border portage) or being compelled to perform demeaning work, sexual crises, and profound experiences of trauma in more vulnerable groups (such as adolescents victimised by sexual violence, and transgender individuals).

The significance of this core category in Grounded Theory research lies in its capacity to assist the researcher in extracting hidden and recurrent patterns from the depths of voluminous data and individual narratives, thereby reconstructing a network of causes, consequences, and relations. Indeed, by highlighting the core category of 'The Perception and Experience of Violence' from the male perspective, the path of analysis and practical intervention can transcend purely physical conceptual boundaries, achieving a more comprehensive and multidimensional understanding of the individual, structural, institutional, and cultural dimensions of violence against the male gender. As is evident in the text, the core category is a composite resultant of men's lived experiences and the structural interpretations of theorists—a synthesis that can serve as the foundation for new theorisation and the formulation of supportive and policy strategies.

In summary, the subsequent discussions demonstrate how the concept of violence against men within the framework of GT research has taken shape in a multi-layered and fluid manner from within direct and prejudice-free narratives. The core category thus consolidates its position as the 'Weaver of Meaning' for the network of male experiences, conflicts, and sufferings.

4.1. Perception and Definition of Violence Against the Male Gender

In the corpus of definitions and narratives obtained from interviewees regarding the phenomenon of violence against men, we confront a broad and overlapping spectrum of forms, roots, and consequences of this violence upon the individual and social lives of men—forms that are occasionally situated at hidden, normalised, and invisible levels within daily relationships.

The first prominent theme to which the majority of men attest is 'The Repression of Masculine Emotions and Affections.' Many men have learned from early childhood that becoming upset, weeping, and fear must be suppressed, for 'a man must be resilient.' The narrative that:

'Men must not get upset... men must not have feelings... you are a man, after all, you are not a woman, you are not a child, you are a man. And these become the founders and foundations of violences that, gradually, as a male gender ages, can be influential in his life' (No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 11),

transforms into a form of existential repression for men, such that many describe their primary experience of violence as this very act of being ignored and the pressure to suppress their emotional nature.

Another stratum of violence against men is 'Being Misunderstood.' In the interpretation of the interviewees, anything that causes distress and offence to a man or boy counts as a form of violence, including warnings, repeated spiritual and material neglect, and the 'failure to understand' men, which occurs in highly subtle and widespread forms:

'Anything that causes a man or boy or the male gender to feel offended counts as violence... The greatest violence I have seen is the failure to understand the male gender' (Ibid, Pos 9).

This disregard is predominantly pronounced within the context of family and marital relationships. An interviewee notes:

'Not understanding [by the spouse], all men have something to say, we go home tired and beaten, she [the wife] starts nagging. These exist without exception. This in itself is a type of violence' (No. 30, Hamid Moradi, Pos 24).

Furthermore, in the context of ageing and social exclusion, the isolation and disregarding of elderly men is highlighted: *'When a man becomes isolated... this is violence'* (No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 89).

One of the prominent templates of violence against men in recent years is verbal violence, which predominantly takes shape in spousal or parental relationships with men. Verbal humiliations, rebukes, and relentless comparisons with other successful men or relatives severely undermine men's self-esteem and identity:

'Good-for-nothing, I wish I were like my colleague, like my friend... I wish we too had a villa like Mr. So-and-so... Unfortunately, you do nothing for us... you take no action at all... you have no capability whatsoever... for five years we haven't left Ilam...' (No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 27).

This type of psychological and verbal violence precipitates the formation of a sense of 'inadequacy and worthlessness' in men. These are men who not only suffer from emotional repression and a lack of understanding but are also repeatedly humiliated, compared, and even mocked.

In some instances, these pressures lead to reactive aggression and reverse outbursts. A man notes:

'Eventually, I exploded... I threw a punch, and my daughter saw that scene... even now, after seven years, they still tell me 'you have a heavy hand' [you are abusive]... meaning I did this only once, but I am accused of being a batterer' (No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 101).

This experience illustrates how the cycle of violence entraps men in the social stigma of 'being violent'; even in cases where men have reacted only once, the judgment and social labelling persist rapidly and enduringly.

Sexual humiliation is another form of this violence, confirmed by both women and psychologists/marriage counsellors. For example, Samira (No. 1, Pos 233) explicitly states that she sexually humiliated her husband, and this is a customary part of her life and that of many women who either face parallel relationships or harbour a form of repression and indifference towards their spouse. From the perspective of experts, this type of humiliation is a symptom of the structural weakness of male identity in contemporary society:

'The weakening of men in current society constitutes violence against the male' (No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 10).

Structurally, mandatory military service is reckoned as another manifestation of violence against men. Narrated memories of military service indicate that:

'Three years of your life are wasted because of service... the expectations they have of boys in terms of physique, in terms of responsibility, these bring nervous pressure' and 'After service, with the labour market and inflation, you fall behind the market by at least 8-9 years' (No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 26).

This structural pressure, in addition to the loss of individual opportunities, brings about a form of psychological and social withering for men.

In the domain of sexual violence, shocking instances of rape against adolescent boys or young men, as well as deep traumas resulting from this type of violence, are observed. For instance, in one narrative, an adolescent, after being raped, faces threats of having photos and videos released, leading to a long period of severe academic decline, eating disorders, and attempted suicide (No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 15).

These traumas are even more severe in vulnerable groups such as transgender individuals. Shayan Varamini (No. 64, Pos 133) recounts how another trans individual, due to family prevention of gender affirmation surgery and confinement at home, resorted to self-mutilation (cutting their own genitalia). Even after this physical injury, the family remained unwilling to accept the individual's condition or provide appropriate support, to the extent that medical care was provided reluctantly and with delay, and the individual subsequently suffered severe isolation, depression, and total familial and social rejection.

This narrative from Shayan Varamini (No. 64, Pos 133) not only demonstrates the peak of structural and familial violence but also lays bare the depth of the destruction of self-esteem, hope for life, and identity in men with non-normative gender identities. This situation, transcending mere isolation and psychological repression, displays dimensions of 'institutionalised' violence wherein the victim reaches a point of helplessness where the only perceived escape is physical harm to the self.

Other interviews confirm a similar pattern of violence against men. Mehdi Momeni (No. 38, Pos 15) also relates a narrative regarding the devastating intensity of sexual violence against adolescent boys, the psychological, academic, and social dimensions of which are profound and enduring. He explains that a student, having been deceived and raped by a group of peers

under the guise of friendship in the sixth grade, suffered severe academic decline, isolation, eating disorders, and even attempted suicide. The psychological pressure resulting from the experience of sexual violence, the sense of shame, desperation, fear of notoriety at school, and the judgment of those around him pushed this adolescent to the brink of psychological collapse. He explicitly emphasises in his narrative that:

'He felt that his honour was lost in that high school and that he had effectively become notorious among other students and school officials' (No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 15).

This bitter experience indicates deeper layers of violence that possess collective, structural, and psychological aspects, the consequences of which sometimes persist for years or even for the remainder of the victim's life. The pressure stemming from the fear of disclosure, helplessness, and the absence of social and therapeutic support creates a closed cycle of violence and self-harm, wherein the victim remains in constant fluctuation between isolation, guilt, and the desire to end their suffering.

Other dimensions of violence against men are illuminated in subsequent interviews with examples regarding 'emotional and sexual violence' and the 'instrumentalisation of men or boys.' For instance, Ali Nour-Mohammadi (No. 48) recounts a shocking narrative from the childhood of a boy whose working parents sent him to a female neighbour—a divorcée with a small child—who then sexually abused the boy, using him as a sexual instrument. What Ali Nour-Mohammadi clearly emphasises is the incomprehensible and unacceptable nature of this violence:

'She used this child as a sexual tool... this, in my opinion, is the worst violence itself... this is a type of violence, it is unacceptable' (No. 48, Ali Nour-Mohammadi, Pos 79-80).

Furthermore, other interviewees have addressed the hidden and more complex manifestations of emotional and sexual violence in adult relationships. In the example of Hosseinzadeh (No. 35, Pos 163), the experience of a spouse or emotional partner directly preventing sexual relations, or using sex as a tool for punishment or reward, is described as a form of hidden and erosive violence. In Hosseinzadeh's narrative (No. 35, Pos 163), this implies that the man is constantly placed in a state of emotional suspension and instability, where the sexual relationship functions not as a language of love

and intimacy, but as a lever of pressure and an instrument of control in the hands of the other party. This situation is often exacerbated alongside other types of emotional and verbal deprivation, particularly when tied to physical and sexual humiliation or comparison with other men.

In addition to individual instances, the collective and structural dimension of violence against men is clearly evident in examples such as the coercion of adolescents or young men into unwanted and destructive behaviours and roles within the school or family environment. As noted in Report No. 5, groups of adolescents during the years of identity formation (ages 6 to 8 or early adolescence) generally learn and repeat patterns of hatred, aggression, and repression from their elders. This process sometimes leads to the formation of cycles of collective violence, such as when *'in high school, a group of adolescents force a male peer into a humiliating sexual situation,'* which results in the development of obsessive disorders, feelings of guilt and shame, and perpetual stress (Summary, Page 5).

At another level of violence, exposure to various forms of sexual harassment and physical and psychological molestation against adolescents and young men leads, in a sense, to the 'instrumentalisation' of men or boys in unwanted and destructive roles. Numerous instances in the interviews reveal this suffering: from the child becoming a tool for the neighbour woman who engages in sexual behaviour with him (Narrative of Ali Nour-Mohammadi, No. 48, Pos 79-80) to the adolescent boy victimised by a peer group who, for various reasons (revenge, pleasure, retribution for what they deem 'improper' sexual behaviours), commit sexual violence or serious psychological harassment (No. 15, Dr. Naserbakht, Pos 15-16).

Ultimately, this collection of narratives and data demonstrates that violence against men is not limited solely to physical behaviours; rather, it encompasses a spectrum including emotional repression, deprivation, humiliation, comparison, coercion, sexual harassment, structural and institutional pressures, and sometimes self-inflicted violence (self-harm and self-destruction). The consequences of this aggregate violence entail severe isolation, depression, decline in academic or occupational performance, the collapse of familial and social relationships, suicidal ideation, or joining recurrent cycles of violence.

The crucial point here is that, based on the aggregate narratives of interviewees and the analysis of specialists (such as Dr. Naserbakht, No. 15,

Pos 15-16), understanding violence against men requires a redefinition that covers all psychological, emotional, sexual, economic, structural, and social layers, and does not suffice with the external manifestation of physical violence alone. This fresh understanding can serve as the basis for supportive policymaking and specialised intervention; for it is only by hearing the lived and multifaceted narrative of men and boys that the ground will be prepared for the realisation of rights, psychological rehabilitation, and the breaking of the cycle of violence.

As emphasised in the aforementioned narratives, recognising all overt and covert layers of violence against men and striving to redefine it at the centre of policymaking, research, and social intervention is essential. The accumulation of these violent experiences—from emotional repression and constant humiliation and comparison to economic neglect, structural coercions like mandatory military service, sexual harassment and rape, and even tragedies related to gender identity and self-harm—leads not only to individual and familial ruptures but to a pervasive context of suffering and isolation that encompasses men from childhood to old age. As one interviewee expressed:

'This volume of being humiliated and misunderstood is the daily habit of men's lives... I wish that one day someone would understand men and do something for them' (No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 10).

Moreover, narratives of structural and institutional violence, including mandatory military service and social and occupational pressures, provide a clear image of the structural substrates of violence:

'Men, solely because of their gender, are inevitably forced to play roles in cycles that strip them of the opportunity for growth, hope, and even life' (No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 26).

Experts believe that the time has come for approaches to the issue of violence against men to transcend the unidimensional framework and lead to a multi-level, systemic cognition connected to other socio-psychological and gender domains (No. 15, Dr. Naserbakht, Pos 16 and No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 10). Lived narratives admonish the necessity of hearing, understanding, and attending to the invisible aspects of violence against men, so that perhaps one day supportive policymaking and social infrastructure development can, while preventing and reducing such violences, assist in the elevation and restoration of men's emotional and psychological lives.

Thus, the definition that emerges from the heart of these narratives and expert opinions is a multidimensional, layered, and intertwined image of violence against men: a violence that is not summarised merely in physical behaviour or verbal abuse, but has rooted itself in cultural infrastructures, collective norms, gender roles, marital and parental relationships, educational structures and systems of compulsory service, as well as in more hidden arenas such as self-blame, self-deprecation, and even self-harm. Only if this multifaceted reality is viewed with seriousness and comprehensiveness is there hope for men's liberation from the cycle of repression, humiliation, and helplessness.

Consequently, the scientific analysis of violence against men must move—with a deep and precise understanding of lived narratives and men's direct experience, and accompanied by the theoretical and research backing of experts—towards becoming more valid and transforming into a foundation for supportive and reformatory policymaking. This is necessary to commence the process of psychological and social reconstruction of men in the current Iranian ecosystem, whilst simultaneously preventing the repetition of violence.

Furthermore, what emerges from the documented narratives and objective observations in the present research is that many men do not even possess the capacity to articulate their painful experiences of violence, or they deem them insignificant and unmentionable; this very repression and voicelessness is itself part of the chronic cycle of violence that is continuously reproduced. Quotations such as:

'How many times have you seen a man cry or speak of difficulty and loneliness in front of anyone?' (No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 11),

aptly demonstrate the breaking of this forced silence. In other dialogues, direct experiences of economic violence and frozen social roles become prominent, for instance, when *Kulbar* labour and humiliating economic conditions are discussed:

'In Kurdistan, we have a phenomenon called Kulbari... these are the victims, the men... society holds the man responsible for providing this livelihood' (No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 100), and also *'With minimum wage... forced into any abasement and humiliation... the self-esteem of these individuals is severely degraded'* (Ibid, Pos 23).

Repeated experiences such as feeling inferior in the family and increasing pressures from children and spouses lead to the idea of eliminating oneself from life and the desire for suicide, and this sequence is starkly highlighted in the narrative:

'I wish for death when I face such words...' (Ibid).

At the level of marital and emotional relationships, diverse manifestations of violence including humiliation, blame, erosion of self-esteem, withdrawal, and the instrumental use of sexual relations are observed. Many of these narratives point to men's experience of a continuous onslaught of accusation, mistrust, and lack of emotional support. This phenomenon, especially when combined with unrealistic expectations and socio-economic pressures, extends the scope and depth of violence:

'He/She tells me 'dirt on your head' [shame on you] or 'how unlucky we are that you are our father'... and I wish for death...' (Ibid).

Finally, structural coercion such as military service (No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 26) is continuously reproduced as one of the instances of violence targeting only the male gender, and alongside other institutional pressures, it strips men of the possibility of psychological and social growth.

The key point in analysing these narratives and reflecting on lived experiences is that violence against men is not merely an individual or familial phenomenon, but a deeply structural and cultural reality that extends throughout the totality of power relations, social patterns, and the distribution of economic and emotional resources. This violence cannot be reduced through concealment and denial, but only through the path of objective cognition, education, the redefinition of supportive policies, and the creation of platforms for dialogue and the disclosure of real experiences. In this regard, researchers and social activists must gather and analyse men's narratives with meticulousness, depth, and attention to detail to map a multi-layered and realistic landscape of violence against men, thereby providing opportunities for specialised and structural intervention and treatment. This body of scattered detailed narratives and everyday experiences can—provided it transforms into a collective voice heard by policymakers and society—pave the way for a comprehensive shift in attitude, the demand for gender justice, and ultimately the reduction of the hidden and overt dimensions of violence against men in Iran.

Continuing on this trajectory, the process of reducing the hidden and overt dimensions of violence against men in Iran necessitates a comprehensive recognition, re-reading, and confrontation with the cultural, structural, and interpersonal roots of this phenomenon. Firstly, it is essential that men's narratives of the experience of violence—from emotional repression and disregard to humiliation, accusation, economic pressures, forced gender roles, institutional violences like mandatory military service, the tragic experiences of trans individuals and sexual minorities, and finally overt and covert forms of self-harm and psychological collapse—be raised with greater transparency in the public sphere. As is clear from the direct quotes of interviewees, most men, trapped in dominant norms, fear of judgment, and the lack of supportive platforms, refrain from expressing these sufferings, and this concealment is not merely an individual problem but a persistent social pathology.

At the level of policymaking and supportive institutions, the formulation of fresh supportive frameworks based on lived realities, dialogue with target groups, and the promotion of a multi-level understanding of violence against the male gender must be the central focus. These frameworks must be designed with the participation of experts in psychology, social work, law, sociology, and especially based on the documented narratives of victims, to focus not only on prevention but on empowerment and the restoration of a sense of individual and collective worth to men. The simultaneous role of family education, media, the educational system, and social activists in breaking taboos and recognising types of violence is vital; for a major portion of the roots of violence is formed in the process of socialisation, group learning, and the reproduction of ignorance and denial.

In this same vein, providing safe spaces for the expression of men's lived experiences, developing specialised counselling centres with a gender-aware approach sensitive to men's needs, and providing psychological, legal, and social support to victims must be prioritised. Investigations such as this research show that many men, if they find a safe, empathetic, and non-judgmental space, will share their experiences, and this very act of expression and being heard is the first step in severing the cycle of violence, reconstructing damaged identity, and recreating possibilities for hope and active agency.

Looking at quotes such as '*Men must not have feelings*' (No. 63, Pos 11), '*Kulbari and economic humiliation are the lot of men only*' (No. 38, Pos 100), or the

deep spiritual and physical wounds narrated by trans individuals and adolescent male victims of sexual violence (No. 64, Pos 133 and No. 38, Pos 15), one can perceive that the key to reducing and eliminating these violences lies first at the level of cognition and subsequently at the level of open dialogue and truth-based policymaking. Therefore, the continuation of deep qualitative research, public education regarding the nature and consequences of violence against men, and the provision of structural and specialised support are prerequisites for any serious and sustainable transformation in the field of reducing violence against the male gender in Iran.

Meanwhile, the continuation of the research process, the documentation of lived experiences and direct narratives, as well as the active participation of affected men in the analysis and decision-making process, can gradually guide this phenomenon from the margins of denial and silence to the centre of social and institutional attention. Accordingly, the qualitative analysis of interview data indicates that part of the way to confront violence is empowering men to express emotions, seek support, and break the chain of taboos and violent gender norms. Particularly, narratives that unveil the depth of emotional and psychological crises—such as the expression of suicidal ideation by men facing the pressure of economic humiliation, comparison, and blame from children and spouses (e.g., No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 23)—reveal that the system must not suffice with preventing physical violence alone; rather, psychosocial interventions must be consolidated and enhanced. This includes creating psychological services for affected men, public information campaigns to reduce silencing norms, and defining long-term educational projects at the level of schools, universities, and media.

Furthermore, taking seriously the diverse and sometimes invisible forms of violence—including repression of emotions, verbal abuse, economic violence (a prominent example being the phenomenon of *Kulbari*; No. 38, Pos 100), the reduction of professional dignity, coercion into accepting traditional or conventional roles, sexual pressure, emotional neglect in family relationships, and recurrent cycles of blame and humiliation—must be placed on the agenda of policymakers and academics. The bitter experiences of severe and chronic sexual and identity trauma, such as self-mutilation in trans individuals due to family rejection (No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Pos 133) or sexual and identity violences in adolescents (No. 38, Pos 15 and No. 48, Pos 79-

80), also indicate the necessity of attending to special groups and designing specialised support mechanisms for them.

The summation of the views of experts such as Dr. Naserbakht (No. 15, Pos 15-16) and Dr. Mehrabi (No. 11, Pos 10) is that liberation from the cycle of violence against men will only be possible when: first, the hidden dimensions of violence are recognised; second, individual and collective narratives are highlighted upon a foundation of public awareness and widespread education; and third, comprehensive interventions at the level of family, education, and legal systems are designed and implemented, centred on hearing and recognising the suffering and lived experience of men. If this path is pursued with seriousness, continuity, and the avoidance of gender stereotypes, one can hope for a tangible reduction in the multiple dimensions of violence against men and the growth of their psychosocial health; a process necessary not only for gender justice but for the health and dynamism of the entire Iranian society.

4.2. Conclusion and Comprehensive Definition of Violence Against the Male Gender

Based on the deep analysis of interview data and its synthesis with expert perspectives, a comprehensive and fundamental definition of 'Violence Against Men' must transcend classical and purely physical approaches to encompass all hidden and overt levels of violence.

Violence against men in Iranian society, based on narrative and theoretical evidence, is a multidimensional, interpersonal, and structural phenomenon. It comprises a spectrum of actions, deeds, or even omissions (failures to act) that lead to humiliation, exclusion, devaluation, repression of emotions, portrayal as inadequate, coercion, comparison, and psychological, economic, emotional, sexual, social, or spiritual abuse in men's lives.

This phenomenon encompasses both active behaviours (such as direct humiliation, insults, threats, assault and battery, economic abuse, rape, accusation, and repeated comparisons with others) and passive behaviours and omissions (such as emotional neglect, ignoring needs, the continuous denial or belittlement of men's position and desires, exclusion and isolation, prevention of social support or emotional expression, and the lack of support or visibility for men's efforts and successes). Consequently, male victims

constantly face feelings of inadequacy, frustration, shame, and social and emotional isolation.

This cycle can range from the smallest everyday behaviours, such as the negation and mockery of emotions (No. 63, Pos 11), the disregarding of efforts and economic or emotional needs (No. 38, Pos 23 and Pos 100), and destructive and humiliating comparisons (No. 33, Allah Reza, Pos 64), to severe physical, sexual, or spiritual violences such as self-harm or attempts at self-elimination (No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Pos 133 and No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 15).

In this definition, not only overt and practical actions but also inaction and the withdrawal of support and care (by family, society, or institutions) threaten men's health and dignity, exposing them to a cycle of psychological, emotional, social wounds, and even chronic physical and spiritual injuries. Accordingly, violence against men, in a comprehensive view, is the product of the intersection of individual, familial, social, and institutional layers; only by recognising all its hidden and overt facets can effective strategies for prevention, support, and treatment be designed.

5. Contexts of Violence Against Men

Introduction

Having elucidated the methodological architecture of the research based on Grounded Theory in the preceding chapter, we now enter the heart of the field data analysis in Chapter Four, subjecting the first dimension of the research's paradigmatic model—namely, 'Contextual Conditions'—to detailed scrutiny. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, contextual conditions refer to that specific category of characteristics and attributes which provide the substrate or background wherein the core phenomenon (in this instance, violence against the male gender) occurs, and in response to which the strategies of actors take shape. These conditions define the specific 'situation' in which the phenomenon acquires meaning and possess a greater degree of generality than causal conditions (which directly precipitate the phenomenon).

The objective of this chapter is to move beyond superficial explanations and to conduct an in-depth analysis of the structural, normative, and social foundations—including cultural, economic, and legal dimensions—that function as an invisible ecosystem rendering violence against the male gender possible, facilitating its reproduction, and in certain instances, even legitimising it.

Findings derived from in-depth interviews indicate that men's experiences of violence are not isolated or episodic events detached from the broader contours of their lives. Rather, such experiences are embedded within a complex constellation of interrelated contexts, the neglect of which would result in a partial and reductionist understanding of the phenomenon.

Methodologically, this chapter is grounded in meticulous coding procedures and the constant comparative method applied to participants' narratives. Through this analytical process, four principal categories emerged as the key contextual conditions shaping violence against men:

- 1) Occupational and Economic Contexts

- 2) Socio-Cultural Contexts
- 3) Legal and Juridical Contexts
- 4) Familial Contexts

In the first section, we shall address Occupational and Economic Contexts. Data analysis revealed how cultural expectations of the man as the 'primary breadwinner' propel him towards arduous, hazardous, and erosive professions, and how this 'masculine nature of hard labour' itself transforms into a form of silent structural violence. Furthermore, factors such as poverty, unemployment, rampant inflation, and hidden gender discrimination in workplaces not only place men under economic pressure but also render them more vulnerable to various forms of psychological and social violence. The shocking narratives of participants regarding the appropriation of their assets or inequality in receiving services indicate that the economy is not merely a material substrate, but a field for the exercise of power and the reproduction of inequality.

The second section dissects Socio-Cultural Contexts—perhaps the most complex and deeply rooted substrate of violence. In this section, we will demonstrate how 'hegemonic masculinity' and gender stereotypes, instilled in boys from childhood through the process of socialisation, entrap them within a cultural snare. On one hand, they are expected to be strong, emotionless, and dominant; on the other, these very constructs block the path to expressing vulnerability and seeking help, transforming them into silent victims. Changes in lifestyle, the decline of traditional roles, and the emergence of new expectations in relationships have fueled contradictions and conflicts that provide fertile ground for the formation of violence.

In the third section, we place Legal and Juridical Contexts under the magnifying glass. Participants frequently alluded to the 'unilateralism of laws' in favour of women in domains such as *Mehrieh* (nuptial financial commitment), *Nafagheh* (maintenance), and custody. This sense of injustice and the absence of legal refuge not only leaves men defenceless against economic and psychological violence but also tarnishes the legitimacy of the legal system in their minds, driving them towards informal strategies or passivity.

Finally, in the fourth section, we address the most private sphere: Familial Contexts. As the primary institution of socialisation, the family plays a vital role in shaping behavioural patterns. Issues such as improper upbringing,

weak communication skills, the interference of relatives, and adverse childhood experiences are all substrates that can sow the seeds of violence in future relationships.

By juxtaposing these four contexts, this chapter demonstrates that violence against the male gender is not the product of a single cause, but the resultant of a complex interaction of structural and cultural factors. Understanding these substrates is the first and essential step towards analysing the strategies and consequences of this phenomenon and, ultimately, formulating a comprehensive and grounded theory.

5.1. Occupational and Economic Contexts

Introduction The economy, as one of the most pivotal factors influencing social and individual relations, has consistently played a key role in the creation and maintenance of gender, class, and professional inequalities. The economic contexts raised—including the masculine nature of arduous and dangerous labour, severe poverty, unemployment and deprivation, high cost of living and inflation, and social class—indicate serious challenges for men that directly impact their lives, professions, and social positions. Structural and cultural expectations for men to fulfil specific economic roles, such as financial provision and the endurance of difficult labour, not only impose extensive psychological and physical pressures upon them but also cause the reproduction of structural violence against them.

A detailed examination of this section reveals that factors such as the appropriation of men's assets and property by women, as well as conflicts arising from inflation and economic pressure, have directly or indirectly had a negative impact on men's sense of economic security, rendering them more vulnerable in the face of financial and psychological crises. This dependence of economic conditions on gender roles, particularly in patriarchal systems, places men in a more vulnerable position than in the past, reflecting hidden layers of economic and social violence experienced widely in workplaces, families, and society. Attention to these contexts and a critique of existing patterns can provide a window for a better understanding of men's economic challenges and solutions for improving this situation.

5.1.1. Gender Discrimination in Workspaces

Mohammad Hosseini, a 30-year-old single man, speaks of his experiences confronting administrative bureaucracy and overt discrimination against men:

'This is discrimination. You go to an office like a bank, someone of our own sex [a male employee], a lady comes in and he gets her work done immediately, but for me, a man, he doesn't give a toss [doesn't chop herbs for me]. Once we applied for a loan; the lady had everything okay, she had exposed a bit of hair and figure, dressed in [revealing] clothes, and her work was done instantly. But ours [the bank loan file] was pushed to next year' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 38).

This narrative clearly emphasises the inequality of treatment within the administrative system. Under such conditions, the administrative structure operates not based on merit or principles of equality, but under the influence of informal factors and discrimination. From the perspective of Social Justice Theory (Rawls, 1971), such a situation indicates a violation of distributive equality, wherein individuals should access resources based on merit and equal need, not gender influence or irrelevant appearances.

On the other hand, Ebrahim Rahbaran, another interviewee, raises his observations regarding gender inequality in workplaces, stating:

'The work they [employers/society] extract from [men]... if you put these two people [a man and a woman] from the service staff side by side, really the lady works much less than the gentleman. I've seen this [in the office environment] too. Then this has psychological consequences for them as well' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran).

This narrative reveals the lesser pressure placed on women in workplaces compared to the tasks men continuously perform. The theory of Gendered Division of Labour (Connell, 1987) points to this fact, noting that in many societies, more arduous and heavy tasks are unequally assigned to men. These differences lead not only to the physical exploitation of men but also bring about adverse psychological effects that gradually facilitate the emergence of psychological and behavioural violence.

In addition to inequality in work responsibilities, Ebrahim points to another experience of gender discrimination observed during crises related to natural disasters:

'You see a guy has lost everyone in an earthquake or flood. His father, mother, sister, wife, and child. If a woman is in this situation, they provide social work much sooner, they attend to her sooner than to a man. They say the man will sort himself out with cigarettes and a hookah' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim, Pos 84).

In this narrative, discrimination in the provision of support services and the prevailing social gaze are highlighted. Based on this general belief, women are perceived as needing more support in crises, while men must solve their problems by relying on themselves or limited means. Goffman (1961), in his Labelling Theory, points out that such social expectations can place men in situations where, even when facing crisis, they remain deprived of fair support and must maintain their role as 'provider' at any cost.

Farhad Azizi, another 45-year-old interviewee, engages in a deeper explanation of this type of discrimination, tracing the roots of the institutionalised structure of gender discrimination. He says:

'Generally, from formal relationships to informal ones, every hard job is associated with the male; every job associated with filth, stench, animals, and insects is associated with the male. In my opinion, the root of all this goes back to gender and early childhood and the wrong system that formal and informal education has institutionalised. [Men] have really dedicated themselves to the family; now gentlemen sometimes work 24 hours, don't go home, for the sake of the wife and child. When this wife and child treat the father badly, in my opinion, that is the worst suffering' (Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 112).

This quotation effectively brings us to the point where educational inequalities and gender roles are institutionalised in society from childhood and manifest in adulthood in the form of disparate gender responsibilities. Gender Role Theory (Eagly, 1987) refers to the intervention of such structures, where men, due to accepted social roles, are placed in harder and riskier jobs and, over time, become vulnerable to the constant pressures of such responsibilities.

The atmosphere conveyed by these narratives possesses distinct unequal gender tendencies that pressure men and render the enactment of violence against them—particularly in administrative and social systems—possible. In these instances, discrimination against men manifests not only in inequality of opportunity but also in psychological, social, and even physical consequences. This discrimination, as Farhad posits, penetrates to the heart of family relationships, causing men's lives and personal relationships to be influenced

by the responsibilities society has placed upon their shoulders. Maslow's (1943) theory regarding the Hierarchy of Needs states that the failure to meet basic psychological and physical needs leads to internal and external violence. In these cases, psychological instability, anger, and even the isolation of men resulting from these gender discriminations can gradually increase the institutionalised violence against them.

The results of this analysis indicate that gender discrimination and inequality in working and social environments, by imposing unequal roles and heavy expectations upon men, do not end merely with creating disorder at the individual level; they also challenge social cohesion and justice. The latent violences generated by these discriminations manifest in various dimensions of men's lives, and resolving these problems requires a deep revision of policies, education, and social structures.

The prevailing culture of Iranian society and its patriarchal structure, combined with expectations regarding men's physical and somatic capabilities, have propelled men towards accepting the responsibility of performing heavy and hazardous tasks. These expectations and duties place men in conditions where they not only endure immense psychological and physical pressures but occasionally their lives and safety are also put at risk. Professions such as policing, firefighting, construction, municipal services, or activity in the military sector are examples of jobs that have been traditionally defined and given meaning as 'masculine.' These traditional thoughts, alongside accepted social roles, drive many men into positions where, to survive in these challenging professions, they are compelled to endure violences ranging from social and physical to psychological domains.

5.1.2. The Masculine Nature of Arduous and Hazardous Labour

In this domain, Dr. Ahmad Bokharaei, a sociologist and researcher in the field of social pathology, alludes to the intrinsically hazardous nature of these activities and the violence embedded within their very essence:

'Look, we have a discussion called 'risk' or 'hazard'. The difference between this and danger lies in the fact that in a risk, one accepts a reasonable percentage of danger. This includes travelling; the fact that roads are busy and you might have an accident. The probability of an accident is higher during the New Year holidays than when it is quieter, and accident statistics are higher. This is part of the nature of men's activity; meaning, by virtue of the fact that they take risks

and come out to operate at the societal level, they are placed in exposure, and by that same token, harms afflict them. They commute more in society and have wider friendship groups. Social pressures are greater than for women, as are economic pressures in this patriarchal culture where the man is the guarantor of provision' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 16).

It is crucial to note that within the patriarchal social structure, men are propelled from the very outset towards risk-taking and the assumption of responsibilities that are, by default, accompanied by danger. This structural compulsion ensures that the injuries and consequences of such choices are predominantly accepted by the individuals themselves, as if they were an inseparable component of masculinity. From the perspective of Gender Role Theory (Connell, 1995), these pressures constitute part of the hegemonic masculinity which drives men to enact roles that, while ostensibly demonstrating power and capability, conversely render them susceptible to an increased incidence of psychological and physical violence against themselves.

Mr. Delaram, a social worker, explains in this regard how the stereotypical masculine culture in Iran, in comparison with other nations, can lead to a specific configuration of expectations and pressures:

'For example, in Europe, a woman is, say, a police officer; a woman is genuinely performing heavy tasks, and for instance, is a municipal worker in the municipality. And on the other hand, she says, 'Well, we must be equal, work together.' But here, they [women] do not perform that work, yet they also expect that, for instance, those duties and positions be fulfilled for them. That conflict exists, and regarding today's generation, I feel that the men of this generation are suffering in this respect. They say, for example, they [women] have the expectations of European women, and on the other hand, they [men] have no role in the house either, and they don't perform their housekeeping correctly either' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 25).

In this narrative, Delaram points to the contradiction between social expectations and the occupational responsibilities of men and women, which in the Iranian patriarchal culture imposes a double burden upon men. The issue that men must answer to all external and internal needs of the family, coupled with the duty of 'hard work,' not only increases structural violence against them but also leads to physical and psychological exhaustion.

Farhad Azizi, an individual engaged in two jobs, clearly emphasises the pressures imposed by these occupations:

'Until, for example, we have jobs that are specific to men, from the dear street sweepers of the municipality [due to pollution and diseases] or military environments where [their lives and health are endangered]. A series of jobs are for boys; for example, if you consider a girl and a boy in a house, the expectation is greater from the boy, whereas men build this society; they could build it together and affairs could move forward. I see boys who are immersed in work problems day and night solely because they are boys' (Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 16).

This narrative demonstrates how gender stereotypes are capable of keeping men confined within limited roles and directly fueling the expectation of the acceptability of these dangerous duties for them. These pressures, which are both social and cultural, gradually expand physical and psychological violence against men at the level of occupational performance and the family environment.

On the other hand, in specific and so-called traditional trades such as construction, the mortal dangers to men are even more starkly evident. Farahani, employed in the construction sector, notes:

'The job of building construction is entirely a masculine and dangerous job, and the guy falls from the scaffolding and passes away. We have heaps of labourers and masons who fall from scaffolding annually' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 51-52).

This description clearly articulates the dimensions of professional violence which, in these instances, manifests itself in the form of a threat to life. General Strain Theory (Agnew, 1992) emphasises that the pressure resulting from the inability to achieve equal opportunities or job security can lead to psychological stress and anxiety in individuals. This structural violence is continuously repeated in environments where men's physical safety is ignored, leaving deep scars on their psyche and physique.

This situation is observed not only in urban environments but even in rural settings. Delaram explains:

'Now, what does 'village' mean? It means a village, someone over there, meaning a family has a cow or wants to have sheep. Nothing, completely, everyone has become a consumer. Meaning the women there essentially wake up at 11 in the

morning, make lunch, and then sleep again in the afternoon until night; they have no work. Well, the women of old were not like this. And they [modern rural women] say 'we are being oppressed,' and this is really [what] most men represent there; if you say it from this perspective, you understand. And sexual issues are also raised again; meaning it has become a transactional state...'

(Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 29).

This unbalanced equilibrium of duties between men and women, accompanied by the suppression of normal life expectations and male self-esteem, increases the level of anger and psychological tensions between individuals.

In general, arduous and hazardous masculine occupations, coupled with gender stereotypes in society, have propelled men to endure a violence that is continuously reproduced. From the perspective of theories related to social pathology and psychology (Connell, 1995; Agnew, 1992), social and cultural expectations for men to perform these jobs and accept their risks, in addition to creating serious physical consequences, impose significant psychological and social pressures upon them. Ultimately, this cycle of structural violence against men continues, unless a more equitable approach is adopted through a shift in social norms and the elevation of sensitivity towards men's safety and health.

In military environments, men face a specific type of violence due to the strict structure and military discipline, which is focused more on psychological and social aspects. This structure, due to its emphasis on men's physical power and psychological endurance, causes expectations beyond the norm to be imposed upon them. Eisi, a military counsellor, stated: *'In the military space, it is expected that you be masculine; under any circumstances, you must continue with your composure, even when you feel you are under severe psychological pressure'* (Interview No. 23, Eisi, Pos 45). These expectations compel men to accept roles without expressing their emotions, roles that may be in conflict with their human nature. Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) also indicates that doubled environmental pressure can lead to the formation of behavioural violence, as individuals learn to ignore their natural needs.

In the educational environment, despite greater attention to gender equality, biases still exist that can lead to violence against men. For instance, a type of gender stereotype dictates that men must be strong in specific

disciplines, and if they do not perform well in them, they suffer blame and psychological violence. A student named Hamed said in this regard:

'At university, I am always under pressure as to why I am not feeling good in the engineering field; they constantly tell me that 'you are not strong enough''

(Interview No. 30, Hamed, Pos 54).

Such social pressures can lead to the erosion of men's self-confidence and self-belief, a point also referenced by Adler's theory of Striving for Superiority (Adler, 1930).

In many working environments, particularly in industrial and service jobs, the type of physical and psychological violence men encounter stems from the high expectations of employers and colleagues. Based on the experience of an employee named Saeed:

'In the factory, you must always work more and more to have been able to show that you can endure any pressure and hardship; this is where you realise how much the pressure crushes your spirit' (Interview No. 40, Saeed, Pos 61).

According to Social Expectation Theory (Merton, 1957), this issue stems largely from social stereotypes that expect men to be perpetually strong and emotionless.

Furthermore, Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) demonstrates that an individual's interactions with various environments can reinforce or reduce violence. In military, educational, and work environments, the existence of norms derived from gender stereotypes and irrational expectations gradually intensifies hidden violences against men. These violences, whether in the form of psychological pressures or physical limitations, are consistently regarded as a serious challenge to men's mental and physical health.

Ultimately, formulating strategies to confront these patterns and creating balance in gender roles can lead to the improvement of conditions and the reduction of violence against men. As Kanter's theory of Structural Empowerment (Kanter, 1977) suggests, removing cultural and structural barriers improves working and social relationships and can moderate accepted gender roles.

In analysing the contexts of men's presence in the public sphere of society and its correlation with the emergence of violence against them, the presented data also show how the role of social and cultural structures, and patriarchal

norms in directing men's lives, create violent conditions for them. This analysis clearly reveals the cultural and social complexities of Iranian society; a society wherein the enactment of men's social and economic roles is perceived not merely as a choice, but as an established expectation and norm, while this very presence exposes them even further to harm and violence.

On one hand, a space is provided for their greater social emergence; on the other, this very space of emergence transforms them into the focal point of violences and social pressures. Dr. Bokharaei points to this, noting:

'This [risk and hazard and violence against men] is natural in Iranian society; 'until a man has spoken, his fault and virtue remain hidden.' Now that person comes and speaks to you, and they grab him by the collar saying 'what the hell are you doing here,' to suppress him. But the person who hasn't spoken yet can still sit at the top. Politicians are like this, you know; sometimes they don't show up in the sun, they don't engage in dialogue, they want to remain in that halo they have spun around themselves, in that halo of power. A man is the same. A man in patriarchal culture comes to the stage for defined duties. When he comes to the stage, a bounced cheque grabs him by the collar too, a fight in the street grabs him by the collar too; it's natural, he's a criminal now, drug trafficking grabs him by the collar too. In our culture, because a man can appear in society, it is his transit and traffic; so his arena of emergence in society is greater too' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 20).

This narrative demonstrates that patriarchal society holds established expectations of men, regardless of their position; they must have a prominent social presence and exhibit customary masculine characteristics. From this very point, chronic pressures commence, propelling men into the centre of various forms of abuse and social, economic, and even legal violence. A point that attracts attention here is the conflation of masculine gender roles with their latent vulnerability; patriarchal societies, despite granting men the agency of greater presence in the public sphere, do not provide sufficient space for protection and care for them. This contradiction counts as another hidden factor in the cycle of violence against them.

Continuing this analysis, Dr. Bokharaei's reference to rough sleeping (*karten-khabī*) and the differences between men's and women's problems aptly illuminates this contradiction:

'It even influences rough sleeping. It isn't very bad for him to go sleep in a cardboard box; it's more comfortable. Meaning if a woman wants to come into the street and become a rough sleeper, we don't have that; the story is this'

(Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 20).

This comment addresses the gender differentiation in the experience of social vulnerability: while men are deemed socially permitted to be present in the public space, this freedom is not a support for them, but can be an additional burden. Rough sleeping, as a prominent form of social pathology, is considered so normal for men that it can easily be ignored; however, for women, due to cultural sensitivity and their social position, the direct manifestation of such pathology is less permissible. These conditions indicate that for men, presence in the public sphere is always accompanied by the logical burden of vulnerability and danger, and can easily expose them to structural violence.

On the other hand, this active presence of men in the public sphere, in urban environments and places where social relationships are often cold, sporadic, and individualistic, imposes independent psychological pressures upon them. Dr. Vali Bahrami also points to the role of social structures in limiting the possibility of men's psychological catharsis and intensifying pressures:

'In the urban environment, this [empathetic connection between men] is less; meaning there exists a space of anonymity in the urban environment, and this space of anonymity causes... in fact, mosaic relationships... not at all, in urban environments, in my opinion, it is much harder. Meaning for an individual to find someone with whom to share their issues and problems, to speak so they can vent, is much harder' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 31).

Indeed, urban life is often accompanied by anonymity, a lack of supportive relationships, and weak interpersonal interactions, placing men in isolation when confronting their social challenges. The absence of sufficient opportunities for psychological venting and strengthening emotional relationships with other men adds to the aridity of human relations in this environment. This rupture of social relationships gradually drives men who are active in the heart of society towards the accumulation of psychological pressures; pressures which, in some cases, pave the ground for violent behaviours or social aversion.

At the same time, Dr. Bahrami emphasises the fundamental difference between urban and rural environments in terms of patterns of social life and their effects on reducing men's psychological violence. He states:

'But in the rural environment, this can be easier, and one point is that in the rural space, those rituals and ceremonies that exist... because they are mostly customs... the placement of the individual in these customs causes their catharsis' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 31).

This part of the narrative indicates that traditions and ceremonies existing in rural environments provide a rare opportunity for psychological catharsis and the prevention of tension accumulation in men. Conversely, urbanisation and distancing from such tension-relieving ceremonies weaken the protective relationship that might prevent the emergence of violent behaviours. From the perspective of Durkheimian sociological theory, it can be posited that the reduction of social cohesion and the weakness in emotional bonds and social solidarity is a fundamental factor in increasing men's psychological tensions in urban environments; tensions that can lay the groundwork for violence and various pathologies.

This analysis demonstrates that men, contrary to general perception, are victims of the emergence of violence within social structures and the public expanse of society. The contradiction stemming from defined social roles and cultural expectations, alongside the absence of appropriate tools for psychological catharsis, creates a doubled challenge for them. The theory of 'Gender Roles and Violence' also emphasises this point, stating that the influence of gender in the distribution of social roles not only causes the emergence of specific patterns of violent behaviour but also reproduces structural violence against men in a hidden manner.

The Masculine Nature of Child Labour: In addition to the aforementioned points, the analysis of the presented qualitative data—based on the methodological framework of Grounded Theory regarding the contexts of boys' childhood work experience and its connection to the emergence of violence against men in adulthood—demonstrates that child labour is not merely raised as a violation of children's rights, but is perceived as a platform for the formation and reinforcement of cycles of violence in economic, social, and psychological dimensions. These narratives bear witness that the experience of work at a young age, when accompanied by factors such as

poverty, family violence, parental addiction, and the lack of social support, paves a path for vulnerability and victimisation in the face of violence.

Based on the statement of Hossein Haghighi, the criminal behaviours of boys begin with petty thefts and then gradually enter a stage of bag-snatching and mugging:

'Criminal behaviours that street and working children perform usually start with thefts from [adolescence], petty theft in the streets, shops, peddlers, and after that theft from people, pickpocketing, petty bag-snatching begins. [These instances become the ground for rough and violent behaviours of youth such as mugging]' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 69).

Such a chain of behaviours is clearly explicable within the framework of Bandura's Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977). Children in a violent environment, particularly when they are compelled to work in streets and unsafe environments, observe criminal and violent behaviours from their milieu and internalise them over time through imitation. This social learning, rather than leading to the child's healthy development, confines them within a cycle of destructive behaviours, the consequences of which continue into adulthood.

Hamid Moradi's narrative shows that economic exploitation, especially in conditions where families utilise children's income to meet basic needs, is itself a form of hidden violence against children:

'[Working children] work by force in the street and errand centres; they are under violence, and also the family's feeling of need for that child's employment. Experientially, what I am seeing is that financial provision is important for this category of individuals... meaning their families are all provided for in terms of financial provision [by the child]. Meaning the child who comes into the street, I feel this way myself, they are really just looking for more income for the financial needs of the family...' (Interview No. 30, Hamid Moradi, Pos 18).

Maslow's Theory of Basic Needs (Maslow, 1943) can explain this phenomenon wherein families remain stranded at the lower levels of the hierarchy of needs—such as economic needs—and consequently force their children to work. In these conditions, the child, instead of experiencing childhood, is under severe pressure to act beyond their capacity and assume the role of provider. This imposed role not only deters them from developmental opportunities but cultivates roots of anger and frustration within them.

The personal experience of Mohammad Eskandari also places a seal of confirmation upon this claim. He clearly articulates how dropping out of school at an early age, as a consequence of the family's economic violence and the need to cover expenses, influenced his life path:

'Because my family population was large, for this reason, I quit school at 14 and stuck to work. First, I worked as a labourer in porcelain manufacturing. I did labouring from age 14 and laboured for close to 7-8 years. Even now, I haven't been able to progress in society and I have a guarding job' (Interview No. 72, Eskandari, Pos 11-13).

This narrative, along with the theory of Relative Deprivation (Runciman, 1966), indicates that economic limitations and pressures placed on children to support the family can disrupt their socialisation process and lead to long-term negative consequences, such as feelings of inadequacy and the repression of opportunities for advancement. Since the individual subsequently sees themselves in a lower position compared to others, this feeling of inequality can provide a substrate for the accumulation of anger and frustration and the emergence of violence.

The role of family addiction, referred to in the narrative of Hamta, a social worker, clearly unveils a violence heavier than economic problems:

'A father who has an addiction, a mother who has an addiction, has forced the boys to go work to earn the cost of this [drug] expense; this is a type of economic violence for boys' (Interview No. 81, Hamta, Pos 64).

Addiction, as a destabiliser of family patterns, entails complications such as economic exploitation and the lack of emotional support for children. Family Systems Theory (Bowen, 1966) describes this behaviour, illustrating how parental dysfunction negatively affects the entire family system and drags children into the arena as the primary victims of these flawed patterns.

Furthermore, Ebrahim Rahbaran speaks of the experience of the repression of childish games and childhood joys in opposition to work responsibilities:

'We have seen violences. From childhood, 'get up early Friday, go get bread,' was totally specific to me. 'Friday morning go get bread, summer go work'... I could have played bicycle like other peers of mine who were cycling in the alley, but I had to do the work...' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran, Pos 10).

This narrative, consistent with the results of Burke's research on the De-childing of childhood (Burke, 2007), shows that by depriving children of basic rights such as play and joy, their individuality is sacrificed, and over time, the imposition of adult duties during childhood brings about feelings of frustration and repression.

Mohammad Hosseini also has a similar experience of the pressures of gender role-playing during childhood:

'They raised us like this, that 'we have become men,' we must do these things; just the fact that we became men, they induce in a person that 'this is a value, don't do this work'...' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 28).

This statement, while emphasising the unequal distribution of duties between daughters and sons, recounts the role of a cultural standard regarding gender found throughout patriarchal cultures. These inducements pave the ground for the transformation of men's roles into a type of labour slavery and hidden violence against them.

Finally, Farhad Azizi's experience of arduous and heavy jobs that were beyond the capacity of children is fully explanatory:

'If we go back further, from very early childhood in families, all hard tasks were for boys. I myself laboured. It was heavy for our stature and build' (Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 9).

This type of action, relying on Agnew's Strain Theory (Agnew, 1992), indicates that the unjust distribution of roles and the application of excessive pressure in childhood results in deep psychological and social traumas in the future.

In summary, the data emphasize that childhood experiences, particularly child labour in difficult environments and under the colonization of the family or social environment, play a pivotal role in the formation and deepening of violences in adulthood, creating a continuous cycle of deprivation and trauma.

In analysing the experience of boys' child labour as one of the effective contexts in the emergence of violence against men in adulthood, attention must be paid to the deep link between pressures resulting from work, economic exploitation, and the social and psychological consequences of this phenomenon. These experiences create a wide range of effects in men's lives, from everyday deprivations to transformation into violent behavioural patterns.

On one hand, street working children, who are often engaged in begging or peddling in the harsh and merciless urban space, are exposed to direct exploitation by families or mafia groups. As Hamid Moradi emphasises:

'[Working children] work by force in the street and errand centres; they are under violence, and also the family's feeling of need for that child's employment... they are really just looking for more income for the financial needs of the family'

(Interview No. 30, Hamid Moradi, Pos 18).

This need, rather than being a voluntary choice by these children, transforms into a type of coercion imposed upon them by both the family and economic and social structures. Theories related to the economic exploitation of children, such as the perspective of Boltanski and Chiapello (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005), indicate that working children, particularly in developing societies, are exploited as cheap and dependent labour in a way that plays an important role in the cycle of poverty and violence.

The experience of these children often lays the groundwork for criminal behaviours in later years of life. Hossein Haghighi explains in this regard:

'Criminal behaviours that street and working children perform usually start with thefts from [adolescence]... and after that theft from people, pickpocketing, petty bag-snatching begins. [These instances become the ground for rough and violent behaviours of youth such as mugging]' (Interview No. 79, Hossein Haghighi, Pos 69).

These statements demonstrate how child labour in the street not only makes them victims of direct violence from society and mafia groups but also influences the type of behaviour and interaction they have in adulthood. Based on the Cycle of Violence Theory (Widom, 1989), it can be said that these children, who have themselves been exposed to violence, reproduce this behavioural pattern in the future and transform into perpetrators of violence.

Furthermore, the role of parental addiction in the exploitation of children, particularly boys, is another influential factor in this field. As Hamta, a social worker, explains:

'A father who has an addiction, a mother who has an addiction, has forced the boys to go work to earn the cost of this [drug] expense; this becomes a type of economic violence for boys' (Interview No. 81, Hamta, Pos 64).

Here, economic violence is displayed objectively. According to Bourdieu's theory of Structural Vulnerability (Bourdieu, 1990), children who grow up in such environments are not only deterred from natural paths of emotional and social growth and development but are transformed into tools for meeting the needs of the pathological family structure.

Moreover, the experiences of those who have faced labouring and dropping out of school from childhood illuminate other dimensions of this structural violence. Mohammad Eskandari narrates his childhood experience thus:

'Because my family population was large, for this reason, I quit school at 14 and stuck to work. First, I worked as a labourer in porcelain manufacturing... Even now, I haven't been able to progress in society and I have a guarding job'
(Interview No. 72, Mohammad Eskandari, Pos 11-13).

This statement reveals the connection between forced child labour and the loss of educational opportunities and social advancement in adulthood. Social Exclusion Theory emphasises that losing access to basic facilities such as education traps children in a closed cycle of poverty and social inadequacy, the consequences of which become manifest in their future lives.

Another important dimension of child labour is gender discrimination in the distribution of responsibilities within the family. Ebrahim Rahbaran says in this context:

'From childhood, 'get up early Friday, go get bread'... 'summer go work.' I have a sister too, but to which girl do they say 'go work in the summer'?... I could have played bicycle like other peers of mine who were cycling in the alley, but I had to do the work' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran, Pos 10).

This quotation reveals the imbalance in the division of duties between the sons and daughters of the family, and the imposition of greater responsibilities upon sons. Gender Role Theory and Connell's perspective (Connell, 1995) on hegemonic masculine dominance emphasise that this type of upbringing reinforces the pattern of gender inequality and transforms men into victims of this system, as it defines a set of heavy expectations and forced roles for them.

The effect of forced and hard labour is also another influential dimension. Farhad Azizi points out:

'If we go back further, from very early childhood in families, all hard tasks were for boys. I myself laboured. It was heavy for our stature and build' (Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 9).

This physical pressure at a young age, in addition to lasting physical effects, causes the formation of a type of apparent endurance reliant on the elimination of emotions and childhood pleasures. Developmental Trauma Theory explains that these pressures can transform in the long term into emotional and psychological problems, including suppressed anger, depression, or aggressive behaviours.

Finally, Mohammad Hosseini says regarding the responsibilities imposed on boys:

'They raised us like this, that 'we have become men,' we must do these things... when we were kids, 4-5 years old, we used to go to the queue [for bread/rations]... 'this is a man, men are a bit stronger,' in my opinion, it is because of this' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 28).

This sentence clearly demonstrates that upbringing systems based on gender stereotypes, which place harder responsibilities exclusively on the shoulders of boys, reinforce the cultivation of men for whom the repression of emotions and the acceptance of pressure is a value. According to Connell's Masculinity Theory, this type of upbringing places men in a position where socio-cultural pressures suppress their goals and needs, creating a cycle of internal and external violence.

Therefore, the experience of child labour in the street or in harsh working environments, as a structural violence against boys, involves a combination of socio-cultural, economic, and gender factors which, in the long term, influence not only the quality of individual life but also their social interactions and violent behaviours.

5.1.3. Appropriation of Men's Assets and Property by Women

The analysis of the economic contexts underlying the emergence of violence against men, within the framework of the presented data and based on the Grounded Theory approach, demonstrates that widespread economic difficulties in society—particularly in patriarchal cultures where the economic responsibility of the family predominantly rests upon men—provide a complex substrate for the experience of various forms of economic violence

against them. The narratives recounted by interviewees and the perspectives of experts examine and elucidate this phenomenon prominently through the lens of macro-economic problems, social expectations, and the transformation of cultural and emotional patterns.

One of the economic contexts of violence against men is the appropriation of assets and property by women, which often takes shape due to financial inequalities or structural acquisitiveness. Allah-Reza, a jurist, explains:

'Usually, it is the men who bear the primary duty of earning income. In society, so to speak, men manage. Now, leaving aside that there is a percentage [of society] where, so to speak, women work, men work and very easily hand over [the earned income] to the ladies, and the ladies spend it' (Interview No. 33, Allah-Reza, Pos 60).

This statement clearly alludes to the widespread acceptance of social conventions wherein everyone expects men to undertake the duty of providing for the family's financial needs alone, yet the distribution and management of financial resources is frequently delegated to women. From the perspective of Social Psychology theories, this imbalance of roles can engender a type of frustration and psychological trauma in men, for in such conditions, simultaneous with the imposition of the financial burden, they practically lack sufficient control over the administration of their own capital.

This inequality and pressure at the social and economic level is sometimes accompanied by the expansion of informal relationships, which in some contexts indicates the roots of economic problems. For instance, Mr. Sohrabi points to the severe inequality in income levels between men's and women's jobs, stating:

'[The] wretched [man] is working his guts out for you [the woman] from morning to night in this rain; money is earned with difficulty. The lady... for how much do I work per day? I work for an average of 500,000 Tomans a day, in severely stressful conditions. A lady who is illiterate goes to a nail technician course, and with a 4-million-Toman device as a nail technician there, she makes one million Tomans a day' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 161).

This narrative demonstrates that in many cases, the physical and psychological exhaustion of men resulting from heavy income generation, compared to the easier activity or income of some women, constitutes a type of indirect economic violence. In this unequal interaction, men often see themselves as



Figure 5 The Absence of Objective and Scientific Statistics regarding Violence against Men

victims of social conditions that, regardless of differences in occupational structure or emotional experiences, expect 'full-time financial support' from them.

Furthermore, severe poverty and unemployment at the individual level are among the most significant factors in the emergence of economic violence against men, which itself exacerbates inequalities. Vahabi explains:

'Livelihood problems, men's unemployment with men's low income... the lady's class [expectations] is much higher than this; she says, 'You could have more income than this, why don't you?!'' (Interview No. 14, Vahabi, Pos 72).

In this interview, in addition to high material expectations, the element of humiliation and psychological pressure is clearly visible. Women's feedback regarding men's economic failure frequently appears in the form of verbal and psychological violences, which creates a cycle of feelings of inadequacy, frustration, and emotional isolation in men. Maslow's Theory (1943) regarding human needs, particularly basic needs such as financial provision, clearly states that when an individual cannot meet their own basic needs or those of their dependents, their self-esteem will be severely damaged, and this cycle reinforces the ground for the emergence of violent behaviours towards oneself or others.

On the other hand, numerous narratives point to the phenomenon of the appropriation of men's assets by women, which has roots in certain traditions and social conventions. Mousavi Viayeh explains:

'They used to make part of the orchard the daughter's Mehrieh... she would return whatever income she had from it and leave that family... but now... a boy can no longer take his bride's hand and take her to a room in his father's house' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 18).

The alteration of these patterns and the erosion of kinship support systems that protected men from such violences has now caused the level of women's dominance over men's financial resources to increase. Numerous examples show that women, with the aid of legal instruments or by utilising cultural expectations, sometimes take control of assets in their entirety. Ahmad recounts his personal experience in one example thus:

'The house I bought, for example, I didn't set any Mehrieh [for her], I put the whole house in her name. I said she works and all that, this is for you, and I put it entirely in her name' (Interview No. 16, Ahmad, Pos 27).

This economic violence becomes more acute when even the laws operate in an unfair manner and place men in a more disadvantageous position. Allah-Reza explains:

'The division of property (Tansif-e Amval), despite the woman not sharing in the acquisition of property and assets... mostly men work. Now... relatively speaking, it is like this' (Interview No. 33, Allah-Reza, Pos 14).

This dissatisfaction with legal processes displays a cycle of structural violence that victimises men due to their role as providers, subjecting them to a type of social and legal injustice.

Other narratives also repeatedly point to the direct impact of these pressures on men's emotional and psychological health. Akbar Mombini says:

'[The man] when he comes home, even if he has one hundred percent money, everyone is his friend. If they don't have money, the very first moment he arrives, the first person who strikes him is his wife' (Interview No. 68, Akbar Mombini, Pos 13).

Such statements clearly emphasise that economic participation or non-participation cannot reduce the level of economic violence towards men; rather, their vulnerability stems more from the expected position of provider.

Data analysis within the framework of Grounded Theory demonstrates that men, in addition to direct economic pressures (such as poverty, unemployment, and high prices), face structural and cultural violences which include the unfair appropriation of assets and bearing the economic responsibility of society without support. This discordant cycle compels men to perform their roles under heavy psychological and emotional conditions with a greater psychological cost.

5.1.4. High Cost of Living, Inflation, and Economic Crisis

The analysis of 'High Cost of Living, Inflation, and Economic Crisis' as a context for violence against men, utilising the presented data, demonstrates that economic disorders resulting from macro-government policies play a significant role in intensifying various forms of violence against men in Iranian society.

One of the important aspects in the economic context of violence against men is the structural and systemic role of economic problems. Marziyeh Hosseini, a social pathology expert, emphasises:

'The greatest abuser is the economic system [high prices and inflation] of the country [the government] itself. We have the phenomenon of men's flight and men's suicide, and such social work files come to my hand... especially last year, essentially from the mid-90s [solar Hijri calendar, approx. mid-2010s] to today, the growth of social pathologies, their activity and complexity, is very striking. I encounter men's flight [due to economic problems] very, very often' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 115).

These statements indicate that from the perspective of experts, government economic policies and their consequences, such as high prices and inflation, do not merely create livelihood problems but directly lead to an increase in social pathologies, including 'men's flight' and suicide. From the perspective of Systems Theories, this type of economic violence is rooted in the macro-structures of society and directly influences individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). When the economic system loses its efficiency and transforms from a support into an agent of pressure and trauma, the first victims are the men who traditionally bear the responsibility of providing the family livelihood.

At the individual level, economic crises cause widespread poverty and unemployment, which itself lays the groundwork for various violences. Vahid

Faraji, pointing to the role of poverty and unemployment in youths' gravitation towards drug use, states:

'The government does nothing [employment] for the youth. It doesn't resolve people's needs. A series... many of the kids [consumers of narcotics and stimulants] end up like this... I know their addiction wasn't out of interest, it was out of their need' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 110).

This view indicates that poverty and unemployment do not just create economic problems but propel individuals towards high-risk and damaging behaviours. Merton's Strain Theory (1938) in criminology explains well that when individuals face barriers to achieving society's cultural goals (such as welfare and economic success) through legitimate means, they may turn to illegitimate and deviant means (such as addiction or violent behaviours). In these conditions, young men who cannot fulfil the economic role expected by society become severely vulnerable.

Furthermore, economic crises reveal the inefficiency of the resource distribution system. Rashidi, a retired senior, pointing to poverty and the inability to cover living expenses, says:

'Our country has many facilities and resources; no country, not even America, has so much wealth relative to our population that the nation would think it's paradise. But these facilities and resources are not used well' (Interview No. 70, Rashidi, Senior Citizen, Pos 36).

These words express the feeling of despair and anger resulting from observing abundant resources in the country while simultaneously experiencing poverty and deprivation. From the perspective of Social Justice Theory, this type of inequality and inappropriate distribution of resources is itself a form of structural violence that harms individuals due to their social position (Rawls, 1971). Elderly and retired men who strove to build society in their youth now face poverty and neglect in old age, which constitutes a form of economic violence and disrespect for their rights.

Also, economic crises have severe impacts on access to basic services such as healthcare. Mr. Javadi, a mental health specialist, speaks of the poverty of families in covering the treatment costs of mental illnesses:

'Families are incapable of covering the treatment costs of their mental illnesses... Now we have many unidentified male psychiatric patients. Meaning their family

has abandoned them and does not care for them' (Interview No. 82, Javadi, Pos 112).

This situation demonstrates that economic crises not only affect daily life but also damage support and treatment systems. Men suffering from mental illnesses who require care and support are abandoned and neglected due to families' economic incapacity. This type of neglect and lack of access to treatment is itself a form of structural and economic violence that damages men's health and human dignity.

Data analysis shows that 'High Cost of Living, Inflation, and Economic Crisis' operate not merely as economic problems but as primary contexts for violence against men. By creating poverty, unemployment, inequality, and the inefficiency of support systems, these crises place men in exposure to various forms of economic, psychological, and social violence. To confront this phenomenon, government economic policies must be revised in such a way that instead of intensifying problems, they lead to the improvement of people's livelihood status and the reduction of social pathologies.

5.1.5. Severe Poverty, Unemployment, and Deprivation

The analysis of the 'Trap of Poverty, Unemployment, and Deprivation' as a substrate for violence against men, particularly in underdeveloped and deprived regions of the country, demonstrates that these factors operate not only as economic problems but as the primary roots of economic violence and other dimensions of violence against men. This analysis, utilising interview data and a Grounded Theory approach, examines how these deprivations influence men's lives and the formation of multiple violences against them, although financial affluence and high economic power also pave the way for another species of violence against men, and this examination does not deny that.

The trap of poverty and unemployment can also fuel high-risk and damaging behaviours such as addiction. Ali Aghasi, with a history of addiction and HIV, locates the root of addiction in the poverty and economic problems of families:

'Addiction has roots in the family itself. Families are low-income and poor. Families where there is pathology, addiction, and prisoners [are poor]'
(Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 417-423).

This view aligns with Merton's Strain Theory (1938), which states that when individuals fail to achieve societal goals through legitimate means, they may turn to deviant behaviours. Addiction in these conditions can act as an unhealthy coping mechanism to escape the economic and psychological pressures resulting from poverty and unemployment.

In addition to addiction, poverty and unemployment can lead to an increase in crime. One of the narcotics police officers introduces financial poverty as the main background for individuals' gravitation towards crime and drugs:

'90 percent of offenders and criminals in the field of distributing and selling narcotics and stimulants are [in high-income crimes]. I dare say that over the past ten years, we have had an average of 450 arrests annually. Poverty and financial poverty is the main background' (Interview No. 55, Narcotics Police, Pos 44).

These statements show that in conditions of poverty and unemployment, some men turn to illegal and high-risk activities to meet their own and their families' basic needs, which is itself a form of structural and economic violence pushing individuals towards criminal behaviours.

At the familial level, poverty and unemployment can lead to domestic tensions and violence. Vali Bahrami, a sociologist, argues the role of poverty and unemployment in violence against the father of the family thus:

'The family of today, because children face various issues... some of their children are unemployed and some are involved in addiction... the tip of the arrow of these issues and problems is the man of the family or the father of the family, and it is one of the multi-subjects that I see visibly, and in fact their social support [which has vanished]' (Interview No. 74, Vali Bahrami, Pos 14).

This view indicates that economic pressures resulting from poverty and unemployment place a heavy burden on the shoulders of fathers, exposing them to various violences. The loss of social support also intensifies these pressures and renders families more vulnerable to economic crises.

Social and economic deprivations also play an important role in the formation of violence against men. Mehdi Momeni, pointing to the high rate of suicide in Ilam province, introduces deprivation as one of the main factors of this phenomenon:

'In Ilam province, the suicide average is three times the national average... Why, what is happening in the society of Ilam and Lorestan... that we have the highest

statistics of suicide against the self... When a society suffers from underdevelopment, when a society suffers severely from poverty—now ethnic poverty, cultural poverty, poverty of facilities... well, surely this violence [manifests as suicide]’ (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 125).

This analysis shows that multiple deprivations not only affect men’s economic lives but also damage their psychological and social health, paving the way for violence against the self.

Alireza Moradi, a sociologist, also sees the root of violence against men in Kermanshah province in deprivation and social exclusion:

‘In my opinion, the root of violence [against men in Kermanshah province] goes back to deprivation. You are sometimes excluded economically, sometimes excluded discursively, sometimes excluded socially and in terms of status, sometimes you are put aside from the bureaucracy system... We do not have the ability to solve the problem, we start causing harm. Causing harm, either we harm ourselves or another’ (Interview No. 42, Dr. Moradi, Pos 2).

This perspective indicates that deprivation and social exclusion significantly intensify feelings of incapacity and powerlessness in men, effectively driving them towards violent behaviours directed either against themselves or towards others.

Hossein Haghighi, an expert in the field of working children, pointing to the experiences of child labourers, demonstrates the impact of deprivation on children’s self-confidence and social identity:

‘Even when he goes to school, when he sees that kids whose families have a more appropriate life... naturally he is ashamed among his friends at school to really want to have proper self-confidence, to show proper behaviour; from the very beginning, this child faces a problem’ (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 39).

This narrative shows that childhood deprivation can have long-term effects on individuals’ lives, exposing them to various social and psychological traumas.

Finally, Allah-Reza, the jurist, in explaining the reasons for the inequality of blood money (*Diyeh*) between women and men, points to the economic role of men as the family breadwinner:

‘Consider, if a man dies in a traffic accident, that family is no more and they are destroyed; there is no longer anyone to be the breadwinner of the family. But if a woman is killed in an accident... they see no damage materially because the father

does business and provides the cost of living' (Interview No. 33, Allah-Reza, Pos [Unspecified]).

This argument, although it may be subject to criticism, clearly demonstrates the extent to which society considers the economic role of men as a central and determining responsibility, and how poverty and unemployment can threaten this role and lead to violence against men.

Data analysis shows that the 'Trap of Poverty, Unemployment, and Deprivation' operates as a multifaceted context for violence against men. By influencing identity, self-esteem, mental health, family relationships, and social status, these factors expose men to various forms of economic, psychological, and social violence. To confront this phenomenon, comprehensive and multilateral policies must be formulated and implemented to reduce poverty, create employment, develop deprived regions, and support vulnerable men.

5.1.6. Retirement and Old Age

The analysis of data from this research indicates that the emergence of violence against older men, particularly amongst retirees and elderly workers, is intertwined with multiple factors at individual, occupational, and social layers. The spark that ignites psychological and structural violence often lies in occupational crises, the reduction of economic power, and the individual's inability to adapt to environmental and social expectations.

The first section of the analysis demonstrates how grappling with poverty and the inability to provide for the family's basic needs transforms into an identity and psychological issue, far exceeding a mere financial crisis. An old man who says:

'God is my witness, I am not a beggar... even now it is very hard to return empty-handed; if it is possible, get a kilo of eggs for me' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 50),

expresses in the most poignant manner possible the image of masculinity fracturing under economic pressures and the shame arising from the inability to provide for basic needs. Psychologists, particularly with attention to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943), rightly emphasise that respect and esteem are among the fundamental human needs. When an individual

fails in meeting this need, they often view themselves as 'worthless' or 'ineffectual,' and this very fact constitutes a serious threat to their psyche.

On the other hand, psychologists such as Karasek (1979) in the 'Job Demand-Control' theory correctly emphasise the effects of occupational pressure combined with the inability to control work conditions. When an individual, especially older men and retirees, is under excessive physical and psychological pressure from the work environment but sees no ability in themselves to manage this pressure, violence transforms into an internal, self-destructive mechanism. This instance can be seen in the shameful narrative of an elderly worker who, as Momeni says:

'...has fallen amidst ten youths who have stronger bodies, better eyesight, and greater intelligence.'

When this elderly worker suffers blame and reproach due to the employer's pressure and the capabilities of younger competitors, and when he says *'a bag of cement fell from his hand and the employer called him a thousand bad names,'* he experiences, in a deeply painful form, the act of bowing his head before the anger of the environment (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 48). Such behaviours lead not only to a feeling of inferiority and failure in the man but also reproduce the cycle of structural violence.

Furthermore, observing the different psychological reactions of older and younger men to the same occupational and financial pressures is a significant point that Momeni has linked to workplace experiences:

'A young man who labours is also under pressure, but he is crushed psychologically far, far less than a 70-year-old old man' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 50).

The condition of the older man, who has lost his former physical and mental capabilities but is still recognised within the framework of social expectations and gender roles as the breadwinner, differs vastly from that of a young man who still has the opportunity for adaptation and recovery. In this midst, the heavy and unjust expectations of social relationships, as well as external blame, are nothing but a confirmation of the 'Broken Self-Concept' theory. This theory states that when an individual fails to meet social and environmental expectations, they consider themselves worthless and resort to internal violence to find an escape route to eliminate environmental pressures.

Mokhtar, a 70-year-old driver who is forced to work even after retirement, presents an image of the difficult situation of the elderly:

'The government has caused our men and elderly to be placed under pressure and abandoned in the streets. Families cannot provide their costs. Our economy has been backward for 45 years. Have you noticed there is no business and trade?'

(Interview No. 23, Mokhtar Davari, Pos 53-54).

These statements indicate that economic problems and the government's inability to support the elderly force them to work in difficult conditions, resulting in the experience of doubled economic and psychological violence. This situation is related to 'Social Exclusion' theory, which states that when individuals are deprived of society's economic, social, and cultural opportunities, they feel isolated and worthless and are exposed to various pathologies (Room, 1995).

This multifaceted interaction between poverty, inability, and the feeling of failure shows that violence against older men is a matter transcending physical issues. This violence attacks the individual's psyche deeply and targets their self-esteem, to the point where it begins to undermine the individual's identity from within. Ultimately, field investigations such as the present research clearly demonstrate that the path to salvation from this dilemma is not summarised solely in improving economic conditions and reducing workplace psychological pressures; rather, a rethinking of social, cultural, and economic structures is necessary, so that the identity and position of older men can be redefined in accordance with the realities of their physical and mental capabilities.

Type of Work and Men's Occupation: In the present research, the examination of economic contexts for the emergence of violence against men shows that the type of work and occupation, particularly for elderly men and in deprived regions, plays a significant role in the formation of this phenomenon. This violence is not limited to financial dimensions but, through humiliation, blame, psychological pressure, and feelings of worthlessness, affects broader dimensions of men's lives.

Alireza Moradi, a sociologist, looking more broadly at work and occupational pressures, introduces them as a form of economic violence:

'Well, let's go into society. From whom or which individuals or institutions does violence come? Institutions... like the violence of military service is enacted, like

the violence that the flawed bureaucracy structure in Iran has, the damage of which is much more severe for men than for women. Violence resulting from exclusion from employment. Unfortunately, violence resulting from unemployment, violence resulting from hard jobs. Let's go further, violence resulting from being multi-jobbed makes a person [men] neurotic. They must give men an economic capsule. Now, most of our [society's] men are dual-jobbed. A faculty member calls me moaning about economic pressure; he is a faculty member, has been a Dean of Faculty, is a full Assistant Professor, a university professor with twenty years of work experience, now he is looking for a second job. Why? Because according to the law defined by other individuals and institutions... and reactions to all these might differ; a man might submit and endure more than what seems necessary. If we want to take the broad definition, work of more than 8 hours for a man is a type of violence' (Interview No. 3, Alireza Moradi, Pos 141-143).

Moradi places institutional violences such as mandatory military service and the flawed bureaucracy structure within the category of economic violence against men. Pointing to the dilemma of holding multiple jobs and economic pressures even on the educated class, he emphasises that working more than 8 hours a day can also be considered a form of violence. This view aligns with theories related to Burnout. For example, the Maslach Burnout Model indicates that emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation (cynicism towards work), and reduced personal accomplishment are the main signs of occupational burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Economic pressures and the need to hold multiple jobs can intensify these signs in men and lead to violence against themselves and others.

Furthermore, Mehdi Momeni, focusing on the situation in Ilam province, points to economic problems and the lack of job opportunities in deprived regions:

'Of these forms of [economic] violence, unfortunately, in our society, especially in Ilam province, it is very high due to greater economic problems in Ilam and the lack of industrial centres and factories, and men who have cut off from agriculture and the village and come into the city, and in the city too have no work whatsoever [stable job] and salary, and severe depression, sorrow, incompetence, inefficiency, and worthlessness are created in them very, very much' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 23).

This narrative demonstrates how unemployment and poverty, particularly in deprived regions, can intensify feelings of incompetence and worthlessness in men and expose them to depression and other psychological problems. This situation is related to the theory of 'Relative Deprivation.' This theory states that when individuals feel they are in a more disadvantageous situation compared to others, the probability of the emergence of anger, despair, and violent behaviours increases in them (Runciman, 1966).

The findings of this research indicate that the type of work and occupation of men, especially in unfavourable economic conditions, plays an important role in the emergence of violence against them. This violence is not limited to financial dimensions but affects broader dimensions of men's lives through humiliation, blame, psychological pressure, and feelings of worthlessness. To reduce this type of violence, special attention must be paid to improving working conditions, creating appropriate job opportunities, and supporting men exposed to harm.

5.1.7. Inflation and Economic Pressure

The present research, focusing on the Grounded Theory methodology, demonstrates that the inability to cover the costs of housing, purchasing goods, education, and leisure—as one of the most significant economic contexts—plays a pivotal role in the emergence of violence against men. Pressures resulting from the responsibilities of fatherhood and husbandhood, alongside inflation and economic difficulties, expose men to various forms of psychological and economic violence.

Farahani, a 50-year-old active in the construction sector, points to the impact of inflation and economic pressures on men's lives:

'Inflation [is] excessive pressure, housing. Everything has an impact; it affects the man more. The man wants to provide, but he cannot. He resorts to petty theft, he goes into activities he shouldn't do, just to provide, to turn one [Rial] into two'
(Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 16).

These statements indicate that economic pressures and the inability to provide for the basic necessities of life can propel men towards high-risk and illegal behaviours. This situation is correlated with Merton's Structural Strain Theory (Merton, 1938). This theory posits that when individuals lack access to desired goals (such as economic provision) through legitimate means, they may resort to deviant behaviours.

Vali Bahrami, a teacher and sociologist, alludes to the impact of economic problems on men's identity and the increase in suicide within this demographic:

'These very men have a weak source of income; in fact, they don't have much of a status, especially with the economic subsystem becoming so important in our society. And when this man becomes economically weak, automatically he has nothing to say 'I exist.' This, in fact, damages them and causes them problems. Therefore, the recognition of identity—meaning the things that become a source of income for an individual, education and these things are important variables that actually give identity to the individual—and when a man does not have these... especially with lower expectations... now in society over the last few years, the last decade, we have had growing inflation. This growing inflation... in fact, many of, meaning our middle class, our expectations increase, this issue shows itself and its objective manifestation is in the mode of suicide itself that these men have' (Interview No. 74, Vali Bahrami, Pos 10).

This analysis demonstrates that economic problems can impact men's identity and expose them to serious psychological pathologies, including suicide. This situation is related to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This theory states that individuals' identity is largely formed based on their membership in social groups, and when this membership is accompanied by economic problems and pressures, individual identity is also affected.

Ebrahim, 42 years old and employed, complains of women's economic pressures and their expectations for earning higher income:

'[My wife] says 'go work more.' I don't care, it doesn't matter, work more. There are times when they become kind, but that is very short, unless that man keeps sitting and eating himself up [worrying]. If I myself want to go work in Snapp [ride-hailing app], put this much pressure on myself to make 500 Tomans a day, make it one million Tomans in two days, Thursday and Friday. I have to spend this one million on the car; 300 remains. Now you want to take down the front suspension, it costs two and a half million. The brakes broke a few days ago, since that day I've been constantly involved, one and a bit [million], I still haven't made one and a bit. What you earn, you have to put a bit more from your salary on top of it to fix the car. Well, if I stay home, my expenses are lower. This way you wear out the tyres, if you're not careful you hit a car, you have to pay insurance, pay some cost to the person you crashed into. You see your salary has

been whittled away, whittled away. Somewhere you realise that neither could you make good money with Snapp nor is anything left of your salary. Well, you sit at home, we'll make do with this same salary together' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran, Pos 98).

These statements indicate that economic pressures and the high expectations of spouses can place men in extremely difficult conditions, forcing them to work more and endure doubled psychological pressures. This situation is related to Gender Role Theory, which posits that traditional gender expectations and roles can exert immense pressure on men, particularly in conditions where they are incapable of fulfilling the role of family 'breadwinner.'

Mohsen Haghi, a 43-year-old electrical engineer, points to the impact of economic pressures on social and familial relationships:

'Tonight, if I want to go to Your Excellency's [your] house without a plan and suddenly, the reality is that there is a 99 percent probability that your monthly routine order will be disrupted. Why? Because you said 'well, we don't have [money] this week, leave it, I'll get it next week.' Now, for my sake, he has to go buy a kilo of meat. Look, your monthly planning gets disrupted. You had decided 'we don't want fruit this week, I'll go get fruit at the weekend.' Now at the start of the week, you have to go get fruit. Look, every family has a plan and planning. Whereas apparently, from what I see in past years, [at] Your Excellency's father's [table], there was always a hanger-on at the table. Uncle, maternal uncle, aunt, stranger, friend, so-and-so, there was always some nuisance at your table, and mother never protested either and attended to everyone. But now, today you can't, you have no readiness at all to bring another person to the table. The order gets disrupted. Why? Because he says 'if it's just ourselves, we'll eat a Dampokhtak [simple rice dish]; if so-and-so comes, I have to put on chicken,' agreed?' (Interview No. 90, Mohsen Haghi, Pos 17).

These statements demonstrate that economic pressures can impact social and familial relationships, diminishing intimacy and empathy. This situation is related to Social Exchange Theory, which posits that social relationships are formed based on the exchange of resources (such as money, affection, support), and when this exchange is unbalanced, relationships encounter problems.

In summary, the findings of this research show that the inability to cover the costs of living, as one of the most significant economic contexts, plays an

important role in the emergence of violence against men. This violence is accompanied by psychological pressures, despair, feelings of worthlessness, and high-risk behaviours. To reduce this type of violence, special attention must be paid to improving economic conditions, supporting families, and altering traditional gender attitudes.

5.1.8. Social Class

The class context plays a determining role in the emergence and intensification of violence against men. The experience of unbalanced development in Iranian society has led to the expansion of class and social gaps among various groups. These inequalities have not only influenced individuals' economic opportunities and social standing but have had a direct impact on family life and interpersonal relationships. The more prominent presence of women in educational and occupational spheres and their attainment of higher social positions has caused an increase in the level of their expectations and demands. These transformations have introduced fresh conflicts into the family arena, and in some cases, violence against men—particularly psychological and emotional violence—has manifested. In this context, the male gender becomes entrapped as a victim within a network of class, economic, and social pressures.

The class gap, in a structural manner, not only imposes economic and income limitations upon men but also creates a type of social label that calls into question men's capability and status in family life and society. One of the narcotics police officers says regarding the low social class of military personnel:

'[The low social class of military families] cannot be ignored. We, the staff of the Law Enforcement Force, generally recruit personnel from the lower stratum of society' (Interview No. 55, Narcotics Police, Pos 16).

This subject indicates that individuals present in the lower stratum, even in sensitive occupational positions, face social and economic limitations that influence their ability to better manage their personal or family lives. Sociological theories, including Marx's Social Conflict Theory (Marx, 1867), point to the fact that the class gap not only causes the intensification of economic deprivations but also, psychologically and socially, by creating superiority for higher classes, constitutes a threat to social cohesion and family relationships.

This class inequality is clearly visible in other narratives as well. Ali Tavakoli, recounting his life experience as someone grappling with HIV and addiction, points to his family's low social class:

'My mother is [a housewife] and my father, who is now retired, was a labourer, and this caused us to [grow up] in a poor family' (Interview No. 23, Ali Tavakoli, Pos 11).

This statement implies a weak economic situation that shaped his childhood and laid the groundwork for subsequent problems in his life. Similarly, Hossein, who has experienced divorce and imprisonment due to *Mehrieh* payments, says:

'My mother did sewing and had a meagre income and [my father died in childhood]' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 26).

These recountings indicate that men who have grown up in limited economic environments are more exposed to psychological and social pathologies, which can be significant reasons for the emergence of violence against them.

Limited economic conditions sometimes place pressure not only on individual life but also on interpersonal relationships. Rasoul, pointing to his low income and his family's support, describes his situation thus:

'I am a tailor. I have a limited income. Little. It's not much. But my family helps me and gives me money' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 22-24).

His experience shows that economic dependence on the family can limit individual independence and transform the man into a dependent and vulnerable individual. On the other hand, financial provision by the family sometimes causes hidden psychological pressures and violences which the individual may not be able to easily confront.

Nevertheless, possessing a high social status does not inherently insulate men from a life fraught with challenges. A 19-year-old youth, raised in one of the counties of Kermanshah province and enjoying a relatively robust financial status, recounts a bitter experience of childhood sexual abuse, stating:

'I am an engineering student at the Islamic Azad University. Our family consists of four members. We reside in one of the small towns of Kermanshah. My mother is a housewife and my father is self-employed. We have a relatively good financial status. I have a 16-year-old sister who is a school student' (Interview No. 62, Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 3).

This narrative demonstrates that class challenges may not, in certain instances, be directly linked to livelihood or economic survival; rather, they exert their influence through cultural, social, and educational opportunities—or the specific vulnerabilities inherent within certain socio-economic milieus.

In the realm of marital affairs, the class gap or stratification between spouses can transform into a potent factor for the emergence of violence against men. Mr. Sohrabi, who has experienced class disparity between himself and his spouse, remarks:

'[My wife's family] were not poor; they had a source of income and utilized it. But, well, they had no other side income. My father is in Tehran and was a retired employee... Look, until you find a person who is on the same level as yourself... when I saw that our family level was not on the same level as hers... my financial conditions are the conditions of 22 years ago. Now, my financial position—not that it is a 'good' position—is normal. I have an income, I have a fixed job...'
(Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 151).

This narrative indicates that class inequality can mutate into a problem of self-concept within family relationships, leading men to perceive themselves as victims of their spouses' perceptions and expectations.

From another perspective, class pressure can have a compounded effect on men in the form of lack of access to counselling and psychological services. Mehdi Momeni, a psychologist, explains that psychological services are predominantly accessible to the more affluent classes, while the lower classes, due to lesser financial capacity, remain excluded:

'On the other hand, a small number of people have the ability to afford the cost of coming to therapy sessions. Who comes to pay 400-500 thousand Tomans per session, and that for, say, thirty sessions?... The one who suffers the most damage as the lower class of society... free and insurance-based systems for providing this sort of service are also seen much less [are rare]' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 127).

This fact demonstrates that the absence of access to services, combined with doubled psychological pressure and the lack of capacity to cope with crises, renders men more susceptible to experiencing violence or manifesting traumatic reactions.

The class context is clearly visible within these stories and experiences. Economic limitations or class distances, whether in familial conditions or in

interpersonal relationships, play a critical role in facilitating conflicts and violences against men. Sociological theories, particularly the Theory of Social Inequality and the effects of structural strain on personal relationships (Giddens, 1984), can assist us in achieving a more profound understanding of this process.

5.2. Socio-Cultural Contexts

Introduction Social and cultural contexts play an unparalleled role in shaping structural and psychological violence against men. These violences manifest within daily interactions and diverse social, familial, and cultural substrates, frequently being reproduced in an invisible or indirect manner. Through a comprehensive study of in-depth interviews, researchers have discerned that violence against men stems not only from structural changes in gender roles but is also exacerbated by social and cultural inequalities. Concepts such as gender discrimination, unequal relationships between men and women, the crisis of masculinity, and cultural gender stereotypes serve as key instruments for analysing this phenomenon.

One of the most significant reasons for social violence against men is the transformation of gender roles within society. The evolution of social values and the diminution of male authority within the family have led to the emergence of a concept termed the 'Crisis of Masculinity.' This crisis, resulting from the failure of patriarchal traditions to provide power-centric roles, causes a decline in self-confidence and creates conflict within male identity. From a sociological perspective, these changes have not only fundamentally altered the man's position within the family but have also confronted marital relationships with numerous challenges. Men who were previously recognised as primary providers now face the decline of their traditional authority with the increasing economic and social role-playing of women. These transformations often lead to feelings of inequality and passivity in the face of responsibilities, culminating in verbal and psychological violences against men.

In addition to gender roles, the disparity in society's gaze towards men and women is another influential axis in social violence against men. Society, influenced by traditional beliefs, holds different expectations for each gender, creating doubled psychological pressure for men. For instance, in the marriage process, men are expected to bear the responsibility for the family's financial

provision and economic security, whereas women have fewer defined roles in this domain. This inequality, particularly in pre-marital interactions, lays the groundwork for psychological and social violences against men. Men often face a type of suspicion or expectational inequality which undermines their self-confidence in these relationships and leads to the formation of patterns of verbal and psychological violence.

Another issue identified through the data presented in this research is gender competition between women and men in the family and society. This competition has not only jeopardised men's position within the family environment but has also reduced their sense of authority. Particularly within the family space, women and men, instead of engaging in cooperative interaction, appear in power roles and strive to maintain their position. These competitive interactions have transformed family environments into spaces fraught with tension for men and have accompanied their interpersonal relationships with numerous challenges.

Finally, the data indicate that the general atmosphere of society also plays a role in producing violence against men. Patriarchal gender stereotypes and institutionalised expectations for men to perform arduous or hazardous jobs reveal other dimensions of social violence. Masculine social roles are predominantly defined in such a way that places men under severe psychological and physical pressure, straining their natural capabilities. These atmospheric constructions, created by the patriarchal culture of Iranian society, not only cause the social reproduction of violence against men but have transformed into a continuous process requiring structural and cultural changes.

In this research, an attempt is made to examine the hidden and overt dimensions of violence against men in social and cultural contexts by analysing the contextual themes raised, and to analyse the key components of these social relationships with greater precision.

5.2.1. Gender Contexts: The Advancement of Women's Rights, Feminism, and the Decline of Male Authority

The components of changing gender roles, the disparity in society's gaze towards men and women, gender competition between women and men, the power struggle between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, and the power struggle between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law constitute the gender

contexts for the formation of violence against men. In the following, we proceed to analyse the data related to these subjects.

Changes in Gender Roles: The analysis of data from this research indicates that changes in gender roles, the transformation of social and cultural values, the reduction of male authority in the family, and the ignoring of their psychological needs play a fundamental role in the formation of violence. This phenomenon is clearly reflected in the interviewees' quotes and aligns with prominent scientific theories in the sociology of family and gender.

The change in gender roles and the concept of the 'Crisis of Masculinity' are raised as one of the main axes of this violence. This concept, discussed in the theories of C. Wright Mills in the form of a crisis in traditional male roles, refers to the reduction of self-confidence and the feeling of conflict in men's identity (Connell, 1995). Dr. Mehrabi explains that:

'You see that the man can no longer enact his masculine role, because we have stereotypically come and bolded the anima in this lady so much, we have bolded that masculinity which exists in a woman's being, that unwittingly men's femininity has risen. Meaning when a man becomes [a man], he must have a wife... technically, gender roles have been displaced' (Interview No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 8).

This analysis aligns with the concept of 'Gender Role Substitution,' which in modern gender studies interprets the change in men's position in the workplace and family as a reduction in 'effective masculinity' (Kimmel, 2004). As Dr. Mehrabi points out, this displacement of roles has directly influenced not only the couple's behaviour but also men's sense of masculinity and, consequently, the reduction of their self-esteem.

On the other hand, the reduction of men's authority and social status within the family is another reason for the emergence of violence against them. This issue, raised in the theory of 'Gender Authority' by Blau and Kanter (1988), points to the fact that men's authority has been severely weakened by economic changes and women's greater participation in family financial provision. Amir Mokhtari points to the changes in the father's role in traditional versus modern families:

'We were in a populous family where there were eight kids, ten kids; there was one woman and this woman had built an idol called 'Father,' and the kids would say 'He is our father.' He passed away and we still don't call him by 'thou'

[informal 'you'], we don't call him by the third person singular' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 15).

In contrast to this traditional respect, he describes the current situation of men in the form of verbal and situational violence:

'Now ladies behave in such a way that the father is no longer extraterrestrial; he is a servant, he is a tool... do you notice? Whereas the child now talks to his father as if he is talking to his buddy' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 15).

This demotion of men's social status in the family aligns with Blau's theory, which analyses the reduction of male authority alongside the increase of female authority in the family sphere.

Also, ignoring the role of fathers in the family is raised as another dimension of violence against men. This issue is discussed in theories of 'Parent-Child Authority Relations' (Latabi, 1999), which examine the reduction of paternal authority resulting from changes in parental function. Delaram points to this subject, stating that 'the relationship is not yet defined and that conflict between generations still exists and hasn't settled yet,' adding:

'The man must provide that family Nafagheh [maintenance], but now that breadwinner role is also disappearing... now, for example, woman and man are working together side by side' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 19).

This change in family economic roles and the reduction in the weight of the traditional male role in providing livelihood aligns with Blau's views and also Parsons' gender role theories, which emphasise that any deviation from differentiated roles leads to conflict in family relationships (Parsons, 1955).

The lack of social value and prestige has also transformed into another form of violence against men, especially in poor families. Mehdi Momeni says in this regard:

'Naturally, the male child of a Sheikh is placed at a higher level than the male child of a peasant family. You have studied sociology more, so when someone is born in a peasant family, when a man is defined in a lower layer, socially he has nothing to say; even his righteous words are not heard anywhere, he is not invited to any important gathering or assembly' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 82).

This experience shows that social violence can spill over into domestic violence. Hartmann's theory of 'Gender and Social Class' reinforces this view that men in poor classes, due to a lack of social and economic resources, possess less real authority in the family, which itself can lead to the enactment of violence against them (Hartmann, 1981).

Family life 'lacking a backyard space [private retreat] for men' is also highlighted as another context for psychological violence against them. Ali Asgari points to this subject:

'In my opinion, every man needs a [backyard] retreat where he wants to do a series of things... work that he likes to do' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 45-55).

He complains of continuous control by family members and describes the family living space as one that is completely under surveillance and restriction:

'This space where you feel your entire life is under control and discipline and you are constantly monitored' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 45-55).

This form of psychological violence is introduced in Goffman's analysis of 'Social Space' as a form of 'Invisible Violence' that strips the individual of psychological security (Goffman, 1963).

Therefore, the analysis of familial contexts of violence against men shows that social and cultural transformations in gender roles, the reduction of men's authority and social value, and the lack of private space for them have led to the creation of various forms of violence in family life. These changes have influenced not only interpersonal relationships but the totality of men's position in the family and society, exposing them to unpleasant psychological and social consequences.

Disparity in Society's Gaze Towards Men and Women: Another source of violence against men in contemporary societies is the disparity in society's gaze towards men and women. In analysing the concept of the disparity in society's gaze towards men and women at the beginning of life, what stands out more than anything is the deep gender discrimination that is reproduced in various forms in social interactions and interpersonal relationships, especially in the marriage process. These inequalities cannot simply be reduced to the sphere of social rights; rather, they are rooted in cultural norms and a set of beliefs that determine gender roles before relationships are even formed. A critical look at this subject, through the quotes provided, clearly

shows how these inequalities provide a suitable substrate for feelings of injustice and the emergence of psychological violences against men.

The first quote from Saberi clearly highlights the issue of gender expectations and cultural sensitivities regarding women's chastity. He says:

'A gentleman showed me a photo; he was a neighbour and an engineer too. [He said] 'I like this girl, I want to marry her.' I saw the girl's style [appearance], I saw it wasn't normal. I turned back and said, 'Is she a girl?' He said, 'What do you mean?' I said, 'Is she a virgin?' He said, 'Haji, what are you saying! Virgin! You are old-fashioned.' I return to a subject I mentioned; I sometimes say things, sometimes with a smile and a joke and in passing, then I turn back and say I was talking about the 'Sin-Eater' [taking responsibility for others' sins]; the Sin-Eater is this: the boy has been abused' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 81).

In this example, we face a cultural incongruity; meaning an individual who wants to marry a woman cares, on one hand, about ethical and traditional criteria such as the woman's chastity, and on the other, is addressed by new norms and environmental and social pressures that portray these expectations as old-fashioned and inappropriate. This cultural paradox places the man on a path full of conflict and psychological pressure, which can ultimately lead to a reduction in psychological peace and even the emergence of intellectual violence against himself. Cultural Attachment Theory suggests that when individuals are placed in environments promoting different or contradictory values and expectations, the results often lead to stress and psychological confusion.

On the other hand, the issue of inequality in dealing with information needs and expectations in pre-marital interactions reveals another dimension of this disparate culture. Nour-Mohammadi's narrative describes this situation well, where he says:

'I have nothing to do with those issues of hers at all. Let me give you a simple example; we take gender discrimination and equality of men and women out of this subject. This goes back to violence; this itself is the very essence of violence. This very question you ask me, I want to ask you: 'What does your daughter have?' if it's a discussion of equality. A girl wants to come sit opposite me for the first time for us to get to know each other; the girl asks me, 'How much is your income?' I'm giving an example, say I tell her thirty million Tomans, forty

million Tomans. Now I ask her, 'Do you work? Are you employed?' (Interview No. 48, Ali Nour-Mohammadi, Pos 185).

This narrative clearly shows how, at the inception of relationships, men face a type of expectational inequality where, despite the raising of concepts like 'gender equality,' the scale of expectations remains tipped in favour of women. From a psychological perspective, this inequality can provoke a sense of being under suspicion in men and cause the destruction of honesty or mutual trust at the start of life. According to Role Expectation Theory, when unequal roles or expectations form between parties in a relationship, one party may show negative reactions and suffer continuous spiritual distress due to feelings of inadequacy or exploitation.

Continuing, Nour-Mohammadi expresses this opposition more deeply with another narrative:

'The first thing she is thinking to herself, the first thing she has in her background thinking about this question—I've asked this again and again—the first thing she thinks is that I am lying and trying to fleece her. Meaning she is allowed to know about my financial affairs, but I am not allowed to know about her financial affairs' (Interview No. 48, Ali Nour-Mohammadi, Pos 187).

Here we see clearly that trust, one of the most fundamental intra-personal components for starting any healthy relationship, has been disrupted under the influence of social discrimination and the disparate gaze between men and women. Excessive sensitivity to the man's financial issues while simultaneously maintaining women's secrecy and lack of reciprocal accountability not only reinforces the sense of injustice but places the man in the position of the accused (relationships based on profiteering or suspicion) or even a victim of circumstances. Social psychology perspectives (Social Equity Theory) also emphasise that when individuals feel their presence or resources are valued unequally in a bilateral relationship, they will suffer dissatisfaction and psychological pressures.

These quotes correctly articulate how social and cultural inequalities can create a cycle of pressures and psychological violences (albeit hidden and indirect) against men. Men who, in confronting these disparities, are placed on one hand in the role of 'responsible for ensuring the woman's psychological and financial security,' and on the other, face the sceptical or demanding gaze of society and even their future spouse. These contexts, despite claims of male-

female equality, indicate the existence of discriminations in the deeper layers of culture and societal beliefs that can lead to more serious psychological and behavioural problems.

Gender Competition Between Women and Men: In analysing the gender contexts for the emergence of violence against men, special attention must be paid to the impact of social and cultural relationships. Contemporary society faces a new order in gender relations that has not yet fully settled. Dr. Mousavi Viayeh points to gender competition between women and men in the family:

'Where husband and wife, instead of teamwork, appear as rivals in interaction, and each uses their own weapons to maintain power in the family' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 73).

This competition and social pressures have a profound psychological impact, especially on men who, due to mental illnesses, are unable to perform their traditional roles. Mehdi Javadi points to this point:

'That men grappling with mental problems are easily rejected by society and family because, according to traditional values, they do not have executive capability in the home environment or society' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 10).

This rejection indicates how society, through established gender values, easily pushes men to the margins.

On the other hand, sociologist Ahmad Bokharaei raises mental differences and intellectual dualities in individuals as contexts for the emergence of violence. He refers to the book *'The Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind,'* which:

'Examines the discussion regarding the unbalanced use of brain hemispheres and the creation of psychological duality in humans' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 87).

This analysis suggests how men may be weaker than women in utilising communicative and interactive capabilities, and these differences can lead to the formation of violence between the sexes.

Furthermore, women's high capability in the verbal and social domain can fuel violence against men. Allah-Reza offers opinions regarding the necessity of a holistic view of violence and the avoidance of gender divisions. He believes that:

'Violence can be so pervasive and influential from both sides that it even leads to hopelessness and despair' (Interview No. 33, Allah-Reza, Pos 8).

In this regard, women's verbal ability, as Yaser Hosseini Fard points out, can lead to the emergence of serious tensions between couples in verbal confrontations and verbal violence:

'Women's verbal ability can lead to the emergence of serious tensions between couples in verbal confrontations and verbal violence' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 29).

These data clearly show how gender laws and expectations, gender inequalities, and social and cultural capabilities and limitations can all play a role in creating and intensifying violence against men. Changing these dynamics and a correct understanding of gender interactions can help move towards reducing violence and improving mental health and relationships in the family.

Another prominent point in the extracted data is the reference to ongoing transformations in men's familial and personal structures, leading to the erosion of power and the loss of courage in facing life's issues. The narrated accounts clearly show that these changes have been influential not only at the behavioural level but in the deeper layers of men's cognition and identity. As one individual stated:

'In my opinion, it goes back to this very issue; now problems have been created for the man in the family, and this man does not have the previous power and courage; he has become very weak' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 52).

This sentence provides a transparent image of men's critical condition, wherein not only their individual position but their social status has also suffered collapse.

From a theoretical perspective, this occurrence can be analysed with the theory of the Male Social Role and the collapse of traditions associated with patriarchy. According to Giddens' views regarding modernity and changing gender roles, social and cultural transformations resulting from economic changes have led to the redefinition of the role men traditionally played in the family and society. With the decline of the man's authority as the individual who held the role of the family's main provider, a type of psychological-emotional inefficiency has formed in them, weakening not only their self-

confidence but also their courage and active confrontation with life's challenges. This is precisely where violence, whether direct or hidden, emerges as a consequence of these conditions.

Also, in Connell's Gender Role Theory, it is noted that for men, social power and authority have meaning more from a symbolic aspect than a practical one. When their authority and courage are destroyed, their vulnerability to expectations, family pressures, and even psychological violence increases dramatically. This analysis is directly reflected in the quoted narrative; for the individual experience in confronting problems in the family explicitly arrives at the erosion of power as a weakening factor that has caused violent behaviours or the inability to respond to social pressures.

The crisis of male identity in these conditions leads to the emergence of violence against him, which in many cases is repressed and indirect. From a psychological theory perspective, this phenomenon can be examined within the framework of damage to self-esteem and the sense of masculine adequacy; according to Adler (1930), when an individual lacks sufficient power to make decisions and manage their life in the face of familial or social crises, a feeling of weakness and passivity replaces the sense of authority, and this trauma can manifest in the form of psychological, verbal, or even physical violence against him.

The quote provided in this section is a reflection of the immense challenge in the masculine role, which in critical family situations and the absence of courage to face challenges, has led to the erosion of their power and position, revealing violence in both direct and indirect forms.

5.2.2. Peer Groups and Relationship Networks

In analysing the role of friend and kinship networks in the emergence of violence against men, we encounter numerous narratives that indicate the potent influence of these networks on individual behaviour and decision-making. The articulation of these roles is sometimes performed through direct expressions by the individuals involved, and sometimes through observing the deleterious results that these relationships entail. Narratives clearly demonstrate how close relationships with friends and relatives engaged in deviant and criminal activities can pave the ground for violence against the individual himself and his transformation into a member of these flawed networks.

In this regard, Rasoul, a 25-year-old youth with a history of narcotic and stimulant use, clearly describes the destructive role of his criminal friend network in his life:

'All [my friends] are only thinking of using [drugs]. All [my relatives] are criminals; I haven't seen a healthy person. Mostly, they chose the wrong friends... I became involved in addiction because, for example, I went to gatherings I shouldn't have gone to... I thought if I went into these gatherings, I would become 'big' [important/powerful]' (Interview No. 46, Pos 258).

This quotation aptly demonstrates the determining role of friends and relatives in directing youth towards anti-normative and criminal activities. Social Pressure Theory (related to Tajfel & Turner, 1979; and conformity studies) points to this issue, noting that individuals, particularly during youth, are severely influenced by peer norms and, due to the need for social acceptance, may choose high-risk behaviours.

Gholam Eskandari, a 50-year-old individual with professional criminal experience, speaks of the profound effects of friendly and romantic relationships in entering the world of crime:

'We came into this story of crime... while we were committing crimes, two women also crossed our path, and they would bring and give us [drugs]... puff by puff by puff, Shisheh [crystal meth]... Shisheh went into our veins [system]' (Interview No. 24, Pos 34).

This narrative indicates how entering into unhealthy social relationships can drag an individual towards drug use, illegal acts, and even severe criminal behaviours. Hamid Haghi, with a brief but profound reference to his conformity amidst criminal groups, says:

'My real family outside were these very criminal kids' (Interview No. 44, Pos 118-119).

This sentence alone can demonstrate the impact of the crowd and friend groups on the individual; a place where individual identity and loyalty tend more towards these groups than biological families, and this issue can lead to delinquency and violent behaviours.

According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), individuals tend to consider themselves as belonging to specific groups, and this very belonging can cause their behaviours to be shaped in accordance with group

expectations. This theory explains well why individuals in such conditions, even at the cost of moving towards violent or criminal acts, maintain their loyalty to the group.

Mr. Shahrokhi, with experience of substance use, recounts the dangerous impact of friend groups on the spread of viral diseases:

'[Among groups and networks] of consuming individuals, HIV, hepatitis, sexually transmitted diseases are easily transmitted... their consumption is shared, consumption implements are shared; the grounds for diseases are very much provided for these individuals' (Interview No. 85, Pos 32).

This story demonstrates how relationships with unhealthy groups can influence not only the individual but the surrounding society as well.

The stories of Ashkan, Hossein, Akbar, and Ali, and the role that friends and 'local lads' (*Bache-Mahal*) played in the deviant path of their lives, all place a seal of confirmation upon this reality that close social relationships with unhealthy individuals play a direct role in the emergence of destructive and violent acts. These individuals clearly show how the lack of acceptance and affection at home and with the family can propel the individual to seek belonging and acceptance in criminal groups. Akbar Ebrahimi says:

'My friends dragged me onto the path... how should I tell you... dragged me onto the path of crime, but somewhere they showed me a small kindness, I felt they were giving me the world' (Interview No. 43, Pos 21).

Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969) explains the psychological infrastructures of this phenomenon; the perception of not receiving sufficient affection and the need to find a substitute for this affection in unhealthy friend networks can cause the individual to bond with people who guide him towards unhealthy behaviours.

In general, this analysis shows that relationships and connections with friends and relatives play an important role in paving the way for violence against men. Unhealthy social networks, by reinforcing criminal behaviours, drug use, and physical conflicts, can propel individuals towards a violent path. This issue is due to the deep influence of social relationships in individual identity formation and the pressure to comply with peer group norms, which, without appropriate support and with the continuation of high-risk behaviours, can drag the individual into delinquency and violent acts.

Activity in Mafia, Criminal, and Delinquent Networks, particularly in fields related to narcotics and smuggling, is also considered a substrate for the emergence of various types of violence against men. These violences, as interviewees describe, can take various forms; from direct physical violences during conflicts and settling of scores to structural and psychological violences resulting from activity in these networks. In this analysis, utilising the provided quotes and within the framework of Grounded Theory, the dimensions and contexts of this phenomenon are examined.

Gholam Eskandari, a professional drug trafficker, says regarding his experiences of enacting violence in this arena:

'In the drug smuggling work, I enacted a lot of violence. Pressure came on me. He took the goods, I gave him 30 million credit, gave him the 'crime' (drugs). He took it and sold it... you understand? Like this, suddenly I would do this [beating and assault] to him' (Interview No. 24, Pos 137-138).

This confession shows that in the world of smuggling, violence is not merely a tool but a necessity for maintaining power and interests. Social Control Theory (Hirschi, 1969) states that individuals gravitate towards deviant behaviours when their bonds with society are weakened and they have no control over their actions. In this case, Gholam Eskandari, by being placed in an illegal network, has separated from social norms and resorts to violence to preserve his capital. This violence results directly from economic pressures and mistrust in this environment, indicating a vicious cycle of mutual violence wherein individuals resort to violence to defend themselves or claim their rights.

In addition to direct violence, activity in mafia networks can pave the ground for structural and psychological violences as well. Hamid Haghi, regarding his experience during military service and selling drugs, says:

'We went to military service and went into the barracks. On the first night of my service, I formed my own team. I didn't go to parade, didn't go to shooting practice, I was skipping all of it, skipping all of it. I used to go into the forest of Babolsar, I served there in the Sepah [IRGC]. My training was there; I would go from the forest into the villages for myself, I would get cigarettes for myself, get hashish, get heroin. I would come back with four guys like myself, we had formed a team in the barracks, we would come and sit for ourselves, something like this' (Interview No. 44, Pos 191).

This narrative demonstrates how closed and high-pressure environments like military service can transform into a substrate for illegal activities and drug use. Social Learning Theory (Akers, 1985) emphasises that behaviours are learned through interaction with others and observing their results. In this case, Hamid Haghi, by entering a new environment and encountering peers engaged in drug use and sales, learned these behaviours and embarked upon them. These activities, in addition to legal dangers, can lead to psychological problems, addiction, and ultimately, violence against oneself and others.

Marziyeh Hosseini, a social pathology expert, says regarding the activity of mafia networks in the Farahzad valley of Tehran:

'Farahzad valley and all around it... these armed men, they call them 'club-wielders' (Chomagh-dar), and about thirty chained dogs salivating from their mouths, and their homes are the same. And where we went, the hangout was for financial turnover; there were four of these big shots buying Shisheh [crystal meth]. Meaning you cannot get close to them, and before your foot reaches this hangout, they have taken ambush in several other stages in other places, and they are armed men and they kill. Meaning they don't care at all; your presence doesn't involve itself in the story [they eliminate you without hesitation]. And there aren't one or two, ten or twenty. Then this is a very strong network, and the reason this pathology is so prevalent in Iran that no one can contain it [is this]' (Interview No. 58, Pos 99).

This description presents a horrific image of the power and violence of mafia networks. The presence of armed men, chained dogs, and complex security systems indicates that these networks spare no violence to preserve their territory and interests. Anomie Theory (Merton, 1938) states that when individuals lack access to society's cultural goals (such as wealth and success), they may resort to illegal means to achieve these goals. In this case, members of mafia networks, by bypassing laws and social norms, seek to acquire wealth and power, utilizing violence as a tool to reach these objectives.

Ms. Hosseini continues, pointing to the extent of these networks and their infiltration throughout the country:

'It is this: our prevention network and deterrent factors are very weak, but the factors that guide and create these pathologies and profit from them are very strong. For example, look at this very addiction; they have infiltrated even the most remote villages of Iran. You can easily obtain drugs wherever you are in this

country, you can easily. But what about the prevention and treatment network? In this very Tehran, few families have access to treatment, to prevention. Everything is like this' (Interview No. 58, Pos 99).

These statements indicate that mafia networks, by exploiting the weakness of prevention and treatment systems, have been able to infiltrate society extensively and expand their activities. Labelling Theory (Becker, 1963) states that when individuals are labelled as deviant, they are more likely to continue deviant behaviours. In this case, the weakness of the prevention and treatment system causes individuals involved in mafia networks to be labelled as criminals and excluded from society. This exclusion reduces the probability of their return to society and cessation of criminal activities, trapping them in a cycle of violence and deviance.

In summary, activity in mafia, criminal, and delinquent networks is a substrate for the emergence of various forms of violence against men. These violences can take different forms; from direct physical violences to structural and psychological violences. To confront this phenomenon, it is necessary that in addition to strengthening prevention and treatment systems, attention be paid to predisposing factors such as poverty, social inequality, and the weakness of social bonds. Furthermore, efforts must be made to consider individuals involved in these networks as victims of social and economic conditions and provide them with the opportunity to return to society and lead a healthy life.

The Analysis of the Contexts of Wickedness (*Sherarat*), Delinquency, and Childhood/Adolescent Crimes to explain the 'why' of the emergence of violence against men in later periods of life also indicates the profound impact of experiences in this life stage on aggressive, criminal behaviours or even situations of victimisation at older ages. Delinquency and criminal behaviours in childhood and adolescence operate as a substrate for the emergence of violence not only due to direct effects on individual mentality and tendencies but through reinforcing unhealthy upbringing, cultural, and environmental patterns. Deep experiences of this life stage can be analysed in the form of a synthesis of individual, familial, and environmental factors.

The story of Ali Tavakoli (35 years old) is an illuminating example of the collapse of an individual's life path during the sensitive period of puberty. He says in this regard:

'Until the third year of middle school, I was the top student in the class. Then suddenly in the first year of high school, the most sensitive period and the age of puberty, we fell into the line of cigarettes and substances; it completely changed the path of my life. I ended up in the street and became completely a rough sleeper. I used to search for rubbish. We became distant from the family. Anyone at this age goes after experiencing these things [drugs]' (Interview No. 23, Pos 258-264).

His experience clearly demonstrates the synthesis of environmental factors, the lack of family and social support, and curiosities related to puberty, which ultimately ended in delinquency, addiction, and social isolation. Psychological theories such as Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) show well that high-risk and criminal behaviours can form as a result of observation and susceptibility to the environment and close individuals, transforming into a fixed behavioural pattern.

Faraz Mahboubi (30 years old) also, pointing to the lack of peace in his childhood, says:

'The most important violence I have experienced up to this age was the lack of peace. Which I experienced in adolescence' (Interview No. 36, Pos 21-22).

This diagnosis shows how psychological peace and security in childhood play a key role in preventing future violent or destructive behaviours. The feeling of psychological and social insecurity, particularly in high-tension families, causes the individual to turn to delinquency, aggression, or dangerous behaviours in an attempt to compensate for this void. This view aligns with Psychoanalytic Theory (Freud, 1920), which states that early psychological traumas, especially those related to the lack of support and emotional security, have a deep impact on the formation of the psyche in adulthood.

Mohammad Amin Bagheri (24 years old), by describing shocking events and criminal behaviours of adolescence, presents a terrifying image of the wickedness and moral ignorance of this period:

'Then every day I would engage in fighting and brawling; I would beat the children of the alley. I used to keep pigeons; twice a week I would break the neighbour's window. I was very mischievous and annoyed them a lot. At the age of 14-15, an incident occurred; one of my friends made a pass at my friend's sister. We kidnapped this boy and took him away. We had actually seen this in films, in reality. We kidnapped him

and took him to one of the kids' houses, and we beat him and raped him. We inflicted [terrible] calamities upon him' (Interview No. 40, Pos 87).

This narrative serves as a harrowing testament to the influence of the culture of violence and the mimetic adoption of erroneous media patterns. The role of the peer group and the vacuum of social and familial control in these instances is fundamental. Hirschi's Social Control Theory posits that when the individual's bonds with normative social institutions—such as the family and the school—are severed or weakened, the probability of deviant and violent behaviours emerging within the individual increases significantly.

Finally, the opinion of Hossein (16 years old), an adolescent student, offers a brief yet articulate depiction of the criminal nature of adolescent behaviours:

'Whatever crime I commit—I mean these drugs and such—I am mostly alone. The police station has caught me with Aragh [illicit alcohol], and a few times also with girls [illicit association]' (Interview No. 101, Pos 244-248).

This example clearly demonstrates how feelings of loneliness, the absence of positive familial and social connections, and the lack of supervisory or supportive programmes for adolescents can propel them towards dangerous and high-risk behaviours.

These narratives, alongside authoritative scientific theories, all emphasise the point that the wickedness and delinquency of childhood and adolescence not only alter the individual's life trajectory but can operate as a primary substrate for violence, high-risk behaviours, and subsequent victimisation. In these cases, the synthesis of educational, social, and individual factors indicates the deepest layers of influence that behaviours during this period exert upon the individual's future.

5.2.3. Poor Urban Neighbourhoods as a Context for Crime, Exclusion, and Violence Against Men

Poor urban neighbourhoods, beyond merely providing the context for the occurrence of violence, crime, and social deviations, act as a direct agent in the formation of violence. These localities, characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment, marginalisation (*hashiyeh-neshini*), and a lack of infrastructural services, consolidate violence and high-risk behaviours not as temporary aberrations but as established social norms. Men residing in these areas, by virtue of the disordered conditions governing their environment,

enter a cycle of economic and social pressures that inevitably propels them towards deviance, delinquency, and even destructive behaviours. Narratives provided by individuals living in these neighbourhoods indicate that in such environments, violence and crime are not only accepted, but the lack of legitimate opportunities and social supervision has transformed them into tools for survival and the consolidation of status.

Hamid Haghi, one of the narrated examples, describes his experience of a crime-ridden neighbourhood, stating that his first violent encounter involving a cold weapon (*salah-e sard*) took shape in that very locality. He emphasises that the lack of control and the presence of violent behaviours in the environment laid the groundwork for his first violent action. Such experiences clearly demonstrate that violence in these neighbourhoods is not a product of individual choice, but stems from the social and structural pressures governing the environment. Robert Merton's Social Strain Theory explains this situation well, stating that the lack of legitimate opportunities and tools guides individuals towards maladaptive and deviant behaviours—a phenomenon more pronounced among men residing in poor urban localities.

Life in crime-ridden urban neighbourhoods leads not only to the formation of deviant behaviours in men but gradually erodes their human identity. Rasoul, another narrator, articulates the dire conditions of his living environment, speaking of the diminution of hope, psychological insecurity, and the destruction of youth residing in these areas. His experience indicates a specific condition wherein violence, rather than being a tool for solving temporary problems, has transformed into a part of existence and survival. Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory also points to this subject, stating that individuals learn violent behaviours through observation, imitation, and direct interaction with environmental conditions. Such conditions in crime-ridden neighbourhoods cause men, for reasons such as psychological pressure, disordered economic positions, and the lack of healthy social opportunities, to gravitate towards high-risk, hazardous behaviours, and even crime and delinquency.

These neighbourhoods also lack social cohesion; instead of positive collective values, violence and high-risk behaviours have become the dominant discourse. Ali Aghasi, narrating the life of rough sleepers (*karten-khabha*) in the Darvazeh Ghar neighbourhood of Tehran, speaks clearly of the prevalence of crime and violence in these areas. He describes how drug use,

theft, and the presence of criminals have become ordinary matters in the daily life of these regions. It is evident that these types of neighbourhoods are not merely substrates for the occurrence of violence, but practically function as producers and reproducers of violent behaviours.

The psychological impact of crime-ridden neighbourhoods is also highly pronounced, as living in a space replete with violence and emotional instability confronts men with a spectrum of mental illnesses, including isolation, aggression, and despair. According to Mehdi Javadi, a mental health expert, living in environments like Darvazeh Ghar has a profound impact on individuals' character and behaviour. In such regions, violence as a part of daily life not only inflicts psychological damage on individuals but intensifies the reproduction of violence and high-risk behaviours in society.

Another point that must be attended to is the role of ethnic and social tensions in these neighbourhoods. The existence of ethnic minorities who have been pushed to the margins increases pressure on vulnerable groups and men, entering them into cycles of violence. According to the Narcotics Police, the Gol Tappeh neighbourhood of Varamin experiences doubled pathologies due to its ethnic and social composition, which further exacerbates conditions of social exclusion and violence against minority groups.

Ultimately, poor urban neighbourhoods operate not only as a context for the occurrence of violence and social pathologies but are considered a primary agent of violence against men. Disordered environmental conditions, economic and social pressures, and the lack of healthy and legitimate opportunities cause men in these environments to be propelled towards violent behaviours, social deviations, and individual and psychological injuries. The cycle of reproducing violence in these neighbourhoods entails deep and pervasive damages for the entire society, and the intensity of these problems can only be reduced by reforming infrastructures, providing comprehensive services to residents, and focusing on reducing social exclusion.

Narratives and reports clearly emphasise that crime-ridden neighbourhoods, due to the high concentration of poverty, unemployment, uncontrolled migrations, and the absence of appropriate living infrastructures, have transformed into places where men, as the primary victims, both suffer harm within them and become agents of harm for their surrounding society. This cycle of violence, which includes individual injuries, high-risk

behaviours, and ethnic and social conflicts, can only be eliminated by focusing on sustainable development and effective social policies.

Social Exclusion is a condition wherein an individual, for numerous reasons, is cast aside from social interactions and the supportive circles of family or society. This phenomenon can be a harsh and violent experience, entailing significant psychological and emotional consequences for men. In the analysis of interviews, numerous signs of social exclusion are seen in the form of neglect, being ignored, and involuntary or deliberate removal.

Vahid Faraji speaks of his experience of exclusion due to his family's migration to an area with inappropriate social conditions:

'My father is from Mianeh and grew up in this very region of Zibashahr and Qarchak and Varamin. I was six years old in this region in a populous family; there are 3 brothers older than me and we are 4 sisters, and from the inception of the incident, our father was a user [addict]. Because my father was a user, he migrates from his own city' (Interview No. 44, Pos 3).

Migration, resulting from economic and social pressure, not only placed this family in environmental isolation but caused the fracture of their *in situ* bonds. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) points to this point, noting that the social and cultural environment surrounding the individual plays an important role in shaping their mental health. When this environment is broken due to migration or social pressures, the individual suffers isolation due to the rupture of existing connections.

These narratives demonstrate from various aspects that social exclusion can be rooted in economic, cultural, communicative, and emotional factors. In the shadow of this exclusion, men are sometimes compelled to accept isolation, sometimes forced to fight loneliness, and in many cases become victims of psychological and spiritual violences that plunge their personality and social identity into crisis.

Migration to Metropolises is also often a response to a set of unfavourable conditions such as poverty, unemployment, and weak economic infrastructures. This forced migration is not merely a change of location but a process that transforms men's social and psychological identity and exposes them to various violences.

Furthermore, forced migration from deprived regions to metropolises, in many cases, causes the fracture of social and familial connections. Vahid Faraji says in this regard:

'My father is from Mianeh... Because my father was a user, he migrates from his own city' (Interview No. 44, Pos 3).

Migration accompanied by poverty and addiction leads to the fragility of family relationships and the reduction of the family's social base in the new environment. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory refers to the importance of changing social environments and their effects on individuals. In such conditions, changing space from a limited supportive system to a system contaminated with social problems reduces individuals' communicative capacity and exposes them to social violences.

Another image of this trend is the fracture of the individual's bonds with family and society in new situations. Akbar Ebrahimi speaks of the bitter experience of being excluded by his family in social situations:

'I wasn't seen at all. In the gathering, on Thursdays and Fridays when my sisters and brothers would gather, suddenly my nephews and nieces—perhaps ten years younger than me—my big brother was warm with them and talking and laughing. My mother told him many times, said 'How do you sit with Pari and Saeed and Peyman, sit and laugh, but with your brother sitting in the yard, huddled up, not one of you gets up to invite your brother into the house?'' (Interview No. 43, Pos 188).

This feeling of being excluded is a direct consequence of losing supportive connections and the social displacement that migration brings. These observations confirm Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969), stating that when individuals are deprived of emotional support and feel insecure in their relationships, the probability of emotional and psychological problems emerging in them increases.

Moreover, migration to metropolises can expose men to violence resulting from cultural and economic differences. Dr. Mehdi Momeni, pointing to the social status of immigrant subcultures such as Gypsies (*Koli-ha*), explains:

'The Koli [Gypsies] that we have in Ilam too, have been inside the city of Ilam for 70-80 years and have not found much social acceptance yet, and no one takes a wife from them yet, no one gives them a daughter. They give them jobs like cobbling and animal husbandry and simple tasks, and they themselves ask for these. We call them Koli or, in the words of [poet] Akhavan-Sales, Luli, Luli-vash; they played instruments and moved. Now whether they came from Eurasia, came

from India, from other places like Italy or from Spain and such, we have them too'
(Interview No. 38, Pos 82).

This social exclusion enacts hidden violence in another form, of which the prevention of social acceptance or the creation of low-ranking jobs is only a part. Bourdieu's Theory (1986) regarding Cultural Capital explains this phenomenon clearly; men who lack the necessary cultural capital to adapt to the new environment are inevitably placed on the margins of society and deprived of equal opportunities.

Migration to metropolises, by robbing men of their primary supportive capabilities, enters them into the heart of a cycle of exclusion and isolation. Migrant men not only lose their familiar environment but often become targets of violence in the new culture due to economic and social differences. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) explains this situation by pointing to the failure to meet basic needs such as security and belonging. The consequence of this failure is a feeling of despair, self-deprecation, and motivation towards hazardous behaviours, which can lead to the emergence of secondary violences, both at the individual and collective levels.

5.3. Family and Kinship

5.3.1. Communication Structure of the Family

The analysis of the contexts of the family's communication structure, which can pave the way for violence against men, indicates—according to numerous quotes and individual and scientific opinions provided in the attached data—that these structures often operate in a complex and insecure manner. In interaction with social, psychological, and cultural factors, they exert severe violence and psychological pressure on men. These narratives reflect not only the emotional and psychological dimensions of violence but also reveal the deep entanglement between family structure, gender role-playing, and intergenerational conflicts.

Violence against men in various forms, including psychological repression, gendered unkindness, and social pressure within family communications, is observed in many quotes. The commencement of this examination lies in the impact of changes in the marriage age in society on family communication patterns. Mr. Rashidi, pointing to changes in the age of

marriage, alludes to the issue of delayed marriage and the psychological problems resulting from it. He says:

'Look, in the old years, for a child, for example, a 15-16-year-old girl, they would say her marriage time is passing; at 10-15 years old she would marry and form a family. Well, anyway, now I myself married late, I was 26 when I married. Well, mostly at 20-22-23 years old, when he came from military service, he had to marry. But now, research it yourself; in these very neighbourhoods and among relatives, how many single boys of 30-40 years are there? The young man can't, you know! He is afraid...' (Interview No. 70, Pos 28).

This narrative demonstrates that delayed marriage, in addition to economic and psychological impacts at the individual level, has laid the groundwork for a spirit replete with fear and despair among single men. From the perspective of Individual Development Theory (Ellis, 1958), such a delay can cause an accumulation of social pressures and cultural expectations, placing men in an inevitable cycle of communicative instability.

Another dimension of violence in the family's communication structure is seen in the manner of women's upbringing in the paternal family and the effects of this upbringing on marital communications. Dr. Vahabi has clearly explained that:

'Ladies have kept the anger they received in the paternal family from the brother, received from the father... and when they became mixed and [found a] husband and then a son... when they marry, when is better than now? Who is a shorter wall [an easier target] than the husband? Blackmail and sexual hostage-taking exist; well, in this sexual relationship, the man's neck is always bent [he is submissive]...' (Interview No. 14, Pos 28-32).

The analysis of these data shows that the anger women endure through conflict with men in the paternal family is transferred symbolically into married life, and this transfer often occurs through retaliatory and sexually controlling behaviours. This matter is rooted in the theory of Transference (Freud, 1920), which states that repressed feelings of past anger and suffering can be reactivated in an individual's subsequent interactions and appear in a new guise.

An 'Authoritarian Upbringing' perspective is another factor leading to the formation of cycles of violence. Dr. Vahabi explains in this regard:

'If the party [the woman] really doesn't have much of a problem within herself... and the lady has this feeling that she must have been raised in a family that has a top-down view on everyone, and she executes this view on her own husband and children, and deliberately wears this gentleman down...' (Interview No. 14, Pos 72).

Such behaviour is interpretable within the framework of Social Dominance Theory (Marx, 1848; though seemingly referencing conflict theory broadly), which states that the concentration of power in certain roles or structures can cause the reproduction of relations of domination and violence to the detriment of weaker parties.

Intergenerational conflict and age differences between spouses in traditional marriages is another instance that paves the way for violence. Mr. Ahmad says:

'Father and mother were very different. The father was a person, he was an educator [cultural figure]. This mother... his first wife was his cousin and couldn't have children, and then he went and married a woman whose age was much lower and who was much lower in terms of class...' (Interview No. 16, Pos 24-25).

Generational and class differences in this narrative are linked in a subtle manner with pressures and psychological rifts in family interactions. Social theories such as Intergenerational Conflict Theory (Coser, 1956) also show that such gaps can lead to conflict and distancing between family members.

The concept of sons' emotional dependence on mothers is another issue that paves the way for the emergence of violence against men in marital life. Mr. Saberi says in this regard:

'The mother has more inclination towards the son... this very illicit [inappropriate] relationship that is created between the mother and the son, if it doesn't destroy the boy, meaning if it doesn't bring him towards female gender/sexuality, it provides for the boy's misery...' (Interview No. 21, Pos 39).

This narrative clearly shows how cultivating excessive dependencies between mothers and sons can create larger conflicts in marital relationships. From the perspective of Relationship Dynamics Theory (Erikson, 1950), such dependencies can directly cause a lack of emotional independence in the individual in relation to their partner and provide the substrate for psychological violence in shared life.

On the other hand, the social exclusion of elderly men and the unkindness of family members towards them reveals another form of violence in the family. Zahra Jiriyaei says in this regard:

'We... by a rule, perhaps children were with the mother more from childhood and accepted this more; socially, perhaps they cope with this subject easier, keep her and love her. But since the father was an ousted manager, and the man was ousted there and abandoned...' (Interview No. 57, Pos 172).

The higher social acceptance of women compared to elderly men causes the formation of unpleasant and violent behaviours in daily interactions. Gender Schema Theory (Bem, 1981) describes how social attitudes towards gender roles can reinforce discriminatory behaviours between men and women in the family.

This analysis shows that flawed family communication structures, from child-rearing to gender roles, have a profound impact on the formation of violence against men. This violence manifests not only as physical behaviour but in emotional, psychological, and social forms, which ultimately affect men's familial and social dynamics.

Disputes and Conflicts in the Family, as a form of violence and one of the main contexts for the emergence of violence against men, can be examined in two main axes: 'Dispute and Conflict between Parents' and 'Dispute and Conflict between Spouses.' Each of these components, through complex processes, leads to the reproduction of violence against men and boys in the family. Examining the data shows that these disputes range from personality factors to broader familial, cultural, and social structures.

One of the most important factors paving the way for family disputes is traditional marriages which lack a deep emotional and romantic relationship. Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, a sociologist and researcher of family social pathologies, emphasises that the traditional marriage pattern in many families causes couples to suffer deficiencies in their emotional connection. He explains:

'This [family dispute] is very hard, and let's remember that many of these marriages were traditional, meaning the party married a woman who was a relative or whom his parents considered for him, and incidentally, that romantic relationship might not have come into existence between the spouses...'

(Interview No. 27, Pos 63).

Furthermore, he points to the new problems of men in the retirement period, stating:

'The woman says, 'You are a retired man; a man shouldn't be in the house, he can't work, get up and go out...'' (Interview No. 27, Pos 63).

This change in men's role from primary breadwinner to an isolated individual causes the emergence of psychological violences and social pressures against them.

In the realm of parental disputes, the destructive effects of these types of conflicts on the lives of boys and future men are highly significant. According to Dr. Shiva, a therapist for marital conflicts, disputes between parents inflict significant psychological damages on male children. She clearly states:

'The point you mentioned regarding boys is very strange and I like to address it here; verbal violences that sometimes occurred between parents... and these children, especially boys, in terms of 'my mum is now being beaten or [suffering] verbal violence,' seem to be damaged as much as the mother...' (Interview No. 12, Pos 7).

She also emphasises that boys in such cases often take their mother's side, but at the same time face verbal violence against the mother and drown in feelings of frustration and inability to defend her: *'Why does he swear at my mum like this?!'* (Interview No. 12, Pos 9).

Interference of families of origin is another main factor in conflict between spouses. Mr. Sohrabi's narrative regarding his parents' interference shows how these interventions create a cycle of disputes and reinforce violence. He explains:

'I beg to submit to you, we met a lady, and because the family had their eye on another individual and I insisted on her [my choice], there I hit a severe dispute with my father and mother...' (Interview No. 29, Pos 28).

These disputes in some cases extend to the direct interference of the spouse's family as well. He continues:

'The argument with her brother was one thing, the argument with the whole family was another... their whole family poured onto me [attacked me]...' (Interview No. 29, Pos 65).

Family disputes are also intensified by issues such as addiction, economic pressures, and large family sizes. Rasoul, one of the interviewees, points to the

destructive effects of parental addiction in reproducing violence in the family. He says:

'Mostly [family disputes and conflicts] were over this very addiction and drug use...' (Interview No. 46, Pos 5-10).

Akbar Ebrahimi also speaks of his experience in facing an addicted and high-tension family: *'My father or my mother, they had so many troubles that they had no thought for our condition... they gave us many empty promises...'* (Interview No. 43, Pos 11).

One of the issues that directly affects men is the existence of populous families and the pressure resulting from it. Mohammad Eskandari, who experienced his childhood in such a family, explains:

'My father had ten kids, married twice, has two wives. Mostly we had material problems and things... my father couldn't attend [to us]...' (Interview No. 72, Pos 33-37).

Hamid Haghi also expresses a similar experience in a large family with economic problems: *'My family is 7 people, four brothers and one sister; over this, we were always involved in the family's poverty [livelihood] problems...'* (Interview No. 44, Pos 9-10).

These pressures not only disrupt men's daily lives but pave the way for serious verbal and psychological violences among family members.

In this same context, the role of duality and conflict in paternal identity is also raised as one of the important factors creating family disputes. Dr. Mousavi Viayah points to problems resulting from adapting paternal roles in the new era. He explains:

'The greatest violence against men is that men don't know what they want... still at the bottom of his heart is [the feeling] that the woman is extorting me...' (Interview No. 27, Pos 59).

The struggle between tradition and modernity in masculine roles places much pressure on men and positions them against new social expectations. Another point is that men often face an inability to fulfil their paternal role:

'Many times he says, 'Well, now if I say this, she will sulk with me for three days...'' (Interview No. 27, Pos 59).

Economic pressures resulting from children's expectations for providing marriage costs and dowry (*Jahiziyeh*) are also among the important issues that

have transformed into economic violence against men. Dr. Mousavi Viayeh states:

'There are financial expectations from the father... the son marries, [they expect him] to pay this wedding ceremony cost...' (Interview No. 27, Pos 61).

Examining the data shows that the contexts of dispute and conflict in the family, from a combination of structural factors such as poverty, economic pressure, and large population, to challenges resulting from the conflict between traditional and modern roles, play a role in a complex manner in reproducing violence against men and boys. These factors not only cause interpersonal tensions but inflict serious damage on men's mental health and social position, reproducing the cycle of violence in the family.

The examination of issues and problems related to couples that lead to the emergence of violence against men shows that these violences take shape in the substrate of complex familial and social interactions. 'Cultural Differences between Spouses,' 'Wife's Controlling Behaviour towards Husband,' 'Women Being Wealthier than Men,' and 'Failure to Meet Men's Sexual and Emotional Needs' are among the most important of these contexts. These factors, alongside men's lack of awareness and skill in attending to their wives' emotional needs, can create a cycle of emotional and psychological violences.

'Cultural Differences between Spouses' is one of the main contexts for the emergence of violence against men. A social worker, pointing to his own separation experience, emphasises the importance of having a level of shared culture between couples. He says:

'Definitely, if two people are going to marry each other, they must have a level of [shared] culture together. Two different cultures placed next to each other is a very hard task... very much cultural differences, in my opinion, are the biggest factor. This issue causes the repression of the woman's feelings and emotions against her husband and deprives the man of many things' (Interview No. 47, Pos 16).

Differences in tastes and values can lead to misunderstandings and dissatisfactions that turn into emotional and psychological violences over time. Another individual, pointing to his cultural difference with his wife, says:

'I was Turk and my husband [sic: implies 'spouse'] was Lur. Anyway, we married, had the wedding, went under one roof, the situation [disputes and conflict] got worse. We didn't understand each other's talk. I would get nervous

and shout and scream [at my husband/spouse], I would get aggressive. Our cultural difference was very great, not that the person grew up in the provinces; both of us were raised in Tehran and born there, but that culture showed itself. Anyway, we separated' (Interview No. 89, Pos 36).

These differences, however insignificant they may seem at first, can lead to serious conflicts and ultimately violence over time. Cultural differences are counted among the important factors in the formation of disputes and conflicts in marital life (Gottman, 1999).

'Wife's Controlling Behaviour towards Husband' is another factor that can lead to violence against men. An individual says in this regard:

'But unfortunately, many women don't understand this. Twenty-four hours a day they are prying into men's phones, twenty-four hours they are following him and controlling him. They are looking to see if he contacted his sister or not, if he talked to his mother or not; I've seen these a lot. The poor man doesn't dare speak comfortably with his own sister for 5 minutes; she keeps coming to see what they are saying, what they are talking about. And this pessimism among women exists in 99 percent of Iranian women. This causes the man's connection with his family to be completely cut off' (Interview No. 68, Pos 49).

This type of controlling behaviour can lead to men's social isolation and the severing of their connection with family and friends. Controlling behaviour and pessimism in marital relationships can lead to reduced trust and increased tensions, ultimately resulting in psychological and emotional violence (Buss, 2000).

'Women Being Wealthier than Men' can also pave the ground for economic violence by women against men. An individual points out in this regard:

'The woman must definitely be younger than the man in terms of age, and definitely have less in terms of finance—not that the man should be needy of her. Now if any lady wants to hear or read this sentence of ours, they say 'Yeah, right, you want to dictate to her,' they say 'Yeah, you want that poor wretch to have nothing so you can bully her.' That's not my meaning at all. My meaning is that if she has [wealth], she becomes a bully. I say if the woman were in the man's place, all men would die of hunger. God is my witness, they couldn't work to bring [food] for you to eat; you would die of hunger, meaning everyone would die' (Interview No. 17, Pos 51).

This view indicates that financial inequality can lead to feelings of insecurity and inadequacy in men and consequently provoke economic violences from women. In societies where traditional gender roles remain strong, financial inequality can lead to serious conflicts in marital relationships (England, 2010).

'Failure to Meet Men's Sexual and Emotional Needs' is one of the most prominent emotional and psychological violences of women against men. An individual says in this regard:

'The damage that falls into the relationship between man and woman has two parts: emotional divorce, and something that is not spoken of much. And the other is sexual divorce that happens, and women deprive men of having sexual relations and intimacy. This is a form of violence' (Interview No. 78, Pos 44).

Sexual and emotional deprivation can lead to consequences such as infidelity and the collapse of marital relationships. Another individual also speaks of verbal violence, sexual deprivation, and lack of personal hygiene observance by his wife:

'My wife swore at me, called me a yob [boor/animal]; I answered back too. But anyway, these issues exist and unfortunately, I always said, I said 'We are two housemates; you in your path and I in my path.' In our house, the curtain had to be drawn, I don't know, no noise. We slept in separate rooms. I decided, I came to leave; I got tired, really. I said [excuse me], someone who doesn't go to the bath, doesn't observe her personal hygiene tools, well, I don't know what to say' (Interview No. 28, Pos 182-183).

These types of behaviours can lead to feelings of worthlessness and being ignored in men, and consequently fuel mutual violences. Ignoring men's sexual and emotional needs can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation in them, ultimately ending in violent behaviours or depression (Beck, 1988).

A social worker also points to this point that:

'Men, when their emotional need is not resolved, go to someone who will resolve their emotional need. He has a wife, has a child too, has sexual connection too, but the woman doesn't know sexual connection [intimacy], doesn't know that sexual violence is from this aspect that the man needs to have emotional connection, to have intimacy/foreplay, and she doesn't teach him either because we don't have education on TV; media is just working now' (Interview No. 51, Pos 39).

These words show that the lack of awareness and education in the field of sexual and emotional relationships can lead to misunderstandings and dissatisfactions that fuel sexual and emotional violences.

The same previous individual, pointing to the role of the capitalist system in the disintegration of men's intimacy and emotional needs, says:

'He is so involved. From morning to night, it's not [possible], he has no time at all to think of these things. Actually, let me say something, let's view it Maslow-ianly. In Maslow's pyramid of needs, isn't it that survival, food, clothing is the first step? The capitalist world says that you, man, can no longer not provide work for your child. When I am stuck on that first step, do I think of the next steps, which are love and security and respect and self-actualisation and so on and so on?!' (Interview No. 78, Pos 88).

This view indicates that economic pressures and the failure to provide the basic necessities of life can lead to the ignoring of emotional needs and intimacy in marital relationships, consequently fueling emotional violences. Economic pressures can lead to stress and tension in marital relationships, resulting in verbal and emotional violences (Voydanoff, 1990).

Men's lack of awareness and skill to attend to the wife's emotional needs can also pave the ground for the emergence of emotional violences. An individual with divorce experience speaks of his husband's lack of awareness and skill for her emotional needs:

'That guard broke when we did the Aghd [marriage contract]. This is very interesting, I can tell you six months had passed since our Aghd, then I realised this. He sent a message: 'Why don't you send me a good morning message even once? I am always saying good morning to you. For six months I have been waiting for you to give me a good morning message.' Meaning in those six months I hadn't yet come to terms with myself that this is my husband. And my inattention and unkindness started too' (Interview No. 89, Pos 16).

This experience shows that lack of attention to the wife's emotional needs can lead to feelings of being ignored and worthless in women, consequently fueling women's violent behaviours against men.

A clinical psychologist points to the ignoring of men's feelings:

'Family, not hearing them. No man hears a boy the first time. They teach him there is no place to seat him [no space for him]; he struggles, then he goes into

himself. And the connection they don't have with him, and therefore he gets tired day by day; a man drags this until old age too' (Interview No. 57, Pos 140).

This view indicates that ignoring men's feelings and the lack of emotional support for them can lead to feelings of loneliness, isolation, and fatigue in them, consequently fueling violent behaviours.

A retired police colonel speaks of the culture of nagging and criticism by women towards the husband:

'It is transferred to society, we don't reduce it. No, I tell men and women, I say 'You have a love reserve with yourself, with your wife; your wife has your love reserve.' Oh my dear, how are you? In those early days of marriage you love each other so much, you actually like to hear her talk, you call, you go see her. Why? Because the reserves are full, love reserves are full. When you marry, the woman nags. What do you do? Criticism, criticism empties [the reserve], criticism empties. 'Why did you come late?' it empties. 'Why did it become like this?' it empties. If we don't replace it, you know, in the end, 'Why did I come late?' if it empties, it reaches separation and divorce' (Interview No. 95, Pos 95).

This view indicates that continuous criticism and nagging can lead to the reduction of love and intimacy in marital relationships, consequently fueling emotional violences.

In addition to the aforementioned cases, the Lack of Social Support, like a broken umbrella, has consistently been an important factor in the emergence of psychological and social traumas in many experiences of participating men in this research. This lack, which in many cases results from structural changes in society, changing values, and the reduction of traditional solidarities, has rendered men incapable in the face of life's problems and propelled them towards a cycle of violence, frustration, and collapse. Participants' experiences show that the lack of social support influences not only family relations but in some cases enacts severe psychological shocks that can lead to the emergence of violence, depression, or even suicide.

A researcher in the field of social pathologies considers the inefficient care system of society as the main cause of this situation regarding the role of lack of social support in intensifying violences and even men's suicide, stating:

'Regarding the population of men's suicide, who are the greatest victims of this pathology, it can be said that [there are] young and middle-aged men who are involved in family problems, and the problem is solved [temporarily] and he

returns to that family that has those problems, and violence repeats. So there must be a wide supportive umbrella for this individual: family, neighbour, teacher, school... Welfare [Organization] gives no special support to these men' (Interview No. 19, Pos 84).

The narrative presented of young and middle-aged men trapped in this cycle of problems and violence expresses the deep gap between individuals' real needs and the capabilities of society's care system. This narrative, emphasising Social Capital Theory (Bourdieu, 1986), shows that these social support techniques, whose duty is to create solidarity among people, have severely lost their efficiency in today's Iranian society and play no effective role in confronting phenomena like suicide.

But what reveals this lack of support even more is the childhood experience of an individual. He faced the lack of family support after his father's death and describes his situation thus:

'We had a good life, we weren't bothered... when he passed away, he had neither pension nor, for example, a shop, nor was there anything... we were entering a life... many nights we were hungry... the sister's husband went to the front [war], and when he came back too, he was constantly thinking of his own pleasure...' (Interview No. 35, Pos 24).

This individual's experience clearly shows how the weakening of economic and social support places a family in deep crises. Durkheim's Theory (1897) regarding Social Integration clearly states that the lack of support from social structures in times of crisis exposes individuals to destruction and propels them towards damaging behaviours. In such conditions, men, who according to traditional discourses are obliged to provide livelihood and support the family, collapse under pressures and expectations and not only suffer psychological traumas but, as Durkheim says, move towards violent or self-destructive behaviours.

The experience of another individual involved with HIV and addiction, from another perspective, displays the defencelessness of men in society. He says:

'From childhood, I was a rough sleeper without backing and shelter. From childhood, either it was the uncle's house or grandmother's house... but I didn't have much relationship with the maternal uncle's relatives... 'one shouldn't

suffer all this hardship anymore'... I liked it to end, then my cousin [paternal aunt's son] helped me' (Interview No. 39, Pos 201).

This narrative, while highlighting the limited supportive role of the family, clearly shows the weakness of social support networks, in the absence of which individuals are trapped in insoluble psychological and social crises. Granovetter's Theory of Weak Ties (1973) states that social relationships between individuals (whether familial or non-familial), if weak, lack the ability to maintain cohesion and prevent the psychological and social collapse of individuals. In this experience, the individual tries to fill this support vacuum through relatives, but this support is sometimes late, insufficient, and limited.

An 80-year-old elderly man raises his complaint regarding the lack of social support in old age thus:

'There was a time everyone hovered around me [because my financial situation was good]. When I ran into a court problem, there was no one. A person, as long as he is young, middle-aged and can work, conditions are good and health and beauty are everyone's kith and kin. Relatives, these people, kept helping me... then our days became ruined, our load fell [we fell on hard times]. God is my witness, no one remembered us; it's as if none of them know me' (Interview No. 70, Pos 66-69).

This narrative is a clear and bitter representation of the condition of old age and the erosion of supportive relationships. This individual benefited from social support and the attention of those around him as long as he had a suitable financial status; but as soon as his financial conditions changed, he lost this support. Disengagement Theory, presented by Cumming and Henry (1961), addresses this subject that during the aging process, individuals gradually distance themselves from social networks or are pushed aside from these networks by society, especially if they do not have specific economic or social roles. This individual's experience tangibly confirms this theory, as in his life, the reduction of financial and physical capabilities, simultaneous with the decline of social status, led to complete isolation and the abandonment of social support.

This general pattern of defencelessness, resulting from weakness in social structures and the lack of sustainable support, is not limited only to the elderly or the poor but encompasses all social classes in various situations. A researcher, addressing failures and frustrations resulting from unfair

competition in the educational system, especially in conditions where sufficient structural and psychological support does not exist, says:

'Wherever we suffer frustration, our needs are not met, we don't reach our goals... the child participates in the Concours [university entrance exam], doesn't reach his goals... we shouldn't make a negative definition of anger, that if people become angry, they get scared and consider themselves abnormal and anomalous and sick' (Interview No. 38, Pos 105).

The analysis of this researcher's words shows that in the absence of effective psychological support and in the face of failure resulting from unfair competition, feelings of anger and frustration emerge naturally, and psychological and social pressure on individuals increases. Frustration-Aggression Theory (Dollard et al., 1939) explains this situation well; this theory indicates that failure to reach goals, when reinforced by a sense of inequality or injustice, can lead to anger, aggression, and the emergence of violence.

Considering what has been raised in the participants' statements, social support systems in Iranian society, which historically relied on traditional family and community structures, are now increasingly suffering collapse and, in the face of contemporary problems such as economic complexity, changing cultural values, and structural transformations, are incapable of providing vital support for individuals. Men who are forced to resist traditional societal expectations (such as being the provider) or face frustrations resulting from the weakness of support systems often find themselves trapped in social isolation or cycles of violence and psychological anxiety.

One of the common narrative points of all these experiences is the highlighting of the role of the absence of networks that reinforce supportive mechanisms: family, relatives, the educational system, and even formal institutions like Welfare or government support organisations. This absence, along with the unequal expectation for men not to bow under problems, has rendered them more vulnerable than ever to psychological, social, and even physical traumas. The lack of support throughout the life cycle, from childhood to adulthood and old age, indicates that traditional society, which was once based on comprehensive support, is now being emptied of its supportive nature. As Durkheim states in Anomie Theory (1897), in times when traditional systems are collapsing and effective replacements for previous relationships and values are not found, individuals become susceptible to crisis.

This unified narrative shows us that the absence of social support, traditional solidarities, and even modern mechanisms in the face of economic, familial, and individual crises paves the ground for anger, frustration, depression, isolation, and in some cases, violent or self-destructive behaviours.

5.3.2. Difficult Conditions of Marriage

The analysis of the subject of strictness regarding men's marriage, based on the presented data, indicates a systematic and hidden violence that men face in the marriage process. These pressures are not limited to financial or social expectations but, in some cases, are applied symbolically or even physically through medical tests or cultural judgments. Such trends, in addition to limiting men's freedom and choice, lead in some cases to the reproduction of cultural violence and influence their mental health.

Azin clearly points to a part of these pressures:

'Expectations are not limited to financial expectations, you know?! We had a trouble over the issue of virginity, and unfortunately, they call it a 'health certificate,' and I always tell gynaecologists and specialists not to pursue such a story. Now, conversely, it is becoming common; for example, a suitor has come for the party's daughter, and after the discussion became serious, she picked up the poor guy and brought him here [saying] 'Mr. Doctor, take HIV, HPV, HPC, and sperm tests and so on from this gentleman who wants to become our son-in-law'' (Interview No. 3, Pos 13).

This narrative is, in a sense, a mirror of the symbolic pressures applied in the marriage process; a process that, instead of assessing mental health and the quality of connection between individuals, is based on strict physical and medical criteria. This approach overtly transforms men into examinable commodities who must meet specific standards for acceptance in the marriage position. Gender Socialisation Theory (Connell, 1995) emphasises that such expectations are rooted in social gender structures that limit individuals' identity to specific and mandatory roles.

Azin also points to a more extreme trend in this approach, stating:

'If previously they only wanted a virginity certificate, now for this poor suitor, they want a 'technical inspection' [vehicle roadworthiness test]. Really, whether this man has sexual capability and his sperm count and type of sperm motility are okay, and suppose he doesn't have a specific disease. We were involved in such

cases three or four times. I haven't seen an example of this anywhere else'
(Interview No. 3, Pos 15).

This quote shows how the marriage process has transformed into a tool for precise surveillance of men, controlling even the most private aspects of their lives within the format of specific testing criteria. Such an approach, according to Azin, can lead to the slowing down of the marriage process; a process that, instead of being a free and natural decision, has turned into a stage of social surveillance and control. Social Control Theory (Hirschi, 1969) explains how such pressures and surveillance can limit individuals' freedom of action and indirectly reproduce violence against them.

Allah-Reza, a jurist, also points to another part of these pressures:

'Sometimes a man and woman have a shared child; if they didn't have a shared child, in my opinion, both parties are losers. Meaning, in terms of that very cultural violence that exists in society, a man who divorces his wife, wherever he goes to propose [for a new marriage], they go and investigate whether he was really at fault or his wife was at fault, and what conditions arose that he divorced his wife. They drive him away completely, saying 'To correct [the phrase], this man has divorced'; they are not even willing to propose for him. This too, in my opinion, is itself a type of violence' (Interview No. 33, Pos 28).

This narrative reveals violence based on social judgments; violence wherein a man's history of divorce, instead of an examination of real reasons or conditions, automatically transforms into a factor for the individual's isolation in society. Labelling Theory (Goffman, 1963) explains this process well; based on this theory, social labels that individuals receive can have profound psychological and social effects on them, compelling them towards isolation or conformity with social expectations.

In summary, the data indicate approaches that exist systematically in patriarchal society structures and indirectly limit men within the format of strict cultural and social criteria. Processes ranging from unnecessary tests to unfair judgments regarding marital history indicate this cultural violence, which not only limits men's freedom but worryingly impacts their mental health.

The reduction in the propensity for marriage among the new generation is a matter rooted not only in demographic structures but fundamentally in the cultural, social, and economic transformations of contemporary Iranian

society. The presented narrative aptly demonstrates a part of the issue that largely returns to legal mechanisms and their role in redefining marital and family relationships.

The interviewee, in his analysis, points out that social and economic changes over recent decades have transformed family situations and the degree of pressures individuals endure, particularly at the beginning of married life. He states:

'Well, our marriage conditions have now become such that if previously ladies were subjected to violence due to the patriarchal atmosphere, society itself has come with solutions to change this patriarchal atmosphere, such as raising the Mehrieh, such as converting Mehrieh from Rial or money to [gold] coins or a house, and...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 13).

The articulation of this transformation is significant from the perspective that it shows laws and social changes, although designed to support women, have simultaneously transferred the structure of pressure from one gender to the other; in such a way that this transfer of pressure has left complex effects on youths' inclinations towards marriage.

This narrative also emphasises economic impacts and related pressures on men, where the interviewee explicitly states:

'I really think we cannot deny that the inclination of youth for marriage has become far less, partly because of the violent atmosphere that happens at the beginning of marriage. Meaning when a boy thinks 'I go marry a girl, become indebted for three hundred coins, three hundred times thirty million [Tomans]... now why should I commit such madness?!'' (Interview No. 3, Pos 13).

This sentence clearly reflects one of the key contexts for the reduction of marriage propensity among men: the disproportion between the financial burden and social responsibilities men endure in the cultural and religious system of Iranian society, and the benefits marriage can create for an individual. This issue is seriously explicable in theories related to 'Perceived Inequality' in marital relationships. Social theorists such as Guerin (2003) point out that when a relationship or social action is perceived individually as an unfair relationship accompanied by an imbalance of cost and benefit, the probability of choosing or entering it decreases.

On the other hand, the interviewee points to one of the beliefs of the past generation, namely the colloquial phrase *'Who has given [Mehrieh], who has*

taken [it]?' (implying *Mehrieh* is rarely claimed), as a manifestation of the change in attitude in the new generation, considering it ineffective:

*'Now they are no longer fooled by these words of 'who has given, who has taken.'
The new generation knows that people are in prison right now because of
Mehrieh; because of Mehrieh, heaps of cases are currently flowing in the courts'
(Interview No. 3, Pos 13).*

This part of the narrative shows a fundamental change in the thought patterns and attitudes of youth towards the concept of marriage. The new generation, based on information and tangible social realities acquired from media or their connections, has a different view regarding marriage commitments and the risks it may entail. This change in attitude reflects theories related to social awareness and normative changes considered in social science literature. Particularly, theories related to 'Modern Individualism,' examined by thinkers such as Giddens (1992), emphasise that in modern and transitional societies, generations no longer passively follow social norms but make their decisions based on their own individual analysis of profit and loss.

The interviewee also emphasises the unequal distribution of responsibilities in married life:

'Then the burden of responsibilities and costs falls on the gentleman. I don't say the burden doesn't fall on the lady and the lady's family, but ultimately the cultural model of society, and partly the ideological and religious [model] of our society, is that that gentleman endures a lot of pressure' (Interview No. 3, Pos 13).

This narrative deeply emphasises that men's share in the cultural value system is defined in such a way that stresses their role as provider. Men have traditionally been considered responsible for financial provision and sometimes even the psychological and social security of the family, and any failure in fulfilling this role can propel them towards feelings of inability, failure, and hidden violence. Gender Role Theory, raised by researchers such as Connell (1995), states that pressures resulting from social expectations and predetermined roles on men can not only lead to a reduction in their inclination to enter marriage relationships but, over time, increase the grounds for violence, anxiety, and psychological tension in them.

Therefore, based on the analysis of this narrative, it can be concluded that cultural, economic, and social factors, interacting with demographic changes,

have influenced the reduction in marriage propensity. These factors include unequal laws and expectations that place financial and psychological responsibility on men's shoulders, generational changes in attitudes towards marriage, and the increasing awareness of youth regarding the risks and potential costs of shared life. The aggregation of these factors has led to the formation of an atmosphere that is implicitly considered violent for many men, deterring them from making the decision to marry.

The analysis of data related to Forced Marriage of Men in the emergence of violence against men, within the framework of Grounded Theory, indicates that this phenomenon, rather than depending on individual choices or desires, is the product of various social, cultural, and even systemic pressures. These pressures manifest in different forms in individuals' lives and direct their life path towards a direction that can ultimately lead to emotional reluctance, deep marital conflicts, and finally the emergence of hidden violences.

One of the prominent meanings observed in the quotes and presented data is the role of social structures and the expectations resulting from them. Specifically, men who are forced to marry in the face of family pressures and cultural norms not only lose their psychological peace but are gradually dragged towards the manifestation of hidden violences. An example of these pressures is the narrative of an individual who states:

'Mother dear rolls up her sleeves [takes action] saying: 'How long do you want to dilly-dally? You are 33 years old, that's enough, you have a job, your studies are finished too; well, you must take a wife!' They force him to marry by coercion, and at some point, he can no longer resist' (Interview No. 3, Pos 29).

These sentences show how individuals, in the face of family and social pressures, practically make choices contrary to their real desires and needs. This process provides the causes for a type of hidden frustration and the experience of a type of psychological violence in the long term.

Continuing, systemic pressures are also highlighted as a determining factor in men's forced marriage. In one of the quotes, a man holding a managerial position states that he was forced to marry to advance in his career. He says:

'My plan in life was to become a Minister, and if I didn't marry, the system wouldn't let me traverse the stages of promotion. I was single, so they wouldn't

let me become a Director, then Director General, and then introduce me to the Parliament to become a Minister; so I had to marry' (Interview No. 3, Pos 29).

This narrative indicates how formal and administrative structures, by prioritizing married individuals, exert doubled pressure on individuals to forcibly enter the institution of marriage. This imposition in itself leads to the formation of inefficient, affectionless, and tense relationships, and through this, can pave the way for various forms of domestic violence against men.

On the other hand, sexual preference or different sexual identities combined with social pressures can make this situation more critical. An individual states that despite being aware of his sexual identity, he was forced to marry due to social pressure and the need for career advancement:

'The gentleman said, 'Mr. Doctor, I knew I was homosexual before my marriage...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 29).

These types of forced marriages, due to the mismatch of the individual's sexual preferences with the partner, entail greater marital violences and cause the doubled repression of his emotional and sexual needs.

In another analysis of the data, cultural norms and expectations, especially among certain ethnicities, directly influence early and involuntary marriage. Another individual says of these pressures:

'I was 23 years old. It was my last year of university. They said, 'You are 23; we Turks marry the daughter off early, you are way past the age and you must marry this very one'' (Interview No. 89, Pos 10).

This type of coercion, due to lack of emotional maturity and absence of mental and psychological readiness, provides space for the creation of severe marital conflicts and even violence.

It is important to note that forced marriage is not limited to social and family pressures but can be the product of individuals' own lack of awareness regarding the requirements and commitments of a shared life. For example, another individual points out:

'I didn't have previous experiences, unfortunately, to say I was acquainted with a lady... because I had just gone to university' (Interview No. 29, Pos 4).

This lack of experience in the realm of emotional relationships and sufficient knowledge of marriage causes individuals to enter a relationship without

readiness, which over time brings psychological and emotional violences for them.

On the other hand, certain barriers cause forced marriages to be experienced with lower quality. For instance, an individual who consciously avoided forced marriage was subjected to mockery and innuendo by others:

'Give it to this uncle [excuse me for saying this]... he said 'I am afraid' and so on; my uncle kept waiting... after that period, my turn came to 'take [a wife]' and so on, and they were making sarcastic remarks' (Interview No. 71, Pos 8).

This type of cultural and family pressure lays the groundwork for a type of psychological violence imposed on the individual.

From the perspective of psychological theories, these types of marriages can be analysed within the framework of Role Expectation Theory. This theory states that individuals, under the influence of social and family expectations, assume specific roles that in reality conflict with their internal identity and needs. The pressure to enact these roles, particularly in the context of forced marriage, leads to the creation of a type of internal and external violence in individuals. Also, according to Maslow's Theory (Maslow, 1943), the repression of basic needs (such as the need for autonomy, love, and belonging) in these kinds of marriages leads to the emergence of feelings of guilt, frustration, and disappointment, which itself can pave the way for psychological and emotional violences.

In conclusion, it must be said that forced marriage is the product of various social, familial, and systemic pressures that entail deep internal and external conflicts for individuals. This phenomenon, in addition to creating overt and covert psychological violences against men, weakens the foundation of many marital relationships and leads to continuing problems in human relations. Forced marriage, by imposing an unwanted relationship, lays the groundwork for emotional repression, sexual frustration, and overt and covert psychological violences against men/boys. Violence in these kinds of marriages transcends the physical form and shows itself in the form of constant marital tensions, despair in the relationship, and deep dissatisfaction in shared life.

5.4. Cultural Contexts

5.4.1. Cultural Beliefs and Stereotypes

The culture prevailing in Iranian society has shaped the community of Iranian men through various forms of beliefs, stereotypes, imaginings, expectations, roles, and behavioural archetypes. Norms and values assume the role of controlling and disciplining this collection of patterns. The beliefs that men hold regarding their role and function in familial and social life play a prominent part in the emergence of violence against this gender. Based on the findings of individual interviews with participants, socio-cultural beliefs and stereotypes surrounding the subject of violence against men encompass eight categories: The Hard Gender, Breadwinner and Family Protector, Sexual Potentate, The Zealous and Honourable (*Ba-Gheyrat*) Man, Variety-Seeker, Uxorious (*Zan-Zalil*), The Loyal Lover, and 'Men Don't Cry.' In practice and in the modern world, these stereotypes have transformed into contexts for violence against men, which will be explained in the following lines based on the data obtained from this research.

The Male as the 'Hard Gender': The analysis of the contexts of the stereotype of men as the 'firm and hard gender' in the emergence of violence against men indicates the extensive role of cultural beliefs and expectations that not only define men within a strict and restrictive framework but also influence their mental, social, and even physical health. Stereotypes and beliefs such as masculinity as power, toughness, and superiority lead not only to the formation of psychological and social pressures but also lack the flexibility to accept human weakness and vulnerability. These pressures are clearly observable in the words of interviewees. One interviewee, stating the sentence:

'But this is almost true in our society; it is patriarchal on one hand, but on the other, society is almost such that the gentleman bears all responsibilities... a man must be strong, be a pillar, be solid; a man must not break... a man must not cry, a man must not have problems' (Interview No. 83, Pos 8),

describes the nature of masculinity in Iranian society as a gender that must be duty-bound, authoritative, and tough. This patriarchal structure is in direct conflict with human psychological needs, which consider the expression of emotions, psychological catharsis, and the acceptance of weakness as parts of mental health. Gender theories, particularly Connell's perspective (1995), emphasise that masculine roles in patriarchal societies are designed in such a

way that they rob men of the opportunity for vulnerability and the expression of human emotions, because masculinity is defined by power and dominance, not by affection or weakness. These expectations create a cycle of psychological pressures and the internalisation of feelings of inadequacy in men.

These pressures are not limited to emotional expectations; the need for success, invincibility, and competition is also prominent in this framework. Another interviewee says:

'This belief comes and places a psychological burden, a stress, and an anxiety on the shoulders of the male gender, especially if he has fallen into the trap of perfectionist parents for whom, from their perspective, a son must never fail in any arena' (Interview No. 38, Pos 44).

Parental perfectionist pressures, combined with general cultural expectations, place men in a position where intense and unrealistic criteria are imposed upon them. Social Anxiety Theory (Buss, 1980) states that when individuals are placed in the flow of social pressures and are unable to meet defined expectations or standards for their behaviour, their stress and anxiety increase significantly. Here, perfectionist pressures combined with gender stereotypes cause men to consider themselves failures or inadequate.

Furthermore, cultural structures reinforce symbols such as masculine valour and courage, which gradually become an important part of male social identity. According to one interviewee:

'One of our villages and nomads have now put aside animal husbandry and agriculture and nomadic life and become sedentary and urbanised, but in the historical memory of these people, that valour... for what were dirges and elegies recited? For the brave men of the tribe, Brno [rifle] in hand, those who were skilled horsemen and in wars...' (Interview No. 38, Pos 56).

This example shows how cultural structures have reproduced stereotypes such as courage and physical toughness as an inseparable part of male identity. Connell's theory of socio-cultural structures of masculinity (1995) also emphasises that masculinity has always been introduced in various cultures as a symbol of power, victory, and resistance. These stereotypes propel men to accept roles that do not accord with their real needs and human capabilities.

Focusing on physical characteristics also fuels the reproduction of psychological pressures against men. One interviewee points to this subject:

'The stronger man is the one who has a taller stature, a broader chest, and more arm strength...' (Interview No. 38, Pos 56).

These physical expectations drive men to compete with unrealistic standards and can lead to feelings of body dissatisfaction, reduced self-confidence, and related psychological problems. According to Bandura's Gender Role Theory (1977), when individuals are placed under the influence of restrictive cultural stereotypes, their adaptive behaviours may change based on severe social pressures, such as accepting roles that are exhausting or unpleasant for them.

Continuing, the image presented of the male in society highlights deep differences with the female gender and imposes numerous responsibilities without considering the man's human and psychological needs. The statement of one interviewee clarifies this matter:

'It defines the man as a hard body with a stone heart who must not cry, must not get upset; income is the man's responsibility, the man must work, the man must undertake living costs, the man must go to military service, the man must have thought/intellect, the man must have superiority over the woman...' (Interview No. 50, Pos 164).

This definition of masculinity introduces the man as an emotionless, authoritative, and responsible being for whom weakness, failure, or feeling the need for help is unacceptable. Social Role Theory (Eagly & Steffen, 1984) emphasises that these gender role stereotypes cause weakness, failure, and the representation of human emotions in men to be considered defects.

Violence against men via the stereotype 'Men Don't Cry,' especially in societies where expectations and stereotypical beliefs regarding the role of strong and strict masculinity prevail, is considered one of the deepest and most bitter layers of this phenomenon. This culture has created a set of psychological and behavioural limitations for men that not only represses their natural and human emotions but enters the individual into a cycle of isolation, psychological pressure, and crises that are not recognised by society or even the individual himself. When a man says:

'We have a golden sentence that we are all familiar with: 'Men don't cry.' Why shouldn't a man cry?! Why shouldn't that man cry? 'You are a man, you fell on the ground, don't cry, get up, nothing happened.' Why?! Because it causes him not to be able to discharge his emotional currents and to pour everything into himself. They also say 'You must be strong, you must not cry like women.' Men

take women under the arm [support them]; no one takes men under the arm. This is violence' (Interview No. 82, Pos 64),

he clearly points to the emotional repression resulting from these cultural beliefs. The stereotypical perception of masculinity such as 'being strong,' indifference to pain and fatigue, and lack of need for support is not merely a wrong conception of masculinity but a gradual violence that places men against themselves.

This cultural belief, which fundamentally forbids the man from the natural right of 'weeping' and pouring out emotions, is imposed on his psyche as an educational principle from early childhood. One interviewee says:

'In our folk culture [Ilam], if a 4-5-year-old boy falls and cries, his parents immediately say, 'How does a man cry? A man must not cry.' This cultural belief from the very beginning places a psychological burden on the shoulders of the male gender that you do not have the right to weep, the right to fail, the right to fall short, and the right to get tired' (Interview No. 38, Pos 44).

This incorrect education, especially at sensitive ages of psychological development, enters the man into a type of emotional freezing, the consequences of which peak in adulthood. Self-Control Theory (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990), which examines the educational process and the acceptance of social limitations in childhood, shows us that this type of psychological pressure and lack of emotional expression gradually drives the individual's mind towards denying natural needs; a subject that leads to men's personal isolation and reduces their psychological capacity to cope with stress and life problems.

But what is more worrying is that this silence and emotional repression is considered a gender duty:

'Men are more introverted; because it has become like this, again they say 'A man, as the saying goes, doesn't cry,' a man must not cry, must not manifest something. As soon as he wants to protest, they stick a thousand labels on him. 'What happened? You are incompetent, incapable.' No, he is not incapable, the guy is tired; perhaps it's just this, psychologically his brain doesn't have the traction anymore, maybe it's for these reasons' (Interview No. 88, Pos 30).

Here, society not only encourages men to silence in the face of their problems but considers any expression of emotional, sentimental, or social pain as incapacity. In the language of social psychologists, the Labelling Process raised

by Becker (1963) shows well how an individual may become isolated through social labels and their individual identity shaped based on stereotypical expectations. This isolation resulting from labelling forces the man to transfer pain and pressure inwards and, by suppressing his fundamental needs, fuel individual psychological crises or even violence against others.

In another analysis, these beliefs not only limit and control emotions but also create a type of conflict between emotion and gender in men's minds.

'I told boys 'Men don't cry.' In my opinion, from childhood you must tell your child 'Cry, cry. Express your feeling.' And this phrase 'Don't cry, oh my, you are a man, you have grown up,' fundamentally these are not correct words [psychologically] that we are using for children' (Interview No. 63, Pos 50).

This wrong upbringing takes away the human capacity for emotional coexistence from men and transforms them into beings with repressed experiences. From a psychological perspective, Adler's Theory (1930) emphasises the principle that repressed emotions in childhood will lead to the emergence of the most complex psychological problems in adulthood. Within the corpus of this theory, men who have been forbidden from expressing anger, pain, or emotional sentiments have in truth limited their path of human interaction and are driven towards social isolation.

These cultural beliefs gradually cause the creation of segregating gender roles which themselves play a direct role in psychological violence against men:

'Sometimes in families, this very subject of separating girl and boy... for example, we give the example to our child that 'Aren't you a man? Does a man cry? Shouldn't a man separate his tasks from a woman? A man must perform harder tasks.' This causes the person to reach this feeling that 'If I share this subject with the family, it means I have no difference from the girl of the family and I am weak'' (Interview No. 86, Pos 35).

Gender roles implicitly impose limitations on men as well, and these limitations, alongside the cultural pressure on their shoulders, consolidate violence against men in a hidden layer.

This general culture that 'Men Don't Cry,' by imposing expectations based on concealing emotions and ignoring the natural need for affection, provides the main substrate for the emergence of violence against men. As one interviewee confesses:

'Men cannot express their feelings and emotions. [The main ground for those disorders] could be this. This is a violence we apply against our sons; why shouldn't a man cry? Does a man not have feelings?' (Interview No. 82, Pos 62).

This sentence is a bitter narrative of a reality that cultivates the root of many of men's psychological problems in a systematic and cultural manner.

In general, the stereotype of men as the 'firm and hard' gender has created a complex cycle of psychological, social, and physical pressures which is the origin of many psychological, cultural, and social violences against men. These stereotypes not only repress men's psychological and human needs, but their damages are transferred beyond the individual to society as well. Social and psychological theories such as Connell and Eagly's Gender Role Theory and Bandura's Social Anxiety Theory confirm these restrictive structures and show that revising stereotypes is the key to reconstructing men's mental health and reducing violence against them in patriarchal cultures.

The Male as Breadwinner and Family Protector: The emergence of violence against men in the context of the stereotype 'Man as Protector and Breadwinner of the Family' has a tight connection with cultural, traditional images and psychological expectations of men; images that have been widely institutionalised in society and expect flawless performance from men as the main pillar of providing the family's livelihood. Dictated roles, social and individual responsibilities, and economic pressures cause the creation of a cycle of psychological pressure and violent situations against men; a cycle that in many instances leads to the marginalisation of their personal and human identity.

One participant narrates his life situation thus:

'When I got a house and car, at that time they didn't even have a car. When I got a car and they slowly came to the house, I saw he was upset. I said 'What's the story?' 'I don't know, this happened, that happened, so-and-so happened, my mother called and said this way.' I said 'Well, what does this have to do with me? My brother is in debt, for example, help him.' I would help him. I don't know, I would get something for my own house... in a way, now for example I'm saying, whatever work came through my occupational conditions, I supported all members of his family; now finally they bought a car...' (Interview No. 29, Pos 113).

This narrative indicates a normalised state of the man's supportive role in the family; a role that covers not only the economic needs of family members but even the social relationships of surrounding individuals. These pressures, appearing in the form of imposed duties, cause psychological erosion and reduced quality of life for men for whom being a protector is placed on their shoulders not as a choice but as a compulsory duty.

These cultural patterns begin from the early years of life and gradually turn into fundamental beliefs. Another participant points to this point regarding gender roles:

'Men, from the very early ages, they say 'So-and-so now has masculinity'... In my opinion, these gender roles are somewhat of a psychological-cultural load from the very beginnings of life... a boy child, I might see an upset boy, and because he is a boy child, they say 'A man doesn't cry'; it becomes a schema and turns into a belief in that person's mind...' (Interview No. 41, Pos 11).

These beliefs are formed from childhood under the influence of social learning and educational patterns and are stabilised in men's mentality. Evolutionary Psychology theories also emphasise that gender roles in the early period of life impose concepts such as responsibility and power on men; concepts that transform into undeniable duties in adulthood.

But these imposed roles influence the individual not only within the family but in society as well. One participant says regarding family and social transformations:

'...in fact, very easily, as you say, now for example it becomes a fashion; 'my sister-in-law [husband's brother's wife] did this work'...' (Interview No. 6, Pos 38).

This speech points to the fact that the cultural and social atmosphere has imposed that the man must always be ready to fulfil his role as financial and social protector. Men in modern society face not only past expectations but must also traverse elements of social competition; elements that often cause the creation of emotional or economic crises. A key point in this field is the role of men in traditional families; where men's presence as a workforce and responsible for providing the family's economic needs has transformed into the main part of their lives. One participant says in this regard:

'This is institutionalised among us... fathers [view] men as a labour force, a leap...' (Interview No. 95, Pos 33).

This view of the man as the main axis of providing family needs has influenced not only his role in the family but social interactions and the image presented of masculinity in society. Another participant, as a psychologist, addresses this subject in another narrative:

'That pyramid [family], the man is at its apex. It has become [such that] an epsilon man stands with it. Well, it has collapsed... when I, the man, am faded, I don't meet my wife's needs, willingly or unwillingly...' (Interview No. 78, Pos 62).

This narrative indicates that the man's central role in the family as the individual responsible for providing livelihood causes his emotional and personal identity to be pushed to the margins. Losing meaningful presence in the family causes the family to transform from an emotional space into a dry and functional environment. Social theories related to capitalism also emphasise that the economic system exerts more pressure on the man's role as a labour force and reduces or completely eliminates the emotional connection between him and the family.

At the individual level, heavy social expectations of men, especially on the eldest son of the family, gain greater intensity. One participant points to this in his narrative:

'The older boy or the first child... usually older boys don't break taboos...' (Interview No. 2, Pos 43-44).

This narrative shows that expectations of the eldest son in traditional families not only place his psyche under pressure but deprive him of the natural moments of growth and youth. The eldest son, who bears the burden of the father's role, instead of having an independent life, is forced to dedicate himself to the needs and wishes of other family members.

The expectations that exist for men in the form of providing income and economic stability have themselves created immense social and psychological crises. A participant says regarding his livelihood conditions:

'Some families are like this, they think [it's like the] 70s and 80s [1990s/2000s], that you can earn your family's expenses with a labouring job or a simple job...' (Interview No. 7, Pos 56).

On the other hand, economic concerns created through unemployment or low income directly lead to the creation of contexts for violence. As one participant points out:

'There is also the spouse's acquisitiveness [demanding more]... low income and unemployment is the source of huge problems [for violence against men]...'
(Interview No. 14, Pos 72).

These narratives demonstrate that men, through the cultural and economic roles imposed upon them, have been inevitably compelled to confront psychological crises and structural violence.

This cycle of cultural and social stereotypes places significant emphasis on the role of the 'Male as Protector and Breadwinner,' separating him from other aspects of his humanity and defining him within a rigid, non-emotional, and solely responsibility-oriented framework. Psychological theories, such as Cognitive Schema Theory, also point to this reality that changing beliefs formed since childhood is a difficult task, and these beliefs, over time, can pave the way for the emergence of violence against men. In general, the stereotype of being the breadwinner has not only limited men's identity but in many cases has led to serious psychological and social traumas.

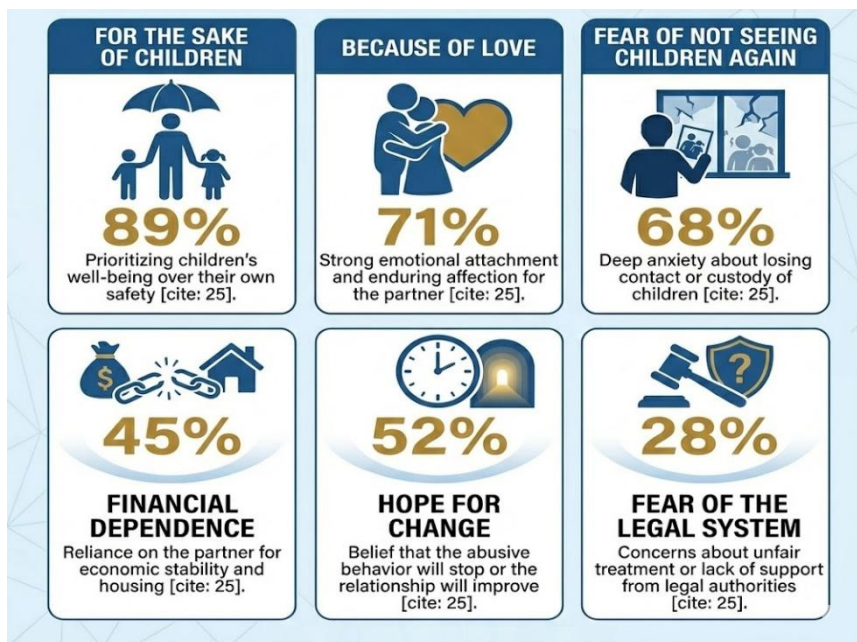


Figure 6 Men's Reasons for Enduring Abusive Relationships

The examination of masculine roles and responsibilities in the family, based on the analysis of interviews, is a delving into structures that impose gender roles on men from childhood, resulting in nothing but psychological, social, and economic pressures for them. The narratives show that these roles influence not only the men themselves but also the quality of their relationships with family members and even macro-social structures.

From very early childhood, society teaches boys that they must 'be strong,' 'not cry,' and 'be responsible.' One of the participants states:

'Don't cry, be strong. Be responsible. From that very childhood, they constantly read this into his ear [drill it into him]...' (Interview No. 63, Pos 38).

This type of upbringing deprives men of expressing emotions and experiencing emotional support, instilling in them that they must always play the role of 'protector' and 'pillar' for others. In these conditions, their inclination towards emotional and psychological participation in the family is ignored, and instead of being accepted, they are compelled to endure the pressures of the demand for breadwinning and providing for economic affairs. These imposed roles are institutionalised in the minds of adolescent boys in such a way that even in daily family relationships, they gradually become a barrier to the balanced participation of members with emotional and supportive roles, propelling them towards internal or external rebellion.

Continuing on this same path, society communicates the message to men that the financial provision of the family, even from the period of youth and student life, is solely their duty. According to one interviewee:

'Yes, one is structural pressure, and 'you are a man,' and because your duty in society and the family is breadwinning, from now on you must think about finding a skill, making money; it has no meaning for you to take money from your father during your student years' (Interview No. 27, Pos 10).

This structural pressure, in addition to creating financial stress, gradually deters men from utilising social facilities or realising their individual goals. On the other hand, legal, religious (*Shar'i*), and customary structures have also clearly placed this responsibility on men's shoulders and indirectly withheld social support from them. As another participant points out:

'The economic responsibility of the family is on the man. Look, 'on' means an executive guarantee has also been placed for this law...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 141-143).

Alongside these pressures, expectations defined by traditional roles also continue to exist. Narratives such as:

'[He should] be like a mountain behind the family; generally, womankind looks for a pillar. He should be a pillar, not shirk responsibility, not shirk responsibility in problems. He should be responsible' (Interview No. 72, Pos 71),

indicate gender bias in upbringing and traditional beliefs that expect men, as the foundational pillar of the family structure, to endure all financial and psychological pressures alone. These propositions blatantly ignore feminine supportive and emotional roles and fuel the reproduction of dominant stereotypes.

At the same time, men in these roles face modern and traditional cultural contradictions. One participant describes this contradiction thus:

'We have placed both traditional duties on the Iranian man and modern responsibilities on the Iranian man. But on the other hand, they have neither benefited from modern rights nor from modern responsibilities...' (Interview No. 42, Pos 16).

This situation places men in a more difficult position in the face of the inability of modern systems to provide sufficient support. Men are forced to adapt to the contradictory expectations of a society that attempts to establish a balance between traditional and modern rights, but the result is nothing but latent violence against men.

One of the consequences of this duality is the experience of hidden suffering perceptible in men's interaction with the family. According to one participant:

'I used to wake up at 3:20 AM... when I returned, the child was asleep again... this issue lasted so long... that [my son] has distance from me, whereas I would give my life for my son' (Interview No. 4, Pos 45).

This narrative shows that the responsibility of breadwinning, alongside the lack of emotional support or the ignoring of the man's psychological needs, has practically deprived him of the natural pleasures of life, even in the form of the paternal relationship.

On the other hand, this double pressure creates familial and social violences. In part of the interviews, this pressure is defined as roles that have mostly been imposed on boys from childhood:

'A man must not cry, a man must be a pillar; the man is the pillar. Actually, the man must go to propose to the woman, the man must go and choose; all the work is with the man' (Interview No. 83, Pos 14).

In this midst, the man, as the victim agent, suffers from psychological and social issues, but at the same time, due to the stereotype of steadfastness, he lacks the ability to express this experienced violence.

Bureaucratic and organisational problems also fuel these violences. One interviewee points out that:

'This system, which is state violence against society, incidentally directs its greatest violence against men rather than women, because it has placed men responsible for affairs outside the family society...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 110-114).

Economic, social, and legal responsibilities placed on men's shoulders are neither accompanied by fair support nor do they give them tools to cope with existing financial and psychological pressures. Another quote clearly shows that even the results of men's efforts are influenced by this very system:

'Come on, that access to resources is not achieved based on the amount of your effort and submitting to these rhythms of progress; what is it the result of? It is rent [corruption/cronyism]...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 61).

The summary of this section shows that masculine roles and responsibilities in the family, in a structural and cultural form, have caused the application of latent violence against men; a violence that begins in childhood, intensifies during puberty, and manifests in adulthood in the form of job dissatisfaction, emotional insecurity, and social pressures. This subject aligns with psychological theories such as Gender Identity Theory, which emphasises that institutionalised gender roles can exert lasting psychological pressures on the individual (Connell, 1995). Also, structuralist theories in sociology (Bourdieu, 1977) confirm that unequal and dual conditions of rights and duties lead to the reproduction of violence against men in the social structures of Iran.

The analysis of the subject of 'Choosing a Field of Study for Income Generation', in the context of violence against men, is a reflection of the challenges men experience within the framework of social and cultural expectations. According to the narrative provided by one participant, it is clear that the process of choosing a field was not only not a free individual decision but was shaped based on structured social pressures and gender roles defined

for men. Here, 'being a man' is examined as a determining factor that limited the path of choices and placed the individual within the framework of society's economic and functional role. One participant points out in his narrative that:

'If I were not a man and were a girl and insisted on studying humanities, my family would give this possibility or authority that 'So-and-so, since you like it very much, go to the conservatory/vocational school.' But this was never an option for me; neither did I express it myself, nor was that suggestion open...'
(Interview No. 20, Pos 102-104).

This quotation unveils the determining role of gender in the process of educational choices. His view shows how family and societal expectations in the enactment of masculine identity compel men to make decisions that may not align with their internal interests or needs. Cultural theories in social sciences, especially Bourdieu's approach (1986) regarding 'Cultural Capital,' explain how social structures impose predetermined roles on individuals and, in this process, manage individual behaviours in accordance with dominant norms and values. Bourdieu believes that cultural and educational systems, through social reproduction, confine individuals within a specific class and gender framework, and here we see how this reproduction manifests through the expectation for the individual to choose fields with high economic value.

Furthermore, being a man in this narrative is defined not only as a social identity but as a type of gendered 'must' that prevents free decision-making. One participant's description that:

'Our school didn't offer this; in [the school for the] Gifted, meaning you either had to become a doctor—meaning either Experimental Sciences or Mathematics. Meaning you had to... here I had already sensed that fundamentally this arrangement is not an arrangement where I can have a choice' (Interview No. 20, Pos 102-104),

is one of the examples of this social imposition. From a sociological perspective, this point recalls Connell's Theory of Gender Hegemony (1995), which shows how male identity is formed as a hegemony in society and highlights expectations such as financial success, headship of the family, and providing for others' economic desires. For this individual, the possibility of access or even thinking towards personal interests (such as an inclination towards art or humanities) was closed from the beginning due to contradiction with masculine social frameworks.

Financial and economic pressure as one of the dimensions of violence against men is clearly evident in this narrative. One participant continues:

'Now let's dissect it gender-wise; meaning let's say that because you were a man, it is likely part of this story is a thing... it was because of being a man that you were under all this pressure to study a field you didn't like or had no interest in...' (Interview No. 20, Pos 107-108).

This interpretation introduces gender pressure as a tool for structural violence. Men in this space are often compelled to prioritise the social and economic needs of others and consequently distance themselves from their own internal needs and desires. Maslow's Theory of Human Needs (1943) can also explain these pressures well. Maslow notes that when basic individual needs at lower levels (such as the need for work or study according to interests) are not met, this lack of realisation can lead to a sense of incompleteness and ultimately to the psychological erosion of the individual. Another phrase from a participant who says:

'Whenever our 'being a man,' with that flawed Iranian understanding of ours, becomes 'being a man,' therefore you must go study that field or do that work which has the highest possible income; pharmacy was likely one of those' (Interview No. 20, Pos 107-108),

points to another issue: the effect of cultural views on the concept of masculinity. This interpretation raises society's view of masculinity as a tool for power and income generation. Gender feminism indicates that the socialisation of boys based on economic masculinity leads not only to the ignoring of their real identity but leaves destructive effects psychologically as well. This individual has felt this pressure well and referred to the *'flawed Iranian understanding of being a man,'* an understanding that forces individuals like him to adapt themselves to expectations arising from old social stereotypes, despite being in complete contradiction with their personal interests and needs.

This analysis shows how the choice of field and educational orientation, which should be a tool for individual growth and development, can transform within the frameworks of social pressure and gender roles into a source of hidden violence that men are often forced to endure. This violence creates deeper aspects including the ignoring of individual identity, the repression of

interests, and confrontation with livelihood and identity crises, ultimately entailing a cycle of psychological pressure and internal isolation.

The Sexual Potentate: Violence against men within the framework of stereotypes of the 'powerful and sexually capable male' can be analysed as complex manifestations of cultural and social pressures in the modern era. These stereotypes, rooted in longstanding cultural structures, have reached a deeper transformation with the advent of modernity and the influence of media, cinema, celebrities, and global phenomena such as pornography. Here, stereotypes that evaluate men from the perspective of physical capability, bodily attractiveness, and sexual efficiency have caused the creation of pressures not only at the social level but in interpersonal relationships as well.

One of the most significant impacts of modernity is the transformation of the male body into a tool for displaying power and attractiveness in society. This matter has manifested destructively not only through media and cinema but also in the world of pornography. In this regard, one of the quotes indicates social pressure on men regarding physical appearance and the use of extreme methods to achieve the 'ideal body':

'Modernity, through cinema and celebrities and the world of pornography (which perhaps has been the most destructive of all), has created these... Now you see, youth do not go to bodybuilding [gyms] with the intention of sport and being healthy... with testosterone and hormones and whatever, they do anything so this arm becomes bulging and comes up [grows big]...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 23).

This social pressure, resulting from the widespread advertisement of ideal masculine images, has propelled men towards the use of supplements and unnatural methods, such that their physical and mental health has been sacrificed to achieve a symbolic image of masculinity. These stereotypes have shaped what men 'must be' with artificial and irrational criteria, which have transformed into psychological violence and emotional threats even in personal relationships.

The impact of these stereotypes in marital relationships is also very striking. Men experience facets of this pressure not only in the public sphere but in personal life as well. In a quote from one participant, it is seen that women too, under the influence of these beliefs, apply unreasonable standards to their men:

'On this very chair where you are sitting, a lady sat saying 'Until my husband melts his belly [fat], I won't live with him; what is this state, what is this figure?!'' (Interview No. 3, Pos 23).

This situation clearly shows the extent of the infiltration of stereotypes into interpersonal structures and emphasises that men, due to the inability to meet these unrealistic expectations, face psychological violence. From a theoretical perspective, these pressures align with the concept of Symbolic Violence introduced by Bourdieu (2001); violence that, instead of physical dimensions, is rooted in subtle cultural and social structures and invisibly compels individuals to comply with dominant standards.

Also, another attitudinal change in women is the 'preference of girls of the 70s and 80s generation [born 1990s/2000s] to marry rich men,' which has left destructive effects on relationships between women and men. One participant, pointing to this subject, says:

'I can only say this, Mr. Doctor, our economic conditions are very bad now relative to our own age; 'keeping up with the Joneses' (cheshm-o-ham-cheshmi) has increased a lot among the kids. Keeping up with the Joneses causes free relationships outside the framework to become free and expand. For the [generation of the] 80s and 70s, they have fallen into a terrible situation. These [girls] do not easily become the wives of people who don't have financial ability; when they [young men] don't have financial ability, they [girls] become wives of individuals who have a higher age' (Interview No. 29, Pos 178).

This preference has placed low-income men on the margins of women's emotional relationships and led to the ignoring of characteristics such as the degree of loyalty. Even men who succeed in marrying in these conditions still face the fear of their spouses' economic intentions; as the same participant continues:

'But I don't think about this: that I take [marry] this girl, tomorrow maybe in my life there will be an age difference; is she [with me] because of my financial situation or because of myself? Now you [see], a girl of the young generation betrays her husband. Girls say 'rich cheating husband or poor loyal husband?' She says 'rich cheating husband'' (Interview No. 29, Pos 170).

This situation, analysed by the theory of 'Changing Attitudes and Economic Values,' causes psychological violence against men in relationships.

Examining the relationship between powerful male stereotypes and sexual roles shows that these expectations have become severely complex in the modern era. Men have been distinguished as 'complete providers' in all dimensions of the family, especially in the sector of sexual relations. One quote shows that these expectations today, more than in past eras, have inclined towards sexual capabilities and men's efficiency in this domain:

'A man who could manage 12 kids in terms of economics and livelihood etc. was a more capable man [in the past], but in the domain of sex and sexual relations, no one had such an expectation... this expectation and violence is incidentally the result of the contemporary era in the last 50 years' (Interview No. 38, Pos 58).

These transformations not only indicate a change in the priorities of the male role but represent the use of new standards to evaluate their capabilities, which has caused continuous psychological violence and pressure.

Furthermore, traditional cultural structures that consider the man the undisputed axis of the family remain steadfast in Iranian societies. These structures oblige men to provide for all family needs, such that their inability to reach these expectations is considered a weakness. Another participant has stated:

'Look, this is an Iranian belief, that the man is the head of the family. But in Western countries, the contract between woman and man is a contract that they have resolved their needs... a social, economic, cultural, sexual, emotional contract, I don't know, becoming a father, becoming a mother; the social contract is written in this form. But here, a man who took a wife must resolve all needs; the man must resolve 90 percent of needs, the woman 10 percent' (Interview No. 51, Pos [Unspecified]).

This cultural difference shows that violence against men in traditional Iranian societies, even in hidden form, results from unequal responsibilities placed on their shoulders. From a theoretical perspective, this concept is also related to the Feminist Approach to Gender Division of Labour and its connection with violence (Connell, 1995). This imperative division of tasks limits men's ability to respond to these expectations and places them in the face of a type of isolation and psychological pressures that transform into a type of structural and cultural violence.

In examining the cultural contexts of using traditional narcotics to treat premature ejaculation and its impact on the emergence of violence against

men, we must approach the social aspects and widespread ignorance that have propelled men in this direction. In analysing this subject, deep roots in masculine beliefs, educational inadequacies, and incorrect cultural expectations regarding sexual capability are observable. These expectations require men to be symbols of power, dominance, and sexual superiority, and the inability to fulfil this role creates a feeling of inadequacy in them.

As stated in this quote:

'70, 80 percent of men who have sexual connection problems go towards traditional narcotics like opium to regain their sexual power; meaning it is one of the most important motivations for consumption' (Interview No. 51, Pos 63).

This part of the narrative shows that drug use, especially substances like opium, has been raised for men as a 'remedy' so they can once again consolidate their masculine sexual role. Also, this subject mirrors the lack of general awareness regarding natural and healthy standards of sexual relationships, which itself lays the groundwork for psychological and social stress for men.

Here, men's ignorance of what is defined as a 'healthy sexual relationship' is itself a factor driving them towards using these substances. According to the interviewee:

'Traditional substances that the man uses, in the early days of use, are a remedy for the man. You know why? Because the man likes, when he has a connection, to be 'riding the work' [in control/dominant], for example, to be told 'Wow, how much sexual capability you had.' Why does this happen? I said, because of lack of awareness and lack of education. It says the best sexual relationship is between five to 10 minutes accompanied by foreplay, penetration, and reaching orgasm. But they contact us saying 'I want the penetration relationship to last an hour.' We don't have that at all; this is pornography' (Interview No. 51, Pos 63-66).

This narrative highlights a structural aspect of society's culture: social pressures for the external display of sexual power, which even in some cases leads to imitating unrealistic and exaggerated images of the pornography industry. In this state, the natural experience of sexual relationships has been distorted by unrealistic personal and social expectations.

Theories related to social pressure and gender identity, such as Bourdieu's theory (1984) regarding 'Cultural and Symbolic Capital,' believe that individual behaviours are largely influenced by social expectations and

cultural norms. In this framework, men, to preserve their symbolic identity as strong and capable individuals, often turn to extreme behaviours such as drug use. The consumption of substances like opium or crystal meth, which according to this quote:

'...sexual connection lasts seven to ten hours' (Interview No. 51, Pos 63-66),

is mostly due to this very social pressure and the effort to reaffirm the self in the face of these expectations.

The analysis of data presented in the Grounded Theory framework shows that the stereotype of 'Male Sexual Impotence' plays a prominent role in the emergence of violence against them. This stereotype, deeply rooted in beliefs, patriarchal social structures, and historical imaginings regarding masculinity, causes the creation of overt psychological and social pressure on men and places them in a position where, in addition to individual problems, they must constantly defend themselves against these destructive imaginings.

In the first instance, one participant clearly points to the psychological and verbal violence men endure based on sexual impotence. He explains that this violence is reinforced by many individuals, including the men's parents:

'The most common violence I experienced is mostly verbal violence; verbal violence questioning the masculinity of a man simply because, assume, a part of his body which is his genital organ doesn't work, or that he has premature ejaculation. Even this man's own parents might condemn this, saying 'Oh, what kind of man are you that you can't handle a woman...'' (Interview No. 9, Pos 13).

This quote shows how an imposed image of masculinity forms the core of psychological and verbal violences, and even in the family, which should be a safe haven, the individual becomes the victim of coercive judgments.

These stereotypes have historical and cultural roots, as one participant states in his quote:

'Men in this subject mostly become victims of an image that the patriarchal world, this patriarchal discourse, presents beyond the real boundary. You look now at books from that era, even Khajeh Nasir [Tusi] and these people... 'A man is someone who has great sexual power, and a real man is such a man who is strong and can satisfy several women...'' (Interview No. 58, Pos 143).

In this sentence, the emphasis on old beliefs regarding masculinity is evident; beliefs that consider the man a powerful entity and define and judge him by sexual power and capability. These beliefs, in addition to consolidating destructive cultural archetypes, have provided the ground for psychological expectations beyond actual human capacity.

Distorted perceptions of sexual performance, rooted in education and marital culture, are also severely involved in violence against men. One participant explicitly states that in the face of marital problems like premature ejaculation or sexual coldness, the first reaction is directed at the man:

'The first thing that happens is 'You don't know how to have a sexual relationship...'' (Interview No. 48, Pos 89).

This sentence indicates how marital problems, instead of being analysed scientifically and therapeutically, are examined in a personal and blaming manner, and the man is subjected to violence due to sexual incapacity. Such reactions not only fail to solve existing problems but cause increased psychological pressure and the weakening of men's self-concept.

Considering the quote of one participant, the problem of men's premature ejaculation can be examined in the change of the function of sexual relationships; from a purely biological and reproductive relationship in the past to a relationship based on mutual satisfaction in the modern world:

'It is nowadays that, as a result of all these sites that speak of the subject of sex as the axis of marital relations...' (Interview No. 38, Pos 60).

This change in social expectations, which has mostly been accompanied by the introduction of the concept of orgasm for women, has provided another ground for pressure on men. When the man's ability to meet modern sexual expectations is questioned, the marital relationship transforms into an arena for psychological violence and destructive communications.

But these pressures related to sexual impotence are not limited to speech and behaviour. Pressures exerted on men from family and traditional structures also play an important role. For example, the quote of one participant regarding his parents' differences in view towards issues reflects cultural hegemony and its impact on men's role in society:

'My mother, I think, was 14 in her marriage, my father 20-21 years...'
(Interview No. 10, Pos 26).

Examining these differences shows how cultural and social structures, especially in more traditional eras, have imposed a distorted image of responsibility and role on men, which is seen distinctly in confronting sexual and marital problems as well.

Based on scientific theories, the pressure resulting from these stereotypes can place the individual in a state of 'Broken Self-Concept,' as psychological theories regarding the effects of inability to respond to social and cultural expectations point out (Adler, 1930; Maslow, 1943). The feeling of inability to face expectations that are strongly defined based on the stereotype of masculinity causes an increase in shame, guilt, and internal violence in men, placing them under pressure. This violence becomes more severe in interaction with the social environment, marriage, and even the individual's self-acceptance.

The stereotype of male sexual impotence is one of the contexts for the development of violence against them which, in addition to individual consequences, has extensive social and psychological effects. Transforming masculinity into a distorted image of sexual power has not only presented an incorrect pattern of masculinity but has caused the creation of a cycle of psychological and verbal violence, the solution to which will only be possible through changing attitudes, education, and treatment.

Ultimately, trusting in natural and human capabilities instead of attachment to the artificial image of sexual abilities requires a structural revision in the cultural and educational system. As analyses show, sexual problems and the lack of awareness regarding real solutions, in addition to economic, social, and psychological pressures, have led to a situation that forms a recurring pattern of violence in the individual's life. This violence, which is initially against the individual himself, gradually spreads to the family and society and requires urgent and radical interventions.

In general, the context of the 'Sexual Potentate' stereotype, which plays a role in the emergence of violence against men, has a multifaceted and complex state. These stereotypes, defined from the perspective of physical appearance, sexual power, and masculine social roles, not only cause an increase in hidden violence against men but cause disruption in interpersonal relationships as well. These pressures, combined with the effects of modernity and ancient cultural structures, have created a cycle of psychological and social traumas

for men, the end of which will only be possible in redefining destructive stereotypes and culture-building.

Beyond all these cases, the data analysis of the Impact of the Porn Industry on the image of men's sexual capabilities shows that this industry, as one of the effective factors in shaping incorrect beliefs and unrealistic expectations, has been able to exert complex psychological and social pressures on men. These pressures have often led to the creation of performance anxiety, emotional insecurities, and ultimately interpersonal violences, especially violence against men. The porn industry, through exaggerated imagery, places men against unrealistic standards that have gradually found their place in individuals' minds and marital relationships.

One interviewee explicitly points to the role of various media in promoting such advertisements:

'Ten years ago was the peak of these advertisements on TV; it still exists on satellite [channels] especially. It said, 'Sir, eat this pill...' I want to say that mostly if someone sees this, they think all Iranian men suffer from a problem of this form, then if they eat these pills, so-and-so [it will be fixed], whereas it wasn't like this' (Interview No. 21, Pos [Unspecified]).

These statements indicate that the porn industry and drugs related to it, in addition to displaying men as individuals always ready and capable, place them in exposure to imaginings as if sexual problems are a very pervasive matter solvable only by drug consumption. Such a conception lays the groundwork for performance anxiety in men and has expanded violent behaviours—whether from women or due to environmental pressures—against men. Performance Anxiety Theory (Kaplan, 1987) points to this point that when men see themselves as failed against unrealistic sexual expectations, this failure can lead to reduced self-confidence, psychological isolation, and even the emergence of violence against them.

The effects that pornography has had on the perception of men's sexual capability are not limited to the advertising aspect. Unrealistic imagery of men's physical characteristics (such as penis size and duration of sexual intercourse) and marital expectations resulting from these images have created an example of conditions of pressure and psychological violence in relationships. One interviewee explains:

'Regarding physical characteristics, this penis size, every time there is a reaction; the lady thinks that the gentleman is a wholly sexual man; whenever we willed it, we must have the best intercourse. People are not robots. This gentleman's cheque has not cleared [he has financial stress], now his entire sympathetic system is active, and whatever he does, this arterial nervous flow doesn't happen in him, and right there the label of 'sexually impotent' is stuck on him and he suffers violence from his partner' (Interview No. 3, Pos 25).

This example shows that unrealistic expectations not only exert severe psychological pressure on men but cause women, in the event of the man's inability to meet these expectations, to address them in the form of verbal or emotional violence. These behaviours fuel men's performance anxiety and create a vicious cycle wherein men are constantly placed in the effort to achieve unreachable standards.

Another quote clearly points to the role of comparing men with exaggerated characters in porn films:

'After the sexual revolution, after pornography, after all these porn films and porn sites and this sort of thing, a perception has been created and this comparison in the man's mind with that actor's character, and in the woman's mind the comparison of her husband with that, has been created and is creating a violence' (Interview No. 38, Pos 58).

These comparisons, according to the interviewee, have not only created unrealistic standards for men but have compelled women to have expectations beyond human capacities from their sexual partners. Beck's Sexual Schema Theory (1997) explains that the porn industry, through repeated imagery, creates new mental schemas that lead to the formation of wrong expectations and beliefs regarding men's sexual capability. These imageries not only create incorrect standards regarding the ability and quality of sexual relationships but influence marital relationships and intensify psychological violences resulting from these expectations.

Another interviewee points to broader effects that the porn industry has had on marital disputes and even on parallel relationships (infidelity):

'Porn, I don't just mean porn films; the images/ideas that this industry makes for women, that the ideal man... and of course the ideal woman too... meaning this is also on men... I have seen these a lot, even our kids [clients/acquaintances] have

differences over this issue with their husbands, or enter parallel relationships or even enter marital relationships [based on this]' (Interview No. 58, Pos 173).

This quote shows that pornography, in addition to its effects on men, has brought women to the highest limit of expectation, and this shared cycle of expectations causes the creation of violence in the relationship and even the abandonment of existing relationships and entry into parallel relationships. Giddens' Social Pathology Theory (1992) states that rapid transformations in social attitudes and expectations, especially through media, can lead to value gaps between life partners which intensify psychological disorders and interpersonal violences.

In general, relevant data show that the porn industry, through exaggerated imagery and incorrect expectations, has been able to place men in exposure to psychological and social pressures that have not only increased violence against them but confronted marital relationships with fundamental challenges. These problems, from performance anxiety to marital disputes, are part of a complex social process that must be examined more precisely in future studies.

The Zealous and Honourable (*Ba-Gheyra*) Man: Masculine zeal (*Ta'asob*) and honour (*Gheyra*) are among the concepts rooted in the cultural structure of traditional societies, especially in Iran, and their manifestation exerts a profound influence on men's social behaviour. This cultural element, in many cases, not only causes the creation of cohesion and social belonging in men but sometimes leads in an extreme form to violence and the emergence of controlling behaviours. The analysis of quotes within the framework of Grounded Theory shows how this type of cultural view has shaped masculine behaviours in a way that superiority and control over the environment are placed at the central core of men's thought and action, and ultimately reveals consequences such as violence, especially violence against men themselves.

One interviewee in his interview narrates a memory of involvement and conflict in a street brawl which is itself the product of limitless zeal and honour that was institutionalised in him from youth. He says:

'I had zeal (Ta'asob) over everything. Friendship, money, smoking drugs, eating. One day my Aga [father] turned around and said, 'We saw someone who, yeah, somewhere, four friends were beating him as a joke...' Suddenly a fight broke out... I automatically was drawn towards the conflict and we got involved and they beat us there...' (Interview No. 24, Pos 164-166).

This narrative clearly shows how men who have grown up under the influence of patriarchal values such as zeal and honour unconsciously enter cycles of violence wherein, to prove their 'masculine' position, they submit even to causeless confrontation with others and serious dangers to their social relationships or physical health. Ultimately, his father tries to clarify the controlling meaning of these values for him with the sentence '*Too much zeal throws a man out of earning bread, and too much honour makes a man dishonourable,*' but this warning does not have much effect on his extreme mentality at that time.

On the other hand, this same cultural value manifests differently in subjects such as women's clothing (*Hijab*). Another interviewee specifically points to the gradual transformation of men's view towards women in the field of clothing, stating that this change is slowly becoming institutionalised. He says:

'In the discussion of clothing and Hijab, this view exists that a man must have Gheyrat [jealousy/protective honour] over his wife, but now we see that issues that were happening... men recognise this sentence that 'Now we can no longer say a word to the [women of the] 80s and 90s [generation] or do anything'...' (Interview No. 41, Pos 15).

This narrative shows how the transfer of norms and social changes in the modern era has slowly reduced men's controlling power over women and created a new definition of masculine honour that can prevent the emergence of violent behaviours. However, this process of change still faces resistance in parts of the existing culture, as traditional concepts of masculine honour are radically linked with the dominant culture in many regions.

The experience of another interviewee reveals another aspect of the subject of masculine zeal and honour. He points to a specific social environment wherein masculine honour was applied in the form of threats and severe control over his behaviour, even from childhood. He says:

'In the beginning, the brothers read into my ear [drilled into me] that 'You go out, you get beaten up; if anyone ever molests you, wants to be bold or you lose your chastity, we ourselves will kill you.' They had a special Gheyrat' (Interview No. 44, Pos 11).

This experience shows the close dependence of masculine zeal and honour on concepts such as maintaining honour and chastity; two concepts that in

traditional societies are not only inseparable from human values but are used in an extreme form to define the identity and position of 'man.' In this midst, direct and indirect threats and violences are applied to the man so that he always acts within the framework of these rules; rules that implicitly reveal a specific type of social violence against men.

Psychologically, theories related to patriarchal behaviours and zeal show that violence by men against themselves is sometimes rooted in pressures resulting from the Culture of Honour. Particularly, a theory like Hirschi's Social Control (1969) points to the importance of the role of cultural norms in shaping men's behaviours and states that excessive zeal can propel the individual towards severe psychological vulnerability or constant social conflicts. In this same vein, Connell's theory of 'Toxic Masculinity' (1995) also addresses this point that excessive emphasis on controlling power, honour, and the repression of human emotions traps men in a cycle that promotes violent behaviour against themselves and others.

In summary, the analysis of quotes related to masculine zeal and honour showed that these deep cultural values, despite positive social functions such as building cohesion and masculine identity, have led in many cases to violent behaviours. Extreme zealotry has sometimes propelled men, as direct victims of this cycle, towards causeless confrontation, social violence, and even the restriction of individual freedoms. Concepts such as social control, traditional male identity, and gradual cultural changes have illuminated parts of this cultural cycle well, but resolving these issues requires a more precise examination and fundamental change in social structures and the mentality of masculine honour.

The Variety-Seeker: The analysis of this section of data shows that the false belief of men's variety-seeking (*tanavvo-talabi*) and infidelity is rooted in discursive relations and cultural institutions that have cast a shadow over mental structures and collective perception over time. This belief, arising from a socio-psychological mechanism, has subconsciously attributed variety-seeking to men, and this label itself has transformed into a factor in reinforcing and continuing violence against them. The interviewee clarifies in this regard:

'What is the root of this issue? If we want to say it very simply, it is that everywhere it is institutionalised that 'man is variety-seeking,' meaning he betrays easily, whereas in practice this does not happen. Meaning I, who at least had many friends... the girl betrayed the boy, the girl betrayed her boyfriend,

rather than the boy to the girl. This is wrong in a way, but it is institutionalised... (Interview No. 48, Pos 13).

Here we face two mechanisms; first, continuous stereotyping that is reproduced in society through media, pop culture, and even slang language. For example, the interviewee points to the making and repeating of jokes related to this issue at the social level:

'They made a lot of jokes, everything is made with jokes... this very case that 'we men are variety-seeking,' so many jokes have been made about it that we ourselves somehow believe it...' (Interview No. 48, Pos 37).

Social and cultural theories such as Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Reproduction (1984) can be applicable here; this theory explains how society's expectations and beliefs, through the normalisation of discourses and their reproduction by cultural tools, transform into stable normative structures over time. Jokes, stories, and gender stereotypes are prominent examples of this process, which are used not only for the unequal distribution of sexual power in society but are themselves agents of institutionalising these imaginings.

Another discussion that is important in this field is the duality in evaluating gender behaviour of men and women. While the desire for variety-seeking can be common to both genders, the general belief is that variety-seeking is the sole intrinsic characteristic of men. In the dialogue of one interviewee, it is stated:

'It is institutionalised that 'we men are variety-seeking but the woman is loyal.' Whereas it is completely equal; that same variety-seeking the man has, the woman has the same. The woman might do this with caution in our society because of a series of events that happen to her, but the man more easily, but she with fear and trembling' (Interview No. 48, Pos 13).

This belief has not only become a factor for the unfair generalisation of behaviour to men but frees women from the scrutiny of these expectations, and this matter entails different psychological effects for both genders.

At the psychological level, this institutionalised belief can have a deep effect on men's self-concept. Labelling Theory, developed by Becker (1963), states that when individuals or a group receive a specific label, their behaviour and views towards themselves change under the influence of this label. Here we witness that men are subconsciously placed under the pressure of this label:

'Because when the label of variety-seeking is stuck on you, whatever event happens for a lady in society and one side is a man, the man is subconsciously the accused...' (Interview No. 48, Pos 37).

This situation shows that in a cultural system that defines variety-seeking as part of the man's essence, men are condemned to reproduce violence not only in confronting their own behaviours but in evaluating the behaviours of others as well.

The consequences of this process on violence against men are clearly visible in the interviewees' speech. When infidelity or undesirable behaviour occurs on the part of the woman, the man is still placed in the position of the accused due to the label stuck on him. Pointing to social archetypes, the interviewee says:

'This thinking is institutionalised. I didn't accept it, I personally didn't accept it, I don't know about others, but I say this is repeated so much in society...'
(Interview No. 48, Pos 37).

In fact, such a label has the power to impose silence and blame on men in violent situations; because the dominant culture of society is constructed in such a way that the prevailing perception of fault or negligence is placed on their shoulders in advance.

From a sociological perspective, Marcuse (1964) in his critical analyses in the theory of 'Sexual Repression in Modern Societies' has pointed to such contradictions. He believes that in modern societies, the application of social control over individuals' sexual behaviour often takes place through the reinforcement of gender stereotypes. These tools not only control individuals based on their gender but themselves transform into a source of routine social violence.

In general, the presented narrative not only reveals the depth of the institutionalised belief regarding men's variety-seeking and infidelity but shows how this belief can lead to gender inequalities in evaluating behaviours. This source of inequality is directly a factor for creating psychological, emotional, and social violences against men, for it causes any crisis or tension in interpersonal relationships to be placed on men's shoulders in advance, and they are always known as the main agent.

The Uxorious (*Zan-Zalil*) Man: The analysis of contexts related to the 'Uxorious Man' (*Zan-Zalil*; literally 'woman-abased' or 'henpecked') and how

violence against men takes shape, when examined within the framework of the data above, indicates the profound impact of social and cultural beliefs and norms imprinted on individuals' minds from childhood. These beliefs not only shape the individual's understanding of his own position but impose expectations upon him which, over time, can lead to psychological pressures, violent behaviours, or avoidant reactions. A man placed under the influence of these beliefs accepts specific patterns of masculine behaviour from the early years of life, which are only validated if he displays demonstrations of power, decisiveness, and the ability to exert influence over others.

In the quote above, the interviewee explicitly points to some of these formative beliefs:

'The wrong beliefs I had in the past, wrong beliefs that 'Dad, these are men. A man's word must have cutting edge [authority].' Wrong beliefs in childhood transformed me into a violent monster. Whether we want it or not, in those times when we wanted to marry off a bride [participate in wedding customs], we had to go around a blue Korsi [traditional heater] and they would place a die [or basin/object], we had to hit it. I remember they used to say 'If you don't hit that die sometime, you will become Zan-Zalil [henpecked]...' (Interview No. 67, Pos 20).

These statements clearly show how the prevalent surrounding culture, particularly in symbolic ceremonies like marriage, engages in confirming or reinforcing gender stereotypes in individuals' minds. Even the use of signs and rituals such as the 'die/basin,' 'burning *Espan* [wild rue],' or the induction of words like 'Zan-Zalil' clearly indicates a social system that forces the man to constantly prove his influence, power, and independence.

From the perspective of sociological theories, this type of normative and social pressure can lead to the process of 'Internalisation of Norms,' meaning the individual considers society's imposed beliefs and expectations such a part of his identity that his reactions to defying these expectations become severely negative and often emotional. Based on Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism (1969), these symbolic experiences (like the mentioned marriage ceremony) and labels like 'Zan-Zalil,' through social interactions, shape a specific perspective of masculinity and often play a destructive role in individual relationships. A man forced to save himself from this label and prove he is not 'Zan-Zalil' effectively transforms into a captive in the cycle of power display. He may, to escape this phrase or remain within the narrow definitions his

culture holds of 'being a man,' move towards behaviours that entrap him in violence—violence that sometimes manifests against himself and sometimes against others.

The term 'violent monster' which appears in the above quote shows the man's internal reaction against the repressions these beliefs have created. The repetition and reproduction of these stereotypes not only force the man to adapt to unrealistic expectations but deter him from knowing his real self and internal needs. Here, Marx's theory of Alienation (1844) can also help in better understanding the subject; meaning this man, under pressure to play the role society has defined for him, distances himself from his individuality and existential nature and transforms into a character that even he himself detests.

Creating concepts like 'Zan-Zalil' in cultures that highlight power and dominance in men implicitly overshadows all communicative values between couples and provides the ground for hidden violence. Although this violence may not necessarily manifest physically, the psychological and normative pressure the man endures in these situations often shows itself in the form of repressed anger, chronic dissatisfaction, and even emotional violence.

Moreover, from the perspective of Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), the mentioned beliefs are not only induced in men in early interactions like childhood and family but are consolidated through observational learning and social reinforcements. For example, he explicitly points out:

'...I remember they used to say 'If you don't hit that die sometime, you will become Zan-Zalil'; why did they say it? Surely so that you, the man, would strike...' (Interview No. 67, Pos 20).

These sentences indicate the role of pop culture and social patterns in forming and reinforcing these beliefs.

The result of these complex pressures is that men, even in daily life, are unable to intelligently and freely recognise and pursue their real needs. Instead, they spend most of their energy proving power or controlling roles determined for them by others. Ultimately, such a structure becomes the ground where violence takes shape in hidden or overt forms in interpersonal relationships, including between couples or in social interactions, and severely distorts the individual's thought system.

The Loyal Lover: One of the important dimensions in the emergence of violence against men is adherence to love and the endurance of violence in emotional roles. This concept in qualitative analysis shows well how love can

both help the stability of relationships and mercilessly trap individuals in the cycle of enduring violence and psychological pressures. Love here is considered not only a deep feeling but implicitly as a 'commitment' that forces the person into dependence and enduring difficult conditions. Participants in the conducted interviews have explicitly shown that adherence to love, for deep psychological and social reasons, has paved the way for enduring violence applied to them from within and without.

The first narrative draws the concept of commitment well within a spiritual and emotional framework. One interviewee says:

'Commitment to the beloved must be of the heart, commitment must be of the soul, commitment must be of the core, existential; commitment is a very big word. Loneliness after experiencing romantic failure, I was hurt. You yourself, now after these two years that have gone, what have you spent most on yourself? I don't know, this is one side of the matter, the other side is possible now, but I am being hurt more. As a man, I am being hurt more. I can't go with anyone else. Meaning this is the masculine spirit; my friends hit me on the head [metaphorically/literally berate me], they say 'Dirt on your head' [shame on you], they say 'You are a fool (Oskol), so-and-so exists, she's giving you the green light, why don't you go?' And this issue has destroyed me. I am tired' (Interview No. 49, Pos 121-127).

This statement clearly shows how emotional commitment to an individual takes the position of love from a purely emotional level to an existential and psychological level. Psychological theories such as Johnson's 'Romantic Attachment' (2004) emphasise that love and emotional dependence in individuals can lead to severe dependencies, such that even after the end of the relationship, the ability to end pain and psychological pressures is not possible. Such dependence can also pave the way for psychological violence, as the individual endures the feeling of frustration and social pressure resulting from the inability to change the situation, and this situation manifests as part of the cycle of violence.

In addition, social pressure and expectations of masculinity also play a vital role. This man, who despite romantic failure cannot start a new relationship due to emotional dependence, in addition to personal suffering, is placed under the pressure of friends and society who expect something else from his gender role; his friends tell him: *'Dirt on your head, they say you are a fool...'* (Interview No. 49, Pos 121-127). The concept of gender role, based on

Connell's 'Social Construction of Gender' (1995), imposes on men that instead of romanticising and dependence, they must have dominant and pragmatic behaviour. This contradiction between emotional experience and social pressures places the man not only in a painful position but fuels a crisis of self-perception and psychological violence against himself.

Alongside this narrative, another interviewee also emphasises how external pressures and the inability to meet social and personal expectations can cause the emergence of violence in romantic relationships:

'I had learned that a man must definitely support the woman, and because I didn't necessarily have the capability for this work completely and wanted to do it with great pressure, fundamentally I would get nervous. Fundamentally I myself would suffer violence, I can say it like this... now come, that violence applied to me from outside would come and crystallise within myself...' (Interview No. 20, Pos 112).

This proposition shows how forced adherence to roles that masculine culture has defined for the individual can manifest violence in the romantic relationship. From a theoretical perspective, this situation aligns with Goode's Role Strain Theory (1960), which states that when an individual tries to manage different and contradictory commitments simultaneously, they often suffer tension and psychological pressure which may lead to violence in social interactions and intimate relationships.

The same interviewee continues:

'For example, with my girlfriend, my tolerance had decreased from a certain point and I would cross [the line] quickly and fight with her over causeless and trivial issues; meaning I would hurt her because I myself had been hurt, and in fact here was the start of the corruption of the relationship. That man is bending because of pressures that have come from outside and he is in pain...' (Interview No. 20, Pos 112).

This section clearly shows the cycle of violence that entered the man from external pressures and was then subconsciously transferred towards his emotional partner. This situation, based on Straus's Violence Transmission Theory (1979; likely referring to intergenerational or displacement concepts), shows that an individual placed under pressure in the external environment is likely to transfer that pressure to those close to him; especially if this pressure is at a high level of his psychological tolerance and control. Here,

adherence to a relationship fed by pressure and violence itself transforms into a factor for continuing the cycle of violence.

In total, these two narratives show how adherence to love can propel men to a position of enduring violence, which is applied to them not only by the social and cultural environment but is defined within themselves with feelings of frustration, shame, and anger. In this cycle, the man as a double victim of internal and external pressures is placed in a state of guilt and inability and subconsciously transfers violence to his emotional partner. This reality is a confirmation of the complexity of the phenomenon of violence in romantic relationships and the prominent role of gender culture in shaping this cycle.

Aversion to Divorce: Research conducted in the field of violence against men shows that the emergence of this phenomenon is in many cases rooted in cultural, social structures and stereotypical beliefs. One of these cultural contexts is the stereotype that considers divorce 'ugly' and unacceptable. This stereotype has expanded deeply and widely in society and causes individuals to refrain from taking action for divorce in the face of fateful life decisions, including in the face of violence or severe marital crises. In an interview, it is stated:

'Because it becomes bad, it is ugly to divorce; maybe if you marry it will get better. I [was stuck] in that same social obligation (Rudarbayesti), in that same [thought] that maybe these people are right. We married each other' (Interview No. 35, Pos 58).

This quote clearly shows that the individual decided to marry under the influence of social and cultural pressures, without attending to the needs or conditions of his relationship. These kinds of behaviours, formed under the influence of the attitude 'divorce is ugly,' not only lay the groundwork for wrong choices at the beginning of shared life but in many cases trap individuals in situations of psychological or even physical violence, because they feel they have no way to exit the existing situation. In this same vein, another interviewee says:

'In my opinion... I saw one or two cases up close, he said 'I wish I had divorced her thirty years ago, I wish I had left and gone thirty years ago,' for example. We heard many of these words from them, that they regret why they didn't do this work in those years when they had the power; they reached here and now they can no longer do anything [because divorce was ugly]' (Interview No. 47, Pos 104).

This quote depicts the depth of regret of individuals who, under the influence of the belief in the ugliness of divorce, lost opportunities to change their life situation and prevent long-term damages. This state of doubt and lack of decision-making over time places the individual in positions of depression, anxiety, and acceptance of violence, which itself creates one of the contexts for enduring violence against men.

On the other hand, other interviews have shown different dimensions of this stereotype of the ugliness of divorce and its cultural effects on the structure of social and marital relationships. For instance, in another interview it is noted:

'Let marriage not be forced. Our social relationships are extraordinarily wrong because of religious issues in our country. No girl is in contact with any boy until age 20, has no information, knows nothing of girl and boy. At age 20 she enters a university environment suddenly, and suddenly enters a series of relationships; relationships first form [based on] emotions, and these emotions are wrong emotions' (Interview No. 29, Pos [Unspecified]).

This section points to the lack of necessary pre-marital education and communicative prohibitions which not only negatively affect the quality of marriages but place individuals in a position where they cannot solve their marital problems. This situation, in the absence of correct patterns for managing crises such as violence in marital life, deepens the belief in the ugliness of divorce.

Another stereotype examinable in this field is the traditional view of marriages performed solely based on family pressures or social expectations. For example, one interviewee has said:

'The lady and gentleman who were cousins [paternal uncle's children] marry each other... the lady's age was low, the gentleman's age wasn't high... this marriage was wrong from the base... the lady enters a relationship with a gentleman via the virtual world... these videos are published in the neighbourhood, and in the neighbourhood where that man had a fishmonger shop, whenever he came to work people would come [saying] 'Come, so-and-so is doing this with so-and-so, this is the video.' What psychological load rules over that man...' (Interview No. 5, Pos 8).

This example shows to what extent social pressures and the pressure of stereotypes related to divorce can influence the life of not only the victimised

individual but the society around him. Here, not only is the individual a victim of psychological violence from society, but society's negative perceptions of him cause him to remain in his complicated situation instead of devising a solution or making an effective decision.

From a theoretical perspective, these examples can be analysed using Bourdieu's concept of 'Cultural Reproduction' (1990). Bourdieu believes that social norms and values, such as the stigmatisation of divorce or expectations of male and female roles in marriage, are reproduced in the cultural system and force society's individuals to accept them. In this same field, Giddens (1984) also points to the influence of social structures on individual decisions in his Structuration Theory, emphasising that social norms have a fundamental impact on limiting or reinforcing individual action.

These conditions and perceptions ultimately provide the ground for the persistence of violence against men; violence that occurs from society or the spouse but, due to deep beliefs regarding the ugliness of divorce, victimised individuals see no remedy but to endure it. This analysis shows how stereotypical cultural and social beliefs can reinforce a process of wrong decision-making in an individual's life and distance him from finding better solutions.

5.4.2. Traditional Dimensions of the Concept of Masculinity

The analysis of the contexts of the stereotype of the concept of masculinity for the emergence of violence against men, within the framework of the Grounded Theory paradigm, narrates a deep reality of cultural, social, and traditional pressures that impose specific moulds of masculinity on individuals. These stereotypes, by creating unrealistic expectations of masculinity and definite roles for men, have provided a favourable ground for the emergence of intangible violences in the individual and social structure.

In many societies, the concept of masculinity has been mixed with traditional values; values linked to characteristics such as courage, bravery, generosity, supportiveness, and composure. One participant in the research explicitly points out:

'No, previously we had other values. For example, masculinity must have a composure, a generosity, a forgiveness and pardon. Not be indifferent, support, those traditional values; be brave, be fearless, be valiant...' (Interview No. 63, Pos 85).

This narrative indicates a traditional image of masculinity which, with the passage of time, has turned into unrealistic and heavy expectations and gradually ignored the human aspect of men. This definition of masculinity not only creates difficult and unattainable standards for men but has defined any weakness, feeling of need, or inability to meet these criteria as a failure of masculinity.

From the substrate of such traditional values, stereotypes emerge that somehow compel men to solve all problems without the help and support of others. This subject is well observed in interviews; where one interviewee states:

'Men seek support less, request help less, because this culture told him from day one 'You must solve all problems yourself.' But the girl comes and cries easily, so-and-so and such-and-such, this way and that way and so it happened; but the boy suffers that same pain and in greater dimensions but doesn't come to express it... because expressing it means 'you have lost your power, you are a failure''
(Interview No. 38, Pos 52).

This culture drives men to silence and refraining from expressing individual problems, placing them in a cycle of psychological pressures and emotional repression. Sullivan's Theory of 'Social Isolation' (1953), which attends to the consequences of non-expression of emotions, states that individuals' isolation due to environmental pressures and social stereotypes can transform into various forms of self-blame, anxiety, and reduced self-confidence.

Another institutionalised context in men's upbringing is the pressures exerted on the male gender from very early childhood, preventing him from expressing his issues. One interviewee explains:

'Usually for boys from that very childhood it is established like this, that 'You are a man, you shouldn't share every issue with the family if you can solve it yourself'' (Interview No. 85, Pos 48).

This upbringing not only considers expressing problems a sign of weakness but places the individual in exposure to individual and social pressures that propel him to accept violence against himself as a natural and even necessary matter. From this view, Connell's 'Gender Roles' Theory shows that the division of stereotypical roles between women and men, whether in child-rearing or social interactions, can reproduce gender differences in such a way

that the grounds for pressure on masculinity and violence against men are reinforced.

Another subject clarified in the interviews is men's violent experiences from childhood, especially in educational and family environments. One respondent says regarding violences inflicted upon him in school and by teachers:

'If you look at the violences against boy children in school from teachers, especially in the era we were in... now I think it might be a bit better... if you look, you see that violence that existed against boy children never existed against girl children. And even families themselves, fathers and mothers too, many of them believe that the boy must be raised very roughly, beat the boy so he becomes a man, so-and-so... but they believe that regarding the girl, one shouldn't raise a hand against a girl' (Interview No. 4, Pos 47).

These experiences indicate a type of systematic violence whose naturalisation has caused the damages resulting from it to be ignored. Pleck's Theory of 'Male Gender Role Strain' (1981) explains that such upbringings repress men's emotional and psychological needs and reinforce feelings of anger, insecurity, and isolation in them.

One of the deep-rooted beliefs is 'beating for the masculine upbringing of boys,' which has influenced violent behaviours against boys from childhood and adolescence. One interviewee has expressed his experience of this stereotype thus:

'...this exists in our custom too and I am upset about it; I was upset because I myself had the experience of violence in school a lot, and now that I go and read [study], I see that fundamentally a boy child who isn't mischievous has a problem, because due to hormones and his differences with a girl, he must fidget and jump around. And we were beaten because of our essence and because of our type of physiology, [asking] 'Why are you like this?' whereas this was the essence of a boy child' (Interview No. 4, Pos 47).

This stereotype in the form of rough upbringing has a significant impact on men's identity, such that physical violence against boys is somehow naturalised and transformed into part of their socialisation process. From the perspective of theorists like Adler (1930), this upbringing is not only not a way to deepen the sense of masculinity but causes boys in adulthood to employ

violence as a tool for expressing identity, coping with pressure, or social control.

Based on the presented data, it shows that one of the most important contexts for the emergence of violence against men in society is the definition of 'masculinity' based on criteria such as economic power, income, and financial ability. This definition has roots in dialogues [suggesting] that masculinity and men's social value are tied to money and material things; a concept that has cast a shadow not only on cultural beliefs but on men's interpersonal and social relationships. As one participant states:

'A man inherently wants character/personality, a man inherently wants respect; that respect in society which I think has become established wrongly, has become [about] money, become [about] material things. They define masculinity by money. Exactly. From the past they told us 'Masculinity means having money in your pocket'' (Interview No. 63, Pos 81-84).

This saying clearly shows how material and economic criteria, as one of the main indicators defining masculinity, have replaced the man's inherent respect and character. In this sense, a man is respected by others and even society only when he has financial ability. This change in value pattern has laid the groundwork for psychological pressure on men who may be unable to meet these expectations for economic reasons.

From the perspective of social psychology, theories related to gender roles by West and Zimmerman (1987) state that individuals' performance in society is evaluated based on their social role expectations. When a man, due to economic or social obstacles, is unable to fulfil the traditional role of 'family financial provider,' this failure in gender role performance causes the creation of a sense of shame, despair, and even social isolation in him.

Economic and social pressures imposed on the role of men in society are highlighted in a different form in one of the quotes:

'Economic and social instabilities affect men's psychological pressures. A man must have a specific social position and credit. This subject is established in our society; although women are also busy working and the discussion of equality of rights between woman and man is raised, this expectation still exists that the man provides the house expenses. I have no complaint, but I wish society's conditions were such that men's income received more attention' (Interview No. 54, Pos 130-133).

These statements clearly show that despite social changes such as women's employment and emphasis on equal rights, expectations of men as the primary financial provider of the family remain steadfast. This contradiction between expectations—meaning the demand for gender equality on one hand and the imposition of the financial burden on men on the other—exerts heavy psychological pressure on men and reinforces feelings of stress and frustration in them.

Connell's Theory of 'Conservative Gender Performance' (1995) states that in many societies, it is still implicitly expected of men to display traditional characteristics of masculinity, such as economic power and the provider role. This value pattern, when synchronised with society's economic and social transformations, transforms into a constant source of tension.

Cultural beliefs also impose a greater financial burden upon men's shoulders, as explicitly highlighted in the following excerpt:

'Currently, we encounter instances where a man, in addition to [supporting] his spouse, is compelled to provide for his mother and sister as well. This onerous financial responsibility is institutionalised within our laws and cultural norms, and it truly does not align with the customs observed in certain other societies' (Interview No. 27, Pos 18).

This statement elucidates that legal frameworks and cultural expectations within Iranian society mandate that men, beyond merely satisfying the immediate needs of their nuclear family, must assume additional financial burdens. This economic strain not only exacerbates psychological and social tribulations among men but may also precipitate a gravitation towards aggressive behaviours. Agnew's General Strain Theory (1992) posits that when individuals are subjected to prolonged social and cultural stressors, the likelihood of manifesting transient aggressive behaviours increases significantly.

Affective states such as humiliation and shame play a pivotal role in intensifying these pressures, as articulated by one of the participants:

'[For a man], to have your hand in the pocket of the woman of the family [to be financially dependent on her] is a source of disgrace' (Interview No. 87, Pos 54).

This statement indirectly alludes to a pervasive social norm that defines male financial independence as one of the fundamental pillars of masculinity. From

this perspective, a man's incapacity to cover family expenses not only tarnishes his social standing but also poses a severe threat to his personal self-esteem. The Dynamic Self-Concept Theory in psychology, as proposed by Markus and Wurf (1987), demonstrates that an individual's mental self-image—which is contingent upon imposed social roles—can, in the event of failure to fulfil these roles, lead to a drastic reduction in self-confidence and an escalation in psychological or behavioural violence.

Collectively, these narratives indicate that the valuation of masculinity based on material and economic criteria, coupled with social and cultural pressures, establishes a fertile substrate for the emergence of violence against men. This phenomenon entails not only psychological and social consequences but also has the potential to engender deeper rifts between individuals and society.

In conclusion, these quotations reveal how stereotypes associated with the concept of masculinity systematically disregard the basic, emotional, and social needs of men, entrapping them within a cycle of silence and the acceptance of violence. Under the influence of these stereotypes, men refrain from soliciting social assistance; they are portrayed as independent and robust individuals who are expected to endure even their own psychological collapse without complaint. Upbringing pressures stemming from childhood, educational violence within schools, and the imposition of social standards as the definitive criteria for masculinity all orchestrate the necessary conditions for violence against men. This cycle demonstrates that violence can manifest in a non-physical form, mediated through stereotypes and social expectations, thereby plunging the psychological and social structures of men into crisis.

5.4.3. Cultural Tools of Men's Social Exclusion

The cultural contexts related to the social exclusion of men constitute a complex subject that has taken shape within the substrate of historical, social processes and diverse cultural beliefs. The presented narratives and quotes demonstrate that roles defined for men and existing expectations of them, alongside social structures and institutions, have created conditions where men are not only placed under severe pressure in some cases but are deprived of access to social support or facilities. The analysis of these data focuses on the profound cultural impacts and social perceptions of masculinity and the man's position in Iranian society.

Firstly, Dr. Moradi's narrative points to historical differences between traditional and modern eras; eras in which many myths and social laws introduced women as 'historical victims of violence.' He says:

'For example, the fact that a woman's Diyeh [blood money] is half of a man's Diyeh, in terms of inheritance they are considered half, or in terms of testimony, the value of their testimony doesn't count for much...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 67).

These perceptions, although they sometimes had economic or functional reasons, have led to the justification of structural discriminations against women. However, in this same era, men have also faced specific social pressures and responsibilities which have sometimes provoked a feeling of exclusion from social rights and support in them. Dr. Moradi points to another point that women have often been exempt from modern responsibilities, while men have been defined as responsible for providing family needs. He adds:

'In our society, husband and wife both go to work; the woman can save all her income for herself, but we (men) cannot. Then if a man wants to divorce his wife, in addition to Mehrieh, he must give half of his assets to her as well' (Interview No. 3, Pos 67).

This narrative is analysable within the framework of Gender Role Theory. This theory states that in traditional and even modern societies where responsibilities are divided based on gender, men face disproportionately heavy pressures and duties, and in the event of inability to perform these duties, they face social exclusion or blame.

Continuing, the exclusion of men in modern bureaucratic systems is also raised as another factor for social exclusion. Dr. Moradi's narrative regarding his personal experience shows this subject well:

'When you refer to an organisation, if a woman with similar conditions goes for the same work, they get her work done, but they procrastinate on my work and don't do it at all...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 155-159).

This situation indicates a type of transformation in social relationships and modern power structures wherein perceptions of prioritising women in certain fields (such as bureaucratic interactions) have formed. Foucault's Theory of Power Structures (1975) states that modern social systems utilise various mechanisms to maintain balance or change power among social

groups; but these changes often occur unfairly and based on gender presuppositions.

Another aspect of men's social exclusion in the presented narratives points to their inability to endure social and cultural pressures. Dr. Moradi's narrative in this field is very thought-provoking. He says:

'What is society supposed to give me that I must endure these pressures for its sake...' (Interview No. 3, Dr. Alireza Moradi).

This statement indicates a feeling of frustration and despair resulting from the lack of social support, which can lead to greater isolation of men in society.

Economic and social pressures exerted on the role of men in society are emphasised in a different form in one of the interviewees' statements:

'Economic and social instabilities influence men's psychological pressures. A man must possess a specific social position and credit. This subject is institutionalised in our society; despite the fact that women also work and the discussion of equal rights between woman and man is raised, it is still expected that the man provides the house expenses. I have no objection, but I wish society's conditions were such that men's income received more attention' (Interview No. 54, Pos 130-133).

These statements explicitly show that despite social transformations such as women's employment and emphasis on gender equality, expectations of men as the primary family breadwinner have still not changed. This contradiction between demands for gender equality on one hand and the imposition of financial responsibility on men on the other exerts heavy psychological pressure on them and intensifies feelings of frustration and stress in them.

Connell's Theory of 'Conservative Gender Performance' (1995) states that in many societies, it is still implicitly expected of men to display traditional characteristics of masculinity, such as economic capability and the provider role. This value structure, when synchronised with society's social and economic changes, transforms into a sustainable source of tension and anxiety for men.

Cultural norms also place a greater financial burden on men's shoulders, as observed in the following statements:

'Nowadays there are cases where a man, in addition to his wife, must provide for the expenses of his mother and sister as well. This heavy financial burden has taken root in our laws and cultural expectations and truly does not harmonise with the custom of some [other] societies' (Interview No. 27, Pos 18).

This statement shows how cultural laws and norms in Iranian society compel men to assume additional financial responsibilities beyond their own family's needs. This economic pressure not only creates psychological and social problems for men but may propel them towards aggressive behaviours. Agnew's General Strain Theory (1992) emphasises that when individuals are placed under social and cultural pressures for a long time, the probability of the emergence of temporary aggressive behaviours increases in them.

Feelings such as humiliation and shame also play an important role in intensifying these pressures, as one interviewee states:

'[For a man] the fact that your hand is in the pocket of the woman of the family is a cause for shame' (Interview No. 87, Pos 54).

This sentence implicitly points to a social norm that defines men's financial independence as one of the fundamental pillars of masculinity. In this view, a man's inability to provide family expenses not only tarnishes his social respect but endangers his personal self-esteem. Self-Concept Theory in psychology by Markus and Wurf (1987) shows that individuals' mental image of themselves, which depends on imposed social roles, can lead to a severe reduction in self-confidence and an increase in psychological or behavioural violence in the event of failure.

These narratives in total indicate that defining masculinity based on material and economic criteria, along with social and cultural pressures, paves the way for violence against men. This issue entails not only psychological and social consequences but can create deeper rifts between individuals and society and influence human relationships.

Finally, these statements clarify how stereotypes related to masculinity ignore men's basic, emotional, and social needs and place them in a cycle of silence and enduring violence. Men under the influence of these stereotypes refrain from requesting social help and are introduced as independent and powerful individuals who must accept even their own psychological collapse. Upbringing pressures from childhood, educational violence in schools, and the imposition of social norms as criteria for masculinity all provide the necessary ground for violence against men. This cycle shows that violence can occur in non-physical forms as well, through stereotypes and social expectations, dragging men's psychological and social structures into crisis.

5.4.4. The Culture of Silence and Non-Reporting of Violence Against Men

In examining the reasons for ignoring violence against men in society, several cultural, psychological, and social factors are intertwined, causing this type of violence—unlike common violence against women—to be seen less or even completely ignored at both the public and macro-cultural levels. These factors are deeply rooted in the cultural structure and beliefs of society and have transformed into a cycle of silence, denial, and implicit acceptance, a subject which can be explained relying on the presented quotes and scientific theories.

One of the main factors for society's turning a blind eye to violence against men is the lack of public belief in the existence of such violence. This issue is clearly observed in the clinical experience of one interviewee who says:

'In the last twenty years, in my own personal experience in clinical work, I have unfortunately seen fewer men who are subjected to violence by women. Society, especially our own society, does not believe that women commit violence against men, and they say 'Oh, this is nothing compared to all the violence men commit against women,' and 'Maybe it's women's right,' and examples are plentiful. How empathetic we are; 'All this time for Shaban, once for Ramezan' [Let women have a turn/It's fair game].' (Interview No. 6, Pos 5).

This sentence clearly shows that general belief in Iranian society considers violence against men not as a serious problem but as a legitimate or justifiable reaction to men's historical violence against women. Such a view is rooted in social theories related to gender and can be linked to Bourdieu's Theory of 'Social Reproduction of Violence' (1995), which states that implicit violence in society is stabilised and repeated through cultural structures and language without necessarily being seen.

Furthermore, what causes men not to be able to express violence against themselves are signs of masculine humiliation in our culture, which is perceived as weakness. One interviewee offers a deep analysis in this regard:

'Because expressing it means that you have lost your power, you are a failure... It is inherent in our literature and culture that this type of violence lies hidden, which is inflicted more on the male gender. And we haven't opened this up much.' (Interview No. 38, Pos 52).

This sentence expresses power and gender relations that reduce or marginalise violence against men from the perspective of weakness or failure. Connell's

Gender Role Theory (2005) explains that masculinity in many cultures is defined by power, dominance, and the ability to cope with problems; therefore, men who experience violence are placed in a dual position: on one hand, they are victims of violence; and on the other, the fear of disclosing such a position causes their personal and social repression.

Another complex aspect of society's turning a blind eye to violence against men is the preservation of privacy and men's silence regarding these violences. One interviewee says in this regard:

'Unfortunately, men don't come to report. Why? Because they repeat this same violence to themselves, so to speak, they endure it or don't even know it's violence. Why do they do this? Because they are the secret-keepers of their own sexual life. Meaning they maintain a special guardianship over their sexual life and think this is a private thing and shouldn't tell anyone.' (Interview No. 9, Pos 15).

This statement explicitly shows that men turn to silence due to psychological and social considerations, as well as the belief in maintaining the privacy of sexual life. From a psychological perspective, Altman's Theory of 'Privacy and Personal Space' (1975) can be used, which explains that individuals, especially in the face of threatening or damaging situations, take refuge more in maintaining their privacy and consider any disclosure of the situation as a serious threat to the image they have of themselves.

Hidden but toxic violences also play a significant role in society's cultural structures. One interviewee points out:

'I have seen ladies who humiliate their men in public, humiliate their man's job, humiliate their man's income, even humiliate his physical appearance, but in the form of humour, in the form of comics, in the form of jokes where outwardly no wound is inflicted, but it is that man who feels that wound well. We are not supposed to say someone who is silent has no pain.' (Interview No. 6, Pos 9).

Symbolic humiliation of men in public, especially in the form of humour and comics, is one of the manifestations of hidden violence that entails deep psychological injuries. Seligman's Theory of Psychopathology (2006) says that this type of violence, although non-physical, lays the groundwork for serious psychological problems by damaging self-esteem and individual identity.

Another point is the issue of verbal and emotional violence, which often happens in marital relationships and is less recognised as violence. One interviewee says:

'Violence isn't necessarily hitting. Verbal violence, for example, becomes 'I wish you had stuck a knife in my chest but hadn't said this word.' Yes, such places have occurred, because my swallowed words show themselves more in fights... 'If my dad were here, he wouldn't have given me to you.' (Interview No. 2, Pos 80-88).

This verbal violence, which happens in the form of frustration or linguistic humiliation, may have a more severe destructive effect than physical violence. Bourdieu's Theory of 'Symbolic Violence' (2001) points to this point that verbal violence, especially in close relationships, can significantly disrupt the victim's psychological identity and lead to a cycle of repression or passivity.

These narratives and scientific theories show that society's turning a blind eye to violence against men is rooted in deep gender structures, cultural beliefs, and psychological archetypes. This social resistance in the face of violence against men is not only fed by a culture and society that measures masculinity by power and control but fuels a cycle of silence, denial, and even implicit acceptance in men's own behaviour.

Another consequence of the culture of silence is men's failure to visit psychologists. In analysing the contexts of men's non-referral to psychologists and the role of this issue in the emergence of violence against men, one must address the depth of psychological, social, and cultural reasons hidden in this behaviour. Narratives presented by experts paint a clear picture of the obstacles to this referral, especially in a society where masculinity is linked with taboos such as 'one must not fail' or 'show weakness.'

This issue is well addressed in the words of one interviewee; he says:

'...a man cannot go to a psychologist, because coming and shedding tears and asking for help has been instilled in his mind as meaning defeat and collapsing. Society is still afraid of expressing mental disorders; it's a taboo, it considers it madness...' (Interview No. 38, Pos 129).

This quote challenges men's cultural situation precisely, a situation that on one hand has trapped them in a circle of negative emotions and on the other has blocked the path of help-seeking. Connell's Theory of 'Hegemonic Masculinity' (1995) is contemplative here; based on this theory, masculinity

demands of men that they repress emotions and show resistance against problems, even if this resistance takes them to the threshold of psychological collapse.

On the other hand, the clinical experience of another interviewee also has a similar narrative:

'Gentlemen don't visit a doctor until they reach the highest level of danger; a small percentage visit. The pain becomes much bigger, becomes very terrible, but a lady visits with the smallest pain...' (Interview No. 97, Pos 126).

This perception indicates not just social taboos but a type of structural inattention to psychological treatment processes among men. This means that men refrain from visiting a psychologist for various reasons, but when the crisis reaches an intolerable level, they may be forced to step towards help-seeking. It is worth noting that based on Zimbardo's Theory of the 'Cycle of Repression' (1999), the prolongation of periods of inattention to psychological problems accumulates the individual's internal tensions and can lead to the explosion of this accumulation, which will manifest as violence or damaging behaviours.

Furthermore, society's view of issues such as mental disorders also has extensive effects on the process of individuals' referral. In the analysis of one interviewee, it is stated:

'...society's view must change, services must become broader, and specialist forces must be trained and produced a lot...' (Interview No. 38, Pos 129).

This view that considers mental disorder a type of 'madness' and fears expressing it is a fundamental obstacle to creating a culture of visiting psychologists among men. Goffman's Theory of 'Social Stigma' (1963) states that social factors, including stigmas or specific labels, severely influence individuals' decisions to seek psychological help. In a society where visiting psychological centres is measured by concepts like weakness or madness, it is natural that men try to avoid these stigmas.

Economic issues also reveal another dimension of this subject. In the words of one interviewee, we read:

'...that same girl who has been raped twenty times, the family didn't take her for 5 hours of psychotherapy, but she had nose surgery to turn it up, the family paid thirty million Tomans. On one hand you paid the cost, [on the other] you can't pay...' (Interview No. 38, Pos 129).

This quote shows how the costs of psychological treatment, alongside other family priorities, especially in a society where spending on mental health is not considered a value, deprive men of receiving services. Maslow's Theory (1943) regarding the hierarchy of needs says that basic needs like physical health or even external appearances (in this case nose surgery) in a society might take precedence over psychological needs, because society attaches more importance to these items.

Ultimately, it can be said that the contexts of men's non-referral to psychologists have not only economic or social reasons but are related to the deepest cognitive and emotional layers of men; where the taboo of masculinity, shame of showing weakness, and fear of stigmatisation distance them from the process of treatment and help-seeking. The consequences of this non-referral, however, sometimes continue far beyond internal injuries and can lead to violent and even self-destructive behaviours, behaviours that require urgent intervention by the psychological community.

The analysis of data from this research indicates the complex connection between cultural norms, social pressures, and the non-expression of fundamental emotions such as grief, fear, and anxiety in men. This situation ultimately provides a suitable substrate for the emergence of violence against men, violence that manifests both in interpersonal relationships and reflects in deeper psychological layers.

What is clearly evident in the analysis of these data is the cultural emphasis on specific gender roles for men that prevent them from expressing their emotions and pains. One interviewee explicitly states:

'It seems we place this group under much, much greater stress and psychological load psychologically, and it is the application of a kind of cultural violence on the male gender, the consequences of which can show themselves much more in depressions, in suicide attempts, in psychological burnouts.' (Interview No. 38, Pos 44).

This sentence shows the depth of pressure imposed on men through social norms, pressure that manifests directly in self-destructive behaviours or violence against oneself and others. Durkheim's Theory of Social Strain (1897) is noteworthy in this field; according to this theory, social pressures resulting from the mismatch between individual identity and cultural expectations can lead to psychological injuries such as depression and even destructive behaviours. This theory states well that the structure of society is responsible

for many violences that individuals experience, violences that may not be overt.

Continuing this narrative, a more complete picture of these internal pressures is presented. One interviewee says:

'We men don't talk. We don't converse; the reason is that the man keeps silent. From old times they told us 'Men don't cry.' Look, the first thing they taught us... I was a small child, I saw again and again... I myself mistakenly and out of helplessness told the child 'A man doesn't cry,' whereas it's not like this at all. When you have a great and huge pain, who do you tell? Who do I tell? Who do I have to tell?' (Interview No. 48, Pos 95-97).

This section clearly shows how social culture, by imposing silence on men, has prevented them from expressing emotions that are essential for psychological balance. Connell's Theory of the 'Social Structure of Gender' (1995) points to this point that cultural expectations of masculinity not only deprive men of access to psychological resources but place them in a limited framework far from understanding and empathy. Here, imposed gender characteristics such as 'Men Don't Cry' transform into a cultural tool through which pressure on men increases. In this path, another interviewee also emphasises these same points and says:

'Because this socialisation they gave him... basically the norm of his being a man is that 'You must not say [complain], do you get wounded too? Your wounds shouldn't scream, basically be a man.' That same old story that 'A man doesn't cry,' but with other sentences, somehow else they taught him 'Soothe yourself like this.' (Interview No. 57, Pos 154).

This bitter confession once again emphasises the point that men learn from the very early stages of life to repress their emotions and, instead of utilizing psychological tools to soothe pain, choose ways such as silence. From a psychological perspective, Freud's theory regarding Repression (1915) explains this process well; he believes that the repression of emotions at the unconscious level can lead in the long term to the emergence of hidden anxieties and violent behaviours.

But the impact of this repression does not end with psychological issues; the non-expression of emotions causes men to remain silent in the face of violence as well. One interviewee says in this relation:

'That for example 'What does it mean? What does it mean a man, for example, should be subjected to oppression? What does it mean a woman does violence to him or has violent behaviour towards a man?' Meaning it is not yet understandable for them, not yet acceptable for them that such a thing exists, because they think if they say this, they will judge them, say 'He is Zalil [abased/henpecked],' say 'He is not a man,' say 'He is incompetent.' Well, he doesn't say this anymore and keeps this constantly in his heart.' (Interview No. 75, Pos 43).

Goffman's Labelling Theory (1963) is fully applicable in this section; this theory addresses how social moulds are created that prevent individuals from expressing their real experiences. Men, under the pressure of these labels, often endure violence against themselves and refuse to express it due to fear of judgment.

The analysis of these data shows that the non-expression of emotions of grief, fear, and anxiety by men not only provides a suitable substrate for creating violence against men but causes the formation of a cycle of hidden violence that starts from psychological repression, leads to individual silence, and ultimately fuels negative feelings. This cultural and psychological violence, imposed on male identity over time, once again reveals the importance of revising gender norms and providing psychological support to men.

This analysis also shows how patriarchal and cultural concepts lay the groundwork for men's silence and refusal to express experiences of violence, such that this silence itself leads to the reproduction of a system of domination and violence.

One expert clarifies in this regard:

'On this subject, because very little has been spoken about it, very little followed up, very little researched... the reason is that usually societies are patriarchal and most countries are like this, and gentlemen, when they are subjected to abuse, because their self-esteem is destroyed and 'a man' has been questioned, they usually demur to express this and refuse to express it and find a solution.' (Interview No. 14, Pos 4).

This quote highlights not only the dimensions of patriarchy as the root of men's silence but points to the concept of loss of self-esteem and masculine identity, which acts as a barrier to expressing experienced violence. Based on

sociological theories, especially Bourdieu's theory regarding Symbolic Violence (1991), it is clear that patriarchy not only expands unequal relationships between genders but victimises men to norms and symbols that are ostensibly in their favour but inwardly impose great pressures on them.

This point becomes more apparent when another expert states:

'Meaning this patriarchy cures no pain of men, rather it has fallen and become a burden on their neck too. Look, all those privileges they used to give men, the modern man doesn't want these.' (Interview No. 27, Pos 25-26).

These words express the paradox of patriarchy; a system ostensibly built to give privileges to men transforms into a burden that limits men's freedom and expression. Gramsci's Theory of Cultural Hegemony (1971) shows how cultural hegemony can, instead of providing security and benefits for a specific group, transform into a restrictor for that very group. In fact, domination operates in such a way that men, even in the position of vulnerability and victimhood, must still accept the dominant and resistant role and, unlike women, do not have the chance to express their injuries. These points also align with another expert's description of the reproduction of the domination system:

'That same patriarchal system, the domination system is reproduced. The domination where the man is up there. What system of domination? A domination whose definition is clear; the male gender's distance from the female gender is completely visible in these views. It seems they cannot look equally; as soon as a woman comes to get close to a man, these cultural handbrakes are pulled.' (Interview No. 65, Pos 26).

This narrative shows that patriarchy not only deepens the gap between women and men but places men in a controlled hierarchy and prevents their cultural liberation and free expression. Men in this system, while benefiting from some apparent privileges, still see themselves in social shackles that deprive them of expressing injuries or appropriate reaction. Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Reproduction explains how such systems continue their domination through the implicit reproduction of norms.

This phenomenon is well depicted in an interview with one individual:

'That time wasn't like now where they raise [kids] that 'whoever said whatever, come and say it.' At that time, besides the fact that I was always at fault from childhood, always in every state. Always in every state I was and am at fault.'

There I couldn't express this matter that this event happened.' (Interview No. 98, Pos 35).

This sentence refers to educational and social norms that condemn men to silence and acceptance from childhood and place the responsibility for any problem or violence on their shoulders. A man who always considers himself at fault is in fact a victim of a cultural structure that considers his self-esteem dependent on silence in the face of violence or injury.

Another interviewee also points to cultural differences and their role in men's silence:

'I realised only gentlemen's silence in the face of these events is a bit more, and perhaps due to that cultural form or thoughts that existed from before in our country, which based on that same poem they teach boys from childhood, 'Boys are like lions, like swords,' basically they must preserve their sanctity in the heart of society and keep silent if cruelty, oppression, or violence is applied to them in the heart of the family. When we entered the space of sexual harassment and sexual violences, I realised that ladies express and talk more, but gentlemen prefer to be silent more, because it seems their masculinity is diminished or other taboos that included their condition [covered them]; this is violence...' (Interview No. 12, Pos 5).

This section specifically shows the impact of gender norms on men choosing silence when facing violence. From the perspective of Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theories (1986), this silence is a reaction to preserve masculine identity and prevent social judgment. The sentence *'Boys are like lions, like swords'* well shows the symbolic inspirations transferred to men during the socialisation process, making them into a steadfast, resistant image without weakness, an image that itself transforms into a barrier for the manifestation of their injuries.

Finally, one individual emphasises the legal and cultural unevenness regarding the phenomenon of violence against men and says:

'Usually the bulk of stories regarding family violences are not reported. Now in our society, for various reasons, it might be even more conducive for this situation of violences. Why?! Because due to cultural and legal and religious issues, we have a series of vulnerabilities that perhaps many other countries don't have.' (Interview No. 3, Pos 9).

This warning sentence emphasises the role of structural factors such as laws and social conditions that reduce the probability of reporting violence against men and reinforce the cycle of violence.

This analysis shows that the patriarchal system, despite its powerful appearance, is itself a source for silence, repression, and violence against men. Cultural domination in this system not only fuels the reproduction of inequality between man and woman but keeps men incapable in the face of injuries and forces them into silence.

5.4.5. Society's Ignorance and Lack of Awareness

Society's lack of awareness provides a fertile substrate for high-risk and damaging behaviours, and this issue manifests more prominently within the heart of various cultures and communities, particularly within subcultures. In this midst, violence against men, as a phenomenon that often remains hidden in the shadows, is rooted in these very deep social ignorances. The statements of the interviewees in the present research clearly illuminate the various dimensions of this lack of awareness and its role in the emergence of violence against men.

One of the interviewees, a teacher and school counsellor and a forty-year-old from Kuhdasht, Lorestan, pointing to the low level of education and parental ignorance in rural areas, arrives at this key point that the lack of knowledge and awareness among parents regarding correct child-rearing methods can lead to violence against boys. He says:

'Because I am in a region where most people are farmers, are rural, are not high in terms of academic education, it is very high there. That one of the reasons causing violence is that the father and mother do not have that ability and that thought regarding how they should behave with their son; meaning it causes them to enact violence against the son. The lack of awareness and education that they should give to the father and mother is not there. They don't have that thought and education that a father and mother should have' (Interview No. 8, Pos 33).

These statements indicate that violence in these communities stems not from malice, but often from ignorance and the inability to employ correct educational methods. In other words, parents resort to violent behaviours due to a shortage of necessary knowledge and skills. This issue aligns with sociological theories regarding the role of education in reducing violent behaviours. For example, Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) emphasises

that violence is a learned behaviour and teaching alternative and non-violent methods can be effective in reducing it.

On the other hand, ignorance is not limited solely to the sphere of child-rearing but encompasses broader dimensions. One individual, a 42-year-old man, points to his own ignorance during his youth regarding girls' sexual issues and the phenomenon of menstruation:

'Our story has a story, Layla and Majnun, they didn't have a story... anyway, at that age, these things [were dismissed/ignored]... I was pursuing my own voids... but I knew nothing of love and lovers and these things. I was 23 years old, I didn't know what a period was; later I understood what a period was. Yeah, well, I didn't know' (Interview No. 44, Pos 167).

This honest confession unveils a bitter reality: widespread sexual ignorance in society. This ignorance leads not only to misunderstandings and inefficient relationships but can lay the groundwork for sexual and psychological violences as well. Specifically, the lack of correct and comprehensive sexual education renders men incapable of properly understanding women's sexual needs and issues, and this incapacity can manifest in various forms of violence in marital and sexual relationships.

One clinical psychologist and social pathology expert illuminates another angle of ignorance. Criticising parents' excessive attention to the education and care of girls and inattention to boys, he considers this discriminatory approach a type of hidden violence against boys. He says:

'I have seen less... as an emergency expert, a counsellor, and an individual who actually lives in this society—I am an ordinary person too in a part of my existence—I have seen less such pressures on boys, and this itself is a type of violence. And in a context where you are teaching the woman 'Girl, take care, don't do this work, do this work,' you don't teach the man a series of limits and boundaries either. Basically, it's our religion; I am living in Iran, your country, your system, your religion has set a series of limits and boundaries for the woman; please respect this. If you don't respect it, transgression from them recognises you as a norm-breaker too. The boy breaks the norm, then he is questioned; you should have taught him that the norm must not be broken' (Interview No. 57, Pos 20).

This critical view shows well how ignorance of boys' needs and vulnerabilities and sole focus on caring for girls can lead to a kind of negligence of boys' rights

and needs and, consequently, the emergence of violence against them. This issue aligns with Feminist views regarding gender stereotypes and their role in limiting men and women. For example, Simone de Beauvoir (1949) in *The Second Sex* points to this point that society, by defining limiting gender roles for men and women, applies a type of structural violence against both genders.

Society's ignorance of 'Sexual Orientations of LGBTQ Groups' also, due to cultural and sexual taboos, has led to denial, social exclusion, and even psychological and social violences against these groups in the family and society. One individual, a 24-year-old trans man who has passed through the experience of divorce, speaks of the extent of parents' and surrounding people's ignorance and nescience regarding the sexual, gender, and cerebral structure of trans individuals and the violent consequences resulting from this ignorance:

'Trans individuals exist in every society; fine, let them exist, but let it not be announced anywhere. Look, it is people's lack of awareness that causes them not to accept this. Everyone says 'This sort of thing doesn't exist,' if it exists too, 'What does it mean? It has no meaning at all.' Why should someone like me, like you or anyone, tell him 'Sir, trans is this, this brain is masculine, there is no way other than surgery'? They don't allow us to say this simple word at the level of the whole country, so at least four families understand what it is... Sir, he has become trans; excuse me, a person is born blind, born deaf, he is born trans. The absence of awareness, knowledge, and education and conditions is severely hard and causes a series of very many consequences, including violences. Because of the lack of education and awareness and ability to confront that bully, whether it be himself or another person, he doesn't have it; in fact, this violence can be inflicted by several people simultaneously' (Interview No. 84, Pos 4).

These bitter words reveal the depth of the catastrophe resulting from society's ignorance regarding sexual and gender identities. The lack of awareness and education in this field leads not only to exclusion and discrimination against LGBTQ individuals but entails numerous physical and psychological violences for them. This issue aligns with Becker's Labelling Theory (1963) in criminology. Based on this theory, social labels such as 'homosexual' or 'transgender' can lead to the formation of deviant identities and violent behaviours against labelled individuals.

One 19-year-old individual also speaks of the status of society's ignorance regarding homosexual individuals and the destructive spiritual and

psychological consequences and the fear and delusion of the existence of groups known as LGBTQ:

'LGBTQ groups aside from that, there are a series of individuals by the name... the term calls them 'homophobes,' which is from the English term 'homophobia' or delusion and fear of homosexual individuals. And those kinds of individuals are numerous; in terms of age/time they are kids, mostly between 14-15 [year old] kids, they aren't above 18. Usually they claim a lot that 'we hate these things.' A series actually broadcast hatreds in the virtual space [social media], out of ignorance and nescience and repression' (Interview No. 84, Pos 17).

He points to the phenomenon of 'Homophobia,' which is rooted in ignorance and nescience and leads to violent and discriminatory behaviours against homosexual individuals. This fear and hatred resulting from ignorance, especially among the young generation, is reflected extensively in the virtual space and fuels the intensification of violence against this group.

The same 24-year-old trans man, continuing, warns of the broader consequences of society's ignorance and lack of awareness of LGBTQ groups for the whole society:

'For the whole society, the impact is very negative. Our society is confused. You come now, this boy is sitting there, you ask him 'What is your sexual orientation?' He says 'Boy to girl' [heterosexual]. You say 'Are you sure?' He says 'Yes.' But when you gave him sufficient education, he says 'No, I need time to find myself; now to you, yes, because I am a boy.' Because he has ignorance' (Interview No. 50, Pos 100-102).

He believes that this ignorance influences not only LGBTQ individuals but plunges the whole society into confusion and ambiguity. Individuals, due to the lack of sufficient education and awareness, face problems even in diagnosing their own sexual orientation, and this confusion can lead to numerous psychological and social problems. Furthermore, he points to the lack of free and open discourse regarding LGBTQ groups in media, schools, and universities and considers this silence and censorship the main barrier to awareness-raising and removing discrimination:

'Regarding LGBTQ groups, no discourse takes place in media and school and university. Now that I am interviewing with you, there is this fear of being executed. Our biggest problem is the existence of the death sentence and punishment of prisoners, ninety percent of whom are executed; unfortunately, in

the inefficiency of governments, they are executed. Unfortunately, there is a restriction of speech and no discursive freedom exists in this country' (Interview No. 50, Pos 92-93).

These shocking statements show that the closed and repressive atmosphere of society not only prevents awareness-raising regarding sexual and gender issues but even endangers the lives of LGBTQ individuals. The lack of freedom of speech and free discourse in this field intensifies the cycle of ignorance and violence.

Foad, pointing to the 'misandrist atmosphere of Iranian society' due to excessive focus on maintaining women's sanctity and rights, highlights another aspect of ignorance and discrimination. He believes that this misandrist atmosphere causes violences experienced by men to be ignored:

'Unfortunately, the atmosphere of society is severely misandrist (mard-setiz); meaning society has severely crushed men and they are severely showing women high [elevating women]. Until 20-30 years ago everyone was after women's rights and entitlements which were violated; now amidst these women's rights and entitlements which were violated, the majority—I don't say all, but the majority—this violence that I am suffering... talk to anyone around you, out of every 10 people, 5-6 people are in this situation. You can neither raise a hand against her, and according to the delicacy she has and according to the mentality that exists in society regarding women, you cannot say this word [complain] anywhere' (Interview No. 17, Pos 31-33).

Foad points to the point that in a society where women's rights are heavily emphasised, the voice of men who are victims of violence is not heard and their experience is ignored. This ignoring is itself a type of structural violence rooted in society's ignorance of the various dimensions of violence and its victims. This view aligns with Post-Structuralist Feminism. Post-structuralist feminists believe that focusing solely on gender as the main factor of discrimination can ignore other dimensions of discrimination and violence, including violence against men.

Finally, Mr. Farahani, 50 years old, pointing to the 'low threshold of people's tolerance in the urban living space due to financial pressures,' points to the role of social and economic factors in intensifying violence. He believes that financial pressures and economic problems cause an increase in tensions and violences in society, including violence against men:

'Life in the city of Tehran has become very hard. I myself am not a man of fighting at all. I say people are angry now. People have become somehow... and it all goes back to financial pressure. People's nerves are wrecked' (Interview No. 52, Pos 14).

Although this quote does not point directly to ignorance, it shows that social and economic pressures, in a substrate of ignorance and lack of stress coping skills, can fuel the increase of violence in society. In other words, ignorance of stress management and problem-solving methods, alongside economic pressures, can lower individuals' tolerance threshold and increase the probability of the emergence of violent behaviours.

In summary, the analysis of interviewees' statements shows that society's ignorance in various dimensions, including child-rearing, sexual issues, sexual and gender identities, and social and economic issues, plays an important role in paving the way for violence against men. This ignorance leads not only to direct violent behaviours but fuels more hidden forms of violence, such as discrimination, ignoring, and silence in the face of violence against men. Confronting this phenomenon requires widespread and pervasive awareness-raising at the society level, reforming stereotypical and discriminatory attitudes, and creating an open and safe space for dialogue and exchange of views regarding issues related to gender and violence.

Violence against men is a complex and multi-factorial phenomenon where, in many cases, its roots transcend superficial and daily behaviours and are linked with more fundamental issues such as illiteracy and weak awareness at various levels of society. These factors are a mirror of the cultural, social, and psychological structures of society which play a role deeply in creating and continuing violence against men. In this analysis, performed based on the Grounded Theory paradigmatic framework, an attempt will be made to examine the contexts of illiteracy and low awareness levels as a substrate for the emergence and normalisation of violence against men, relying on presented quotes and scientific theories.

One of the most important predisposing factors is the issue of education. As Gholam Eskandari points out:

'We didn't study [go to school] towards these behaviours, and someone who doesn't study doesn't reach complete consciousness (Sho'oor). Why doesn't a person get to his work [understand things]? Meaning even if you beat him with a stick, like me, get beaten by the earth, get beaten by time, he doesn't understand.'

Meaning we were at a level, we remain that same way' (Interview No. 24, Pos 175-178).

This quote clearly shows how lack of access to education or illiteracy prevents individuals' intellectual growth and keeps individuals at a level of ignorance where they not only do not understand the application of violence but perhaps are not even capable of identifying the oppressions inflicted upon them. Freire's Theory of 'Educational Poverty' (1970) states that educational inequalities not only limit individuals' intellectual capabilities but guarantee the domination of power structures over them. This issue can become a ground where acceptability of violence becomes institutionalised in culture in an unconscious manner.

Furthermore, the weakness of public awareness and the inability of critical thinking in society has expanded the scope of violence further. As Saberi points out in one of the interviews regarding the impact of taboos and sexual beliefs:

'Look, we live in a society where many things are forbidden in it; sexual and gender taboos, including raising such subjects. Still after 45-46 years after the revolution, our society still doesn't have the traction to see those nudity films. A boy who comes and annoys another boy and wants to bring about an event with him, if he knew what damage he is doing to himself with this work, he wouldn't do this work. If a boy knew regarding the masturbation he performs, what damage he inflicts on himself and his family in the long term in the future, he wouldn't do this work' (Interview No. 21, Pos 83).

Ignorance regarding the effects of actions on oneself and others is an intensifying factor not only in the sphere of behaviours related to violence but in all interpersonal and social aspects. Dewey's Theory of 'Critical Consciousness' (1916) emphasises that only when individuals become capable of analysing the effects of their behaviour and actions can they make conscious decisions to reduce violence.

Continuing, the weakness of media literacy and the dominance of superstitions that Soroush Ghobadi mentions is also another manifestation of the low level of awareness in society. He says:

'Our people don't have media literacy, and all the contents that happen in the virtual space... even now I myself get a message that 'put your phone in flight mode, at that hour of 2 AM a wave will pass over the sky that if the phone is on,

you yourself will die and explode.' These superstitions are still dominant'
(Interview No. 25, Pos 28).

This situation provides a suitable substrate for public misunderstanding, creating false fears, and also the instrumental use of violence against different groups, including men. Based on Habermas's Theory of Media Empowerment (1984), media can become a tool for awareness-raising or social control; and in a society where media literacy is limited, this tool, instead of empowering, fuels the reproduction of violence and inequality.

Also, from Erfan's view, pointing to the educational system, another aspect of illiteracy and its impact on violence becomes clear. He says:

'We had a teacher who had violence, had shouting and screaming. Had swearing, but had no specific reason either; the reason was this very bullying: 'I am the teacher and I can do this work; you are the student, you cannot'' (Interview No. 80, Pos 124).

Here, there is a specific example of how authoritarianism is internalised and violence emerges from within ignorant and inattentive systems. The fact that violence occurs without reason, solely to exercise power, is an instance of the theory of the 'Cycle of Authoritarian Violence,' which believes that in the absence of social awareness, violence will transform into a tool for the acceptance and continuation of social order (Arendt, 1970).

The impact of illiteracy and weakness of awareness in society also includes cultural complexities and contradictory social views. The quote raised from Kermani clearly displays behavioural contradictions and gaps existing in cultural foundations:

'People's view is full of contradictions; meaning you came yourself on the first day, it had no problem; because you came with your wife and child, it has a problem.' And then he continues: *'Because his interests weren't in danger there, he is a kind of bastard agent; now that his interests are in danger, he is a kind of bastard agent'* (Interview No. 55, Pos 149-150).

These deep cultural contradictions indicate a level of social unawareness that disrupts deeper understanding of necessities and realities and provides space for structural and personal violences. Finally, when Kazemi says with decisiveness:

'It will never be fixed; the cause is also because of the level of literacy and awareness of society' (Interview No. 55, Pos 172-173),

it is a reflection of a summation and unpleasant reality that numerous studies also confirm. Theories such as Inglehart's Theory of 'Cultural Inefficiency' (1997) also state that in societies where weakness of awareness exists and public education has not been able to reinforce sustainable social and cultural concepts, violence becomes part of everyday culture.

Contexts of illiteracy and low level of awareness, ultimately, not only add to the emergence of violence against men but create a cycle of violence, ignorance, and its reproduction. This cycle can only be broken by elevating cultural, media, and educational literacy.

5.4.6. Subcultures

In every society, subcultures exist which pave the ground for the emergence of violent actions against men. In this research, subcultures are raised in the form of 4 components: 'Closed Social Atmosphere and the Emergence of Honour Killings,' 'Cultural Lifeworld,' 'Subculture of Thuggery (*Lati-gari*) and Bullying,' and 'Matriarchy and the Weakening of Male Authority.'

Honour Killings: Honour killings in closed societies are not only the product of patriarchal culture and traditional controlling values but are the manifestation of severe psychological and social pressures imposed on men. This issue clearly shows how the closed atmosphere of society, alongside limiting subcultures, lays the groundwork for the emergence of severe and controlling violences in the form of honour killings. In this analysis, an attempt will be made to examine this phenomenon as a result of cultural and social pressures and unequal power structures, utilising the presented quotes and scientific theories.

In the closed atmosphere of small communities, one of the issues leading to the intensification of honour-based reactions is the limitation of social communication and severe cultural surveillance. As Mehdi Momeni points out:

'Inside that tribe with specific values, [if] a girl has been violated, either the opposing party's family must be completely executed by firing squad, and definitely the girl must be killed too.' (Interview No. 38, Pos 119).

This speech indicates structures that necessitate violence based on concepts such as honour, dignity, and reputation (*Aberu*). The closed tribal culture operates based on patriarchal values and places men under psychological and social pressure to apply violence as a way to protect the family and restore lost reputation. Bourdieu's Theory of 'Symbolic Violence' (1977) states that in societies where controlling values are symbolically institutionalised in culture, the application of violence based on these very values is not only accepted but viewed as a masculine duty.

This restrictive cultural structure is further reinforced in closed societies where social surveillance is intense. Just as small and tribal communities are based on symbolic values, individuals in this space are forced to perform behaviours in accordance with those values, even if these behaviours are violent acts. Mehdi Momeni explains in his analysis that:

'The more society expands, the more the space opens up... well, these social transformations are happening and getting better; [but in closed societies] it seems we place men under much, much greater stress and psychological load psychologically, and it is the application of a kind of cultural violence on the male gender, the consequences of which can show themselves much more in depressions, in suicide attempts, in psychological burnouts.' (Interview No. 38, Pos 119).

This view shows that cultural pressures influence not only men's social life but have profound effects on their mental health, trapping them in a cycle of violence and chronic stress.

According to social theorists like Michel Foucault, violence in closed societies is often the result of the reproduction of power and control structures that limit the boundaries of individuals' choice and freedom and imprison them in predetermined social frameworks (Foucault, 1977). This mechanism is seen particularly in small and tribal communities where social surveillance is very intense. As mentioned in the narrative of Yaser Hosseini Fard:

'Two tribal kids got involved [in a fight] with each other.' (Interview No. 8, Pos 74).

These violences sometimes even overshadow younger generations, and the violent behavioural pattern is transferred from the adult generation to children. In such a space, violence transforms not only into a social norm but is counted as a tool for restoring family and identity credit.

On the other hand, the contradiction between traditional values and cultural transformations created by global communication and the expansion of social space is reducing the intensity of honour killings. Momeni says in this regard:

'Now in Tehran, for example, even if a girl has been sexually violated, they don't come to behead the girl; it is possible they go and file a complaint, and perhaps they don't even file a complaint.' (Interview No. 38, Pos 119).

This narrative shows that in metropolises and more open social spaces, due to the fading of social surveillance and changing cultural patterns, honour-based violences happen less. Based on Inkeles and Smith's Theory of Social Transition (1974), societies, due to the extent of global communications and interaction with modern values, gradually distance themselves from traditional structures and move towards individualistic values. This transformation can pave the ground for reducing honour killings and violent behaviours.

Alongside this, the cultural weakness of society also plays a role in reproducing violence. Allah-Reza points to this issue that:

'Culturally, we are behind in everything; that same thing I always really suffer from, so to speak, is the discussion of the cultural weakness of the Iranian people.' (Interview No. 33, Pos 26).

This view focuses on society's inability to accept and implement laws. In his opinion, weakness in the legal and social culture of Iran has limited the possibility of reducing honour-based violent behaviours. This structural weakness in cases leads to the institutionalisation of violence, because existing laws are either not implemented or are violated by the dominant culture of society.

Honour killings in closed societies, in addition to being a reflection of psychological and social pressures on men, also show the emergence of conflict between traditional and modern values. Although global connection and social changes are reducing these violences, cultural weakness and restrictive subcultures still prevent the complete transition to modern and violence-reducing values. Change in this social system requires deep cultural reforms, elevation of social awareness, and effective implementation of laws.

Ethnic Subcultures: The 'Cultural Lifeworld', as a collection of values, norms, and subcultures formed throughout history and institutionalised in

society, plays a very deep role in explaining social behaviours and actions, including violence, suicide, and honour killings. This lifeworld, by providing a specific communicative system, defines a type of social life formed from within regional, economic, historical, and social subcultures and, in many cases due to underdevelopment and focus on prevalent traditions, creates violent and tragic reactions. Dr. Ardeshir Bahrami explains that:

'In this lifeworld, there are seven important cultural components that have been placed as the basis of values and norms of the regions under study: 'Retribution (Taghas)', 'Mourning (Soog)', 'War and Gun', 'Labelling (Nam-o-Nasagh)', 'Honour, Dignity, Nobility, Reputation (Namus, Heysiyat, Sharaf, Aberu)', 'Marriage', and 'Verbal Violence'.' (Interview No. 19, Pos 22).

Each of these components plays a key role in shaping the lifeworld of subcultures. For example, the concept of 'Retribution', which refers to the desire for revenge in wars and killings, leads in many cases to provoking violent actions and appears in the form of honour killings or suicide. Also, 'Honour and Reputation' (*Namus and Aberu*) as one of the fundamental values in these cultures, sometimes imposes a heavy burden of social pressures on individuals (especially men), such that the duty of protecting these values comes at the price of human lives.

In this analysis, what Dr. Bahrami points to clearly shows that behaviours related to honour violences, suicide, and other forms of critical confrontations are fluid phenomena dependent on the cultural lifeworld. He emphasises that:

'You must have a historical view towards poverty and the analysis of roots that were both in the whole society and roots that existed in the individual's own life.' (Interview No. 19, Pos 22).

This point indicates the deep connection between the historical and cultural system and individual actions in this specific lifeworld.

Hamid Moradi also, pointing to social changes and the impact of the fluidity of these subcultures, emphasises this point that social violence and collapse resulting from underdevelopment have been imposed on families over time and its consequences have been stabilised on children and subsequent generations. He says:

'Social violence is perhaps that culture that that society has imposed on the family and caused that culture to become institutionalised in them; this effect is placed on children.' (Interview No. 30, Pos 10).

Here, subcultures such as child labour and lack of social affection clearly show the groundwork for reproducing violence and psychological pressures.

At the same time, as Amin Rezaei states, cultural stereotypes and the androcentric view of social roles are also one of the fundamental components of this lifeworld. He points out that:

'In many of these subcultures, the man is defined as the 'pillar of the house,' 'breadwinner,' and a symbol of power and dominance; whereas these definitions not only impose a burden of heavy social and psychological responsibilities on him but have created a monster-like image of masculinity that even men themselves sometimes are crushed under: 'We brought the man and made him a monster... this monster is not a monster with four horns and a tail.' (Interview No. 67, Pos 26).

This stereotypical view, which is institutionalised in the heart of the patriarchal culture of the lifeworld of different regions of the country, plays an important role in creating inequality, psychological injuries, and repeating social violences. By analysing this lifeworld, one can perceive that underdevelopment and weakness of social opportunities, alongside limiting norms, have a direct link with the emergence of suicide and violence. As Dr. Bahrami points out:

'Categories like honour (Namus), mourning, and war, which are socio-cultural elements of these societies, in social conditions of underdevelopment cause these phenomena to turn into social problems such as murder and suicide.' (Interview No. 19, Pos 22).

This point is explicable with Frank's Theories of Underdevelopment (1967), which believe that established cultural and economic systems in underdeveloped societies not only prevent social growth but provide the ground for the emergence of social pathologies.

In conclusion, behaviours related to suicide, honour violences, and killings in the cultural lifeworld are understandable not as individual behaviours but as a reflection of social, cultural, and historical systems reproduced through limiting norms and unequal power structures. These systems trap individuals in frameworks beyond their will and personal choice, and analysing these structures can offer a path for cultural and social reforms.

Thuggery (*Lati-gari*) and Bullying (*Gardan-Kolfati*): The subculture of Thuggery (*Lati-gari*) and Bullying as one of the social and cultural substrates

for the emergence of violence against men has specific psychological and social complexities sometimes rooted in the normative mechanisms of neighbourhoods, regions, and specific social groups. This subculture, which often takes shape in specific social areas with economic and cultural deprivations, is based on modelling violence, physical power display, and dominance over others. Peripheral communities where this subculture is promoted or has become established as a cultural ground effectively transform into a substrate for reproducing violence.

One interviewee, pointing to the popularity of violence in peer groups, explains the subculture of thuggery within the framework of collective modelling. He says:

'Subcultures that exist among adolescents... in the form of that person who wounds his body more, it seems he creates more popularity and fear and dread in the heart of the peer group, that 'I who have passed [disregarded] my own body can place your body under threat and destruction in various ways too.'

(Interview No. 38, Pos 33).

This narrative shows how physical injury has transferred into a symbol wherein adolescents have linked fear and respect to the feeling of power and popularity. Social Identity Theories, especially Tajfel's Theory (1979), emphasise this point that membership in compressed and specific groups can legitimise the emergence of deviant criteria. In such groups, unstable values like violence transform into indicators of power and social acceptance.

In this same vein, another [interviewee] explains a similar issue in the online community and social networks, where famous figures with violent behaviours become models for others:

'Like the bullies (Gardan-Koloft-ha) that exist, these kids who are on Instagram, now I'll name names too, like Amir Agha Farzaneh, Mehdi Amiri... they made a name in society and are known as bullies, but you saw all those violences of society that reached here [resulted in them].' (Interview No. 51, Pos 5).

This narrative shows that the reflection of violence from social networks to real alleys and streets is a cycle that has displayed the culture of power based on violence in today's world. The sociological explanation of this issue is examinable in McQuail's Theory of Media Reflection (1994), which believes that media are not only mirrors of realities but reinforcers and accelerators of behavioural patterns.

One of the important axes derived from these narratives is the social compulsion to enter paths that align with the dominant values of the subculture of thuggery and bullying. One participant in the interview explicitly points to this subject:

'For example, we live in a society, for example, a county (Shahrestan). If you don't go on that path, idiomatically they say you are a lamb and get eaten; if you don't go on the path of crime and offence and that thuggery (Lat-o-Luti-gari)... in a city like ours, for example, if your head is down [you are submissive], you cannot live coming and going. Unwittingly there is an unwritten law here; meaning the guy knows the crime he is committing, the fight he is having, has consequences, but he says 'If I don't do it, it has consequences too.' Meaning in any case, that guy is stuck in the middle.' (Interview No. 55, Pos 33).

This story resembles the principle of structural pressure in Tönnies' Rational Choice Theory (1987; likely referring to constraint/choice frameworks); meaning where the individual, amidst non-ideal choices, is forced to go for the option that entails the least harm for him, even if that option is ostensibly violent or wrong.

In other conditions described under the title of 'Jungle Law Life,' one interviewee describes this situation thus:

'When you live outside, no one comes to hassle you about why you use drugs. Basically, my life was this: to bully this one. Life is like this. It's the law of the jungle. Except for drugs, I didn't think of anything. Fight with everyone, fight with yourself. So you can live. If you slacken, they won't let you live.' (Interview No. 46, Pos 285-289).

This narrative refers to Merton's Anomie Theory (1938), within the framework of which the imbalance between cultural goals and legitimate means of accessing those goals leads to increased social deviance and violent behaviours.

On the other hand, these subcultures and violent behaviours are reinforced due to positive feedback from society and surrounding people. One interviewee explicitly says:

'Unfortunately, it is possible these individuals are in societies, in neighbourhoods where this gets positive reinforcement by others too. Meaning it gets valued. It is possible an adolescent who walks in the street in a t-shirt and has the scar of a machete and knife on his hand appears very big to others and hears 4 'Well done's and 'Bravo's and so on and 4 friends and neighbours, and it seems this gets

reinforced so that this pride is promoted more in the tribe/clan and acceptability is created in it. (Interview No. 38, Pos 33).

This story speaks of the effects of social reinforcement and cultural reproduction which Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) has explained precisely. According to this theory, individuals, especially adolescents, learn their behaviours mostly through observing and experiencing actual and potential feedback from the social environment.

Finally, these cultures are justified in such a way that even the victimised individuals themselves might unconsciously stamp approval on it or cooperate in it. An individual says:

'Anyone who had any problem, you say 'It was me.' I don't deny it at all. I put it on the account of Marefat [camaraderie/honour] and such, and people get stuck in social obligation with Marefat and say 'He's a local kid, it's okay.' I am willing to buy [accept] the fine and prison, but [for] your friend...' (Interview No. 39, Pos 64-69).

This state not only helps the issue of social identity but is adaptable with theories related to Local Criteria, wherein the justification and legitimation of deviant behaviours is considered part of the norms.

In total, the subculture of thuggery and bullying can be considered a result of social pressure, cultural learning, and the weakening of rational and ethical norms in peripheral societies. This culture-building of violence, in the substrate of social injustices, structural weakness, and positive environmental feedback, not only helps reproduce violence but legitimises it as a path of identity finding and survival in difficult environments.

The Taboo of Men's Sexual Orientations: The prevalent view regarding the taboo of sexual issues and homosexual tendencies in society is one of the fundamental and complex factors providing the ground for the emergence of violence against men. In this midst, denying these tendencies and the lack of appropriate education from families can exert severe psychological and social pressures on men. This issue is explicitly displayed in the perception presented from the interview:

'Or sexual issues being taboo and the denial of homosexual sexual tendencies for the family and the family's lack of inclination to educate their child at young ages causes the emergence of these serious problems.' (Interview No. 84, Pos 4).

This statement reveals how families, instead of consciously confronting sexual tendencies and fundamental education, refrain from addressing such subjects and fundamentally try to deny the existence of such issues.

This denial and the abandonment of education, under the shelter of conservative and traditional values, gradually leads to conditions where youth are not only deprived of correct recognition of their sexual identity but, in the event of questions or different feelings emerging, face psychological isolation or even violence. Psychological theories, especially Adler's Theory (1930), emphasise that individuals' basic psychological and sexual needs are an inseparable part of their mental health, and suppressing these needs can lead to numerous psychological and behavioural problems. Within the framework of such a theory, one can understand why the lack of education and fundamental denial of sexual tendencies by the family confronts the individual with a cycle of psychological pressures and repression; a cycle that can sometimes appear in the form of social or familial violence.

On the other hand, the role of the cultural taboo should not be ignored. In cultures where sexual issues are not discussed openly and candidly, as emphasised in the interview, youth do not find a correct understanding of themselves and their tendencies. This lack of understanding, in turn, leads to a mechanism wherein society or family, instead of identifying the problem and finding a solution, operates in the reverse direction and makes the problem more complex by applying violence or adding social pressures.

From the perspective of sociological theories as well, the denial of individual identities and repression of unconventional tendencies, especially in societies believing in the supremacy of traditional values, causes the formation of a type of 'Othering' of individuals (Marx, 1964; derived from sociological theoretical analysis). In this process, men involved with homosexual tendencies unconsciously transform into the 'Other' and face feelings of shame and social guilt. This feeling, according to the interviewee, brings 'serious problems,' and its consequences are reflected not just in the individual but in social and familial structures.

The interview narrative shows well how education, which should transfer the seeds of awareness to individuals' minds and psyches in childhood, is replaced by a type of denial and conservative view. This process, on one hand, prevents men's personal acceptance and identity finding, and on the other, provides the ground for the emergence of cycles of psychological, verbal, and

even physical violences against them. These conditions, as Adler's theory predicts, lead to psychological insecurity, feelings of incompetence, and reduced self-confidence. Denial of reality and lack of correct education essentially transforms into a type of unstable exchange between families and society wherein immature expectations and vital ignorances are the main source of psychological conflicts.

This analysis reminds us that sexual issues being taboo and the denial of homosexual tendencies by the family is not only considered an individual problem but informs of a deeper and more structural issue: society's avoidance of accepting the complexities of human identity and the application of direct or indirect violence upon it. Although these violences, as clarified by the quote, might be raised in hidden or indirect forms, their effects clearly indicate the necessity of revising culture, education, and social values.

5.4.7. Society's View of LGBTQ Communities

Society's gaze towards LGBTQ communities, as one of the predisposing factors for the emergence of violence against men and transgender individuals, is severely influenced by institutionalised beliefs and the dominant culture of society. This view is formed not only due to lack of public awareness but due to patriarchal and misogynistic structures that not only fail to accept identity differences but often subject them to denial or reductionism. The incorrect and distorted perception existing among people regarding the identity of trans individuals and their type of social relationship often creates no opportunity for the expression and social presence of these individuals, placing them in the face of severe cultural and psychological challenges.

One of these instances is the restrictions imposed by family and society on the social interaction of trans individuals. The narrative of the interviewee in this field clearly shows the structural and cultural pressures that society exerts on trans individuals. He says:

'Trans individuals are not given a podium (tribune), I don't know. Especially for us trans women, an opportunity is really not given; now maybe men are given a bit of opportunity. Look, there is a patriarchal view... I don't know, we who become women, appear in society... in their words we 'change sex,' even though it's not the correct term; they say 'the guy went and became a woman,' whereas she was a woman but now she has adapted herself, adapted her soul to her body.' (Interview No. 60, Pos 132-135).

This quote clearly shows how society, instead of accepting the real identity of trans individuals, limits them to stereotypes that not only rob them of the opportunity for expression and social association but deny their identity as well. This patriarchal view causes trans individuals, especially trans women, to remain under pressure and discrimination; because their presence as women in society is often met with an instrumentalist and humiliating gaze.

The misogynistic culture institutionalised in various layers of society explains another part of these limitations. The interviewee points out that:

'The culture is misogynistic; [if] this culture were not misogynistic, then woman equals man and she is not half a man and it is not humiliation, or that person who is passive (maf'ool) is not more special [stigmatised/marked]. The thinking is like this...' (Interview No. 60, Pos 179).

This speech indicates that the dominant culture not only considers women as beings inferior to men but this gender valuation has spilled over into the interactions of homosexual and trans individuals as well. When society cannot accept women in a position equal to men, the negative and violent view towards trans women will be doubled; because trans women face double discrimination not only for their trans identity but for being women.

These views also fuel fundamental misunderstandings regarding different LGBTQ identities, especially when a false conception arises between homosexual individuals and sex workers. The distinction between real sexual identities and roles that individuals adopt for economic or social reasons is not clear to the general public in many cases. This confusion and ambiguity reduces social trust in trans or homosexual individuals and exposes them to various forms of exclusion and violence.

Social theories, especially Connell's Gender Theory (1987), explain well how patriarchal structures and traditional conceptions of gender roles transform into tools for controlling and limiting different identities. In this view, patriarchy not only dominates men but exerts pressure on other gender groups and lays the groundwork for hidden and overt violences. On the other hand, Connell's theory of 'Gender Hierarchy' points to the fact that when individuals fall outside the gender frameworks defined by society, systematic efforts to eliminate or limit them begin.

Finally, society's view towards LGBTQ communities, which is also accompanied by false beliefs such as the strong association of AIDS with homosexual individuals, complicates the conditions of individuals in this

group. These false beliefs not only cause fear among the general public but provide excuses for discrimination and violence against these individuals. The result of this situation is forced isolation and the impossibility of healthy social interaction for trans or homosexual individuals; a process that not only deprives individuals of their basic rights but provides the ground for violence against them.

This analysis shows that violence against trans and LGBTQ individuals in society is severely influenced by incorrect beliefs, misogynistic and patriarchal cultural structures, and limitations resulting from these views. Although some efforts have been made to increase public awareness and remove these limitations, many individuals in this group remain victims of violence applied by society and family.

Creating Restrictions by Family and Society for Trans Interactions with Others: Violence against men, especially trans men and gender non-conforming individuals, is rooted not only directly in physical or verbal acts but in deeper layers of social and familial restrictions imposed on the interaction of these individuals. These restrictions, arising from traditional views and the subordination of individuals not aligned with society's gender stereotypes, gradually create a repressed identity and even isolation in these individuals.

One interviewee, in describing his adolescent years, makes a detailed reference to the limiting role of his family:

'They knew [me] as a girl. By God, I don't know how; there was nothing in their minds either. Perhaps, for example, it happened that one or two cases of individuals who from a certain point onwards could behave [differently]... I behaved so boyishly that they said 'You are our friend' at a very young age. Then when I went to the first year of middle school, that distance [started]... they no longer allowed me to stand in the alley and...' (Interview No. 64, Pos 13).

This narrative shows how behavioral and identity duality in dealing with a trans individual leads to creating limitations both in the social play space and in the family environment. The family's view of the individual seems not only far from accepting his real identity but limits the space for social interaction as well.

These social limitations are often accompanied by severe isolation, as one interviewee says in his experience of cutting off social connections:

'I have no friends; to be blunt, I have connection with no one and no friend, and my whole world is my room and the films and series I watch and the books I have; my whole world is composed of all those and I have no connection with the outside world unless it is this connection where I am at your service [interviewing] or such cases...' (Interview No. 98, Pos 27).

Isolation and lack of connection with society at ages where a space for identity finding, self-discovery, and gaining social acceptance should be created is another consequence of the limitations of the social and family environment. Non-acceptance by parents, lack of space for dialogue or freedom in social interactions propels trans individuals onto a path where isolation is their only refuge.

The collective approach and incorrect stereotypes of society are also clearly seen in restrictive social behaviours. One interviewee clearly speaks of the feeling of humiliation and social blows he has received from his gender and identity:

'Girls think that we are boys, we are free, we go out, we have a lot of fun; but it is this very society that strikes a blow to a person. It strikes many blows, strikes a psychological blow, strikes a physical blow; many might even be much higher [in status], they annoy you.' (Interview No. 101, Pos 136-138).

The imperative gaze in dealing with unconventional genders is accompanied by creating severely annoying limitations, and this feeling from society that the individual cannot freely declare his gender or identity lays the groundwork for various forms of spiritual and even physical violence against him.

The influence of cultural thoughts and expectations also shows itself severely in regulating restrictive patterns against trans individuals. One interviewee points to explanations in this field and says:

'I was so curious about this issue that I went... fundamentally I saw men who are very authoritative men, who for example are men who don't go under the burden of a woman's word [submit to her] and have the whole family under dominance, are mostly men who are sexually strong men. But well, something our women don't know is that an Iranian man cannot be like a Brazilian woman; basically his race, basically his genetic structure is not like this...' (Interview No. 58, Pos 167).

This view of gender roles, the superiority of authoritative individuals, and limiting identities not aligned with society has created an incorrect conception of masculinity which ultimately leads to the repression of any different identity.

The broader social attitude towards the transgender phenomenon clearly expresses the deep gap between identity change and public acceptance:

'But look, this subject where for example I say a religious leader comes and gives this permission, but society... look, infrastructure is very important, infrastructure must be receptive to this.' (Interview No. 21, Pos 17).

Limitations applied by society in accepting gender diversity, especially in environments with unreceptive cultural and social infrastructures, create lack of support, exclusion, and even direct social pressures.

On the other hand, gender confusion seen in some traditional environments unfamiliar with concepts like non-binary or different sexual orientations has also directly added to the limitations of trans individuals' interaction. In the words of one interviewee, this confusion is pointed out:

'You know man, you know woman too, but here there is a gender between these which becomes 'non-binary' in English... in Persian it becomes a neutral gender that becomes neither woman nor man, at the same time can be both woman and man, but it is not intersex that we say has both penis and vagina together...' (Interview No. 50, Pos 9).

Lack of knowledge of gender concepts not only limits the social interaction of these individuals but propels the public atmosphere towards verbal and behavioural violence.

Ultimately, this restrictive social and familial structure creates a current of isolation, humiliation, and identity repression on one hand, and on the other creates a type of bipolar atmosphere around accepting or condemning the interaction of transgender individuals in society. Psychological theories, such as Maslow's Theory of Basic Needs (1943), emphasise that the failure to meet identity and social needs in individuals causes anxiety, severe isolation, and even depression, which gradually deprives the individual of free and healthy interaction. Here, a complex relationship is seen between social beliefs and individual behaviours; a relationship that not only reinforces the cycle of violence but dangerously threatens the human interaction of transgender individuals in society.

Lack of Distinction between Homosexual and Sex Worker: Qualitative studies on violence and limitations formed by society and family in interaction with various groups, such as LGBTQ+ or other norm-breaking groups, indicate complex patterns of psychological, emotional, and behavioural conflicts between individuals and their surrounding social structure. These quotes, extracted directly from individual and objective experiences of people in the heart of these challenges, express layers of problems analysable within the Grounded Theory framework.

The first narrative, pointing to differences between sexual identity and economic activity related to sex work, draws our attention to one of the main axes of understanding the context of violence: 'Being homosexual or a sex worker' as a real identity or economic necessity. The speaker, with clear emphasis on direct observation of these differences, states:

'The distinction of homosexual from sex work [is] due to income; this very thing has caused us to think that in such an issue our child turns into such a person, whereas that person who has a psychological problem is different from a sex worker. I have seen personally, a sex worker who is not homosexual but is forced to do this work because of income, but someone is a sex addict and this is a psychological problem that he cannot be dependent on [committed to] anyone, he is forced to have sex and penetration with a different person every day; this is a problem of society.' (Interview No. 50, Pos 25).

This quote in fact not only makes a clear distinction between self-willed identity and imposed identity but points to one of the most important structural problems, namely economic pressure and social judgment. From the perspective of Structuralist Social Theory, economic and social institutions operate in such a way that they force individuals into specific performances and simultaneously interpret the actions of these individuals not in the form of economic behaviour but in the form of moral or norm-breaking identity (Giddens, 1984). In this framework, an individual performing economic activity related to sex work, instead of being identified as an individual under the pressure of economic structures, is subjected to moral and character judgment—a point that reinforces social violence against these individuals.

In addition to this analysis, another context the speaker points to in the second experience is confusion in the period of puberty—confusion that can simultaneously result from a lack of understanding and social acceptance. The speaker says:

'Their first problem is their own confusion at the age of puberty. We in the LGBTQ society consider the minimum age for starting sexual relationships 16 years, not 18 years. We consider intellectual puberty 16 years because individuals who are in this community, willy-nilly, after the age of intellectual puberty, have high understanding... if they are helped, they find high mental understanding and very high knowledge and awareness, more than even those who are 40 years old, 80 years old and have no awareness... there are a series of problems too, it is said that at a young age they encounter emotional and sentimental problems...'
(Interview No. 50, Pos 17).

This state of confusion, especially in the period of adolescence and the beginning of recognising sexual identity, is the basis of many violences and psychological pressures against these individuals. Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory (1968) shows that individuals in adolescence and early adulthood are involved in a struggle between 'Identity' and 'Role Confusion.' This struggle becomes more intense especially regarding groups outside the stream of dominant culture due to their sexual identity. In this sensitive stage, educational, familial, and social pressures to conform to defined norms directly challenge the individual's self-willed identity. By clarifying this issue, the speaker points to a conflict in accepting individual identity against the dominant gaze.

At the same time, the speaker points to high mental understanding and knowledge in the LGBTQ community, which can be a sign of intellectual maturity towards resisting these pressures. Such statements are close to Gramsci's Theory of Cultural Resistance (1971), which addresses explaining the paths through which minorities transform awareness and knowledge into a tool for confronting normative social pressures.

In total, the presented quotes show that the contexts for creating violence against men in society and family are not limited to one factor but are a combination of economic pressure, lack of differentiation between economic activity and sexual identity, and confusion in the puberty process. These interconnected factors have led to the formation of a cycle of violence fed by non-acceptance, judgment, and the imposition of structural pressures. This cycle will only stop when institutions become sensitive to the distinction between structural and individual factors, and families and society can accept individuals' identities free from stereotypical and normative labels.

Family and Friends' Insistence on Trans Boys Performing Girlish Behaviour: The analysis of contexts for creating limitations by family and society in interaction with trans individuals and the emergence of violence against men within the Grounded Theory paradigm, using the data comprehensively, transforms into a unified and coherent narrative. This analysis attempts to present a multidimensional image of the situation of trans individuals in society, utilizing the full text of quotes and scientific theories, especially when limitations lead to psychological pressure and violence.

Violence against trans individuals, due to traditional gender roles and limiting social frameworks, mostly begins from the very early stages of life, and the family plays a fundamental role in it. One interviewee points out in part of his experience that family and even surrounding individuals have been trying to limit his tendencies and behaviours with their actions. He says:

'But in many places, with pleading, I would go to cut my hair just a little bit in a way that I wouldn't allow them to cut it boyishly, to shave with a machine, under no circumstances; meaning I would scream and wouldn't let them do this work. Only for example to the extent of short girlish [style]; even then, the whole family would come and tell my mother 'Don't let her cut her hair, she constantly mimics boys. Don't do it. Don't let [her], for example, give her wings [encourage her], return her to...' (Interview No. 64, Pos 39).

This pressure not only leads to limiting the individual's freedom of action to express his identity but causes the formation of a continuous feeling of internal repression and psychological isolation. From the perspective of psychological theories, especially Adler's Theory (1930), this type of social pressure can increase feelings of worthlessness and severe shame in the individual, trapping him in a cycle of conflict between personal identity and social expectations.

Another factor intensifying social limitations is society and family's perception of trans tendencies as a 'passing phase.' One interviewee raises another case:

'A series of individuals who, for example, either themselves at some time had taken a boyish phase, these pass and go, after they marry they forget. Well, I was likening these to that [idea] that they said 'Don't give wings to that one, let this period end and steer towards being girlish'...' (Interview No. 64, Pos 41).

This view, which considers trans identity temporary and correctable, aligns with Goffman's Social Labelling Theory (1963); especially when the individual, instead of being accepted as his true self, is placed in a position where society places him under corrective pressures to act according to collective expectations.

Alongside these pressures, gender and cultural taboos are also one of the most important factors leading to violence. One interviewee points out that subjects related to gender surgeries and gender affirmation in society are severely unknown and full of taboos:

'Well, perhaps because the trans issue is a sexual issue, and anyway when I do surgery, I must operate exactly on my genital parts, later I must enter a relationship with a lady; everything goes back to sexual issues. Well, totally talking about sexual issues in the country is a taboo...' (Interview No. 64, Pos 141).

This limited and taboo-laden view of sexual and identity issues, from the perspective of cultural theories, especially Foucault (1978), indicates how social power structures and dominant discourses force individuals into silence and internalising their sexual and gender experiences.

Also, violence occurring due to social non-acceptance becomes more prominent in the difference between accepting trans individuals transitioning from female to male versus males transitioning to female. One interviewee points to this subject:

'Its reverse, me too, if a girl wants to become a man, it is a bit more tolerable because... not that I say it, society is saying this... acceptance is a bit easier, but on that side, a boy, 'Sir, my son is a man, so-and-so,' to think that for example one percent [excuse me, excuse me] he sleeps with someone else...' (Interview No. 64, Pos 193).

This subject confirms cultural analyses stating that feminine roles are considered subordinate roles in many cultures, and consequently individuals adapting to them are less judged and subjected to violence [when moving 'up' to masculine roles, or conversely, moving 'down' to feminine roles is seen as a loss of status and thus punished more severely—*Translator's Note: The text implies FTM is more accepted than MTF due to the higher status of men*] (Connell, 1987).

Violence of men against their trans children also expresses the intensity of social and familial limitations. One interviewee, pointing to an example, says:

'Well, what happens that a father kills his child because of homosexual tendency? The existence of taboos and hatreds against this community, and education is not offered in our society.' (Interview No. 50, Pos 90-91).

This tragic narrative reflects the deepest roots of violence in cultural and social structures operating based on hatred, pessimism, and social exclusion. From the perspective of Marx's Social Conflict Theory (1964), these types of violence reflect the struggle between groups, one of whom tries to maintain power and social discourse, while the other is in search of rights and acceptance.

Finally, what has made the experience of trans individuals difficult beyond physical violence is the lack of education and public understanding regarding their identity. One interviewee points out:

'Bravo, because these [other groups] are seen, they are being seen; we are not seen, we have become ordinary members of society, no one comes to say 'Oh, this is trans.' Well, what difference does trans make...' (Interview No. 64, Pos 157).

This invisibility has influenced not only social acceptance but reinforced the loop of violence. Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory (1986) points to this point that when individuals are placed in marginalised groups, their collective identity is not only not recognised but transforms into a source of pressure, isolation, and in cases, violence.

Ultimately, this analysis shows that contexts of limitation for trans individuals and the emergence of violence against men originate from social, cultural, and familial structures which, in interaction with taboos and negative attitudes of society, form a cycle of violence. This cycle will only be broken when social acceptance is realised through education, providing positive discourse, and changing gender attitudes.

Public's False Belief regarding Severe Transmission of AIDS in Homosexual Individuals: In analysing data regarding the public's false belief regarding the severe transmission of AIDS among homosexual individuals, what emerges from the interview and quote provided refers to an incorrect social perception that not only has no scientific basis but is rooted in stereotypes and social presuppositions. These perceptions, based on invalid ideas and incomplete information, provide numerous grounds for

psychological and social violence against men, especially in male homosexual groups.

In this narrative, one interviewee explicitly states:

'Regarding diseases too, a very fundamentally wrong belief exists, meaning not just very, but completely wrong exists that the transmission of AIDS and HIV disease is higher among homosexual individuals and the LGBTQ community. Much of it... almost everyone I have personally witnessed was under no circumstances involved with this disease, was healthy, even though they had multiple relationships...' (Interview No. 84, Pos 8).

This saying is clear testimony to this social reality that false presuppositions regarding this disease and its connection with homosexual individuals rely not on scientific evidence but on imaginings and rumour-like words. The interviewee continues:

'This is a belief and incorrect talk that hasn't been proven medically either, because I myself am in contact with several doctors I say this and confirm it with assurance; under no circumstances is it transmitted by homosexual individuals...' (Interview No. 84, Pos 8).

Such statements show that public beliefs, despite lack of scientific validity, have still penetrated social structures and fueled the reinforcement of stereotypical ideas.

Scientific views have clearly confirmed this point that HIV and AIDS are not exclusive to any sexual or gender group. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) emphasise that this disease is transmitted through high-risk behaviours, regardless of the individual's gender or sexual orientation. Researchers have also warned that reinforcing such beliefs can cause stigmatisation of specific groups, such as LGBTQ, and expose them to discrimination and violence. On the other hand, social research regarding the structure of sexual discrimination, from the perspective of Labelling Theory, emphasises that social stigmas can lead to the creation of 'Vulnerable Identities,' such that labelled individuals are not only placed under psychological pressure but are ultimately marginalised (Becker, 1963).

From the perspective of existing data, one of the consequences of such false beliefs is the reinforcement of violence against homosexual men. This violence is not limited to the physical level but manifests in social structures such as

deprivation of basic rights, social exclusion, and creating a sense of shame in victims. The interviewee's words here suggest that incorrect beliefs regarding the disease have fueled the growth of social pressures and caused homosexual men to become more vulnerable to the violation of their rights solely due to wrong perceptions regarding their physical health. He says:

'Under no circumstances is it transmitted by homosexual individuals unless that individual has been infected for a very long time and has taken no action for his treatment...' (Interview No. 84, Pos 8).

This re-emphasis on the mismatch of reality with public beliefs reveals well the importance of reforming these attitudes in reducing social violences.

A theoretical look at this subject within the framework of the Theory of the Social Construction of Harm shows that this false belief is constructed and reproduced through gender stereotypes and incomplete media information (Goffman, 1963). Media and social circles that deal more with reinforcing negative ideas regarding LGBTQ individuals, instead of preventing violence, help stabilise an unequal social system. The combination of these false beliefs and unequal status provides conditions where men in these groups must always explain themselves to others to prove the absence of danger.

In general, these data and analyses show that the false belief regarding the connection of homosexual individuals with HIV and AIDS is not only incorrect and devoid of scientific evidence but is a key factor in the formation of social and psychological violences against men in these groups. Reforming these beliefs, through public education, scientific information dissemination, and active critique of media stereotypes, can be effective in reducing social stigmas and violences resulting from them.

5.5. Media Contexts for the Formation of Violence Against the Male Gender in Iranian Society

A significant portion of men's emotional, sexual, and psychological desires, needs, wants, and tendencies have fallen under the influence of virtual networks, particularly within the format of the sex industry and pornography. These tendencies and needs possess high excitability. Patterns of sexual and emotional communication between women and men within the substrate of social networks and media have undergone a specific metamorphosis. This has

altered women's sexual expectations and demands towards men, as well as gender roles in marital life.

The media contexts of violence against men include 4 components: 'Weak Media Coverage of Male Victims,' 'Growth and Expansion of Violence in Mass Media,' 'Presence in Social (Virtual) Networks,' and 'Perception of Modern Men's Sexual Ability under the Influence of the Porn Industry.'

5.5.1. Weak Media Coverage of Male Victims

Within the framework of the Grounded Theory paradigm model, the weak media coverage of male victims of violence is raised as one of the primary contexts for the emergence of this type of violence. The examination of existing quotes shows that this weakness in media coverage is rooted in cultural, social, and linguistic obstacles that are widely institutionalised in public beliefs and social structures. Lack of recognition of men's rights and gender taboos play an important role in the formation and continuation of this situation. Dr. Marghati's quote emphasises the lack of recognition of men's rights:

'Well, the reason is that the atmosphere is somewhat rotating towards this direction: whether men can defend their own rights or not, or basically whether they recognise those rights or not. Well, naturally, [it is] the lack of recognition of those rights.' (Interview No. 9, Pos 11).

This statement indicates that men are weak even in the rudimentary understanding of their rights, especially in the context of being victims of violence, and this issue not only causes violence against them to receive less attention but limits reporting as well. Sociological theories regarding the role of education in awareness-raising state that insufficient education in the field of rights places the individual in a vulnerable position and leads to his inability to defend himself (Giddens, 2006).

Furthermore, the weakness of men's reporting in the face of violence is intensified due to cultural obstacles and public beliefs regarding 'masculinity.' The quote from Sajjad Motahhari-Nasab indicates one of these very obstacles:

'What I see... as I am on line 123 [Social Emergency Hotline]... they have many calls daily, a significant amount of which is domestic violence too; however, men report domestic violence extremely little. One of the reasons is men we had who suffered physical injury, even sexual [injury] too... the individual [thinks] 'It's

nothing, ' [if] this lady sulks, they haven't had sexual relations together; this is violence too, isn't it? ' (Interview No. 41, Pos 17).

This quote shows that men, due to prevailing social pressure and the view of their gender as 'power,' have no inclination to report violence or face derisive reactions from society if they do. From the perspective of gender theory, social mechanisms usually consider men in the role of guardian and strong, and following this view, their vulnerability or victimhood is downplayed (Connell, 1995).

On the other hand, the media's tendency to downplay the importance of violence against men also stems from these same social approaches. Dr. Moradi states thus:

'Look, our patricides are very high; filicides that occur, more boys are killed than girls; did you know this? Sir, our number of boy-killings is higher than girl-killings, but we never... issues related to boy-killing are not publicised in the media at all, not highlighted, not addressed.' (Interview No. 42, Pos 14).

This bitter observation shows that even in cases where victims are male and violence against them has emerged seriously, media act very weakly in creating social sensitivity. Theories related to Media Power (McQuail, 2010) state that media regulate their axes based on society's dominant expectations, and consequently, issues related to men who are victims of violence are pushed to the margins due to contradiction with the normal image of men in society.

Another important dimension of this weakness is the taboo nature of speaking about violence against men. Ms. Jiriyaee declares thus:

'Sort of look for ways to console yourself, but don't think talking about it and looking for a solution is the right thing to do. That work [counselling] exists too... this is a problem we have; meaning we encounter reports from women committing violence in the counselling room. The judge just laughs; for example, men who have been beaten, he tells him 'May the washer of the dead take your body [Damn you/You are pathetic].' It is so much a joke, so much for us that a man calls to report violence, we don't accept it at all; 'Is it possible? Well, you should have hit back too.' We coldly don't accept it, whereas really the truth... finally a man has opened his mouth and must say it. For ourselves too, it is a taboo.' (Interview No. 57, Pos 182-184).

This quote clearly shows the depth of the institutionalisation of the taboo of speaking about violence against men in the social structure. Such reactions not only destroy men's trust in reporting and pursuing violence but create deep psychological consequences. Theories related to Social Taboos in psychology also indicate this point that taboos cause doubled psychological pressure, and victimised individuals endure or hide violence to escape judgment and humiliating looks (Foucault, 1979; likely referring to disciplinary power/silencing).

Finally, the shift of advertising and media culture towards highlighting the image of female vulnerability and accusing the male has further exacerbated the cause. Ali Nour-Mohammadi states:

'Wherever its interests lie, just as it drags that country into war. One of these things where the finger of accusation and violence against men is happening... this is my personal opinion... this propaganda has increased so much that our right has been eaten [violated] and we have been ignored in society, that society comes to defend them [women] in other ways, in another wrong way, one of which could be this. This very accusing of men. That whatever event happens for any woman anywhere, definitely one side of it is a man, and the woman has done nothing and the woman is innocent.' (Interview No. 48, Pos 43-45).

This view shows how the stereotypical image of man as 'responsible for violence' causes men's victimhood in various violences to be ignored. Gender socialisation highlighted in media helps spread this negative image, and consequently, media coverage of men exposed to violence is pushed to the margins. Theories related to the Power of Social Structure (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) point to this same issue that the interaction of social forces can distort meaning in people's minds and stabilise it as a general belief through media.

In summary, the present analysis shows that the weakness of media coverage of male victims of violence occurs as a result of a combination of social taboos, lack of recognition of men's rights, institutionalised gender reactions, and media effects. This deep weakness in different sectors of society has not only diverted necessary attention from male victims but created a mechanism for continuing the cycle of violence against men.

Political Media Activity and 'No to Execution' Campaigns: The examination of qualitative data shows that media activities, political campaigns, and 'No to Execution' campaigns as part of social actions are

influential in a specific way in the process of emergence and intensification of violence against men. Interviewees' statements clearly emphasise the existence of deep vacuums in media interaction with men, censorship of opposing views, and highlighting specific movements including 'No to Execution' campaigns. This analysis addresses these contexts with attention to presented quotes and related theoretical foundations.

The statements of the Narcotics Police (Interview No. 55, Pos 89-90) clearly reveal that the pressure of foreign media and specifically campaigns opposing legal punishments has extensively influenced the manner of managing violences and punishments inside countries. He says:

'Discussion of its legal and juridical vacuum aside, maybe it has a law too, but because of our model of society governance, unwillingly they are forced... because of the subversive, because of that hypocrite (Monafeg) even... look, the law says the party must be executed, correct? He has killed four officers, made four families mourn; if this very thing becomes media-ised [publicised], this very BBC won't let go for a year. 'No to Execution' campaign... for example, assume his name is Ali Karimi; it sets up a 'No to Execution' campaign for Ali Karimi. It brings pressure on the system [regime], brings pressure.' (Interview No. 55, Pos 89-90).

This statement indicates the complex interaction between international media and political pressures, where the axis of focus often revolves around aspects related to social and legal rules which in many cases distance male victims from the space of public discussion. From the perspective of theories related to Media Power (McQuail, 2010), media campaigns possess high capability to create public orientation and, in this regard, may propel the justice system towards taking less predictable decisions and illegal pressures. In this midst, men who are victims of violence remain in the centre of this invisible cycle.

Furthermore, media censorship and social networks against men is another context for intensifying this violence. Hassan Espania points to this case and says:

'I don't know if you remember that a lady who considers herself a feminist named Ms. Shadi Amin was interviewing some time ago on one of these BBC channels and said — this is exactly her sentence — 'Every single man in Iran is complicit in the regime's crimes because they have benefited from the advantages of being male in this government.' And on the other side, you want to explain to your

compatriots, to women, to others, even to men... men who don't [express] this oppression against themselves... social networks themselves censor. This is censorship against men; no media exists to speak for men.' (Interview No. 4, Pos 48).

This quote shows that extensive censorship of views related to male victims has caused the unilateral empowerment of movements that focus mainly on securing women's demands and do not create a fair space for reflecting men's problems. Theories related to Media Bias (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) emphasise that media institutionally engage in reinforcing messages that align more with public beliefs and dominant currents, and for this reason, issues related to men are placed less in the focus of attention.

This subject is observable in more specific cases as well. Espania continues:

'You now, if you see a (#KILL ALL MEN), how many options come up... you cannot get clearer than this hate speech. 'KILL ALL MEN' is posted by radical feminists but they are not censored, they are not banned, they don't violate Instagram guidelines. I showed this very thing to my wife, I said 'Look, this is the comment I wrote, it was deleted, this is its message saying you are blocked for a week.'' (Interview No. 4, Pos 48).

This statement is an example of structural injustice in managing social networks which, with unfair labels and restrictions, deletes or censors men's messages and concerns. Theories related to Public Sphere Management (Habermas, 1989) emphasise that this type of removal or censorship in the public sphere ultimately leads to the stabilisation of views that place specific groups in a position of weakness.

Continuing, restrictions on publishing books and content related to men's subjects is also a raised issue that Saberi expresses thus:

'After ten years, in Mr. Ahmadinejad's second term, it got a print permit and was printed, of course with many changes; I think we added 80 pages to the book, reduced 10-20 pages. In any form, the book 'The Mirage of Identity' was printed. It didn't have that value anymore. You know, those things I had in mind to give regarding subjects of sexual abuse and I don't know, gentlemen's prostitution and these things, were not in it.' (Interview No. 21, Pos 19).

This quote shows that even in cases where efforts are made to reflect men's problems, restrictions on access and content reduce the value of provided information and dim public access to real issues related to men. Theories

related to Knowledge Control and Access Restrictions (Foucault, 1979) state that information control can directionally influence the distribution of power in society and place specific groups in a position of permanent weakness.

Therefore, it can be stated that contexts of media activity, political campaigns, and 'No to Execution,' through a combination of various factors including foreign media pressures, censorship in the social network space, and control of informational content, have extensively caused weakness in reflecting men's problems and intensifying structural violence against them. These contexts, by unilaterally highlighting subjects related to women and limiting men's protests and problems, have influenced the formation of unfair images in the mind of society. Confronting these media and political violences requires redefining justice-oriented approaches and attention to all gender dimensions.

5.5.2. Growth and Expansion of Violence in Mass Media

In the path of analysing the contexts of the growth and expansion of violence in mass media, one must point to the high impact of media in the repeated reproduction and stabilisation of violence-inducing patterns in various societies. Data analysis shows that mass media, including cinema films, TV series, and online content, by creating and expanding contents whose centrality is violence or aggressive acts, have been able to subconsciously instil the culture of violence in societies and expand the scope of its acceptance.

One of the most important aspects highlighted in conversations is the role of literature and dramatic art in forming this culture of violence. Mehdi Momeni, pointing to the repetition of violence patterns in Hollywood films and its impact on youth attitudes, says:

'In research that is done... generally films are made in Hollywood whose axis is action—now either it is sex or it is action or it is anger; somehow this is constantly being reproduced.' (Interview No. 38, Pos 107).

This reproduction of violence through media is raised as one of the most important factors of change in the attitudes of the young generation. He, stating examples of youth inclination towards high-tension sports like boxing and martial arts compared to sports like chess, believes that this change in attitude is rooted in childish modelling encouraged in the family environment: *'Amidst ten adults, the one who strikes another and knocks him to the ground, he becomes the hero and is seen more and is the centre of the family's attention; 'Bravo,*

well done, excellent, what a good boy I have.'' (Interview No. 38, Pos 107). In such a space, violence is encouraged not only in media but in family interactions and appears as a heroic and commendable behaviour.

Furthermore, Dr. Vali Bahrami in his research points to the weakness of the family structure against media and emphasises that families, due to inability to reproduce appropriate educational content, have failed in confronting the negative effects of media:

'Media hasn't been able to reproduce itself in terms of content, and this causes... in fact one of these issues of violences is violence against men or not, although it exists against women too.' (Interview No. 74, Pos 8).

This view indicates that media fuel damaging cultural patterns that reproduce not only a type of physical violence but psychological and social violence as well.

Mehraban also, pointing to the direct impact of Turkish series and films on relationships between family members and relatives, points to another type of violence whose origin lies in the representation of infidelity and change in family values. He says: *'Turkish films, this one betrays that one, this intimate friendship of the lady with husbands has become very much... it has been seen and repeated so much that it has become normal, it seems it is a normal thing and has become quite fashionable.'* (Interview No. 89, Pos 100). These continuous representations of infidelity, relationships outside the framework, and emotional violences have shifted moral behavioural boundaries in families and support violence as a natural matter.

In this regard, theories related to media communication, especially McLuhan's perspective (1964) regarding the impact of the mass media environment on shaping public culture, are contemplative. McLuhan proposed that media do not only transmit messages but, as an environment themselves, shape behavioural patterns and social attitudes. Films and cultural works whose axis is focused on violence and aggression, by creating idealised conceptions of these behaviours, raise violence as an accepted principle in social interactions.

On the other hand, Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Reproduction (1984) also enters this discussion. Bourdieu believes that cultural institutions and media transfer patterns of violent behaviour from previous generations to new generations by constantly reproducing them in cultural products. This theory aligns with Dr. Vali Bahrami's words saying:

'One of the most important reasons is this very discussion, I think media is important.' (Interview No. 74, Pos 8).

Reproducing this violence through images and thoughts leads to the formation of part of individuals' unconscious mental structure which ultimately determines their manner of interaction with the surrounding environment.

This cycle of media violence, by influencing the mental unconscious and social emotions, has not only reproduced violence against men and women in various forms but gradually transformed violent behaviours into a normal matter. What must be emphasised here is the active role of media not only in representing violence but in educating and cultivating a mentality that sees violence as a symbol of power and heroism.

5.5.3. Social (Virtual) Networks

In analysing the contexts of the growth and expansion of violence in mass media with emphasis on presented views and interviewees' experiences, one can point to this point that cyberspace, as part of tremendous changes in social communications, has created a substrate for shaping identities, redefining relationships, and simultaneously reinforcing human tensions and incompatibilities. Presence in social networks, although providing extensive facilities for knowing and recognising oneself and others, can in cases transform into a source for the emergence of violence or stimulating negative emotions in relationships.

One of the prominent examples of these tensions is controlling behaviour and jealousy in relationships, resulting from the type of presence and activity of users in this space. This subject shows itself well in the example provided by one interviewee. In explaining his feelings towards his emotional partner's behaviour in cyberspace, he says:

'She posts photos without Hijab. She had taken many photos of herself; she wasn't a person who took many photos for her profile, and because I had become a bit sensitive and I was hassling her about 'Why do you do these things?!' These. That time when I saw these, my heart rate went up so much... well, calculate, I am sitting on this side of the sofa, she on that side of the sofa. She was [chatting] with someone... I said 'Who is it?' She said 'It's my sister.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 79).

This example indicates how in cyberspace, small actions like sharing images or simple interaction with others can lead to the expansion of a sense of mistrust in relationships. Psychological theories, especially Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1980), emphasise that low levels of trust in interpersonal relationships cause an increase in the level of controlling behaviour, feelings of insecurity, and even violent behaviours. This issue is reinforced in cyberspace due to the uncontrollable and largely private nature of relationships and brings a wave of insecurity and tension for one party in the relationship.

On the other hand, cyberspace with the expansion of its facilities has given individuals the opportunity to engage in better self-knowledge and personal tendencies. This subject, as another interviewee points out, can be a positive aspect of activity in social networks:

'Basically in that period there were no people who were like myself either, and cyberspace helped me much more to know someone like myself more.' (Interview No. 84, Pos 4).

This experience indicates that cyberspace in many cases has allowed individuals to find a homogeneous society for themselves in terms of intellect or culture and escape the isolation they experience in their traditional or real environment. This recognition of personal and social identity, although empowering, can at times, due to the formation of different patterns of behaviour in the social layer, create differences between traditional and modern values which itself is a source for violence or severe reactions from others.

The point the next example refers to is the growth of awareness and individual empowerment through cyberspace which helps individuals make more independent decisions:

'New society, extensive cyberspace... persons know and find themselves, see various educations. Of course, there is still much room for work. Many persons find themselves. They diagnose right at the beginning; the first thing individuals diagnose is their own orientation.' (Interview No. 84, Pos 4).

This view clarifies that cyberspace is a substrate where individuals can clearly discover tendencies, interests, and identities they might not express in real life and place them in the view of others. This trend of transparency, although leading to self-discovery and even individual flourishing, simultaneously may

bring opponents or harsh social reactions. Gudykunst's Intercultural Communication Theory (1998) holds that in societies where identity transformations are occurring rapidly, cultural and value differences can be the fountainhead of the emergence of interpersonal or social violences.

In total, the analysis of these quotes and views shows that cyberspace, while providing a suitable substrate for empowering individuals and finding social identity, has also become a source for the emergence of psychological violence, controlling behaviour, and intercultural disputes. The dual nature of this substrate includes both the opportunity for individual growth and recognition and threats to human relationships. This contradiction, especially considering the rapid transformations of modern societies, can be attended to as one of the serious dimensions in analysing media processes and their role in expanding violence against men and even women.

5.6. Religious Contexts

Introduction Religious contexts play a significant role in organizing social and cultural relationships and are often utilised to provide frameworks for social behaviours and norms. In many instances, these frameworks lead directly or indirectly to the reproduction of violence against men. Subjects such as religious discrimination, religious prejudices, religious norms of boy-girl relationships, the 'Religious Husband,' and the religious view on individuals with different sexual orientations reveal various dimensions of social and psychological pressures in this space.

In the context of religious discrimination, men in religious societies may suffer social exclusion due to different religious tendencies or lack of adherence to designated rituals. This issue, especially in religious structures that reproduce strict values, can lead to their deprivation of cultural and social rights. On the other hand, religious prejudices, stereotypical views, and religious dogmatism also lead to pressures against men which, by limiting their individual freedoms, pave the way for psychological and even verbal violences.

Religious norms of boy-girl relationships are also among the important subjects that, by imposing excessive restrictions, place men in conditions where their social relationships are defined within narrow and closed frameworks. These norms sometimes cause the creation of feelings of guilt or psychological pressure which negatively affects their mental health.

Furthermore, regarding the 'Religious Husband,' extreme expectations of men to perform specific religious roles in the family can lead to family conflicts and social pressures.

Finally, the religious view on individuals with different sexual orientations is a prominent example of religious discrimination; many religious societies place LGBTQ+ individuals in exposure to stigma and exclusion and limit their natural rights. These cases not only have deep social impacts but severely affect the mental health of these groups. Analysing these cases can guide a better understanding of religious relationships and the position of men in these structures.

5.6.1. Religious Discrimination

Religious discrimination in the emergence of violence against men manifests itself in various social and psychological layers. These contexts not only stem from differences related to religious beliefs and affiliations but, in many instances, structures, systems, and social relationships have fueled the foundations of this issue with a discriminatory view. Discrimination occurring institutionally and systematically in educational processes and occupational opportunities causes the psychological and social weakening of individuals and elevates the boundaries of violence in imperceptible and sometimes lasting forms. Enjoying support related to religion is not only not raised as a positive value but, conversely, creates conditions where individuals experience feelings of being cast aside, injustice, and ultimately psychological violence.

The story of Mohsen Hagh is a prominent example of this institutionalised discrimination highlighted at the structural level. When he enters university with very high hope and motivation from the city of Sanandaj and the backing of his academic efforts, the structural encounter of an institution like the University Security (*Herasat*) places him under the influence of an invisible but very extensive violence. He says:

'When I came to university, on the very first day they told us 'These have come from Sanandaj, they are Sunni'... I graduated with a GPA of 19.80 in Electronics. Three months later, I achieved the fourth national rank in the Computer Olympiad... I went to the Head of Security (Herasat); he said 'Are you a Martyr's family?' I said 'No.' 'POWs, Freeman, and Veterans?' I said 'Nothing.' He said 'Have your kith and kin gone to the Front [war]?' 'No.' 'Are

you a Basij member?’ ‘No.’ ‘Here you go [leave]; priority is with Basij sisters and brothers.’ (Interview No. 90, Pos 41).

This experience was a turning point where Mohsen not only experienced the feeling of being cast aside from the circle of equal opportunities but directly faced the violation of meritocracy in the academic environment, where it is expected that individuals be judged based on competence and capability, not social or religious affiliations.

From the perspective of Durkheim's Psycho-Social Theory (1893), such anomalies in the educational system fuel a type of social anomie that deprives the individual of coexistence with other members of society and leaves him alone amidst value and identity crises. Mohsen, continuing this narrative, describes his situation with utter bitterness:

'I was a bookworm who studied like a Benz [worked hard/functioned perfectly]... in that moment, I washed [criticised/rejected] them from top to bottom. They put a tick on my file that 'he has insulted sanctities' and expulsion. I had only studied.' (Interview No. 90, Pos 41).

This violence that Mohsen clearly perceived is the result of structural discrimination; discrimination which, according to Marx (1859) in the theory of 'Alienation,' separates the individual from his creative power and induces worthlessness in him.

This discrimination is similar in other individuals, and even its familial and environmental roots complicate the situation. In another experience, Mohsen narrates how his geographical and religious background has been imposed on him as a social stigma:

'From day one, a patch [label] of 'Sunni' was stuck to my forehead. My father was a hardline religious [Sunni] and my mother hardline Shi'a. Me, nothing; forget it.' (Interview No. 90, Pos 41).

These types of judgments not only prevent the individual from reaching individual goals but place him in exposure to psychological pressures and the loss of the feeling of social belonging. As Wagner (1985; likely referring to social identity/intergroup theories) points out in Social Identity Theory, social judgments and labels leading to the formation of imposed identity can make social bonds fragile and guide the individual towards feelings of separation and isolation.

In this midst, the force that transfers religious discrimination from the social level to the familial dimension is prominent in Farhad Azizi's narrative. He implicitly points to unfair differences between children in religious environments:

'Religious, well, my family was religious, that deeds must be performed; however, this point you mentioned... in my surroundings that I knew, they differentiated between the kids. For example, all the work was for the second child of the family. For example, I say my own family; we were a livestock-farming family.'

(Interview No. 97, Pos 47).

Patriarchy Theory from the perspective of Radical Feminism, as well as role division in religious systems, shows that such discriminatory behaviours at the family level have a direct link with social values and norms cultivated in religious environments (Walby, 1990).

What is deductible from these narratives and theories is this point that religious discrimination transforms into a violent tool that increases psychological and social tensions in individuals who are directly placed against this unequal system. In this regard, the educational system, executive institutions, and even family environments help reproduce this violence and leave individuals alone with loss of self-confidence, feelings of being rejected, and ultimately social rupture. Emphasis on meritocracy and removing privileges resulting from religious affiliations or beliefs can be a step towards moderating these unjust conditions.

5.6.2. Religious Prejudices

The analysis of presented data within the framework of Grounded Theory indicates that religious prejudices in an inflexible and strict structure play a key role in creating psychological and social contexts for the emergence of violence against men. Prejudices that are ostensibly raised in the form of religious and ethical obligations but in practice impose serious limitations on relationships, decision-making, and individual behaviours, leading directly or indirectly to the formation of violent cycles in individuals' social and familial life.

On one hand, the nature of these religious prejudices itself is accompanied by a dry and closed definition of norms and 'musts.' In the words of one participant:

'Meaning hard religious prejudices are the groundwork for violence. Dry religiosity is itself violence, you know. Well, that prejudice causes that social current not to form. A series of dry 'musts' and 'must nots' are defined, a dry norm without flexibility.' (Interview No. 82, Pos 71-74).

This approach brings with it a repressive environment; because the inflexibility of such prejudices not only inhibits individuals' ability to interact and express individual identity but answers the voice of any criticism or disharmony with violence.

These prejudices often begin their role in the family as the primary pattern of individual character formation. Rasoul, one of the participants, in explaining his family's religious strictness, says:

'I was once a memoriser (Hafiz) of the Quran, a reciter (Qari) of the Quran, and was first in Quran competitions... these religious issues, for these straits that pressured me, especially from the side of my maternal family... I used to go with my mother to the Sisters' Basij and the like... as soon as you said 'Salaam Alaikum' to a girl, they stuck four labels on you and hit you four times... my mother is a seminary student (Howzavi), an orator and praiser (Maddah) of the Ahl al-Bayt and a Quran teacher. My father had religious strictness.' (Interview No. 98, Pos 9).

This narrative clearly shows how religious strictness, even in a religious and practicing family, instead of reinforcing human and ethical values, causes the creation of pressures, deprivations, and a type of emotional gap in the relationship with children.

Religious prejudices in the family context cause individuals not to be able to interact naturally with environmental issues and social life. Another participant says regarding the impact of his mother's religious upbringing:

'My mother is very religious. I always... even now she prays; my mother, always when the Azan [call to prayer] sounds, is involved in the thing of prayer and never backs down either.' (Interview No. 36, Pos 189-190).

Parents' excessive dependence on strict religious patterns, without considering children's emotional needs, can cause frustration, isolation, and even violence; violence that sometimes manifests in the form of individuals' overt reactions against their strict upbringing.

On the other hand, the role of religious prejudices is visible not only in family upbringing but in social relationships as well. Another participant describes thus:

'Religious: you must pray. For example, a boy must not be friends with a girl and have a friendship connection, go to university.' (Interview No. 29, Pos 10-11).

From this example, it can be understood how imposing limited and controlled roles and relationships by religious beliefs can deprive individuals of experiencing healthy social interactions. This level of strictness on human interactions not only prevents individual growth but in many cases provides conditions for the emergence of psychological and emotional violences. The presence of strict religious prejudices in the family and social environment may sometimes be accompanied by more severe reactions or even violence. For example:

'I used to get drunk... he was at prayer 24 hours a day and that session and that session, and basically didn't eat food with someone like me.' (Interview No. 44, Pos 106).

Here one participant explains that his religious parents became involved in religious rituals and simultaneously neglected emotional relationships and primary interactions with their child; behaviour that can create feelings of rejection and deep emotional suffering in the long term.

Another example of the impact of religious prejudices on parents' behaviours and interaction with children is presented by another participant:

'My dad is a relief worker for the Relief Committee (Komiteh Emdad)... my mother is a seminary student... my dad told my sister 'If it's true, I'll come and cut off your head.' Now for a few days my dad is constantly following my sister like a shadow...' (Interview No. 66, Pos 5).

This example clearly shows how prejudiced and strict religious beliefs can justify behaviours ostensibly in line with ethical values, but in reality transform into threats and overt violence against children.

Based on sociological theories, including Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Domination, it can be said that religious prejudices in such contexts act as a tool of parental power. These prejudices, reproduced within the framework of cultural ideologies, create alternative value and semantic criteria that reduce individuals' experience of free life. Similarly, Adler's

Psychological Theory also points to the role of these pressures on feelings of inadequacy, shame, or psychological tension in individuals. Here it is observed that the application of religious prejudices and the strictness resulting from them reinforces the grounds for the emergence of various types of violence, including psychological violence, in the individual.

Ultimately, data analysis shows that strict religious prejudices not only damage natural interaction in the family or society but fuel a cycle of psychological violence which in many cases drives individuals to emotional isolation or even severe reactions against these beliefs. Educational and social systems formed based on such prejudices ultimately, instead of advancing religious and ethical values, create a repressive atmosphere and become a factor for the emergence of violence.

5.6.3. Religious Norms of Boy-Girl Relationships

The examination of data related to the observance of religious issues (*Sharia*) in the stage of acquaintance between girls and boys and its impact on the emergence of violence against men also shows that the role of religion, not only as a value and ethical system but as a source of interpretation and social judgment, can be an influential factor in creating and expanding psychological pressures and interpersonal tensions. Especially in the initial stages of a relationship, values originating from religion and religious beliefs may create a type of social judgment process which ultimately lays the groundwork for experiencing violence and repression.

In the first quote, reflecting an example of this type of social judgment, an individual influenced by these beliefs raises such a view:

'He thought that 'That girl whom you met in an environment like university and became friends with, without there being a contract and religious contracts (Aghd-o-Oghood) between you, these words... if that girl was a healthy [decent] person, she wouldn't become friends with you.' (Interview No. 29, Pos 29).

This statement clearly shows that implicit religious beliefs have led to a type of ethical judgment pattern that labels women's roles in relationships in advance. In this space, a girl who enters an informal relationship, solely due to not observing Sharia frameworks, is considered an individual with negative ethical characteristics. This view influences not only the mental structure of individuals governing the relationship but over time may create obstacles to realizing a healthy connection between two parties; such that one party (often

the woman) becomes the target of social judgment and the other party (usually the man) imagines that entering this relationship is a type of wrong commitment or behaviour contrary to religious values.

In this midst, religious views, often due to their interpretive flexibility, instead of stabilizing human relationships, can lead to greater complexity. As Bokharaei points out in the second quote:

'If the element of religion wants to open its foot into the analysis, because there you can have any type of interpretation and analysis; meaning you can extract contradictory and conflicting matters from Quranic verses and Hadiths, because its basis is on interpretation, so it cannot be a referable and firm text. From a text, when everything comes out, that time it is dangerous. Therefore, religion [works] in one case: that the government moves within the ambit of its own desire.'

(Interview No. 65, Pos 93).

This confession clearly emphasises the dynamic nature of religion, which can be a tool for judgment, manipulation, or even repression depending on the type of perception and desire of individuals or groups.

Based on sociological and social psychology theories, including Hirschi's Social Control Theory (1969), it can be said that such judgments not only can influence individuals' behaviour but provide a ground for creating psychological pressures that lead to violence. In this framework, when religion is considered a criterion for valuing individuals, this value system can transform into a tool for repression or intimidation, such that an individual who imagines he has been in a relationship contrary to Sharia or social expectation, even if he had no intention of oppression or violence, might show behaviours with violent consequences due to social and internal pressures resulting from judgment.

In this midst, the tension between religious values and psychological and human desires is also considered one of the important dimensions of this issue. In many societies, like the society reflected in this research, religion is recognised as a source of legitimacy for ethics and value judgments. Consequently, any behaviour or relationship formed outside religious frameworks is condemned to labelling and sometimes even violence, because the individual, in confronting social and internal pressures, sees himself obliged to behave or react in accordance with religious expectations.

Ultimately, it can be concluded that religious contexts related to the emergence of violence against men stem not only from direct religious beliefs

but are reinforced more through flexible or restrictive interpretations made of religion. It is this interpretive flexibility that causes religion in cases to act as a tool for judgment, control, or even creating psychological or social violence.

5.6.4. The Religious Husband

Also, examining data related to the category of the 'Religious Husband' shows that religious attitudes and beliefs, especially in relation to the concept of 'Repentance' (*Towbeh*), 'Forgiveness,' and 'Gender Role' in shared life, can provide potential grounds for the formation of structural or psychological violence against men.

The first narrative, raised by Samira, describes a man who has religious adherence to performing obligations such as prayer and strives to maintain religious beliefs and principles in daily life. In his life path, even in the face of ethical challenges such as a 'parallel relationship' (infidelity), he has remained committed to his religious principles and has been involved with the concept of 'repenting' in the long term:

'My husband is religious and prays. Once too when he had a parallel relationship, he was involved in repenting in the long term. Yeah, he has a very religious mind.' (Interview No. 1, Pos 291-293).

This narrative indicates this reality that religious beliefs, despite the deterrent and normative role they create in society and the individual, can cause the transformation of internal pressures into disruptive behavioural patterns.

Theories of social and religious psychology experts, especially Allport's views (1950) regarding Intrinsic Religion, emphasise the dual impact of religious beliefs on the individual's psyche. Allport explains that if religious beliefs are used 'instrumentally' and only to manage guilt, they can intensify the individual's psychological pressure. In this specific case, the man with religious concerns regarding repentance and the effort for ethical adaptation to society not only keeps himself safe from potential blame but endures a heavy psychological burden for complete adaptation to religious expectations. This pressure in the long term can lead to the emergence of injuries in marital relationships which ostensibly relate to violence against the woman, but in reality affect the man too and drag him into a type of internal repression.

The second narrative, stated by Ms. Entezami, explains the social and familial role of the religious man with the dominant view in the traditional

structure of society. This view is built upon providing the woman's economic needs and the man playing the role of head of the family. She says:

'The conception of a religious man is not this; a religious man sees himself as an exemplary man in society who is paying his wife's expenses... provision of whatever there is, his conception is on this, but he doesn't see the emotional dimension of a woman as a need at all.' (Interview No. 47, Pos 24).

This narrative clearly shows that the religious man, under the influence of his social role in the traditional framework, may fall short in evaluating the woman's emotional and psychological needs. Such a shortcoming leads to a cycle of frustration in marital relationships which gradually exerts not only implicit violence against the woman but a type of continuous psychological pressure on the man.

From the perspective of Gender Role Theory in socio-cultural research, this conception that religious men see themselves as 'examples of social virtue' aligns with Gender Stereotype Theory. Based on this theory, men in many cultures have the duty to be not only the material provider but the ethical model in the family (Bem, 1981). Any shortcoming or failure to realise such expectations, whether due to the woman's dissatisfaction or the man's inability to meet all types of needs, can lead to a type of internal struggle between duties versus personal needs.

In this framework, violence finds its place not as a 'perceptual' or 'behavioural' phenomenon but as a complex social and psychological process. The religious man, who has a comprehensive mental conception of his role as provider and ethical model, may fail in meeting deeper emotional or psychological needs. Also, the pressure resulting from certainty in the correctness of his behaviour or religious lifestyle leads to a type of isolation or ignoring of fundamental problems in the marital relationship.

Psychological theories such as Maslow's Theory (1943) regarding the hierarchy of needs also confirm that enjoying emotional needs is essential as a basis for creating healthy relationships. Where the religious man suffices only with providing material needs—*Nafagheh* or house and expenses—he neglects the emotional and psychological hierarchy and unconsciously shapes a violent dynamic through ignoring, the impact of which is transferred to both parties of the relationship in the long term.

The analysis of religious contexts in the emergence of violence against men shows that the system of religious beliefs itself, with all its value and ethical

instructions, may unintentionally transform into a factor of psychological pressure in men. This pressure results from social expectations to perform specific gender roles which limit the religious man's behaviour both in the form of personal desires and within the framework of facing the social role. Such conditions create a cycle of mutual effects of psychological and social violence of which sometimes men themselves are also the main victims.

5.6.5. Religious View on Individuals with Different Sexual Orientations

In addition to the aforementioned cases, the analysis of presented data shows that religious beliefs and the religious view on sexual actions, especially in relation to trans individuals, play a determining role in shaping the contexts for the emergence of violence. In a society that places much emphasis on religious teachings with strict interpretations, individuals who distance themselves from defined norms in this field are often placed in exposure to severe guilt, pangs of conscience, and even familial and social violences.

In these narratives, beliefs learned from religion as well as the social role of families in rearing and teaching these beliefs act as a repressive structure. Interviewees state that concepts such as sin and the immorality of sexual actions have trapped them in a cycle of doubt, shame, and torment. Omid, one of the participants, pointing to the doubled pressure resulting from religious beliefs and family experiences, says:

'Religious beliefs and the experience that families in Iran taught us about homosexuality. Fears and a nightmare of being labelled and blamed by family and relatives and people. The religion of Islam has a very hard view and considers this work totally a sin and immoral. This causes feelings of guilt and pangs of conscience.' (Interview No. 56, Pos 3).

In this quote, one can clearly see how the pressure of society and religious teachings causes the formation of feelings of guilt in individuals and makes them reluctant to express and live their identity freely.

From a psychological perspective, such pressures bring about destructive effects, especially during the individual's identity and sexual development. Identity Conflict Theory in psychology points to this point that when individuals suffer conflict due to disharmony between what they are and what society or family expects of them, this can have destructive effects on their self-confidence and mental health (Erikson, 1968).

Shayan Varamini, another participant who raises the experience of living as a trans individual, expresses his fruitless efforts to understand and explain his identity thus:

'I myself didn't know either. Until a period, I thought 'Am I not sinning? Am I not committing a major sin?' What does it mean, why do I like this [person]? I didn't like him as a girl. I considered myself completely a man. These two are very different. Someone who tells me 'I am homosexual' considers herself a girl who, with this very body she has, likes that girl. His/her story is very different from that, but I couldn't make anyone understand this because I myself didn't know how I should say it.' (Interview No. 64, Pos 25).

This narrative indicates the internal struggle to understand gender identity amidst religious and social pressures. Shayan grapples not only with physical and sexual limitations but with the psychological and emotional resistances of the surrounding environment and even his own incomplete personal understanding. Freud's Theory (1920) regarding the feeling of shame in individuals points to the origin of these problems; he emphasises that accepting inconsistencies between beliefs and identity, if accompanied by repression and guilt, will lead in the long term to a type of chronic anxiety and even psychological self-harm.

In both sampled narratives, this question exists: how can religion and religious beliefs reproduced in the family environment transform into a tool for psychological and social violence against individuals who do not correspond with the moulds defined by these beliefs? Concepts of sin and sanctity in such spaces are beyond an ethical guide and transform into tools for blame and controlling individual identity. As Omid points to this issue, labels resulting from deviant sexual actions from the view of society and family cause the formation of a cycle of guilt, anxiety, and social exclusion. However, Shayan's experience indicates that these pressures create disruption not only in accepting oneself but even in establishing communication with others; because the fear of being judged prevents individuals from conversing about their personal issues.

These findings align with sociological theories as well. Specifically, Michel Foucault (1978) in the analysis of Power and Sexuality points to this point that religious institutions, through control over the body and sexual acts, often transform into tools for exercising power over individuals and repressing different identities. In such a system, concepts like sin or deviance always find

legitimacy from power systems, and individuals who do not correspond with these criteria become victims of this control system.

In the final analysis, it can be said that strict religious beliefs and the induction of guilt resulting from sexual actions not aligned with religious teachings, especially in relation to trans individuals, have profound effects on their psychological, identity, and social health. This cycle of pressure and repression leads not only to the formation of violence directly but, by means of feelings of guilt, pangs of conscience, and fear of social judgment, places individuals on a path of isolation, repression of individual needs, and inability to establish free communication.

5.7. Legal and Juridical Contexts

Legal and juridical contexts, as one of the key dimensions in Grounded Theory research related to violence, demonstrate the complex connection between codified laws, social structures, and cultural norms which sometimes create discriminatory and challenging substrates for various groups in society. In this domain, the conflict between traditional and modern rights and disputes between jurisprudential views and civil liberties—especially regarding subjects such as the rights of individuals with different sexual orientations—have been highlighted as vulnerable points. These vacuums not only disrupt the tracking of social justice but lead to an increase in various forms of gender inequality.

Another subject of attention is the imbalance between rights and responsibilities of women and men. Laws related to child custody, women's economic rights (*Mehrieh*), assets and economic independence, and limitations created for men have shaped an atmosphere of conflict and discrimination. Inequality in the implementation of laws has also fueled consequences such as dual approaches in cases of infidelity or existing legal vacuums for protecting victims of violence, especially male children. On the other hand, social expectations related to gender roles in instances such as submission (*Tamkin*), military service, and division of property have formed a cycle of psychological and spiritual pressure and tension among individuals, causing further complexity in family and social relationships.

This section also emphasises issues related to the incorrect implementation of laws by enforcers and the lack of correct understanding of the concept of violence; subjects that often place men in unfair positions and have led to an

increase in psychological and social violence against them. These analyses highlight the necessity of a fundamental revision in laws and social policies so that, on one hand, gender justice, and on the other, the protection of human values, can be achieved in a balanced manner.

5.7.1. Conflict between Traditional and Modern Rights

The study of jurisprudential (*Feqhi*) and religious (*Shar'i*) contexts in relation to the conflict between traditional and modern rights reveals a phenomenon wherein we are witnessing not only the transformation of legal and social structures in today's society, but the contradictions of these two legal systems have caused the formation of hidden and overt violences against men. In these conditions, jurisprudential and legal issues, due to lack of revision and updating, have created foundations that exert different pressures on men and place their rights and duties in opposition to new expectations and conditions.

One of the points worth contemplating is the dual discourse observed in behaviours and demanded rights. One interviewee says humorously:

'We have now reached a place called 'Islamic Feminist'... 'I want the freedom of Europe, I don't want Hijab, I want a job, I want the right to choose everything, [but] I want Mehrieh and Nafagheh [maintenance] and a wedding too...'

(Interview No. 5, Pos 30).

This sentence clearly shows the duality and contradiction formed between women's rights in the modern and traditional space: the selective use of rights, where one side points to equality and modern freedom, but the other side maintains dependence on traditional rights like *Mehrieh* and *Nafagheh*. This opposition in rights and obligations has placed men in a position where, while obligated to provide traditional rights, they cannot benefit from reciprocal rights in an equal framework. This very matter, according to this interviewee's statements, has transformed into hidden violences in social and legal layers against men.

On the other hand, the jurisprudential and religious system based on regulating these rights still shows signs of unilateralism. In this regard, another interviewee states:

'Now I say our legal system... dowry [household goods - Jahiziyeh] is with the husband... legally, if a woman brings zero dowry to the house, legally there is no problem' (Interview No. 27, Pos 46).

This legal system, formed on the basis of tradition, has placed financial and economic responsibility completely on men's shoulders. Despite the fact that in the modern view, laws of equality and economic sharing are raised, no reform has taken place to reduce this heavy responsibility of men against traditional rights. Furthermore, when the woman speaks of new rights and modern demands, she still insists on receiving traditional rights, and this contradiction effectively removes the possibility of regulating a fair structure between couples.

Another issue discussed is the effects of religious laws on sexual relations between women and men. Within the framework of traditional discourse, sexual relations are seen as a one-sided privilege for men. One interviewee says:

'The woman says 'I submit (Tamkin), for this submission a series of rights are defined for me'... but when the man demands sexual need and the woman has no inclination, here feminists say 'It is violence, it is rape...' (Interview No. 42, Pos 99-112).

This view shows how old jurisprudential laws have limited the concept of mutual sexual rights with one-sided perceptions, and these perceptions among modern discourses have also been accompanied by contradictions, such that the man, even in his legal demands, is exposed to accusations such as violence.

5.7.2. Social Roles of Women in the Traditional and Modern World

Another discussable context is the social roles of women in the traditional and modern world. In the traditional structure, women had responsibilities in addition to rights, as one interviewee explains:

'I think the woman had responsibility, in the traditional world she had dignity/status (Manzelat) too... but in the new world, the woman has no responsibility...' (Interview No. 42, Pos 43-49).

Here, it is observed that with the transition from traditional to modern society, expectations of women have changed, but the legal framework still remains in adherence to the traditional system. Consequently, men in the modern world are obliged to provide rights based on tradition, but women shirk equivalent responsibilities.

On the other hand, the role of social and legal movements is also significant in intensifying this disharmony. As one interviewee points out:

'Have you ever seen women who claim to be modern and feminist come and critique the traditional nature of Mehrieh?' (Interview No. 42, Pos 79-85).

This dual approach indicates that some legal and social movements, rather than addressing the redefinition of mutual rights and responsibilities, are striving to use privileges and maintain traditional rights alongside modern rights, which can lead to creating discrimination to the detriment of men.

In this same vein, the established jurisprudential system emphasises women's rights but has fallen short in providing reciprocal rights for men. One interviewee points out:

'The definition that exists from the dawn of Islam, in fact women were seen as sexual service providers, and men's infidelity has no meaning in religious culture...' (Interview No. 42, Pos 99-112).

These views have defined laws in a one-sided format, and a procedure for adapting to modern needs has not found its way. For this reason, these contradictions have paved the way for hidden violences against men.

Another problem in the conflict between these two views is the issue of the legality of heavy *Mehriehs* and *Nafagheh*, which often places men under serious economic pressures. In this regard, an interviewee points out:

'Mehrieh, Nafagheh, Ojrat-ol-Mesl [wages for housework] and... are legal tools that some women use to torment men' (Interview No. 33, Pos 12).

Such issues have caused men to be placed as passive targets and victims in jurisprudential and legal structures.

In this examination, it became clear that traditional jurisprudential and religious laws, simultaneous with creating unequal legal conditions between women and men, have provided the grounds for the emergence of violence against men. The conflict between traditional rights and modern rights, in addition to creating economic, social, and psychological pressures on men, has caused them to face dual and sometimes unfair expectations. To solve this issue, we require a serious revision of laws and the creation of a comprehensive discourse that simultaneously defines the rights and duties of both genders in the traditional and modern space.

5.7.3. Conflict between Jurisprudence (Feqh) and Civil Liberties

The examination of data related to the conflict between Jurisprudence (*Feqh*) and Civil Liberties shows that this subject is rooted in the daily challenges of men's individual and social life in Iranian society and, especially in the context of modern life and legal and cultural changes, has transformed into a source for psychological violence against men. The conflict between traditional jurisprudential principles and modern values of civil liberties has influenced not only men's position in the family but their social and psychological identity. This struggle manifests more when individuals try to establish a balance between these two contradictory value systems or adopt a specific criterion to maintain their personal relationships.

One notable case is the experience of a woman who has achieved financial independence, but her husband, due to challenges resulting from this independence in the traditional and Islamic space of Iran, has suffered severe psychological pressures. In this case, the man is confused in the struggle of deciding between two different types of life. He says:

'It bothers [me]. Look, this is very hard for a man in Iranian society. Let me give you a small explanation; maybe a third person hears this and says 'Well, what's wrong with it? The woman is working.' They are right too, huh; let the woman work, what's wrong with it? But to suddenly reach from here to there... where 'is it important for me or not important?' working is very hard. If it is a shared life, Mr. Doctor, everything is 50-50. If it is a traditional and Islamic life, Bismillah [go ahead], you have your Mehrieh, you have your Shirbaha [milk-price/bride price], and according to this traditional and Islamic law you must live under one roof with me. You can't say 'I put two basins in front of myself; in one I put traditional and Islamic laws and in one I put laws of freedom anywhere in the world that exist for humans'' (Interview No. 17, Pos 19).

This quote clearly shows how traditional jurisprudential rules and the expectation of men as breadwinners and main heads of the family are placed in opposition to modern values like equal rights and individual independence. On one hand, traditional life based on jurisprudential principles defines men as those who bear the responsibility of the family's financial provision and final decision-making; but on the other, modern life with values such as equality of man and woman and women's financial independence exerts pressure on this traditional system. This pressure, in men's interpretation, is not only a legal and cultural challenge but a psychological struggle that

challenges the ability to establish effective communication and maintain family relationships. Theorists such as Giddens (1992) in modern sociology have pointed out that the transition from traditional balance to modern balance often leads to heterogeneity of roles and expectations in family relationships; where, for example, a woman's independence in decision-making or working can transform into a serious challenge in redefining social identity for men in traditional societies like Iran.

On the other hand, another experience shows that some men feel that in the process of equalising rights of men and women, serious damage has been inflicted on their social position. These individuals consider the process of new jurisprudential interpretation a type of weakening of the essence or foundation of their masculinity. This view can be clearly heard in the words of an individual who states:

'They say from that side 'We are observing the complete jurisprudence of Islam, we are making rights of woman and man one [equal]'; from this side they are striking an axe to the root of men. Yeah, well.' (Interview No. 53, Pos 26).

This view reveals the deep contradiction between traditional masculine roles in jurisprudential society and pressures resulting from the conflict of equal rights between man and woman. Men living in this jurisprudential-modern environment sometimes feel they have no space to enact the traditional masculine role and their social position, because parts of these roles are in danger of being eliminated or modified. Social Identity Theories such as Burke and Stets' theory (1991) in social psychology explain that when individuals live in environments with opposing values and cannot establish a balance between contradictory social expectations, they suffer identity tension which may lead to violence, repression, or aggressive reactions.

These narratives, aligning with scientific theories, show that the conflict between jurisprudence and civil liberties leads to violence against men when men see themselves facing a contradictory role from the familial and social environment. The depth of this tension is not summarised only in individual psychological pressure but has created a serious challenge for social cohesion; because the environment, between traditional and modern values, places men in a position where the possibility of decision-making based on a fixed value system does not exist; for this reason, the feeling of inability and frustration gradually transforms into psychological or even behavioural violence against

men. Therefore, the conflict between jurisprudence and civil liberties is not just a legal dispute but a source for men's psychological crises in society.

5.7.4. Legal Vacuums for Dealing with Individuals with Different Sexual Orientations

Another issue in this field is legal vacuums for dealing with individuals with different sexual orientations. The analysis of legal contexts of violence against men in relation to trans individuals, especially from the angle of weaknesses in the legal system in issuing gender reassignment permits and the absence of behavioural expert specialists in courts, indicates a type of legal defect that can directly and indirectly lead to numerous psychological, social, and even violent injuries against this group. Such contexts not only cause increased legal complexities in dealing with these individuals but place them in a cycle of confusion and social misunderstandings.

Shayan, a 24-year-old trans man, when explaining part of the legal challenges related to this subject, points to the non-specialised process of issuing gender reassignment permits. He says:

'Well, those have psychological and psychiatric cases too; psychological and psychiatric tests must have a high specialised level. Must be specialised. Because now many diagnose very well, but a series [of people] whom I don't want to name and are paramount in this issue, then have no knowledge; meaning they gave a permit to someone that 'in one session... I am nothing [qualified] scientifically, I am a Bachelor's [holder]'' (Interview No. 64, Pos 266-269).

This quote clearly points to the weakness in using standard scientific methods to evaluate individuals' real need for gender reassignment; a weakness that not only limits individuals' access to correct and appropriate diagnosis but leads to creating serious confusion in trans individuals. Legal and social theories in relation to this issue explicitly state that the lack of clear laws and use of specialised criteria is the main factor creating psychological violence in this group. According to Scott and Childs' theory (2006; referencing legal/psychological assessment standards), incorrect or non-scientific diagnosis in sensitive psychiatric and psychological issues, such as evaluating gender reassignment, can cause isolation, trauma, and increased social pressures in vulnerable individuals.

This issue becomes more complex when entering the space of courts, due to the absence of behavioural expert specialists, transforms the process of

dealing with trans individuals' legal affairs into an ambiguous procedure. Dr. Saberi, a psychologist and activist in trans disorders, describes the weakness of the court system thus:

'Look, that judge sitting there... I always say this, it is good that like media, like the Clerical Court, there be a series of individuals trained in this subject; meaning there be a series of court branches that know psychologically this person sitting in front of him right now is really not at fault' (Interview No. 21, Pos 13).

This narrative shows that weakness in judges' specialisation or the absence of special court branches to deal with these issues causes trans individuals to be seen as criminals or responsible for their condition; whereas external factors such as social pressures, lack of public awareness regarding their condition, and utilizing inefficient legal tools play the main role in forming these problems. From the perspective of the 'Cycle of Social Harm' theory, this situation not only makes reconstructing trans individuals' identity difficult but places them against negative judgments and prejudices that intensify existing legal gaps.

The absence of a specialised approach in courts and the legal system transforms into a type of 'Structural Violence' that not only does not support injured individuals in the legal process of treatment and reconstruction but increases the psychological burden and social pressures on them. From the perspective of Restorative Justice Theory, when this system cannot act in accordance with the psychological and social needs of victims, it unintentionally creates an environment that paves the way for deepening psychological and social injuries. This view manifests clearly in the absence of behavioural expert specialists capable of evaluating and explaining the real situation of trans individuals. Narratives related to vulnerable individuals like Shayan or critiques of experts like Dr. Saberi show that weakness in the legal system is not limited only to issues directly related to gender reassignment but causes trans individuals to be trapped in a cycle of violence and legal negligence that makes deepening their social and psychological injuries inevitable.

The perspective of Psychological Needs Theory is also illuminating in this field; this theory states that injured individuals, to reach mental health and social reconstruction, require attention to psychological security, mutual respect, and social support. A legal system that cannot provide these fundamental needs effectively imprisons trans individuals in a cycle of

psychological and social insecurity which transforms into a type of structural violence. Narratives like Shayan's, which speak of ignoring individuals' psychological and social injuries, show well how the lack of specialised substrates to support vulnerable groups paves the ground for failure in responding to these needs and intensifies injuries.

Inefficient legal systems, contrary to principles of restorative justice theory and psychological needs, in most cases not only lack the ability to evaluate and offer specialised solutions in dealing with vulnerable groups or trans individuals but increase pressures inflicted on these individuals and distance them from opportunities for reconstruction and repair. Reforming laws, providing specialised infrastructures, and supplying special branches to examine the status of vulnerable groups are among the solutions that can stop the cycle of structural violence in the initial stages.

5.7.5. Inequality of Rights and Responsibilities of Women and Men

Also, examining the data of this research shows that inequality in rights and responsibilities, especially in the field of government support and social expectations, plays a significant role in increasing men's vulnerability. Discrimination in providing support services to women and lack of sufficient attention to injured men, on one hand, and imposing doubled financial and executive responsibilities on men, on the other, creates conditions that place men in exposure to various violences, including economic, social, and psychological violence.

Dr. Alireza Moradi, a sociologist, states regarding this discrimination in providing services and support to injured women and men:

'They give heaps of services to these individuals [women]. Basically, someone whose mother is a head of household, her child can be exempt from military service; she receives 17-18 types of services, educational allowance for children. Now if she gets up from here and goes to Tehran, the cost of tickets and guesthouses is also paid; it gives her a 4 percent loan. A group of men can receive salary [welfare], those who are disabled, psychiatric [patients], to whom they don't give loans. In support organisations too, this view exists. That what happens is both the law and the structure of the entire system of our social care organisation and our social services development organisation is defining it like this... these think it is derived from that same traditional view, those same religious and traditional views. We come and prolong the divorce process so

much... these fall [into conflict], the man says 'I'll bring a calamity on her head,' 'My Mehr [Mehrieh] lawful, my life free' [woman waiving Mehrieh for divorce]... the woman says 'Is it like this? Until I get the last Qiran of my Mehrieh, I won't let go; for 50 years you must give me money.' A large part [is] we have inflation of laws, we have nuisance laws, we have laws that strike a blow' (Interview No. 3, Pos 172).

These statements show that not only are existing laws and support structures designed more in favour of women, but legal processes like divorce can also transform into tools for applying pressure and economic violence against men. The continuation of this situation, especially in the shadow of traditional and religious views, places men in an unequal position and strips them of the possibility of defending their rights (Adler, 1930).

Furthermore, social expectations also play an important role in intensifying this inequality. Ebrahim, 44 years old, points in this regard to inequality in vehicle tax and performing costly repair and maintenance tasks by men, saying:

'In our society, it is established that if the car is in the lady's name, men do many of its tasks. Why, when the document and property is in the lady's name, the oil, repairs and workshop and petrol, all this falls on the gentleman's neck?' (Interview No. 87, Pos 75-78).

This view shows that even in daily life issues, men, due to gender expectations, are inevitably forced to accept greater financial responsibilities. This situation, especially in unfavourable economic conditions, can lead to doubled psychological and economic pressure on men and provide grounds for the emergence of violence (Maslow, 1943).

From the perspective of legal and social theories, this unequal structure is rooted in traditional and cultural views of individuals' gender roles. Broken Self-Concept Theory in psychology also believes that when individuals are unable to meet expectations of themselves, they are placed in exposure to psychological pressure and various injuries (Freud, 1920). In these conditions, men, due to numerous responsibilities and lack of receiving sufficient support, are trapped more than ever in a cycle of pressures and hidden violences.

In general, inequality in rights and responsibilities, both at the level of laws and support structures and at the level of social expectations, places men in a vulnerable position. This inequality manifests in various forms including

discrimination in providing services, imposing doubled financial and social responsibilities, and lack of sufficient support for injured men, and provides grounds for the emergence of various types of violence against men.

5.7.6. Issues Related to Custody and Guardianship of Children

The analysis of qualitative data related to the subject of 'Custody and Guardianship of Children' also shows that the issue of custody and guardianship of children can transform into one of the key contexts for violence against men. This type of violence reflects not only in legal structures but in personal experiences and the system of beliefs and social interactions. Conditions where men feel deterrence, dispossession of authority, or even being ignored in child custody cases reinforce psychological and social pressures on them.

Collected narratives depict this subject especially from the perspective of the feeling of legal and structural weakness men experience against the custody system. For example, the story of Gholam Eskandari informs of a bitter history where, due to weak legal supervision over child guardianship, deep violence was imposed on him and his family. He says:

'My paternal uncle's wife said, what... said 'I will take this child, but on one condition: you must give this to me as a child [adoption].' My father didn't accept and my uncle's wife said 'Now let me take her, I'll keep her.' My uncle's wife picked up this younger sister of ours named Niloofar and took her and for three-four months she took her there and kept her, then what... one day my Aga [father] came and said 'Uncle's wife says Niloofar died'' (Interview No. 24, Pos 10).

This narrative shows that the lack of formulation and precise implementation of child protection laws and lack of clarity of parental rights can lead to tragedies such as abuse, violence, and even inability to protect the child's life. Such a situation is not only a human tragedy but a reflection of legal and social weakness that places men in positions where they cannot exercise effective power and authority regarding their children.

The existing legal system in many cases provides a substrate for the emergence of violence against men, especially when the discussion of child custody arises and laws have less flexibility regarding fathers' individual conditions. Dr. Mousavi Viayeh explains:

'She fell one privilege ahead of me. From the benefit of child-rearing, the child is hers, guardianship is on her responsibility. If I go under a car right now, no problem occurs for that child in terms of guardianship, in terms of providing needs and these things' (Interview No. 27, Pos 40).

This view indicates that custody conditions, although ostensibly prioritizing the child's interests, in practice may push the man to the margins and deprive him of playing a meaningful role in the child's life. This man does not see himself as an irreplaceable individual for providing affection and emotional support to his child, and his bitter psychological experience accompanied by feelings of inefficiency imposes mental and social violence upon him.

On the other hand, looking at related legal articles, it is observed that existing laws not only fuel inequality between parents in the domain of custody but can create the ground for legal violence against men. Allah-Reza proposes:

'Even more disastrous is the one where couples who separate also have a shared child, because then at that time violence against that child is also raised, so to speak, and you know that in law until age 7 custody is with the mother and after seven years custody is with the father, unless an agreement takes place and the father does not have custody competence, so the mother goes and files a petition for revocation of custody and can take custody of the child' (Interview No. 33, Pos 28).

This quote shows that legislation does not behave by giving equal priority to both parents, and revocation of custody from one of them, especially in the absence of legal transparency, can create conditions where the other parent (often the father) feels fragility, legal inability, and elimination from his role. This issue facilitates the production of psychological violence and sometimes violent social confrontations.

Considering this point, being far from the child or limiting the father's visits with the child as a result of custody decisions sometimes causes the creation of a sense of distance and isolation in men. Bahrami describes an example of this situation:

'No, I'm not in his loop/shell; my Aga [father] accepted his custody, is raising him now. Me too, because I didn't show myself to him... he was four years old I saw him, I didn't see him again' (Interview No. 44, Pos 240).

This narrative vividly shows how the inability to access the child or perform the parental role leaves destructive psychological and emotional effects on men and intensifies the feeling of alienation from the child.

Furthermore, in cases it has been observed that laws are founded solely on family competence and do not apply more managerial supervision. One interviewee, who is a retired colonel, points out:

'Families who cannot raise the child well, the Judiciary revokes child custody and assigns it to the Welfare Organization' (Interview No. 95, Pos 3).

This view shows that if fathers or families are considered incompetent, the system, accompanied by a one-sided judgment, deprives them of the right to custody. Such decisions in many cases lead to ignoring more fundamental factors.

Men's reaction against such conditions also sometimes ends in complete abandonment of parental responsibility and dispossession of the paternal role. Farhad Azizi says:

'Men's reaction... they might divorce very easily, not take responsibility for the child either, and reject/abandon' (Interview No. 97, Pos 76).

In this type of reaction, one of the consequences of legal and psychological violence against men is the denial of identity and parental responsibility, which can transform into an emotional and social crisis for them.

With all this, part of the root of these problems is examinable in the path of legislation and how laws are passed in favour of one gender. Hosseini points to behind-the-scenes experiences of some laws:

'It was Ms. Kadivar who said 'When we were in Parliament and a law wanted to take shape, we would put gentlemen under so much pressure at home from their wives that the law inside Parliament would be in favour of ladies'' (Interview No. 5, Pos 26).

This type of proposition shows that patterns arising from personal and social pressures on representatives' decision-making can play a role in explaining legal inequalities against men and transform them into potential targets of legal and psychological violence.

Finally, the analysis of legal contexts related to child custody shows that laws and legal structures have so far failed to answer the needs of both sides of parental responsibility and in cases have even provided the ground for more

critical conditions. This failure leads not only to violence against men but creates deeper dangers including alienation of parental relationships and future social crises.

5.7.7. Problems Related to Women's Economic Rights in Law (Mehrieh)

In addition to the aforementioned cases, data collected in this research shows that the implementation of the *Mehrieh* law is one of the legal and social contexts of violence against men. In this midst, the *Mehrieh* law, which is recognised as a legal right in the Iranian legal system, can in cases transform into a tool that imposes significant psychological, economic, and social pressures on men. These pressures not only have consequences in individuals' daily lives but confront marital relationships with tension and sometimes fuel a cycle of indirect or hidden violences in social and family life.

One of the narratives of men placed under pressures resulting from the implementation of this law is an experience that clearly recounts its violent aspects:

'Everything belongs to women. Mehrieh is this very thing that they go to prison [for]. Nafagheh, Ojrat-ol-Mesl. Look, until last year they came in Parliament and passed something saying they cannot execute [seize] car and house for Mehrieh; now they came with their new law this year that they finished, the Guardian Council rejected, the Expediency Council... can take the house completely. Take it in exchange for Mehrieh. Can [take] the car. I now have a car I work with; I have to prove I am working with this personal car of mine' (Interview No. 53, Pos 37-40).

These statements indicate the direct impact of the *Mehrieh* law on the daily life of men involved in cases related to it. In this narrative, *Mehrieh* has transformed not only into an economic factor that can place the man under pressure but, in a legal and structural form, becomes a tool for applying the opposing party's power. The fact that a man is forced to prove that the tool he needs for work and providing livelihood is a functional and personal tool is itself a type of indication of this reality that existing laws can impose a doubled economic burden on the individual, especially in conditions of marital relationship crisis.

The above narrative is analysable with theories related to Institutional and Social Pressures. From the perspective of Conflict Theory presented by Karl

Marx (1867) and other thinkers following him, social and legal laws are regulated in numerous cases in such a way that they apply greater threat and pressure on individuals of a specific group. Here, the role of legal structures is clearly observable; where the economic and legal power of the opposing party (women in this specific case) can find greater weight in social and familial equations. From the perspective of this theory, legal tools, when distanced from the balance of power in individuals' relationships, fuel the development and reinforcement of crisis rather than solving it. In this specific case, the man placed under the pressure of the *Mehrieh* law faces a legal reality that has challenged his economic and social independence.

On the other hand, Strain Theory raised by Robert Merton (1938) points to this point that tensions resulting from lack of resources and structural pressures can influence violent behaviours or unexpected reactions from individuals. Here, pressure resulting from legal laws has brought the man to a point where he feels he must enter a legal war to maintain his minimum livelihood or explain and defend even his simplest assets like a car.

Another interesting point in the narrative above is the reference to legal changes and contradictions observed in passed laws. The interviewee explicitly says:

'Until last year they came in Parliament... passed something saying they cannot execute [seize] car and house for Mehrieh, now they came with their new law this year that they finished, the Guardian Council rejected' (Interview No. 53, Pos 37-40).

This confusion in implementing laws and their repeated changes is itself another factor that can increase men's psychological pressure. Changes that with every decision might enlarge the scope of legal threats do not provide an opportunity to solve problems, and tensions only deepen.

From a social and culture-centric dimension, the fact that *Mehrieh* laws are defined in many cases as 'Executive Guarantee of Women's Rights' has found another function and can transform into a tool for repressing or coercing men. The traditional definition of women's rights in societies like Iran, founded on androcentric and unilateral legal systems, relies in some conditions on the idea that punishing the man to provide *Mehrieh* can be part of gender justice. However, what occurs in practice can create other structural problems, such as economic crisis or long-term emotional disintegration in marital relationships.

The analysis of presented data in the field of violence against men from the perspective of *Mehrieh* law implementation, within the framework of the Grounded Theory paradigm, shows that this issue is rooted in a social and legal order that not only leads to historical gender discriminations but has caused increased psychological and economic pressures on men. Narratives raised in interviews well express this issue that how traditional concepts of women's rights, in practice, have the capability to transform into a tool of structural violence against men. The subject of *Mehrieh* is raised especially in this field as one of the key elements which, in the position of legal policymaking and social custom, places men as easy targets for exploitation and repression.

In all presented quotes, the repetition of concepts from traditional Islamic jurisprudential and social views regarding *Mehrieh*, *Nafagheh*, *Ojrat-ol-Mesl*, and specific women's rights is evident. For example, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh states:

'From a jurisprudential perspective, the woman has no right; as soon as, from a jurisprudential perspective, the woman enters the husband's house, she transforms into the husband's slave. Her freedom is only when [he pays] that money that was supposed to [be used to] buy her, pays that money and frees her life/soul' (Interview No. 27, Pos 18).

This interpretation of *Mehrieh* points directly to the structure of ownership and transactional gender relations which transforms women into tradable commodities and introduces *Mehrieh* as a tool for determining their material value. However, what this social order causes is the creation of an unequal legal relationship that places men under heavy economic pressures to pay the price of this so-called 'ownership.'

This economic and legal pressure, as Allah-Reza points out in the interview, has driven many men towards economic bankruptcy or psychological despair:

'Mehrieh is also, according to law, 'payable on demand' (Ind-al-Motalebeh), meaning whenever the lady, so to speak, wills it, she can demand her Mehrieh; the man is obliged to give... very easily their spouses go and put an execution order on their Mehrieh and confiscate their entire life, and later auction and appropriation and these things' (Interview No. 33, Pos 12).

This narrative indicates unfair conditions imposed on men wherein legal tools of *Mehrieh* and *Nafagheh*, instead of supporting healthy marital relationships, have turned into tools of pressure and control. On the other hand, the group interview with citizens of Ardabil points to the social aspects of this violence:

'Mehrieh is against gentlemen, which many ladies use as a tool to torment the gentleman; basically to divorce this one, go to that one, just Mehrieh...'

(Interview No. 63, Pos 44).

This sentence clearly shows how existing laws have created a ground for the instrumental use of women's rights, such that in cases women might use *Mehrieh* as a weapon to achieve financial or vengeful goals.

On the other hand, in patriarchal jurisprudential and traditional interpretation, a wrong and unequal understanding of 'Equality' is constantly seen. As Allah-Reza explains, women's legal rights, contrary to slogans of equality, are an additional burden on men's shoulders:

'The law has considered no responsibility for the woman... these are all legal and cultural violences that are against men. The man must give Mehrieh; basically why must the man give Mehrieh? Isn't this life equal? Don't they start this life together...' (Interview No. 33, Pos 42).

In fact, what these talks reveal is a deep deficiency in thinking and regulating laws related to marital relationships which has not only caused violence against men but fundamentally questions the concept of equality at the start of shared life. This trend causes the renewal of a cycle of oppression and economic and psychological violence defined for men as the main person responsible for paying *Mehrieh*.

From a scientific perspective, social and legal theories have also clearly shown that systems built on gender discrimination will always lead to the emergence of violence. For example, the Radical Feminist view in interpreting man-woman relations emphasises that any regulation of relationships based on gender, regardless of which gender it benefits, ultimately causes harm to all members of society (MacKinnon, 1989). Here, traditional *Mehrieh* as a symbol of social screening and distribution of economic power has overtly caused inequality and also legal violence against men.

Another important point is executive responsibilities and interpretations arising from jurisprudential concepts. For example, Ms. Jiriyaee points out with a symbolic view:

'From wherever you took the woman, she should be treated similar to her father's house... they even say 'Avoid the green plant of the dung-heap (Khadra-al-Demn),' the woman who has grown in a sludge-pit' (Interview No. 57, Pos 92).

This quote indicates implicit social criteria that define a man's ability to pay *Mehrieh* or provide other conditions as his 'Honour.'

It can be said that the implementation of the *Mehrieh* law, the aim of which was maintaining the security and rights of women, in practice can lead to a tension-filled result against men. The presented narrative indicates a part of these structural tensions that not only imposes severe economic pressures on men but remains as a legal tool challenging the balance of power in marital relationships. The legal pattern based on this type of guarantee, in cases by ignoring the foundations of social justice, influences individuals' psychological and social realities and sometimes leads to a cycle of indirect violences for which no end can be envisaged.

Ultimately, the presented data show that *Mehrieh*, *Nafagheh*, *Ojrat-ol-Mesl*, and other rights defined for women, under certain legal and cultural interpretations, have transformed into tools that, instead of supporting women, provide the ground for applying violence against men. These consequences are not only results of traditional beliefs but result from existing vacuums in law and related policymaking. Laws that should help establish gender justice have in practice transformed into tools for deepening violence and inequality, exerting extensive psychological, economic, and social pressures on men.

5.7.8. The Concept of 'Ojrat-ol-Mesl' (Wages for Housework) for Women in the Family

The concept of 'Ojrat-ol-Mesl' (customary wages for housework) for women in the family is also a key issue rooted in the type of religious view regarding the responsibilities and roles of spouses. Contrary to the perception of many, the legal and religious structure in Islam is designed in such a way that, instead of imposing specific duties on the woman, it emphasises her right to receive wages and compensation for her efforts in the house. However, this religious view, when placed in conjunction with practical limitations and implicit social culture, sometimes leads to the emergence of tensions and violences of which men are the direct victims. Ms. Entezami clearly points to this subject in her analysis:

'Whatever you can include... [if] she doesn't have it for her husband, doesn't wash his clothes... now it's true these are not the job description of a woman; they say that, for example, Islam has said that a woman must receive something in exchange for service in the house, but this is Ojrat-ol-Mesl. This, in fact, because [Islam/Law] knew the woman is emotional and provides all these things, it didn't come to set this as a law for her...' (Interview No. 47, Pos 2-4).

This quote clarifies the contradiction that exists between traditional beliefs and religious teachings. On one hand, the religion of Islam grants the woman the right to *Ojrat-ol-Mesl*, meaning that any action the woman performs, including cooking and cleaning, is fundamentally not considered her legal or religious duty unless it is by agreement. But on the other hand, the emotional and cultural expectation existing of women has placed them in the position of unquestioningly performing such duties, which sometimes manifests as pressure or coercion.

These conditions pave the way for violence against men, because many men, in facing this situation, find themselves in a position where they must pay a spiritual, financial, or social cost for undefined duties implicitly expected of the woman. Men, especially if forced to pay *Ojrat-ol-Mesl* due to family or judicial disputes, often face not only economic injuries but feelings of inability and anger. This violence may manifest in the form of verbal or even physical confrontation, as Ms. Entezami points out:

'The ultimate point is that I say issues that arise in shared life, or basically arise in shared relationships, cause [men] to be ignored somewhere, to be confronted somewhere; now somewhere the confrontation might be physical, might be verbal.' (Interview No. 47, Pos 2-4).

From a theoretical perspective, these subjects are analysable with gender and religious sociology theories. Studies by Bayati (2016) and Ghaninia (2018) show that gender roles in religion, although defined based on justice, transform into power relations when encountering patriarchal society or families dependent on traditional structures, which in many cases lead not to justice but to inequality. Also, Bourdieu's Theory of 'Cultural Reproduction of Gender Roles' (1990) emphasises how the roles of woman and man, instead of flexibility, can lead more to the stabilisation of one party's domination in religious environments.

Consequently, it can be said that religious teachings related to 'women's *Ojrat-ol-Mesl*' and other gender roles, despite their lofty goals, pave the way for violence against men in many cases due to cultural and social reasons. This violence manifests especially in economic, psychological, and verbal forms, and men, while enduring economic pressures or unequal laws, face feelings such as frustration and inability. This complex cycle will only decrease when cultural attitudes, accompanied by true religious education, reach a type of balance between roles and responsibilities.

Legal laws in the sphere of family, especially divorce and *Mehrieh*, have always been controversial subjects in Iran and are indicative of a type of imbalance in dealing with the two genders which in many cases ends to the detriment of men. Interviewees' experiences show that these laws, although outwardly close to gender equality, have practically created a type of systematic inequality against men due to the executive mechanism and dominant interpretation in courts.

One of the quotes clearly describing this situation points to the imposed conditions of *Mehrieh*:

'The situation of Mehrieh in Iran is terrible; the situation of financial conditions that are against the man is terrible. Whatever the man works for, he brings into that house and spends; she expects all the facilities of the house to be provided...'
(Interview No. 29, Pos 161).

This narrative presents an image of financial pressure on men; a man who, besides providing the current needs of the family, must be accountable for the legal issues of *Mehrieh* as well. This is while the law has granted this privilege to women that even without playing an equal role financially, they expect complete support. Modern legal theories, such as Bornstedt's Theory of Gender Equality in Family Law (2018), point to this point that laws must avoid any gender distinction in financial support; a subject which is observed to the contrary in the Iranian example.

5.7.9. Excessive Legal Support for Women's Assets and Income (Legal Discrimination)

Another subject pointing to legal discrimination turns, contrary to common perception, to the excessive legal support for women's assets and income:

'The man's assets and income and whatever assets he has are for women. Contrary to the perception that everyone thinks the law is on the men's side, but in practice, all income and assets belong to women' (Interview No. 53, Pos 31-36).

This narrative is a direct critique of laws that systematically transfer men's property to the benefit of women. This legal method, instead of maintaining balance, has made men's role in fulfilling economic obligations excessively heavy and placed them in exposure to financial pressures. Herring's Theory of Property in Family Law (2015) emphasises that the assets and income of couples must be divided based on the actual contribution of the couple, not based on gender stereotypes.

Limitation in Freedom of Speech and Women's Independence in Confronting Men: The issue of women's independence in expression and confrontation with the man is another title highlighted in narratives.

'Now men [are focused] more on the freedom of speech that has been given more to women...' (Interview No. 53, Pos 18).

This sentence points to a cultural and legal reality that women's rights are highlighted in some cases in such a way that the possibility of challenging or comprehensively examining men's rights and responsibilities is overshadowed. This situation has resulted in a type of boundless independence for the woman, even against her own parents. From the perspective of Miller's Culture-Centred Theories (2021), this type of excessive independence can cause conflict in gender and family relationships.

5.7.10. Dual Treatment in the Legal System regarding Infidelity

Another subject highlighted in these quotes relates to infidelity and dual treatments in the legal system:

'Violence means... you see, a very interesting sentence has happened... the man has caught his wife [cheating], that now his wife has entered a relationship with someone else, and now in the clinic the woman is the claimant [demanding party], saying 'If you knew what to do, I wouldn't have done this work; you are the culprit too'' (Interview No. 11, Pos 10).

This narrative shows that the judicial system often has a greater tendency to support women, even in cases where women's infidelity is evident. In such

cases, men not only become victims of infidelity but are placed under psychological pressure and lack of judicial support.

'Our legal and penal and judicial system... [instances] of giving a verdict against the woman's infidelity are very few...' (Interview No. 88, Pos 21).

This issue indicates a contradiction in judicial justice which causes dissatisfaction and frustration for men in social and legal interactions. The dominant approach in the Iranian judicial system continues in a way that aligns with stereotypes of victimising women and ignoring pressure on men. Giddens' Theory of Gender Justice (1990) emphasises that the administration of justice must not be influenced by cultural or gender images but must have equal executive guarantee for both genders.

5.7.11. Legal Vacuums in Punishing Sexual and Physical Abuse against Male Children

The discussion of sexual and physical violence against children in the Iranian legal system is a subject requiring more precise analysis and reform of existing laws. The narrative presented by one interviewee engages in a pathological look at the existing situation:

'Wherein determining criteria such as the Forensic Medicine (Pezeshki-e Ghanooni) opinion are placed as the basis in many cases and challenge the process of administering justice. At present, sexual and physical abuses that happen against children and adolescents, especially boys, are not dealt with legally in a way that can provide the necessary deterrence.' (Interview No. 85, Pos 72-78).

This issue manifests particularly in cases where visible physical or psychological injury does not exist. According to the interviewee, escaping punishment has become easier in such cases because only the Forensic Medicine opinion is considered the main criterion for proving the crime. This situation can create a space for abuse and escaping legal responsibility, where laws focus more on sexual violence against women and sufficient attention is not paid to male victims, including male children and adolescents.

Psychological and legal theories related to child protection by Christie (2013) point to this point that laws related to violence against children must consider broader tools for evaluating the victim's condition and not be limited solely to the Forensic Medicine report. Furthermore, supportive and legal processes must be designed in such a way that they possess the necessary

complexity for deterrence and the possibility of reducing the criminals' responsibility or escaping determined punishments does not exist.

This approach can point to a type of gender distinction in the Iranian legal system wherein dealing with sexual and physical abuses against male children possesses less intensity and seriousness than cases related to women. In such conditions, the lack of precise laws in the field of legal protections for victimised children, especially boys, can lead to an increase in social pathologies. Jones's Theory of Child Protective Justice (2019) emphasises that laws drafted to deal with child sexual abuse must be implementable equally, regardless of the victim's gender, and instead of focusing solely on forensic evidence, a more comprehensive examination of the child's psychological and social injury conditions should be conducted.

The presented narrative indicates inequality in attention to issues related to sexual and physical violence against male children; a subject that not only causes the creation of a legal vacuum in punishing rapists but places victims in a space without sufficient social or legal support. To confront this situation, comprehensive and more precise legal reforms are necessary so that the judicial system can protect children based on fairer criteria and drastically reduce the commission of violence against them.

5.7.12. Laws Related to Division of Property, Mehrieh, Tamkin, and Military Service

In the heart of men's daily life, laws governing family and social relationships have somehow turned into a cycle of tension and psychological pressure. These laws, although representing social justice in the view of some, inform of the existence of a type of hidden injustice in the narratives of men who have been under the influence of these laws; an injustice that can leave a significant spiritual, psychological, and even practical impact on their lives. In this midst, the law of 'Division of Property' (*Tansif-e Amval*) is one of the controversial subjects clearly reflected in men's experiences. One interviewee states thus:

'Division of assets... if a woman and man who live together, and from the time they start their life, when they want to separate... all assets they acquire... you know in our society mostly men work... now it is true that recently women are employed too... but the absolute overwhelming majority is that men work and bring in the family bread...' (Interview No. 33, Pos 14).

These words well reflect a string of complaints among men who believe the economic burden of life is on their shoulders, but when separation occurs, their earnings are divided equally, without regard to the parties' actual share in acquiring this capital.

On the other hand, the Mehrieh law is also known among men as a factor that can lead to psychological or even practical violence. This law, whose initial philosophy was supporting the woman, is sometimes interpreted and implemented in a way that places men under severe pressure. Hosseini, one of the interviewees, pointing to this subject says:

'The Sharia of Islam itself says a woman who betrays [commits adultery] should not be given Mehrieh... but the law and laws of the Islamic Republic say whatever the woman does, even murder of her husband... Mehrieh must be accorded to her...' (Interview No. 5, Pos 27).

This contradiction between religious (*Shar'i*) and legal perceptions has created a type of feeling of imbalance among men. Legal and social theories, such as Bentham's Theory of 'Proportionality of Punishment and Crime' (1789), emphasise that punishments must align with the committed crime and create a sense of justice. But here, the implementation of the *Mehrieh* law without regard to the woman's behaviour sometimes transforms into a tool for applying pressure on the husband.

Continuing, the subject of women's non-submission (*Adam-e Tamkin*) is another issue that has turned into a display of discrimination in the view of some men. Hosseini believes in this case:

'If the woman does not submit, what happens? Mehrieh is accorded to her and... she just doesn't get Nafagheh [maintenance]. Meaning a woman who hasn't come into your house, hasn't lived, don't give her expenses [but still pay Mehrieh]...' (Interview No. 5, Pos 28).

This matter shows that in legislation, sometimes greater sensitivity has existed towards the needs of one party (women) and, in contrast, men's experience has not received much attention.

The subject of laws punishing adultery (*Zina*) has also had extensive reflection among men's justice-seeking campaigns. Dr. Mehrabi, regarding these laws with a critical look, points to existing contradictions and states thus:

'...if a man is married and a woman is married... the sentence for the married woman is stoning and the single man gets lashes...' (Interview No. 11, Pos 39).

This difference in the degree of punishment clearly raises the issue of disproportionality between punishments, which in the current justice-oriented atmosphere can create a type of dissatisfaction among men.

The issue of Military Service is also another important part of this equation that directly influences men's lives. Ehsan, one of the interviewees, pointing to his experiences of this period, says thus:

'Military service is on your neck... the law of this country is this too, you must go do it... if that period of military service existed for ladies, ladies could go to work... meaning the name of 'man' is tied with working and suffering hardship and, for example, being a protector and being strong...' (Interview No. 48, Pos 342).

These words well indicate a view emphasising that existing laws not only do not create necessary support for men but, in some cases, impose an even greater burden of responsibility on them. From the view of Social Identity Theory by Tajfel and Turner (1979), these laws can lead to a feeling of relative deprivation among men; a feeling arising from comparing their position with other groups (including women).

The experiences of those who have been involved in tangible challenges of marriage and *Mehrieh* laws also show this dissatisfaction in a specific form. Abbas Barghamadi, who has passed through these difficult stages, says thus:

'...as soon as the woman complained regarding Mehrieh... the man had to be in prison... the law at that time was like this... little by little it was moderated, that stress, that violence towards the man decreased...' (Interview No. 77, Pos 47).

But even with the reform of laws, it seems justice in the masculine perception has not yet been achieved. These experiences align with Rawls's Theory of 'Distributive Justice' (1971) as well, which shows that laws must be designed in a way that guarantees the possibility of fair distribution of rights and responsibilities among all social groups.

Finally, the experience of those who have been deprived of their social rights for various reasons, like Hassan Espania, perpetuates this perception of discrimination and lack of respect for social status. Pointing to his deprivations, he says:

'Stidious [as I was], totally for years and years I was deprived of all my social rights...' (Interview No. 4, Pos 35).

Long-term deprivation, which is sometimes created by the application of unequal laws for men, can keep them away from active social participation at the national level and create a sense of insignificance.

These narratives and theories, all together, create an image of discriminations hidden in laws against men. Laws related to division of property, *Mehrieh*, *Tamkin*, and military service are all examples of the complexity of relationships between law, society, and gender. This complexity has influenced not only the feeling of justice among men but has fueled a type of cycle of psychological violence and social dissatisfaction as well. To resolve these discriminations, the need for rethinking laws, including balanced views, and removing existing gaps is felt.

In summary, existing legal laws in Iran, especially in the sphere of family, have been designed or implemented in such a way that they confront many men with numerous psychological, financial, and social pressures. These discriminations not only reduce the possibility of reconstructing relationships and mutual trust between couples but confront men in many cases with the feeling of victimisation before the law and society. Existing legal and executive conditions often place men under financial pressures resulting from *Mehrieh*, assets, income, and other legal obligations, while women's rights receive attention from society and courts in a more prominent form. This situation can create a cycle of psychological and social violences in family interactions which reflects systematic discrimination against men.

5.7.13. Society and Judicial System's Disbelief in Gender Equality and its Consequences

In analysing the legal contexts of 'Society and Judicial System's Disbelief in Gender Equality' in the emergence of violence against men, one must point to institutionalised social structures that shape criteria of social justice via gendered images of judicial justice. Experiences raised by interviewees show well that this disbelief in gender equality not only ignores men's rights as a vulnerable stratum but lays the groundwork for a type of structural and institutional violence against them.

5.7.14. Unfair and One-Sided Obligations in Family Laws

One of the prominent signs of this dual attitude can be observed in the concept of unfair and one-sided obligations in family laws. Hosseinzadeh, in part of his talk, explicitly points to this legal inequality:

'[Judges] how do they give all these verdicts? How do they now say 'compulsory Hijab'? Why don't they say 'compulsory Mehrieh'? Sir, are you not human? Anyone who complained higher than this [amount]...' (Interview No. 35, Pos 340).

This sentence is not just a simple critique of a specific policy or law but a narrative of men's deep feeling regarding the disproportion of existing laws with real values of justice. From his view, laws like *Mehrieh*, instead of being designed on the axis of equality and fairness, have placed a heavy burden on men's shoulders and transformed into a tool for control and unfair exploitation of them. Such laws not only cause a reduction in men's trust in the judicial system but lead to the creation of feelings of anger, frustration, and victimisation. Gender rights theories also point to this issue that when legal systems are designed in a way that reproduces structural inequality, the feeling of discrimination and psychological violence is reinforced in individuals (Connell, 2005).

5.7.15. Unbalanced Judicial View on the Concept of Rape and Men's Defence

Alongside this issue, one of the more complex dimensions of this legal inequality lies in the story of molestation and rape. Nour-Mohammadi, in expressing his experience, points to one of the dimensions of the unbalanced judicial view on the concept of rape:

'I don't like a lady, she doesn't like me either, and she is desperately looking to, for example, destroy my reputation and honour. Let's give a simple example: I and that lady want to go up in the elevator. That lady inside the elevator screams that 'This gentleman touched me.' It has happened to everyone. You can't defend it at all. It is not defensible at all. Meaning the first violence that in my opinion exists in society against men is that in the field of molestation and rape, the view is not equal. Rape is always defined for the man. Exactly defined for the man; they send the man to prison, I don't know what-what. You cannot prove it. The lady [claims] with four tears and so on it happened; this is one of the cases.' (Interview No. 48, Pos 24-25).

This description shows that the judicial system, in critical moments, defines men from the beginning as the agent of violence and does not recognise their victimhood. Such a view, wherein the presumption of the man's guilt is

institutionalised, transforms into one of the prominent manifestations of legal and organised violence against men.

Gender justice theories also confirm that the dominance of gender stereotypes over the legal system causes a deep gap in the realisation of true justice. The view that always sees the man as the rapist or agent of violence stems from historical and cultural assumptions that have defined women due to the traditional position of victim in power relations (Butler, 1990). These assumptions, without considering individual characteristics or specific situations, continue to reinforce the past symbolic order. The result of such conditions is that the legal system, instead of being a fair shelter for all individuals, transforms into a discriminatory reference causing the weakening of the social position of some individuals (here, men).

On the other hand, Nour-Mohammadi's narrative shows that men's ability and facilities to prove their innocence in fields such as accusations of molestation or rape are very limited. He points out:

'It is not defensible at all... You cannot prove it.' (Interview No. 48, Pos 24-25).

These sentences introduce a judicial system that effectively deprives men of the right to full defence, and this is itself a type of psychological and institutional violence. Considering concepts of Systematic Pathology raised in legal theories, it can be said that when a system places unequal assumptions as the basis of its decisions, in addition to reducing the feeling of justice in society, it fuels the increase of hidden or overt violences against specific groups, including men (Gilligan, 2001).

What is ultimately obtained from these narratives and analyses is an image of a socio-judicial system which, by not believing in gender equality, helps reproduce and reinforce violence against men. In this system, stereotypical laws and imaginings such as accusation of rape without possibility of effective defence, the heavy weight of financial obligations in marriage, and predetermined notions regarding men's guilt all lead to the intensification of structural violence against them. This violence is not of the physical type, but lies more in the realm of social and legal oppression, where trust in the judicial system is ruthlessly destroyed.

5.7.16. Incorrect Implementation of Law by Enforcers

In analysing the framework of legal contexts, specifically Police Abuse of Law in connection with offenders and criminals, it can be shown how the abuse of legal power in the police system causes the emergence of violence or the intensification of the cycle of crises. Experiences referred to in this section reveal bitter realities that highlight systematic or behavioural deviations beyond the supervisory and legal role of the police.

In an example of existing quotes, a person points to police abuse of legal power and describes the manner of invalid arrangement of crime evidence. He says:

'The officer himself was the drug liaison; he would go somewhere where he would extract a kilo of 'crime' [drugs], saying 'The guy is [to be] executed anyway; whether I put one gram or put a kilo...' They worked with me for up to three years. After three years, with the 'crime' [drugs] he himself had given me, he caught me with 40 grams of it. I went to prison, was in prison for 5 years and 9 months. They beat me so much so that, for example, I would confess to [implicate] that officer; now the officer told his buddy 'I caught him, I gave him the stuff myself...' (Interview No. 24, Pos 116).

This narrative clearly shows how officers, instead of implementing justice, exploited individuals in the bureaucratic process of law and produced cyclical processes of dispossession of public trust, financial abuse, and deep violence. Here, the concept of the 'Polluted Function of Law' is raised, wherein the law is no longer just a means for ensuring social justice but has transformed into a tool at the disposal of power holders. From the perspective of Legal Sociology, this mechanism can tarnish trust in judicial mechanisms and render individuals vulnerable to feelings of passivity, insecurity, and entrapment in a violence-generating system.

Another quote illuminates dimensions of this abuse, where violence is portrayed as a legitimate control tool.

'Sometimes these kinds of violences are necessary... I declared martial law... it caused that [disturbance] to be completely extinguished...' (Interview No. 95, Pos 73).

This narrative focuses on the legitimacy-seeking view attributed to violence by legal agents in many systems. From the perspective of Max Weber's Social Action Theory (1922), legitimate power gives validity to legal violence when it

serves social order; but the abuse of this very validity sometimes leads to the distortion of the nature of law and creating unnecessary tensions, creating violent and repressive conditions in confronting people.

These cycles of legal abuse, some of which have transformed not only into legal deviation but into structural corruption, are recounted extensively by Faraz Mahboubi:

'Those same kids who used to come into the security [forces]... maybe some of them know the limitations...' (Interview No. 36, Pos 294).

This quote indicates a type of process of imposing violence on individuals not for corrective goals but with a view to producing an irregular disciplining performed without deterrent supervision. The socialisation of violence in such systems casts a shadow over the role of agents and legislative structures. On the other hand, examining the view of the military colonel also indicates a procedure wherein emphasis on individuals' limited readiness to deal with crisis has ended in the legal structure's addiction to violence. He says:

'He experiences violence because at that time... old issues... he has been hit so much it has become normal...' (Interview No. 95, Pos 65).

This normalisation of violence, carried out by agents and social intervention structures, is directly related to the Theory of Trauma Repetition in social psychology. A cycle that causes limitation in social trust-building.

Numerous scientific theories also illuminate this process; including research by Faris and Cross (2015) regarding the breaking of social trust following violent legal actions. Based on these findings, increased police abuse of legal mechanisms instead of producing security leads to the induction of a sense of inequality and social injustice and ultimately the intensification of systematic violence.

In this midst, another factor is also seen in the analysis of this legal context: Arbitrary Justice.

'They do these things themselves. A state where the judge or court should... from their own view, they are performing justice...' (Interview No. 8, Pos 98).

This statement reveals a structure in the judicial and police system wherein justice has exited the path of law and is implemented arbitrarily. From the perspective of Critical Theory, the lack of precise supervision and

vulnerability of legal structures can provide serious grounds for deviations of justice and accelerate the reproduction of violence at various social levels.

Thus, existing narratives of victims' experiences and police intervention factors show how abuse of law can lead to violence; violence that has taken root not only between individuals but in social and legal structures and causes a cycle of pressures, isolation, and social mistrust.

In the heart of narratives related to violence against men, a deeper and more systematic issue is also visible. Vulnerability and Corruption in the Judicial System, which itself transforms into a substrate for violating men's rights and laying the groundwork for violence against them. This issue is not just a defect in administering justice but a facilitating factor for legal and financial abuses that place men in a position of weakness and lack of support.

Mr. Hosseinzadeh says in this regard:

'Its inspection [department] knew this lady has a deviation problem and is giving money too; I think now they are presenting her with a huge wealth... she is after wealth to reach her interests and I don't know, apparently she had done such a thing with several people because they were very professional...' (Interview No. 35, Pos 102).

These statements implicitly point to the existence of a network of corruption wherein judicial inspectors, with knowledge of deviations and abuses, close their eyes to the truth and continue these violations in exchange for receiving bribes. This corruption not only leads justice to the slaughterhouse but tarnishes public trust in the judicial system.

This mistrust increases when the victimised individual feels the judicial system not only does not support him but is powerless against legal abuses. Mr. Hosseinzadeh continues:

'Look, if you had compromised a bit... well, there was so much [corruption]... my mother was defenceless, they brought a co-wife upon her head very easily in this corrupt judicial system where no murderer is found at all; if a murderer is found too, ultimately it says 'Sir, it was a woman, half Diyeh [blood money], 'Sir, how much was your Mehrieh?' so-and-so, 'Mehrieh has gone up this much, this has gone down this much,' leave it, it goes... ten percent of your Mehrieh drops, you have to extract ninety percent of Mehrieh. We are in this situation.' (Interview No. 35, Pos 102).

These words present a painful image of an inefficient and corrupt judicial system wherein men easily become victims of legal and financial abuses. This situation is especially visible in cases related to *Mehrieh* and divorce, where men are forced to pay exorbitant costs due to unfair laws and corrupt procedures, leading their lives to ruin.

It seems this situation is rooted in wrong policies and decisions adopted over years. Mr. Hosseinzadeh says in this regard:

'From that time it became a fashion and girls did business through this way, and the government was coordinated with all these issues, and it started from the time of Yazdi who was a corrupt man and not only himself [but] had made all judges corrupt. I come exactly there so you know I know the whole judicial system.'

(Interview No. 35, Pos 102).

These statements show that corruption in the judicial system is not a new phenomenon but has deep roots in the country's history and politics. It seems some officials and authorities, instead of fighting corruption, have had a hand in it themselves, thereby transforming the judicial system into a tool for abuse and violation of people's rights.

Theories related to Systematic Corruption state that corruption becomes a serious dilemma when it takes root in a society's structures and institutions and transforms into a norm (Klitgaard, 1988). In such conditions, fighting corruption becomes very difficult because corrupt individuals use their power and influence to maintain their interests and prevent the disclosure of their violations.

In summary, it can be said that the vulnerability of the judicial inspection system and the existence of corruption in it is one of the most important legal contexts for the emergence of violence against men. This corruption not only causes the violation of men's rights but tarnishes public trust in the judicial system and thus provides the ground for further abuses. To confront this dilemma, fundamental reforms in the judicial system must be carried out and corruption must be dealt with decisively.

5.7.17. The Law's Inadequate Understanding of Violence

In analysing the legal contexts of violence against men, the presented narrative clearly indicates that the dominant understanding of the concept of violence in civil, penal, and legal laws has often been limited to its physical aspects, and bodily casualties have been the main basis for defining and regulating laws.

This limitation in the legal understanding of violence implicitly dims or ignores the voice of victims of non-physical violences, including male victims. Such an approach not only reflects the historical patriarchal structure wherein men's physical power was considered a prominent factor but reinforces stereotypes that limit violence solely to physical acts and victims mainly to women.

As Mehdi Momeni has clarified:

'Partly due to the man's physical and bodily power, this application of violence has been raised more in its physical forms, seen more, and spoken of more in that domain, and civil and legal and penal laws and these things have been worked on in this domain and spoken of more on this section. It seems when the law speaks of violence, mostly assault and battery (Zarb-o-Shatm) and injury and bodily and physical casualties come to the reader's mind and enter [the discourse]. In this view and based on this perception, generally men and the male gender is the applier of more violence against the female gender.' (Interview No. 38, Pos 4).

This view not only shows that the existing legal framework is incapable of understanding the multi-layered nature of violence but seems to be unconsciously involved in reproducing gender stereotypes; stereotypes that have highlighted men's violence only in the role of 'aggressor.'

From a theoretical perspective, this limitation in legal understanding links to social theories related to power inequality between man and woman. Based on Goffman's view (1977), social roles and gender expectations can shape social and legal structures and influence the interpretation of violence. Focusing on physical violence is a reflection of a gender attitude that associates men with physical characteristics and physical power, and women with vulnerability and victimhood. In such a framework, psychological, economic, or legal violence against men is not visible; because intangible aspects of violence have received less attention from legislators.

This limited legal understanding, on one hand, helps reinforce gender inequalities and on the other, deprives victims who do not fit within the framework of this definition, such as men subjected to violence, of legal support. From the perspective of Berger and Luckmann's Theory of the 'Social Construction of Reality' (1966), laws and regulations are the product of reflecting cultural and social realities which over time have been stabilised as part of the legal structure. Therefore, the dominance of the concept of physical violence in laws can be considered the product of the socialisation of cultural

beliefs that have stabilised stereotypical views regarding the gender role of man (as aggressor) and woman (as victim).

On the other hand, the law's inclination towards physical violence has deep consequences for the legal structure; because a mass of psychological, economic, emotional, or psychiatric violences that men experience as victims do not fit in the legal framework or are not recognised. More precisely, when speaking of violence against women, a wider range of violence types, in addition to physical violence, receives attention. This is while laws regarding men have specifically examined only physical violence. Humanistic theories, such as Carl Rogers' view (1951), emphasise the importance of liberation from psychological, legal, and environmental pressures; it is interesting that these pressures in the case of victimised men are often hidden behind the image of their physical power and remain intangible.

In total, 'The Law's Inadequate Understanding of Violence' is a reflection of limitations that have caused inattention to the wide spectrum of violence against men. Such a narrative not only narrows the space for identifying the experiences of victimised men but reproduces the dominant gender culture which attributes violence to a masculine matter and power to men. This legal limitation necessitates a fundamental revision in the definition of violence and related legal frameworks so that, with attention to the broader experience of violence victims, including men, justice can be realised in the true sense.

5.8. Political Contexts

Insufficient human resources, the lack of congruence (*Sonkhiyyat*) between the family system and the patriarchal political system, the ignoring of violence against men in dominant political discourses, and the absence of civil institutions are among the categories related to the political contexts of violence against men addressed in this research.

5.8.1. Pressures Resulting from Disproportionate Workload, Lack of Personnel, and Insufficient Benefits

Pressures resulting from the disproportionate volume of work, lack of personnel, and insufficient benefits lay the groundwork for the emergence of violence against men, especially in the law enforcement and military forces. This subject is clearly evident in the statements of a Narcotics Police employee:

'We ourselves, meaning we are delinquents if we want not to lie to you, because of this word you say... that volume and pressure of work that is coming upon personnel... on one hand, their retirement output is in place [stagnant/limited], on the other, their output [salary] is low. Personnel whom, for example, as the saying goes—I'll simplify this—on the first day they told us 'Sir, this is your desk, this is your work, this is your salary.' Now I look, the next year they said 'This has been added to it too.' Now I look at eight or nine jobs where each one demands a [separate] staff member to manage it, because of the shortage and deficiency of personnel, and we see that the benefits they are giving in return have become less...' (Interview No. 55, Pos 14).

These statements indicate that increasing the volume of work and responsibilities without a proportionate increase in benefits and facilities can lead to feelings of exploitation and burnout among forces. This situation, in turn, can provide the grounds for the emergence of violent behaviours. From the perspective of Organisational Justice Theories, this inequality in receipt [of benefits] and payment can reinforce the feeling of injustice and discrimination in individuals, which can lead to negative behaviours, including violence (Adams, 1965).

Furthermore, external pressures resulting from the expectations of society and judicial apparatuses also weigh heavily on law enforcement and military forces. These pressures, especially in conditions of lack of personnel and facilities, can lead to increased stress and tension among forces. The Narcotics Police officer continues:

'Even regarding that file you take responsibility for, and that pressure that the inside [internal hierarchy] is bringing on you, the judicial apparatus is bringing on you, and the corresponding rank is bringing on you. Meaning in the county now, God forbid a case... I say here two or three cars have their batteries stolen; the city's Friday Prayer Imam exerts pressure, the city Governor exerts pressure, the Mayor exerts pressure on the Law Enforcement Force. Within the Law Enforcement Force itself, the higher rank exerts pressure on his county commander that 'What [is this], Sir? Society has become unsafe, do this work...' (Interview No. 55, Pos 14).

These pressures, accompanied by a lack of facilities and equipment, can place forces in a position where they are unable to perform their duties desirably, which can lead to feelings of inefficiency and anger.

Also, the 'Disproportion of Law Enforcement Force Volume with Demographic and Cultural Conditions of Society' fuels existing problems. According to Kazemi, from the Narcotics personnel:

'One of the biggest problems why violences have increased... whether I speak against myself at all, I have no business with other guilds... the biggest problem is the law that has been enacted. The law is floating; the law must have flexibility. A law was enacted, assume, for Iran's 35-million population; this law has not been reformed, this law is still the same one. Meaning Qarchak county, one day you set [allocations] for Qarchak county when its population was 60,000; now Qarchak's density is about 400,000 people...' (Interview No. 55, Pos 64).

These statements show that existing laws and regulations are not proportionate to the current conditions of society and cannot effectively respond to society's security and disciplinary needs. This disharmony can lead to an increase in crimes and violences and, consequently, exert more pressure on law enforcement and military forces.

Finally, a Law Enforcement Colonel offers solutions for reducing violence among forces:

'Look, if I were in the place of FARAJA [Law Enforcement Command] officials, I would definitely put in education on child-rearing and family upbringing; I would definitely reduce the working hours of forces. Meaning if he wants them to patrol for eight hours, patrol for 6 hours; these two hours, two hours a week, I would put solely at the exclusive disposal of the family. I would definitely provide programs for their families. It must be; if it is costly, let it be, it's no defect. These are not costs, these are future capitals. Really, forces need peace after service; there is work every day, they must have this peace. We must go with wife and child once a month, once every two months, to entertainments, to restaurants, to places where they really have a good time, so that we guide this, send [discharge] it. If it is not there, these violences get absorbed, absorbed, absorbed, absorbed; it itself becomes a source of violence. And it is transferred to society at all...' (Interview No. 99, Pos 24).

These solutions include improving working conditions, increasing education related to family and child-rearing, and providing recreational and rest opportunities for forces. It seems that attention to these factors can help reduce stress and burnout among forces and, consequently, prevent the emergence of violent behaviours.

Furthermore, the patriarchal political system ruling the Islamic Republic of Iran clearly places special emphasis on maintaining the traditional family structure, a structure wherein the man plays the role of head and breadwinner and the woman the role of caregiver. This foundation is clearly visible not only in the country's macro social and cultural policies but in upstream documents and the ideological bases of the system. Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, a sociologist, explains in this field:

'The Islamic Republic seems to like the traditional family based on the breadwinner man and caregiver woman; actually, it is really doing this work. In the article I worked on in my dissertation, this was it: 'Family Policy in Iran.' The collection of policies I extracted... exactly wants to preserve this family. Because that traditional and patriarchal family is palatable to the traditional and patriarchal sovereignty which at its end is Guardianship-oriented (Velayat-madar). Look, that Guardianship-orientation where the Supreme Leader (Vali-ye Faghih) is at the top of the political hierarchy... when this is reproduced, your family too should be a family where its head is the man who has Guardianship (Velayat) over wife and child.' (Interview No. 27, Pos 38).

This overt policy of governance in preserving the traditional family system based on patriarchy seems to be a direct response to political needs for stabilizing and continuing the structure of domination in society. The concept of 'Guardianship' (*Velayat*) here is not only a symbol of patriarchy in the family but an extensive political model that reproduces the vertical domination of sovereignty in the social substrate. In fact, the connection between the man's domination in the family and the Supreme Leader's sovereignty over society clearly displays a network of power relations starting from the smallest social unit, the family, and expanding to the highest political level. According to Dr. Mousavi:

'...the patriarchal family, in this structure, its head is the man who has Guardianship over wife and child; then it goes to the Leadership who has Guardianship over his subjects (Ra'iyat), over his people.' (Interview No. 27, Pos 38).

From a theoretical view, this lack of congruence between the traditional family structure and socio-modern realities existing in Iranian society can be analysed with a look at social theories, especially Hegemony and Social Reproduction Theories. Gramsci's Theory of 'Hegemony' (1971) explains how the dominant

power tries to maintain and reproduce its domination through cultural and social structures. Here, the traditional patriarchal family plays the role of a key tool, because by providing a suitable cultural substrate for creating domination in family relationships, the overall structure of sovereignty also gains greater legitimacy. Gramsci points out that reproducing power requires adaptation to social structures that have been stabilized over time and appear in a natural form.

However, this adaptation between sovereignty and the traditional family has faced serious challenges. Today's Iranian society, especially among the young generation, has entered the modern era with expectations and needs completely different from the past. This lack of congruence between traditional structures supported by the political system and changing social structures directly leads to various crises, including the emergence of violence against men. Men in such a system must bear the heavy burden of cultural-traditional expectations as well as the requirements of modernity, but the country's macro legal and social policies still try to define a stereotypical role for them; a role that not only does not fit with the realities of modern life but imposes doubled psychological and social pressures on individuals.

Dr. Mousavi adds:

'You say the burden is on men's shoulders; well, that legal system placed this burden which is not yet alert [aware] that the patriarchal and traditional family model no longer answers [works] in this modern society.' (Interview No. 27, Pos 38).

This clear pressure on men in this system leads to crises such as social isolation, violence in family relationships, and reduction of their self-confidence. In general, men live in a society that on one hand offers them new freedoms and roles, but on the other, due to severe legal and cultural surveillance, still expects them to remain in their traditional roles.

Structuralist Theory, especially Bourdieu's theory (1977), has also addressed this subject that how social and cultural structures oblige the individual to perform specific roles which are often in conflict with the individual's external and internal conditions. In this field, the patriarchal structure of the family not only creates identity crisis and psychological pressure for men but is effective in reproducing stereotypes that define violence as a tool for maintaining power.

This cycle of reproducing the patriarchal family in the patriarchal political system is undoubtedly one of the main contexts for the emergence of violence against men. Men in such a structure not only must meet expectations the system has of them but play roles under the heavy pressures of this system themselves. Ultimately, these pressures, in addition to individual and family violence, fuel a broader structural violence observable in various dimensions of men's social and political life.

Also, ignoring violence against men in dominant political discourses is a context influential in the emergence of violence against men. Violence against men in Iranian society has not only not received sufficient attention behaviourally and psychologically, but has been pushed to the margins in social discourse and gender movements as well. One of the main obstacles preventing the construction of this issue as a serious social dilemma is the structured ignoring and even indirect legitimization of violence against men by some social, cultural currents and macro policies. This subject is reflected both in the speech of researchers and experts and is evident in methods of social reaction towards cases of encountering violence. Hassan Espania refers very explicitly in this field to the type of social view towards violence against men, which not only lacks the intensity of reactions towards violence against women but has transformed into a tool for humour and mockery:

'Unfortunately, I see in our society an event happens against a woman, a man has committed it, the whole society shows reaction to it... but again and again I have seen this a lot, when the reverse event happens, this becomes a source of jokes in our society, especially [among] women... when such an event happens, for example some time ago news came that a woman killed her husband and cooked him. And [if you] come read the comments underneath it... everyone applauded for her that 'Bravo, she did well, it was his right, lion-woman, more power to her'...' (Interview No. 4, Pos 50).

This type of social view is rooted in a type of gender discourse that has taken shape excessively under the influence of feminist movements. In the belief of Alireza Moradi, the feminist movement, by introducing its own specific literature which did not have much congruence with Iranian society, has in many cases distanced itself from an impartial view of the issue of gender violence. He explains:

'A large part of it I think relates to this feminist literature which didn't have much congruence with Iranian society...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 69).

On the other hand, feminist movements that have striven for women's rights throughout history have indirectly caused violence against men not to receive attention and sometimes even find implicit legitimacy. Allah-Reza, a jurist, explains this issue thus:

'That movement caused feminist movements and the women's movement to be established throughout history, so to speak, and caused violence to happen against men from this side.' (Interview No. 33, Pos 58).

Ignoring violence against men, however, is not limited to the discursive level; rather, it has been neglected at the political level as well. Mehdi Momeni points to this subject regarding how politicians and social custodians, with a stereotypical view of men, have considered them by default more aggressive and agents of violence, whereas this issue can be one of the factors hiding the subject of violence against men:

'It seems society and the general political custodians in the field of health and culture and economy etc. have accepted that the male gender is a more aggressive gender and applies more violence against women.' (Interview No. 38, Pos 7).

Dominant stereotypical views in the political and social arena have limited the ability of victims of violence to be seen. According to Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, excessive focus on the role of women as victims of violence has in turn led to the fading of attention to men who themselves have been victims of violence:

'I have a feminine and feminist view and my discussion is the discussion of feminine rights, so I always focused on the discussion of violence against women as victims and not as those who committed violence.' (Interview No. 27, Pos 4).

Perhaps one of the most important dimensions of these discourses is the distorted view of the concept of gender equality. Ali Nour-Mohammadi offers a critical view in this regard and believes some feminist movements, by defining gender equality incorrectly and sometimes unrealistically, have somehow negatively influenced the violent dimensions of gender interactions:

'Equality exists... meaning look, some are looking for an equality that really exists, it is there, but it is a futile war... meaning feminism itself is violence against women. Feminist discourse itself.' (Interview No. 48, Pos 247-252).

To describe this ignoring at the analytical level, one can point to theories related to Discourse Structure and Group Domination in society. Foucault's Theory (1977) regarding power and social reproduction shows how dominant discourses in social spaces can highlight specific subjects and drive other subjects to the margins. Here, feminist discourse has directly highlighted the subject of violence against women as the centre of attention and simultaneously removed the subject of violence against men from social priorities.

Another factor that must be considered is the issue of the gendered gaze on victims of violence. Psychological theories such as Hoffman's views (2000) regarding social empathy show that the social view of violence is influenced by the image society has of victims. Violence against women, due to the mental image that considers the victim more vulnerable and defenceless, receives more attention than violence against men. For this reason, violence against men is often either not seen or met with jokes and mockery, as Hassan Espania explains well.

Ignoring violence against men, whether in social discourse or in macro policies, in addition to the emergence of psychological and social injuries for men, leads to the consolidation of stereotypical gender views and the creation of a continuous cycle of injustice which must be examined as a serious social problem.

Studying the issue of violence against men within the Grounded Theory framework shows that one of the prominent political contexts for the formation of this violence is the 'Absence of Civil Institutions.' This context, not only interacting with social and political structures but due to organised weakness in supporting men and providing preventive services, opens a window towards intensifying violence, vulnerability, or their isolation.

The explicit narrative of Ms. Zahra Jiriyae, a clinical psychologist, describes well the existing crisis regarding the role and performance of civil institutions and factors involved in their failure. She says:

'There is no budget, they don't work either when there is no budget; how should I, the NGO, work? Then he wants to consult; backing the consultation he needs the support of a government organ. For simple correspondence that at least wants the guy to cut from work hours, [for the employer] to allow that boy, that man to sit for a talk... most factories don't go under this burden [accept this], they say

'Close down a factory so people sit and get educated?' (Interview No. 57, Pos 48).

This quote indicates the existence of a vicious cycle where insufficient budget and limited support for non-governmental institutions cause their inability to provide services. This inability becomes especially more tangible when civil institutions themselves need organised government support to continue activity.

From a theoretical perspective, thoughts related to the role of civil institutions in social development and reducing psychological and social pressures point to improving interpersonal interactions and reducing social pathologies. One of the important aspects of these theories is the impact of institutional structures on empowering individuals. For example, Amartya Sen's view (2001) regarding the concept of 'Human Capabilities' shows that individuals can maintain their rights and reduce violent behaviours only in conditions where social and organised tools exist to support them. In the absence of these tools, those exposed to social injuries—including men—not only find the path to confronting violence limited but are forcibly trapped in a cycle of endurance or unhealthy adaptation.

As Ms. Jiriyaee's narrative shows, non-governmental organisations seeking to work in these fields face numerous obstacles. On one hand, the lack of sufficient budget and on the other, the need for government organisation support disrupts the service provision process. Furthermore, the lack of effective presence of civil institutions, such as NGOs, especially in working and industrial environments, places men in vulnerable positions where even the opportunity to be heard or ask for help is stripped from them. As she points out:

'Most factories don't go under this burden, they say 'Close down a factory so people sit and get educated?' (Interview No. 57, Pos 48).

This opposition is a sign of strict structures that not only consider education and awareness valueless but, by ignoring the social effects of these negligences, reinforce a ruthless system of economic needs and ignoring human issues.

New Institutionalism Theory, proposed by North (1990), explains well this connection between institutional weakness and increased social pathologies. Based on this theory, civil institutions act as regulatory structures that influence and limit individuals' behaviours, activities, and lifestyle. In the

absence of these structures, individuals not only receive less support but even in the face of inequalities or oppression, remain in silence. The concept of 'Silent Non-Compliance' (or passive resistance) in social theories also emphasises this very point that men, in the face of violence, for various reasons including lack of legal or cultural support, turn to passive behaviours which, instead of breaking the cycle of violence, make it more sustainable.

In general, the absence of civil institutions leads not only to reduced trust of men and women in social interactions and problem-solving but reduces the deterrence power against violence and, in contrast, reinforces structural violence. Ms. Jiriyae's narrative shows the deep weakness in utilising communicative and organised capacity, while scientific theories also confirm that only by strengthening these capacities can the cycle of violence against men be reduced.

5.8.2. Policy-Making Contexts

The absence of a national statistical and research system regarding violence against men, organisational obstacles in conducting research related to violence against men, and problems of reporting and statistics are among the most important subjects of the policy-making domain in this field, which are addressed in the following using collected data.

The analysis of the 'Absence of a National Statistical and Research System regarding Violence Against Men' within the Grounded Theory framework indicates one of the most fundamental factors in the non-formation or lack of social transparency around the issue of violence against men in Iranian society. This statistical absence not only causes general neglect of injuries inflicted on this group but existing information gaps help the continuation of violence against men. The lack of such a system reduces the possibility of scientific, legal, and effective policy examination and limits the accountability of institutions in facing this social crisis.

Dr. Azin, a social medicine specialist, says regarding existing challenges in gathering data and social surveys:

'Perhaps one of the reasons they don't want the survey to be done is that these come out with numbers and figures, and they can no longer think that in society our youth always sit at home reading 'Light Kuwait' [religious texts/Quran] so they might marry, and we have no free sexual relationships. And we show them numbers and figures that what you think — conforming to what they thought 60–

70 years ago in America, absolute 'be good kids, have no sexual behaviour, exercise restraint until marriage' — these are not for today's society, neither East nor West nor this very Islamic Republic of Iran.' (Interview No. 3, Pos 17).

This narrative shows how society resists conducting statistical studies around sensitive social issues. This resistance in countries with similar cultural structures indicates a dominant tendency to hide issues that do not align with existing social norms. This subject also expresses the political and cultural dimension of the lack of a statistical system in Iranian society which prevents the revelation of gender-based violences.

Similarly, Dr. Marghati, pointing to sexual abuses against boys in Iranian society, states:

'In a society like our society, out of a hundred boys, 16 of them are subjected to sexual abuse and MOLESTATION. Whereas it seems that girls should be more because girls are quiet and... My point is that this substrate of sexual violences and abuses and these things is designed from that very childhood.' (Interview No. 9, Pos 19).

This narrative clearly emphasises that violence against men is not only real and observable but occurs in substrates that are severely silent and hidden from public view. In such conditions where precise statistical data do not exist, any effort for scientific recognition of violence against men reaches a dead end. Many cases, such as sexual abuse against boys, in the absence of this very research system, remain only in the form of scattered experiences and are not recognised at the social level.

Dr. Moradi, a sociologist, continuing the discussion based on existing data from official institutions, raises the status of male victims of violence:

'In society, in the course of these very official statistics of security and law enforcement institutions and the Judiciary and Forensic Medicine, we see that those who have perished as a result of violence are almost men, two times [more than] women. But in indicators that are confirmed, this indicator is made so beautifully that society is severely misogynistic, anti-woman, society is in favour of men. But in the real space, the case I am seeing myself at least in the field of murders and unnatural deaths, life expectancy and many other things, there are indicators that show in the real space men are more under violence in society.' (Interview No. 3, Pos 16).

Stating these data by Dr. Moradi clearly shows the mismatch between official statistics and the real situation of violence against men. The absence of a parallel and transparent statistical system has caused these indicators to be adapted to the dominant normative structures of society, and layers of violence against men to be placed under shadow and cover.

What highlights this lack more is the unwillingness of governmental and scientific institutions to study issues related to violence against men. Dr. Azin says in this regard:

'We now, for several years, despite striving ourselves for the Ministry of Interior to accept that we have a scientific survey of sexual life... but no governmental and university system has a concern for this story, and perhaps they don't mind 'good news is no news' [ignorance is bliss].' (Interview No. 3, Pos 7).

This view well shows the lack of support from formal structures for the scientific processing of violence against men. Such a situation undoubtedly makes the path of recognising and analysing this social problem very difficult.

On the other hand, the country's statistical and research system is so inefficient that even existing data may not be stated precisely. Mehdi Javadi, a psychologist, speaks of statistical censorship:

'Welfare [Organization] itself published this statistic that 27 percent of Iranian people suffer from mild mental disorders... [but] Welfare was attacked that 'you had no permission to publish such a statistic.'' (Interview No. 82, Pos 82).

This narrative is an important warning regarding organised censorship of statistics existing in society which can help clarify dimensions of various types of violence. This censorship is seen even in broader social dimensions, especially in issues like violence against men. When this story is accompanied by restrictive legal structures, the possibility of scientific progress and developing legal strategies is destroyed.

In a macro view, the lack of a national statistical and research system in the field of violence against men means not only the absence of data but the absence of a critical, scientific, and analytical view towards this issue. Such a lack leads to structural misunderstanding of gender-based violence and diverts policy focus towards other issues. Social theories like Bourdieu's theories (1997), which point to social structures as belief-shaping systems, explain this subject that in such conditions, dominant social powers

deliberately push macro data of violence against men to the margins and guide their priorities towards induced ideals related to social desires.

This analysis shows that the country's statistical and research system in the field of violence against men reflects not only the absence of data; rather, it is a factor helping the reproduction of gender inequalities and the denial of the issue of violence against men. For this reason, developing this system is not only a research need but a social necessity to reduce gender-based violences.

As derived from Dr. Azin's narrative, it has played an important role in keeping this issue hidden and causes violence against men to be placed systematically in the shadow of inattention. Dr. Azin points out that:

'You must have an image of the existing situation; proof is that this 4-year plan, its tool is ready too, we are on the job and ISPA [Iranian Students Polling Agency] has come into the country to execute it in the country, but in the Ministry of Interior itself there are elements that hold the brake on the work...'
(Interview No. 3, Pos 7).

This statement shows that despite infrastructure being ready, internal obstacles in organisations have caused research related to this subject not to proceed or even to be completely stopped.

This type of resistance can be considered the result of mechanisms pointed to in Talcott Parsons' Theory of 'Structural Action' (1951). Parsons explains that organisations, like any other social system, tend to maintain dominant norms and values and prevent the entry of unexpected or challenging issues. In this framework, violence against men, as a subject that can lead to challenging the traditional image of gender and violence, likely has a secondary place among policymakers and for this reason faces resistance. This issue is particularly more prominent in societies that still define violence mostly in the form of violence against women.

In addition to Parsons' theory, Foucault's view (1980) regarding the mechanism of power and control can also help better understand this subject. According to this view, organisational institutions, including ministries, often by holding tools of power, prevent raising subjects that might disrupt the general order of power or contradict it. Violence against men, a subject challenging the traditional gender power structure, may face such resistance.

This organisational resistance operates in such a way that even ready research plans possessing infrastructure are not executed solely due to political factors and the existence of resistant elements in the body of

organisations. Inability to advance this research, in addition to depriving society of precise information regarding dimensions of violence against men, prevents scientific and practical dealing with this issue and perpetuates this cycle. As Dr. Azin's quote emphasises, the 'brake on the work' lies fundamentally in organisational structures and bodies of power, and until these cases are resolved, clarifying the dimensions of the issue will be impossible.

Finally, these organisational obstacles can be considered part of soft power and control currents which, as Foucault explains, operate hiddenly at various organisational levels so that some social issues are pushed to the margins or made to appear insignificant. Violence against men, by virtue of its challenging nature, is easily ignored in such a space.

The issue of 'Statistical Comparisons of Gender Violences' is one of the complex social realities directly influenced by the statistical registration and reporting system of government and sovereign institutions. This method of registration and reporting mainly highlights narratives that transform issues like violence against women into a social crisis, but simultaneously implicitly conceals or ignores violence against men. This reality is seen more than anything in the form of the invisibility of violence against men and its social construction, such that men in statistical systems are introduced only as agents of violence, and victims of social and family violences receive less attention.

Dr. Alireza Moradi, a sociologist and researcher, points in this connection to the phenomenon of statistical exaggeration in femicide and raises this exaggeration in contrast to the concealment of violences like patricide and husband-killing. He says:

'In my opinion, there has been exaggeration in this honour field. Look, let's come see statistics; for example, in our country, what is the rate of filicide (daughter-killing) annually? And compare that same thing with the rate of patricide; we see that the rate of patricide is several times the rate of daughter-killing. How do we want to define this? Why is there now a big question mark [over] husband-killing... I want to reach this too. That you pointed out even our rate of husband-killing is higher than the rate of wife-killing (zan-koshi), but why are statistics related to patricide and husband-killing never highlighted? Why does no one address them?' (Interview No. 42, Pos 12).

This analysis points not only to the issue of reduced attention to violence against men but shows at statistical levels that even when violence against men

takes acute and lethal forms, this reality is not seen in social and cultural narratives. Concealing this category of violences causes the process of social construction of violence to occur unequally between the two genders, and concepts related to being a victim of violence for men to be pushed to the margins.

Continuing, Dr. Moradi examines statistics of unnatural deaths resulting from violence against men compared to women. He states:

'We who monitor statistics in society, in the course of these very official statistics of security and law enforcement institutions and the Judiciary and Forensic Medicine, we see that those who have perished as a result of violence are almost men, two times [more than] women...' (Interview No. 42, Pos 15).

These data indicate significant statistical differences regarding violence, murder, and other social pathologies between women and men. Men, especially in cases like family fights, separations, prison for *Mehrieh*, or being victims in family murders, are influenced by violence more than women. But despite this reality, many of these cases are not only not recounted at the public level but even at the statistical level are not highlighted enough to be raised as an important issue. This situation clearly confirms that the system governing statistical registration is not only influenced by gender policies and attitudes but reproduces specific narratives regarding gender which cause the highlighting of one group and ignoring or marginalising the other.

Dr. Azin also points to another example of concealed violences against men: sexual violence and physical violence in the family. Pointing to the status of sexual violence against men in the world and especially in Iran, he states thus:

'Now that you are focusing more on men's issues... look, violence is not just sexual violence, and there can be all sorts of gender-dependent violences too. If we address sexual violences from the beginning, yes, it can be an abuse of sexual behaviour, which we will return to later. But these types of violences can be physical violences in the family...' (Interview No. 3, Pos 9).

He explains that the dominant conception of physical family violence is always in the form of men subjecting their women and children to violence, whereas physical violence upon men exists too and has remained an invisible subject. According to him, in clinics addressing violence and family issues, the ratio of physical violence by women against men has been reported at a significant

ratio (60 to 40 percent; *Note: Context implies significant prevalence, exact directionality in source text slightly ambiguous but implies women against men is significant*). This data emphasises the reality that violence against men is not limited only to sexual aspects or physical violence but is seen less in the legal, social, and cultural system, and fewer structural supports exist for victimised men.

In the theoretical framework, the analysis of these data can be linked to theories related to Social Constructionism and Gender Inequalities. The theory of Berger and Luckmann (1966) in the field of the 'Social Construction of Reality' points to this point that social reality is formed through narratives and language, and what is highlighted is accepted as truth in social processes and discourse-making. regarding violence against men, the absence of prominent narratives regarding phenomena like patricide, husband-killing, and other forms of sexual and physical violence against men shows how inequality in the field of discourse has hidden the social reality of these violence. On the other hand, gender theory in the framework of feminism shows that narratives and social attentions to the issue of violence are formed based on gender approaches and not as objective data. This situation has transferred gender inequality from the level of individuals to the level of institutions and organisations and reproduced unequal power relations between the two genders.

In general, statistical comparisons of gender violence express an incomplete narrative of reality wherein violence against men is ignored or pushed to the margins in the shadow of violence against women. This subject, in addition to its social impacts, clearly indicates the weakness of statistical and policy-making systems in realistically and equally representing social issues.

5.9. Chapter Summary and Conclusion: The Structural Ecology of Violence Against Men

The detailed examination of the contextual conditions in this chapter reveals that violence against the male gender in Iranian society is not an isolated occurrence arising solely from individual pathologies; rather, it is the inevitable product of a complex, multi-layered, and interconnected structural ecology. As demonstrated through the analysis of economic, socio-cultural, familial, religious, legal, and political contexts, men are situated within a

matrix of contradictory expectations and systemic limitations that collectively pave the ground for their victimisation.

The findings indicate a profound structural lag and role conflict: 1. Economically and Politically, men remain tethered to the traditional role of the 'sole provider' and 'authoritative protector,' yet they operate within an unstable economy, rampant inflation, and a job market that no longer supports this traditional mandate. 2. Legally and Religiously, statutes such as *Mehrieh* and custodial laws reinforce archaic patriarchal obligations (imposing heavy duties on men) while simultaneously adopting modern discourses of rights that strip men of traditional supports, leaving them legally defenceless in the face of family disputes. 3. Culturally and Socially, stereotypes such as 'The Hard Gender' and 'Men Don't Cry' enforce a culture of silence, compelling men to repress emotional pain and refrain from seeking help, thereby internalising violence or projecting it in self-destructive ways. 4. Institutionally, the absence of civil support structures, the gendered bias of media which renders male victimhood invisible, and the lack of statistical transparency create a policy blind spot, ensuring that violence against men remains unrecognised and unaddressed.

In the framework of Grounded Theory, these contexts constitute the 'bedrock' upon which the phenomenon occurs. They create a situation where men are subjected to structural violence (through laws and economy), symbolic violence (through media and culture), and interpersonal violence (within the family).

This chapter concludes that the emergence of violence against men is fundamentally a systemic issue. It arises from the friction between a transitioning society that demands modern equality on one hand, yet enforcing traditional masculine burdens on the other. Understanding this deep-seated contextual foundation is the prerequisite for analysing the Action Strategies (how men respond to this violence) and the Consequences (the long-term impact on men and society), which will be the subject of subsequent chapters.

6. Intervening Conditions in the Process of Violence

Introduction

Having meticulously dissected the broad, structural substrates—designated as Contextual Conditions—within which the phenomenon of violence against the male gender takes root in the preceding chapter, we now advance to a distinct level of analysis in this chapter: the examination of 'Intervening Conditions.' Within the paradigmatic model of Grounded Theory that guides this inquiry, intervening conditions refer to that category of dynamic factors and variables situated between contextual conditions and the action/reaction strategies of individuals. These conditions possess the capacity to moderate, facilitate, intensify, or even divert the trajectory of the phenomenon. If contextual conditions operate as the general 'environment' and 'texture' of the phenomenon, intervening conditions function as specific 'catalysts' or 'barriers' which, in a given situation, influence the manner in which violence is experienced and responded to.

The objective of this chapter is to identify and analyse those specific temporal and spatial situations that directly impact the intensity, direction, and quality of violence against the male gender or their reaction to this phenomenon. Data derived from in-depth interviews with participants demonstrated that violence is not a linear or predictable process. Two men with identical contextual conditions (for example, both under economic pressure and cultural stereotypes of masculinity) may manifest completely different reactions when facing a similar situation. What determines this difference is predominantly these very intervening conditions; factors such as immediate psychological state, the level of accessible social support, the presence or absence of children, or even a physical illness. These conditions render the dynamics of the phenomenon more complex and distance us from deterministic and stereotypical analyses.

The systematic analysis of data and the continuous comparison of participant narratives have guided us towards identifying a broad spectrum of intervening conditions, which, for analytical coherence, have been categorised into eight main categories: 1. Individual Conditions 2. Familial Conditions 3. Social Conditions 4. Economic Conditions 5. Organisational Conditions 6. Cultural Conditions 7. Religious Conditions 8. Legal and Political Conditions

Each of these categories is further divided into more precise sub-categories, which clearly reveal the depth and breadth of these factors.

In the first section, we shall address Individual Conditions as one of the most significant and recurrent categories. Here, we demonstrate how factors such as 'emotional deprivation,' 'high volume of psychological-spiritual pressure,' 'angry mentality,' 'low self-confidence,' and physical and sexual injuries reduce the individual's capacity to manage conflicts and render him more susceptible to experiencing or enacting violence. These factors act as filters through which the individual interprets the situation and responds to it.

Subsequently, other intervening conditions will be addressed in order. Familial conditions such as flawed relationships or the presence of children; social conditions such as discriminatory attitudes; and economic conditions such as job insecurity and inflation can all instantaneously alter the equations of power and reaction in a violent situation. Furthermore, cultural conditions (such as gender taboos), religious conditions (Shar'i limitations), and legal-political conditions (support vacuums) also act as forces that can limit or guide individuals' strategies.

By dissecting these conditions, this chapter presents a multidimensional and dynamic image of the process of violence against the male gender. Understanding these intervening factors is essential not only for the theoretical comprehension of the phenomenon but is of vital importance from a practical perspective as well; for many effective therapeutic, supportive, and policy interventions are focused precisely on managing and changing these very conditions. By identifying these leverage points, the path can be paved for designing more efficient preventive and interventional strategies.

6.1. Individual Intervening Conditions

In analysing the process of the formation of violence against men in Iranian society, intervening conditions play a pivotal role in directing, intensifying, or moderating this phenomenon. Emotional and psychological conditions such as emotional deprivation, increasing psychological pressures, angry mentality, low self-confidence, stress, anxiety, fear, inflexibility, and stubbornness create an uneven structure for men's healthy confrontation with life's challenges. These factors not only reduce individuals' capacity for emotion management and problem-solving but render them prone to the manifestation of emotional reactions, aggression, and the formation of violent patterns.

In this midst, physical conditions such as the tendency towards alcohol and drug consumption often act as temporary and inefficient solutions for escaping psychological pressures, but ultimately perpetuate the cycle of harm.

In the sexual dimension too, problems such as sexual disorders, parallel relationships (infidelity), and sexual ignorance not only fuel identity crises and individual dissatisfaction but indirectly provide the causes for intensifying conflicts and increasing the grounds for violence. These intervening conditions provide a suitable substrate for the radical and holistic analysis of the phenomenon of violence against men.

6.1.1. Emotional-Psychological Intervening Conditions

6.1.1.1. *Emotional Deprivation*

In the heart of the complexities of human relationships, emotional deprivation as an emotional-psychological intervening condition plays a determining role in the formation of violence against men. This deprivation, often rooted in early experiences and family relationships, places men in a situation where the feeling of lack of affection and emotional support makes them more vulnerable and paves the way for the emergence of hidden or overt violences. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, this intervening condition acts not only as a contextual factor but, in interaction with other conditions, reinforces a cycle of emotional frustrations which can lead to physical, psychological, or social violences against men. Imagine a man who has grown up from childhood in a family where his father, as a symbol of authority, could never establish healthy relationships;

'Subjectively/Visibly, I never saw anyone with whom [my father] was okay; meaning in the 25 years he was a police officer, he has 48 complaint files with different people, from the boss, colleague, and... he would fight with everyone. Because he was a traffic police officer too, at the intersection, for example, he would find a problem with someone, he would grab the guy and beat him. In short, I had a wrecked dad' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 5).

This narrative paints a vivid picture of a violent and isolated father who transfers emotional deprivation to the next generation, where the child, without receiving necessary emotional support, is placed in exposure to violences resulting from this lack. Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969) applies well here; Bowlby emphasises that the lack of secure emotional bonds in childhood drives individuals towards insecure attachment patterns, and this insecurity can manifest in adulthood in the form of violence against oneself or others, especially in men from whom society expects the repression of emotions.

This emotional deprivation sometimes continues in current family relationships as well, placing men in a position where they experience love and affection not as a right, but as an unattainable wish. For instance, a man who, despite deep love for his family, suffers from sarcasms and lack of affection, yet remains silent to maintain their happiness:

'From my dearest of dears, my family, instead of those taunts, I really liked them to show affection to me. I love them very much. Let them upset me, it's no problem, but I don't want to cause them to be offended by me for a moment. [When] the kids come, for example, they call them, say 'Your mother has come, your sister has come,' they get up and go with such zest and zeal and return with another zest and zeal. I say 'Oh God, why does no one come for me?' They come and say 'We are happy you are here, stay.' I don't take this happiness from them, it's no problem; at night when I sleep hungry, perhaps from sleeplessness I don't have sleep either, but I say despite the fact that, for example, they do these things... now that they are happy, I don't like to take this happiness from them' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 176).

This painful statement indicates how emotional deprivation drives men towards compulsory self-sacrifice, where they endure emotional violences against themselves to prevent losing even a particle of relationships. This phenomenon aligns with psychological perspectives such as Self-

Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which emphasises the need for emotional relatedness; when this need is not met, individuals may fall into a cycle of depression and violence, which in the case of men often appears in the form of social or familial violence against them, because society views them as 'strong' and offers less emotional support.

In romantic relationships too, emotional deprivation can intensify violence as an intervening condition, especially when men witness discrimination in the expression of affection. A woman describing the difference in her messages to her husband reveals the depth of this deprivation:

'Of course, I was like this with him because I saw [he sent] messages of 'My dear' and 'I love you' to that gentleman... for example, he would message me 'Hello, buy such-and-such meat and come,' and to him he would say 'My love, I opened my page for you,' and he would say these kinds of words to him [his partner]'
(Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 101).

This inequality in expressing affection places men in a position where they feel worthless, and this feeling can lead to psychological violence against them, such as infidelity or emotional rejection, which ultimately provides the cycle of violence. From the perspective of Grounded Theory, this intervening condition combines with contextual conditions such as gender expectations and drives men towards repressing emotions; this repression, according to Hegemonic Masculinity Theory (Connell, 2005), often leads to violence against men from themselves or others.

Sometimes this emotional deprivation is so deep that it drags individuals towards unhealthy and even dangerous relationships, where the search for affection comes at the price of psychological suffering. A narrative of a young woman who experienced unrequited love highlights this dimension:

'I am talking about Sophia. Sophie falls in love with a man who is their teacher, you know, she falls in love with her teacher. She has a fever for two or three years, gets sick, sleeps in a mental hospital for 18 months... she is in love with their teacher, and when does she get better? When she tells this subject to their teacher and sleeps with her teacher, do you understand?! Then the teacher tells her 'We slept together, this issue is finished, but I cannot marry you because I have a wife, have a child; whenever you wanted we can be together,' and that's it. This person likes to be, in her own words, a 'partner' with this teacher of hers; she calls, she can't... to another one, another one. Then this [girl] sometimes in society

encounters people, these people are sexually sick, they had annoyed/abused her. Once or twice when Sophie came to me, I myself felt sorry for her, this child has been annoyed/abused so much. Then I said 'Why did you do this work so much?' I said 'For money?' She said 'No, by God, I basically...' until you see, you cannot feel this, understand this, until you think, do you understand?!' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 23).

This story, which reaches from a feverish love to mental illness and encounter with sexually sick individuals, shows how emotional deprivation can drive individuals towards relationships that entail sexual or psychological violence, and in the case of men, this deprivation often places them in the role of 'prey' or 'victim' without receiving social support. Feminist views like the works of Gilligan (1982) emphasise this point that emotional deprivation in relationships, especially in patriarchal societies, influences men too and drives them towards violence, where the feeling of lack of affection, as a psychological condition, perpetuates the cycle of violence.

Ultimately, these narratives within the Grounded Theory framework highlight emotional deprivation as a key intervening condition which, by interacting with contextual factors such as family patterns and social expectations, intensifies violence against men. This condition not only increases individual suffering but drives society towards reproducing cycles of violence where men, deprived of affection, suffer in silence and experience violence as an unwanted response. Understanding this phenomenon requires interventions that prioritise emotional support to break this cycle.

6.1.1.2. High Volume of Psychological-Spiritual Pressure Against Men

In the heart of the research surrounding violence against men and within the capacity of emotional-psychological intervening conditions, we address the highly significant and often overlooked subject of the 'High Volume of Psychological Pressure Against Men.' These pressures, rooted in social expectations, family dynamics, and communicative voids, can manifest in various forms and serve as a substrate for violence. Men, in confronting such pressures, may undergo severe and sometimes repressed emotional and psychological experiences that fundamentally transform the trajectory of their lives and relationships.

Sometimes this pressure is imposed by the closest individuals in one's life. As we witness in one of the interviews, the spouse's family exerts relentless

pressure on the man to resolve the issue of his wife's *Mehrieh*, as they consider this matter a threat to the family's reputation (*Aberu*) and their mother's dignity:

'His family [my husband's] said: 'It is true our father has passed away, but our mother is living in this house; we will not allow you to disgrace our reputation [by letting] your wife sell this house because of your Mehrieh. Go do whatever you do, go pay her Mehrieh and finish it, let her take her hand off this house.' His family also brought this pressure on him. They exerted a lot of pressure that 'You are so incompetent (Bi-orzeh) that you did this to your life... and from this side you are destroying our reputation.' That 'Your wife [taking] the house for Mehrieh is your wife's right'... it is very interesting, everyone said 'It is your wife's right,' they were all educated, but 'We will not allow the disgrace that the house becomes your wife's Mehrieh.' In short, with a lot of this side and that side and 'Sir, don't do this work'... and when we talked, he would say bad words to me... I too, to compensate, would do that work; I would pressure him with my Mehrieh, I would say 'Is it like this?! Okay, I'll fix you. Tomorrow I'll come and do this work.'' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 60).

This quote clearly shows how external expectations, especially from the family, can place men in a psychological strait. The concept of 'incompetence' (*Bi-orzeghi*) here is a reflection of the hegemonic pressure of masculinity which demands the man always have control of affairs and protect the family's 'honour.' When this control is lost or expectations are not met, the individual faces a massive volume of blame and spiritual pressures which can act as a strong intervening factor in the experience of violence, and even lead to confrontational and destructive reactions from the individual under pressure.

Furthermore, the experience of psychological pressure in men sometimes occurs in a compressed and sudden form which robs them of the opportunity for gradual processing. One interviewee points to this point:

'...she obtains it briefly [quickly], but Doctor, for example, a woman has been annoyed for ten years, has seen abuse, but it has been gradual; but a man, for example, imagine this happens in one year, happens in six months; he experiences a compressed thing, in fact.' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 133).

This difference in speed and compression of experience can be severely damaging. While gradual abuse might give the individual an opportunity to adapt or seek a solution, the experience of 'compressed' psychological abuse

engages the man's psychological system suddenly and disrupts his ability for a healthy reaction. This issue can lead to chronic stress, anxiety, and even post-traumatic symptoms, because defence mechanisms do not find sufficient opportunity to adapt.

Moreover, in couple relationships, men face pressures from the other party which can ignore their basic psychological needs. Reza, in one interview, speaks of his pain; a pain resulting from lack of responsiveness and sufficient attention from his wife:

'I can't... why... her good point was that... someone who would cry at night if she didn't hear my voice, someone who, if I didn't talk to her, her friends would call me one by one that 'Reza, she's looking for you'... those buddies of mine [saying] 'Why don't you answer her phone? She called us, Neda dear what happened?'... 'Man, by God I was involved in work'... on that side crying that 'Why didn't you answer me? I feel bad'... well, I have that 'bad feeling' right now, so where are you? How does violence happen? Violence is this, isn't it? You don't act on your commitment...' (Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 89).

Here, violence is defined not just in the form of physical action but as 'not acting on commitment' and ignoring the emotional needs of the other party. This aligns with Self-Determination Theory, wherein the need for relatedness is one of the basic psychological needs. When this need is not met, the individual feels abandoned, lonely, and under pressure, which can propel him towards unhealthy behaviours.

Psychological pressures on men in the context of relationships are often rooted in cultural and educational teachings that dictate traditional gender roles. As raised in the group interview with ordinary citizens:

'Now let's look from this side too; we see, well, when they enter a life, someone has raised a lady, has raised a girl, and told her 'All responsibilities are on the gentleman's neck,' and instead of coming and taking this support from the lady, this series/time she must become a mountain for the man. He sees no affection because the lady thinks that affection must be totally one-sided; the gentleman must constantly show affection to the lady. She doesn't think at all that the gentleman also has a need to be heard, to be seen, for attention, for affection. On the other hand, he might even be subjected to physical violence by the lady; as they say, she swears, uses foul language... these cause that gentleman to distance himself from that family environment gradually. He doesn't want to enter that

house after a day of work at all, because again she sees him only as money and peace be upon you [that's it], and they don't see anything else. Then this causes the gentleman to come and gravitate towards another environment again. To another individual who actually sees this [man], hears him, resolves his affection [need], resolves his need; which this again causes infidelity in life.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 38).

This section of the interview shows well how the idea of the man being a 'mountain' and accepting 'all responsibilities' without mutual expectation can deprive the man of his emotional needs. When men feel they are seen only as a financial source and their needs to be heard, seen, and receive affection are not met, they are placed in danger of 'even physical violence' and 'swearing and foul language,' which is itself a type of severe psychological pressure. This situation propels the man towards distancing from the home environment and seeking other connections, which entails consequences such as infidelity. This view aligns with the theories of Carol Gilligan regarding the Ethics of Care and the importance of mutual connections in human relationships, and shows that ignoring men's communicative needs can be as damaging as ignoring women's needs. The pressure resulting from inequality in giving and receiving affection and attention causes men's psychological burnout over time and paves the way for the emergence of violence in various forms.

In total, 'High Volume of Psychological Pressure Against Men' as a key intervening condition in the emergence of violence against them is examinable from various dimensions. These pressures can be rooted in heavy social and familial expectations, occur in a compressed and sudden manner, or result from the inability to express deep pains and unmet emotional needs. The lack of a safe space for expressing vulnerability and the repression of emotions intensifies these pressures and drives them towards destructive consequences, including serious psychological injuries and even the emergence of unhealthy behaviours. Understanding these dimensions helps us to have a more comprehensive approach to the phenomenon of violence against men and attend to their hidden and often ignored psychological needs.

6.1.1.3. Angry Mentality and Thought Patterns of Men

What is seen in the narratives of interviewees is a deep embodiment of emotional-psychological intervening conditions and the key role of pressures and humiliations in shaping and reinforcing violence in men; conditions that

sediment in the mental and emotional mechanisms of the human being and, in the absence of a path for release, lead to multiple forms of violence manifestation.

In the first experience, the continuation and accumulation of repressed thoughts and unanswered expectations ceaselessly force the individual's mind to reproduce anger:

'Meaning my mind compels me that 'If Mr. So-and-so, for example, had done this work, perhaps the way would have been better.' This gradually... my anger and complex and hatred... gradually... I had it from Mr. So-and-so or from family, it makes no difference, or from society or from my school or from my teacher, it makes no difference. I say this, I say anger is like a mosquito that falls into my mind. When this mosquito falls into my mind, I don't think of many other things anymore; I only give wings and feathers to this. I only make this mosquito big, and it becomes an eagle. 'If this hadn't happened, that would have happened; if he had done this work, that work would have happened.' I give wings and feathers to this so much that I transform a single small mosquito into a large eagle... that this eagle casts its shadow over my mind, over my brain... I don't think of anywhere else anymore; I only think of that opposite point, of that anger and revenge I want to take.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 8).

In this narrative, anger enters the mind like a small and annoying creature, but due to the lack of healthy channels for discharge, and especially when no supporter or listener exists, this anger remains in the mind, grows, and symbolically transforms into a colossal eagle that conquers the mind. What is reflected in Amin Rezaei's experience aligns with psychoanalytic perceptions of the driving of the emotion of anger (Jung, Freud) and Self-Regulation Theory; because long-term repression of an emotion does not curb it, but makes it hasty and pervasive (Fry, 1386 [2007]).

In another example, the mechanism of social and identity humiliation is observed overtly. The humiliation of immigrant students and the promise of revenge in the future is a thick sign of the internalisation of feelings of worthlessness and the formation of the desire for violence:

'For example, a force [staff member] has been hired in the Education [Department]... now because he is hired and they can't fire him, this principal, that principal, then he becomes the disciplinarian (Nazem); meaning it is a cycle. For example, we were in Pakdasht, we went to a school where the principal told

Afghan kids that 'You must wash these toilets,' for example, in contrast to the Iranian kid. For example, the Afghan kid, when we talked to them, they said 'We are waiting to grow up; when we grow up, we will take it out on Iranians (Hal-e Iranian-ro migirim).' These are all humiliations that lead to violence, you know.' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 50).

Here, the reproduction of the power structure creates such humiliation and anger that aggressive action appears unavoidable and even desirable. According to Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Cultural Capital (1975), when the identity of an individual or group is humiliated institutionally, the expression of violence is considered a mechanism for reclaiming lost dignity.

In another narrative, the experience of humiliation and frustration transfers the opportunity for aggressive action into the form of pranks, sabotage, and damaging objects and individuals:

'For example, we would put nails under our teacher's desk. We would make the teacher's desk sticky [with glue]. We would break his desk. Or we would tear his pamphlets to shreds, pick up his bag, for example, throw it somewhere, lose it. One or two of my friends, for example, he had a laptop, he annoyed [us] a lot in class, they stole his laptop.' (Interview No. 80, Erfan, Pos 112).

Here, indirect aggressive and damaging reactions are a clear sign of the displacement of repressed anger onto tools that provide the possibility of discharging emotion; whether it be damage to objects or mutual humiliation of the authority figure (here, the teacher). This phenomenon is interpretable according to Freud's Displacement Model, wherein due to the lack of possibility for direct discharge of anger, the individual directs it towards substitute objects or individuals.

At a deeper psychological level, the description Elnaz Safaei offers of Butler's theories points to the role of complexes and bodily and psychological inferiorities in shaping damaging behaviours:

'Part of it is inferiority. Let's come see Butler's issue of complexes. Butler speaks of several complexes and inferiorities. One is bodily inferiority, the power I didn't have physically... and we see a lot [that] those who experienced physical beatings in the family... meaning sadistic behaviours happen more in them.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 30).

Here, they consider the main engine of violence formation to be the feeling of emptiness and bodily and psychological worthlessness which, after

accumulation, propels the individual towards violence against others. As Adler clarifies in the Theory of Inferiority Complex (1992), environmental indifference and bodily and emotional inability drive the man towards excessive compensation, and sometimes towards revenge: *'Individuals who have experienced lack or beating (whether physical or psychological) in childhood tend to repeat the same patterns sadistically with those around them to regain self-esteem.'*

In the recent narrative too, emptiness and meaninglessness, along with identity confusion, drag the individual towards violence against himself and others:

'I used to self-harm. My brain couldn't take it anymore... I was at an age, at a young age, to myself whoever I asked 'what is his crime,' the guy said 'ten years, five years.' It had a lock [it was incomprehensible/stuck]. I was looking for points [status] there too; for example, I would fight, break windows, self-harm. I liked to make a name for myself in the Juvenile Correction Centre.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 94-99).

Here, violence, even against oneself, is a stratagem for constructing meaning, regaining value, and demanding identity. This behaviour can be linked with Erikson's views on Adolescent Identity Crisis (1984) and chronic frustration in satisfying basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1400 [2021]); when the need for worthiness, being seen, and finding meaning is repressed, self-humiliation and self-harm will be the starting point for the emergence of the most destructive type of violence.

Thus, it is evident that pressures, humiliations, and consecutive emotional and psychological frustrations, if not placed in a structure based on understanding, empathy, and healthy discharge, will over time become the source of external and internal violence. Men, depending on lived conditions, direct violence either towards society, the institution of power, or even themselves, and this destructive cycle continues until the formation of new psychological and social facilities. Such an image within the Grounded Theory paradigm is a reflection of structural interactions and the mutual action of actors in the context of the absence of sustainable emotional and psychological requirements.

6.1.1.4. Low Self-Confidence

In the heart of the interviewees' narratives, a deep chasm is observed between the image of the man at home and in society, and his ability or inability to confront this gap; how it revives love, hatred, frustration, and violence in him.

'The self-consumption [worrying] they are doing... they don't know how; they neither know this one nor how to cope with that one. He goes into society, modern women, that girl who is outside... he doesn't know [how to interact]; those who are outside are not similar to his mum and these people, similar to his mother and sister who are at home. And he goes again... now if we don't consider the modern ones, the old and traditional [man] goes inside the house, sees his mother and sister are different, have a different role. This conflict itself, and the fact that they haven't taught him this adaptability, humiliates him enough, breaks his self-confidence. Multiplicity of partners and partners changing and being betrayed... because definitely he manifests an unacceptable behaviour from himself in such relationships because he doesn't know healthy relationships; these can be damaging for him.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyae, Pos 28).

In this narrative, the main axis is placed on the lack of education and the experience of conflict between gender role patterns at home and in society. The individual, unwittingly, experiences self-consumption and role confusion; *'they don't know how; they neither know this one nor how to cope with that one...'* This confusion is rooted in the dual conflict of tradition and modernity, where the ways and means of confronting contradictory expectations have not been taught to the individual. The man, defenceless against new and old standards, knows neither the pattern of 'mother and sister' nor the pattern of the 'girl outside' completely, and consequently, with every experience of emotional-sexual failure or betrayal, he touches the burden of internal humiliation again: *'It humiliates him, breaks his self-confidence... these can be damaging.'* In Erikson's Theory regarding Identity Formation, this 'Role Heterogeneity' and failure in adaptation is one of the focal points of identity disorder and the emergence of secondary frustration and aggression (Erikson, 1984 [likely referencing *Identity: Youth and Crisis* or similar works]).

In this same vein, the unparalleled role of self-confidence and self-esteem in men's psychological system is seen with doubled clarity in the next interviewer's narrative:

'Self-confidence and self-esteem are very involved. A man who has very little of these two, I told you, pays any ransom [blackmail] to keep the person. 2. Those who, in their cultural structure, people are very intertwined, are very easily nosey; so that no one understands anything, extreme reputation-keepers who are very much after 'Hush, no one must know,' 'No, no, no one must know,' 'Let no voice go out of the house,' 'Whatever they said, okay, [just] let's not shout so the neighbours hear.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 92).

Here, the subject transcends individual injury and reaches the cultural and social substrate: a man who, for the survival of the relationship, 'pays any ransom,' lacks the art of self-defence and psychological boundary-setting, and constantly despairing of self-expression, prefers silence so 'no one understands.' This situation aligns with Carl Rogers' theories regarding the 'Incongruent Self' (Rogers, 1961) and the 'Conditioned Self,' where extreme approval-seeking resulting from lack of self-confidence incites the individual to deny his desires and angers, and the culture of 'Saving Face' (*Aberu-dari*) only perpetuates this self-censorship and inability for direct confrontation (Gilligan, 1982). The continuation of these patterns forces men, instead of self-expression, into self-humiliation and repression, providing the ground for the explosion of hidden aggression.

In the detail-rich narrative of Mohammad Hosseini, the crushing and reductive process of self-confidence begins from home and remains stable throughout the man's future relationships:

'A boy child who gets crushed at home, they take his self-confidence from him, and tomorrow when he wants to go to work and life, proper for himself, and wants to become friends with someone, there too, for example, he becomes weak because he has no self-confidence. He has to pay ransom there too: 'I have no friend, I must do this work, I must give him something, I must give a gift to my friend so he can be with me.' This is ransom. This itself has taken self-confidence from the boy. Tomorrow he goes to university, cannot talk to anyone, a thousand problems. Anyone who comes along nags at him, even though he sees the guy is really more worthy than that party, but because they took his self-confidence from childhood, he has grown up weak. He always feels somewhere in his work is limping [flawed], always feels he hasn't done the work perfectly. He extracts work from himself somehow so they approve him. He is needy of that approval. If they hadn't taken that boy's self-confidence from that childhood, that boy would have had better morals and better behaviour, and even sometimes wouldn't commit

oppression [cruelty] either. Basically, this becomes a complex, as the saying goes; he too, when he sees someone worse [weaker] than himself, commits oppression.'
(Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 68).

This quote not only depicts the fragility of self-confidence but reveals its direct link with the phenomenon of violence. The child, when crushed at home, develops a dependent personality full of feelings of defect. Incapable of claiming rights and self-expression in future relationships, he constantly takes refuge in paying ransom, attracting affection, and giving gifts to get approval: *'He is needy of that approval.'* But this internal wound shapes a cycle of self-harm and other-harm; as in Adler's Theory regarding the 'Inferiority Complex' and in the views of Psychoanalytic Theorists, early repression at home becomes the source of subsequent aggression with friends, colleagues, family, and even in the form of patriarchy with the next generation (Adler, 1992; Freud, 1937). The sequence of this trend from lack of self-confidence and dependence on approval to frustration and finally the transfer of violence to others is a mechanism which is also explained in the Grounded Theory paradigm by the interaction of conditions and individual and social reactions.

In summary, the present narratives beautifully show how low self-confidence, under emotional-psychological intervening conditions, erodes the man from within, weakens the power of resistance against violence, and over time transforms him into both a victim of violence and a reproducer of it. The process of external blows descending with the lack of education in adaptive skills, acceptance of contradictory roles, failure in establishing healthy boundaries, and a humiliating upbringing structure adds a link to the chain of frustration and dimension of violence each time, and instead of a healthy and resilient man, delivers a fragile, approval-seeking, or rage-filled man to society.

6.1.1.5. Creating Stress, Anxiety, and Fear

In the heart of narratives that interviewees recount with choked or trembling voices, the face of violence against men is woven more than anything with threads of anxiety, fear, and desperation; threads that sometimes become so thick they completely block the individual's psychological and practical breathing path.

'This way a person reaches the end of the line. The street floor [street life] has a thousand troubles; that they kill you, you kill, have the fear that the officer doesn't

catch you in the street like this, they don't catch you' (Interview No. 46, Pos 132).

In this narrative, the street—that public space which can be a place for the manifestation of power and dominance for men—suddenly transforms into a scene of perpetual threat. A constant fear of being victimised or even becoming an agent of violence imposes a continuous sense of abandonment and defencelessness, along with a sense of worthlessness, on the man. This feeling is similar to that deep experience of 'Existential Anxiety' (related to stress vulnerability) that psychologists note, and due to the repetition of threatening stimuli, prepares the ground for maladaptive reactions and even aggression (Kashdan et al., 2014).

The shadow of stress is so deep that its effects penetrate the body as well:

'Yeah, it's stress. Before my service [military], my hair wasn't white; it has become white. You have stress of what? You have stress of that paper of yours; will he sign, will he not sign? Do you go out, do you not go out?' (Interview No. 48, Pos 67).

This tangible interpretation of bodily change under the burden of stress speaks of the direct relationship between social anxiety—resulting from ambiguities of power, dependence, and insecurity—and physical-psychological erosion; a condition pointed out in theories of 'Psychological Burnout' and the effects of chronic social stress on men's health (Lozier et al., 2010). Here, anxiety is not a one-time event but a 'background state,' like a heavy load eroding every masculine decision and identity.

But the deepest narratives reveal anxiety and fear not in the heart of external threat, but in the perpetual experience of humiliation, bodily abuse, defencelessness, and sexual terror:

'Then when the teacher is not in class and we are waiting for the teacher to come, and Mamad [Mohammad] wants to prove himself among the kids, he would take my bag from me and rub it on himself [masturbate with/on it]... that for example, 'I own him' and these things. Between the group of class bullies there was intense competition and fighting to possess me. Everyone annoyed/abused me. I resisted but I was tired, and their annoyances/abuses were bodily contact and not complete sexual intercourse, but they did whatever [else] with me. And these behaviours and annoyances put me under pressure every day. I couldn't get help from anyone.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 17).

This bitter narrative speaks of the same condition attachment theorists refer to as 'Traumatic Isolation'; where the fear of disclosing injury, the repeated experience of insecurity and defencelessness, transform into chronic psychological pressures that scratch the innermost layers of the man and make him ready for destructive emotional reactions. The experience of these abuses in childhood and adolescence has a deep connection with 'Trauma Theory' and its long-term effects on personality formation and adult relationships (Levine, 1997).

On the other hand, failure in self-defence in conditions where the individual is defenceless, even in therapeutic and closed environments, marks the peak of anxiety and fear and is considered an instance of systematic violence:

'Someone who is hospitalised in a psychiatric centre is somehow, in my opinion, disabled [out of order]. When he cannot defend his own right, when the opposing party bullies him, definitely violence is happening to him. When he is forced to stay a long time in a closed-door space, have no entertainment, and have no proper food, and cannot communicate with his family; all these are violence against him, you know.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 96).

This situation recalls the concept of 'Learned Helplessness,' wherein repeated exposure to harmful stimuli from which the individual cannot escape leads to submissiveness, anxiety, and inability to act (Seligman, 1975). Men in such situations not only experience the fear of losing independence and identity, but this hidden fear and anxiety itself transforms into part of the experience of violence against them.

Sometimes these very psychological pressures and long-term stresses shatter men's tolerance threshold and propel them towards the eruption of anger and aggression:

'Basically men are like this; men explode [become nervous/angry] when their tolerance threshold ends.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 103).

This passive-aggressive strategy is in fact a way to discharge accumulated anxiety and anger so the man can temporarily free himself from the feeling of defencelessness and helplessness. This phenomenon is compatible with the 'General Aggression Model' (likely referring to Anderson & Bushman) in explaining aggression, which emphasises the role of environmental stresses and the individual's tolerance capacity (Anderson et al., 2003).

The shocking example of 'Hosseinzadeh's' brother, who returned from the front [war] with PTSD, is a real image of the destructive effects of war and psychological trauma on men, which influences not only their own lives but the family as well:

'We had a brother who was PTSD. He had gone to war, yeah, he had become shell-shocked (Moji). And he was 15-16 years old too, couldn't work. At any job he went to, because he was wrecked, he would fight, engage in fisticuffs. They would throw him out. A psychiatric brother to whom we didn't dare say a word. He would beat us. A psychiatric brother, a sister who, for example, was under pressure, wanted to marry and go, and a sister who had married and gone... the son-in-law wanted to stay in that house all the time and annoyed [us]... in any way possible he was looking for a story [trouble]. You had that psychiatric brother... for example, conflict and killing and slaughter would happen, and I would choke and leave.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 227-228).

This situation is a clear example of the consequences of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), wherein anxiety, nightmares, and aggressive reactions keep the individual in a limbo between the memory of past trauma and present reality, placing the family in exposure to domestic violence. These inefficient defensive strategies are rooted in the failure to process deep trauma and require specialised psychological interventions (Kleim et al., 2012; likely referring to cognitive processing therapy contexts).

Interestingly, sometimes, even in the face of the individual's violence and mental illness, the family, instead of supporting, seeks to 'hospitalise' and 'distance' him, which itself intensifies the anxiety and fear of rejection:

'Psychiatric patients themselves are bothered more than others. Most of that annoyance returns to themselves. Families who don't do anything... they see their case is a psychiatric case, they quickly take action to hospitalise him in a mental hospital or put him in one of the psychiatric centres. They don't think perhaps in that centre that person or that gentleman is caused to experience much worse events' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 92).

This family passivity is itself a type of psychological violence that fuels the anxiety of 'impermeability' [being locked away/unheard] and 'fear of an unknown future' in the sick individual. In this midst, some families themselves become the main source of fear and anxiety, and even the father cannot be a safe haven:

'My dad, when I was a child, didn't pay much attention to what was what and what wasn't, and I have a mother who is hot-headed (Kalleh-kharab).' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 19).

This paternal inattention and maternal violence create a space full of fear and anxiety for the child wherein the lack of fatherly support and mother's violence intensify the experience of insecurity and fear, planting deep psychological roots in the individual.

Even the fear of 'impoliteness' (*Bi-adabi*) and not being raped reveals men's hidden anxiety in a subtle but painful way:

'Of fear... my fear... how should I... thing... I beautifully [openly] confess that [I have] fear of 'impoliteness,' that I don't get raped.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 15).

This confession to the fear of 'impoliteness,' which implicitly refers to rape or violation of honour, shows that men are also exposed to psychological and physical injuries, and the fear of violation of personal privacy is one of their hidden anxieties.

In unstable and tumultuous family conditions, the fear of loss and also the struggle for emotional survival places men in difficult positions:

'Because he (stepfather) doesn't like me to be in his life; he hates the kid. Because he is an addict, he hates... I saw my mother, we cried, we hugged each other. Her husband wasn't there; when her husband isn't there, I am very comfortable with my mother. I was forced to work myself to help my mother.' (Interview No. 61, Arshia Jafari, Pos 11).

Here, anxiety resulting from family insecurity, fear of rejection by the stepfather, and the burden of responsibility for the mother drives the young man towards forced labour, and this itself brings more stress and anxiety. This situation aligns with concepts of 'Role Strain' and 'Inefficient Defence Mechanisms' in high-tension families (Coleman et al., 2009).

Finally, the vicious cycle of domestic violence originating from humiliation and the induction of worthlessness sometimes leads to self-harming behaviours such as suicide attempts:

'So far I have attempted suicide and self-harm four or five times. I did all my suicides with pills. The family assassinated me [character assassination/psychological destruction]. All my suicides were because of my

family. They said 'You are useless, you must die. Your peers are so-and-so. I don't know, go from here, you destroyed our reputation [we became notorious].' As a result of these words, my usage [drug consumption] went higher, I kept smoking to get calm. I didn't get calm either, I would go eat pills. Then this story would keep repeating.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 107-114).

This deep confession is a view of the peak of anxiety, despair, and hopelessness which, with the constant induction of 'worthlessness' and 'rejection' by the family, drives the individual towards self-destructive behaviours. This cycle, accompanied by severe psychological stress and the search for false relief through substances or pills, shows how verbal and psychological violence in the family leads to the fear of death and suicide, planting a paralyzing anxiety in the man's existence. This phenomenon is explained in psychology by the concept of the 'Destructive Effects of Family Communication on Mental Health' and 'Perpetuation of Psychological Trauma' (Bowen, 1978).

In summary, it can be said that stress, anxiety, and fear, in the heart of emotional-psychological intervening conditions of violence against men, not only leave destructive psychological and physical consequences but themselves transform into a driving engine for the continuation of the cycle of violence and injury. From the fear experienced in the street or closed environments to anxiety resulting from internal worthlessness and fear of family rejection, and finally, anxiety leading to self-harming behaviours, all indicate the depth and breadth of the impact of these psychological states on the experience of violence in men.

6.1.1.6. *Inflexibility and Stubbornness*

In the text of men's narratives, a clear image of resistance against norms, insistence on steadfastness in one's position, and stubbornness (*Kalleh-shaghi*) is seen within the heart of emotional-psychological conditions of violence; a situation that manifests more rigidly and passively, especially in the context of social and interpersonal pressure.

Sometimes the entirety of life transforms into a field of permanent conflict over the most trivial matters, even wearing a pair of socks:

'My nerves would get wrecked; continuously I had to get involved [fight] with this one and that one, become so-and-so... basically, Sir, I wore my socks inside out; this sock was bothering me, I wore the sock inside out, whatever... Sir, this

sock is bothering me, does it have anything to do with you? Are you my foot? Are you inside my life? People have business with everything; you are forced to coordinate with this custom (Oruf), otherwise in one direction the current says 'be in the direction of the cold and hot water current,' and a severe hot water current is coming from [that] direction, you must move against the current like... what is that? Like turtles... can you free yourself from that path? If you want to get free, for example, you must go to a corner and become alone; meaning you have no way other than this. Everyone looks at me with crazy eyes.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 131).

This quote well shows the repressive and controlling atmosphere around the individual; where even the most insignificant behaviours are under the domination of 'external musts and must-nots,' and the only way of liberation is submission or withdrawal. The man's passive resistance against this customary onslaught shows itself in the form of stubbornness and inflexibility; a behaviour called defensive rigidity in psychology and, in Erich Fromm's terms, the 'Obstinate Character' (*Man for Himself*, 1386 [2007]). In this approach, the individual, by sinking into his shell and stubbornly insisting on his desires, testifies that sharp currents of social pressure have dragged him either to conformity outside himself or to isolation; a situation that sociological studies refer to as the overt manifestation of 'Normative Pressure' and deterministic reactions to authority structures.

Stubbornness sometimes manifests in the guise of rough and obstinate standing, but ostensibly based on a valuable family principle:

'You wanted me to take revenge on your dad? I wanted to make my word sit on the chair [enforce my will], you know. And let my word be the word. She said no, I said yes. No, I had no [issue] with anyone, I was always alone. For example, if there was someone, if there was something... I would take... once in a while if I come to myself, the first thing I do is go into war with this [person], you know what I'm saying? I am a person, the word I speak... I have no way at all [no flexibility] in encountering it; when I say it, I must act. I say a man must act on the word he speaks. My dad says this, 'A man's word is one [unchanging].' My father and mother. No, this was from the beginning, my family was [like this] from that very first day, from those very first days... 'promise to do such-and-such work,' for example. A man must stay on his word.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz, Pos 147).

In such a space, the value of 'Stubbornness' and steadfastness is not only a defensive reaction to external pressure and imposition but, as an identity construct transferred from the family, takes on an ethical and value-laden meaning. The man's agency, with internalised suggestions such as 'A man's word must be one,' leads to sometimes damaging persistence. Theorists such as Hegemonic Masculinity theorists (referencing Connell, 1995) emphasise that these dominant masculine patterns not only distance the individual from flexibility and dialogue but entail deviance, violence, and even isolation.

So stubbornness is a manifestation of internal conflicts and social determinism; a man who represents the most objective signs of structural pressure with extreme persistence and even revenge-seeking from parents: sometimes the mentality of obedience leads to 'Angry Disobedience' (related to self-rigidity), and this situation is the direct achievement of transferring power-centric and rigid paternal-maternal values into his psyche (Fromm, 1986; Bandura, 1977).

But inflexibility appears in other conditions as a silent reaction to family coercion and imposition and the attitude of the obligation to conform to the collective:

'I counted it as force... I was thinking to basically go get a house so my father and mother wouldn't force me to marry. At that time, a condition of very heavy pressure was applied to me.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 32).

Here, 'Passive Steadfastness' is a reaction to the family's structural coercion; experiences that theorists like Karen Horney have explained in the discussion of the 'Need to Reject External Pressures' and 'Reactive Selfishness' (Horney, 1950). When the environment places the individual under pressure—demands marriage from him, or considers imposing family decisions mandatory—stubbornness and reactive behaviour, more than being constructive and problem-solving, are signs of defending the meagre realm of authority and identity.

In this situation, the individual, by choosing escape routes such as silence, avoidance, or even silent defiance, manifests a kind of defensive inflexibility; as if guarding his personal safe boundaries at the cost of standing against the current of family and even society (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Finally, stubbornness and getting stuck in the bonds of past relational experiences leaves the individual in a cycle of suffering and pain and is a sign of his neuro-psychological resistance to grief, rejection, and unkindness:

'What was the worst violence you experienced? Violence might be a psychological thing, it's not just assault and battery. The worst violence was this very case of my wife. Even now, it isn't possible that a night... when I want to sleep, at least for an hour like this, thoughts and fancies don't come to me, I don't think of her, memories don't repeat.' (Interview No. 69, Vahid, Pos 80).

In this example, inflexibility does not mean only insisting on an opinion and belief but is a type of Emotional-Cognitive Fixation; a sign of inability to pass through bitter experiences and the fixation of mind and emotion in past trauma. This situation is explained in Jung's Analytical Psychology and Freud's Theories of Mourning (Fixation) as remaining in a stage of tragic experience and the psychological imprisonment of the individual in analysed memories (Jung, 1933; Freud, 1917).

In general, inefficiency in behavioural, intellectual, and emotional flexibility in some men of Iranian society is rooted not only in family structures, traditional patterns of masculinity, and customary pressures, but is severely influenced by contemporary emotional-psychological conditions which drive the individual to the brink of explosion and sometimes absolute passivity. Stubbornness and inflexibility, therefore, are both products and reinforcers of violence against men; a defensive reaction that sometimes finds a violent face, sometimes an isolationist face, and sometimes a face of fixation in the past—and in all its forms, reproduces and perpetuates the complex cycle of violence.

6.2. Physical Intervening Conditions

In the narrative of men who have passed through the experience of alcohol and drug consumption, complex relationships between physical, psychological, and environmental conditions are observable, playing a fundamental role in shaping and intensifying violent behaviours against oneself and those around. Sometimes substances become not merely a direct cause but a substrate and facilitator for crossing moral and behavioural boundaries; a substrate that drives the individual from alienation towards actions that, in a normal state, seem terrifying even to imagine. In the interpretation of one interviewee:

'That psychological mechanism that causes the guy to turn into a rapist or turn into a thing isn't there anymore, and it provides the substrate; and someone who

is full of sexual complexes and, for example, they provide a condition for him—I don't know, the family itself, society itself—so that he goes towards rape and abuse... and then that person himself doesn't consider it rape anymore; for example, he says 'I messed around with this kid, did this work with this kid, did this work with this kid, what is it [what's wrong], it's me myself.' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 52).

In this description, substance use is interpreted as a substrate that weakens the safe margin of conscience and moral deterrents. Explanatory patterns such as Social Control Theory (referencing Hirschi, 1969; text cites 'Karthak' which may be a transliteration error for a specific theorist or Hirschi) state that substance use loosens the individual's bond with society's values and norms and reinforces the courage to cross red lines. At the same time, familial and social contexts, repressed complexes, and environmental threats place the individual in exposure to behaviours that are less likely in the absence of consumption.

Multiple and repeated substance uses, an experience that turns into repeated returns to addiction withdrawal centres, is not only a sign of inability to control dependence but indicates the collapse of the individual's position in the social structure and supportive continuities as well:

'Then I fell into using Shisheh [crystal meth]; in one year, he [family/authority] gave me to the camp eight times. In one year, eight times gave me to the camp.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 149-151).

Dependence and repeated return, in addition to being explicable with Skinner's theories of Operant Conditioning and Negative Reinforcement (1953), display a type of vicious cycle in individual and social relationships wherein the individual has no achievement but the re-reproduction of pain and frustration.

In this midst, nervous outbursts and unpredictable reactions to stressful situations are another manifestation of this violence-generating cycle:

'Emotional and psychological... suddenly you see... I myself have a temper, [there are] times when I get very nervous, suddenly I hit the opposing party.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam, Pos 216).

Substance use transforms repressed tendencies, swallowed anger, and inability to manage emotion into impulsive and sometimes uncontrollable actions. This image corresponds exactly with the axes of 'Self-Destruction' (or

death drive) in Freud's theory (1920) and the impact of substances on impulse control.

The bold connection between sexual pleasure and substance use is itself one of the most important reasons for the persistence of addiction and the deepening of high-risk behaviours:

'I say it, no, you know what it is? It stiffens the back [prolongs erection/stamina], and Shisheh too because you don't fall asleep... I say it gives a pleasure... now many of... now 70 percent of those who fell, 80 percent of those who fell into using Shisheh fell because of this pleasure. Its sexual pleasure.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 221).

The consumption of amphetamine-like substances such as *Shisheh*, by increasing sexual desire and reducing inhibition power, paves the ground for high-risk sexual and physical behaviours; a subject examined in the works of Kaiser (2018).

From another angle, substances are understood as a temporary solution to escape academic and psychological pressures; an effort to compensate for frustration or lack of conventional pleasures:

'I know families... how many students should I bring you who, because of too much studying (kharkhuni), sat and smoked hashish and Gol [marijuana]; perhaps this way it gives him energy and his screw loosens [he relaxes] and he can do the thing... but he doesn't think of his demise, that tomorrow he is constantly burning the capillaries of his brain. Knowing all these... I knew it closes the valve of my brain and in sleeplessness my brain is going to feed on itself; I knew all these, but because it had given me that pleasure... society should come and provide pleasures for me from somewhere else too. By God, most of them didn't know this.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid, Pos 112).

Substances, like a painkiller for the unrest of mind and body, are an easily accessible substitute for deprived pleasures in a society incapable of providing for the psychological and physical needs of the young generation. The 'Self-Medication' Theory of Khantzian (1997) also emphasises that individuals prone to violence or self-destruction utilise substances to cope with psychological and physical despairs.

The experience of some individuals of substance use, especially pills and sedatives, is the tendency to eliminate fear and increase boldness to commit high-risk or even unplanned behaviours:

'That is the power of substances, you know. I used heroin and pills, Clonazepam pills, a large number of pills. I consider a large number of pills effective because, you know, because of the boldness and that thing the pill gives you... for example, Clonaz pill is a sleeping pill, but you eat one or two, maybe that same time you fall asleep; then when the number goes up, when you get drunk on pills, not only do you not sleep, but movements you make are not predictable either.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz, Pos 264).

These experiences show that substances sometimes act as a medium to temporarily overcome anxiety and doubt and, by repressing the faculty of volition and assessment, smooth the path for violence and high-risk behaviours (Deci & Ryan, 1388 [2009]).

The reflection of the transformative effects of substance cessation is also noteworthy:

'Yeah, I accept all these that it was wrong, now... of course, I accept [now] that after some [time]... it's going into a year that I don't use substances, I am clean. It returns, that's it... I am a thing... both flexible and logical. Perhaps before I quit, because I hadn't quit yet to think about this point... but perhaps if it was before this, I always gave this right to myself. Now I accept all my mistakes. Perhaps if I come out now too, perhaps I won't get involved with anyone anymore; perhaps I can see this too, that maybe someone comes and slaps my ear, I just look at him once and come [away].' (Interview No. 36, Faraz, Pos 274-276).

After achieving abstinence, the individual looks at his life and interactions from another perspective; self-awareness and flexibility take the place of previous stubbornness and aggression—a subject which, according to the Transtheoretical Model of Change (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983), usually provides a ground for reducing violent impulses.

But not all substance users succeed in quitting. Some see themselves in the trap of addiction, homelessness, and feeling of failure:

'I was a rough sleeper, I was in the street. A human must be neat and clean and look after himself and use substances. I don't know... I would see an officer from afar, I would run. I was tired of this life. Neither did I allow myself, by God, to go quit, nor could I live. Even though I had much commitment, I said 'This is my fate,' I thought false thoughts to myself.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 34).

The cycle of society's structural violence, lack of effective support, and shame of addiction sink the person into the corner of passivity and despair. These situations align with Seligman's Theory of 'Learned Helplessness' (1975); where the individual, after consecutive failures, sees all efforts as useless.

The volume of destructive effects of substances on judgment and behaviour is evident even in intervals of temporary quitting:

'Both for quitting and for working. At first, four days, 'Yeah, I know Abbas, he's my colleague, we are [in] the centre [rehab].' Well, afterwards I can't live outside. I can't come out. If I can keep myself, it's a week. Meaning if I come out of the addiction withdrawal centre, we get involved again. Substances I used influence my brain a lot. What I use destroys all the grey cells of my brain. I don't think at all; I didn't think, I only act. Sometimes a good, quiet, polite kid. When I get angry... these things... and I say I become somehow [different]. He had given me a series of medicines but I didn't take them. If I took them, I would go out of my own state. If I took them, I would go out of my own state; I ate these pills, used substances too... I didn't understand what I was doing anymore.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 186-188).

In such conditions, the lack of realistic feedback to the behaviour the individual performs disrupts conscience and self-regulation and severely increases the probability of violence against oneself and others (Bandura, 1977).

In total, the role of 'Alcohol and Drug Addiction' as physical intervening conditions in facilitating and intensifying violence against men has a multifaceted yet convergent image: these substances, by directly influencing the nerve and psychological structure, on one hand reduce the threshold of irritability and caution, and on the other, in the substrate of family insecurity, defective value system, and social pressure, can be facilitators of high-risk, aggressive, and sometimes self-harming and other-harming behaviours. This very combination of physical-psychological and social conditions creates an aggressive substrate for reproducing and perpetuating violence against men.

6.3. Sexual Intervening Conditions

6.3.1. Parallel Relationships (Infidelity)

In the narrative of men and women present in these interviews, the experience of 'Parallel Relationship' (infidelity/affairs) as one of the sexual intervening

conditions in the emergence and intensification of violence against men is clearly intertwined with complex layers of feelings of frustration, social fear, cultural tensions, and normative and gender pressures. Usually, the individual finds himself in the middle of a hidden game of power and desire, where the roots of violence are reinforced not merely in external action, but in the inability for dialogue, expressing desires, and mutual empathy.

What is heard from the interview of a man like Reza is despair, questioning, and a sense of loss following the rupture of a romantic relationship; where neither opportunity for emotional clarification existed nor the power to endure failure:

'I don't know, do you know what bothers me now? I wish [my partner] had said why; had said 'Reza, up to now I enjoyed being with you, from now on I don't enjoy being with you anymore.' I don't know what she left for. Oh why did you go? What was missing? What faded? Where did I fall short? Do you want to say my salary... I don't want to lie, maybe at that time my income was less compared to now, I couldn't satisfy financially. Oh goddammit (la-massab), there must be some tolerance; I told her many times too. Perhaps you say why like this... I say commitment; if she had stood, acted on her commitment, now I wouldn't be working in my father's factory, I would have had a factory of my own. I am sure that now... look, I wouldn't open a factory for myself, I would open a factory for myself [but] I would definitely do something for her so her hand would be in her own pocket. Women are variety-seeking; variety-seeking is not going out wandering, excuse me very much, having sexual relations; if you think of someone else in your imagination, it is emotional betrayal. Why did we reach here? Why did I reach here? Because the party thought that now... of course Doctor, this is root-based [deep], if I want to tell you this, it is root-based.'

(Interview No. 49, Pos 97-99).

In the heart of this narrative, the individual is influenced by a type of emotional instability and fear of facing unequal standards of social and gender expectation in relationships. At the same time, perceptions of betrayal extend not only to external action but to the spouse's mind and imagination and are considered a type of cruelty and injustice which ultimately destroys the possibility of dialogue and leads to hidden forms of violence.

On the other hand, Samira's narrative is a self-confession to having a 'third person' in the emotional relationship; a bitter description of reproducing communication loops parallel to marital life:

'Unfortunately, there was always a third person beside my husband, but now I don't do this anymore. In the university period, I returned to that person I loved before. I brought my cousin [paternal aunt's son] back into life.' (Interview No. 1, Pos 92-93).

In the substrate of Attachment Theories (Bowlby, 1969) and interpersonal relationship disturbances, this experience reflects the inability to establish a secure bond and the lack of emotional security; a matter that doubles the possibility of hidden and overt violence against men and reciprocally against women. Such conditions simultaneously contain the substrate for feelings of inadequacy and shame, fear of rejection, and unspoken frustrations.

Azin Bahrami's analysis, which offers a scientific and psychological narrative of paraphilic experiences and infidelity, reveals another important layer of 'parallel relationships'; where the fear of disclosing sexual preferences, the impossibility of dialogue over desires, and the pressure of custom and conservative norms propel individuals towards hidden behavioural patterns, even when there is no need for harm or forced behaviour:

'Many individuals who have this type of paraphilic interest (unconventional preferences) have no compulsive behaviour either, no harm has reached anyone either, and they don't force anyone to do anything and don't harm themselves or others. However, the pattern of sexual arousal of this person is that he has gone and married; the poor guy, his luck [was that] he married a girl who is naïve (Cheshm-o-gush-basteh) and conservative, and now he doesn't dare talk to this person about his sexual arousal pattern... then [if] this person turns to this girl who is from a conservative and naïve family and tells her 'I like to have a relationship with you like this'... what does she think to herself? Firstly, he doesn't dare say it. Therefore, many gentlemen who are not satisfied with their sexual life and unfortunately their work drags to extramarital relationships are in this category, because he cannot talk to his couple partner about his couple arousal patterns because of fear of being judged; she has this potential... And this person as a human had the right to have this enjoyable sexual life. But now he has a sexual life whose pattern custom and culture have determined... The second part, he doesn't dare raise it, he goes towards extramarital relationships... and this gentleman, through Sigheh [temporary marriage] or a sex worker, one day his secret falls on the water [is revealed], and now see what violence he is subjected to. Everyone looks [at him] as a traitor, an inconsiderate person; 'We dipped our finger in honey for you [did everything for you] and you bit it; how

much my father supported you, you wretch had no job, my dad opened a shop for you, you came and betrayed me.' This is for someone who hasn't raised it. But if someone raises it [sexual arousal pattern], right there without him going to start his extramarital relationship, it starts: 'If I knew you were such a person, I wouldn't have married you at all.' (Interview No. 3, Pos 31).

This experience, based on Self-Determination Theory and the concept of psychological autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000), shows that the inability to express authentic needs and lifestyles leads to a deep gap between the real self and the performative self. This gap, in the face of social and cultural pressures, propels the individual towards concealment and consequently parallel relationships; a matter which ultimately is met with the label of betrayal and socio-psychological violence.

Mohammad Amin's experience reveals another dimension of social and familial complexities in the context of parallel relationships:

'Then I saved and saved, then after a while I fell into what... playing with friends [hanging out] and again playing with girls [womanising] and these things. I became friends with a girl; this one, her father was a snitch (Adam-forush), her father was a snitch, she was a child of divorce too. Her mother was a [maternal] aunt too [implies close relation/familiarity]. Then her mother knew my tribe and clan; basically in Bahonar street everyone knew my family. Then Naneh [Mom] and these people knew me and her father knew me too; for example, this girl liked very much to become friends with me.' (Interview No. 40, Pos 191).

This narrative highlights the role of families and social networks in shaping relationships and even the emergence of violence. Family dependencies and mutual recognition of individuals and families is a factor that can deepen bonds or, conversely, due to hidden tensions and specific family norms (like 'snitch' or 'child of divorce' and the role of aunt), fuel the formation of parallel relationships and ultimately violence against the male individual. This situation recalls the concept of 'Structural Family Dysfunction' in some psychoanalytic theories, where tensions within the family can lead to the emergence of unconventional behaviours in the next generation.

Ultimately, 'Parallel Relationship' as a sexual intervener encompasses a wide range of human experiences ranging from inability to express sexual desires, fear of judgment, and cultural pressures to involvement in complex familial and social networks. These situations, when accompanied by unequal

gender expectations and lack of candid dialogue in relationships, provide the ground for the emergence of various types of psychological, emotional, and even physical violence against men, because the individual is placed in a position where to maintain his psychological or social survival, he is forced into concealment and creating parallel relationships.

6.3.2. Sexual Disorders

In the complex texture of human and social relationships, sexual issues as one of the most fundamental instincts and simultaneously one of the most sensitive spheres of identity play a pivotal role. The analysis of intervening conditions in the emergence of violence against men shows that disorders, ignorances, and anomalies related to this domain provide a fertile substrate for the formation and intensification of various types of violence. These conditions, which cover a spectrum from physiological incapacities to identity crises and social pressures, place men in vulnerable positions that can lead to the experience of violence from others or the application of violence upon oneself.

One of the key factors in this field is the pervasive vacuum of sexual education. This shortage is evident not only at the family level but in the country's formal educational structure as well, creating a substrate for the formation of incorrect perceptions and high-risk behaviours. This lack of education has distorted individuals' understanding of fundamental concepts such as 'joy' and 'pleasure' and propelled them towards damaging paths. As one participant points out:

'Now a major part of our youth and adolescents want to experience joy in drug consumption. Want to experience joy in consuming alcoholic beverages. Joy has been defined for them as damaging sexual relationships. Meaning they haven't learned what joy is at all, and what are the factors producing joy, how one must confront an emotion called joy and pleasure. Well, we haven't taught these in society... no one has spoken on it. Neither in the formal education system, whether it be university or school.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 127).

This ignorance disarms youth in the face of their natural emotions and paves the way for deviations and violence. Another interviewee describes the inefficiency of the educational system thus:

'Teaching the method of controlling anger. Controlling emotion; we must teach these in schools especially. Our schools are mostly formal [superficial]; I have seen it myself in the Education structure. Most of them are formal. Formal means a circular regarding violence, violence workshop, anger control workshop; the guy comes, takes two or three photos, finished. 'Meaning we held the workshop.' Government work is not done correctly... that education is not there, this is that education that youth and children must [have]... because we can all teach from elementary and middle school periods but we don't teach. There is a vacuum of education.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 100).

This insufficient education renders society prone to the emergence of high-risk behaviours; as another participant states, *'Lack of education causes sexual deviations from young ages to old and the expression of attempt at rape, because officially it counts as a rape'* (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 184).

At the level of marital relationships, sexual performance disorders such as premature ejaculation or frigidity can transform into a tool for applying psychological violence and controlling behaviour. The man's sexual need, which is a natural and human need, in this context turns into a weakness that the partner uses for humiliation, emotional blackmail, and exercising power. This phenomenon, referred to in psychology as 'Sexual Coercion' (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2006), traps the man in a cycle of frustration and humiliation. One interviewee narrates this situation explicitly:

'Wherever you go, because men, due to that sexual need they have for ladies, it comes back to [her saying] 'Go, or else I won't give [sex].' I'm saying it bluntly. 'Go fill petrol, take the car to the repair shop. [Otherwise] there is no news [sex] at night.' Men, because of that need they have, say 'Okay.' He goes, does the tasks there, hits himself on the head that 'Dirt on my head that it is so-and-so [I am in this situation].'' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim, Pos 80).

This instrumental use of the relationship shows itself in a more complex and painful form in the experience of another participant whose wife suffers from sexual coldness:

'I, in these 12-13 years I've been living with her [my wife], have myself reached this belief that she is basically a cold person sexually... the torments I am suffering are this: for example, you see we have fought for a few days, she herself knows I am warm [active] sexually, for example, you see for a week, ten days, intercourse hasn't happened between us... instead of repairing, the first thing she

starts is 'It is not clear with whom you are busy doing what outside, like this, you don't care at all... now you expect me to just come hug you like this?' At the end of it too... I myself must do this work [initiate/fix it].' (Interview No. 17, Foad, Pos 41-43).

These narratives show how one party's sexual incapacity, like the experience of a participant who says:

'My husband had a premature ejaculation problem' (Interview No. 1, Samira, Pos 80),

can have devastating consequences for both parties and even lead to the collapse of the relationship and the formation of extramarital relationships, as the same participant continues to point out:

'In the middle of this relationship I got pregnant. He [my husband] had accepted all issues that I divorce. From my husband, so I marry him [the lover]. I returned to square one.' (Interview No. 1, Samira, Pos 102-104).

Furthermore, sexual deprivation in specific environments like barracks or prisons can pave the way for the emergence of severe sexual violences. In such spaces, lack of access to a sexual partner drives some individuals towards aggression and rape. This phenomenon, known as 'Situational Rape,' is not necessarily rooted in the individual's sexual orientation but results from lack of opportunity and accumulation of need (Groth & Birnbaum, 1979). One interviewee analyses this subject pointing to the military environment:

'Why should a person rape in the military environment? What is the reason? It has many reasons. He doesn't have access; for example, the guy is 20-25 years old, has just come to service; when he was outside he experienced everything, every week there was a person he established a connection with, but when he comes, 45 days...' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim, Pos 23-24).

In these environments, rape is not merely a sexual act but a tool for humiliation and exercising power, as one expert explains how in prisons:

'It is sexual behaviour but has no relation to pleasure and sexual orientation, but they brought a calamity on his head so that 'Don't do such-and-such work here, your voice shouldn't be raised, this is our jurisdiction.' (Interview No. 3, Azin, Pos 25).

Due to cultural norms that define masculinity by power and impermeability, speaking of these experiences is very difficult for men and often these wounds remain hidden forever:

'It counts as rape, and because of this very firm and hard appearance of our men in society, it is not titled [mentioned] and is buried under the earth forever. Severely hard, I myself had the experience too; it is not a very good experience, it is not easy to talk about it at all.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 4).

Alongside these issues, gender identity crises, especially regarding homosexual and transgender individuals, place them in exposure to multi-layered violences. As one expert states, the existence of homosexual tendency in society is a statistical reality:

'We, in every society, whether the country's officials believe it or not, 4 to 6 percent of gentlemen are absolute homosexuals. Basically in Iran too it is under no circumstances an exception.' (Interview No. 3, Azin, Pos 25).

These individuals, due to social and family pressures or internal conflicts, sometimes submit to marriage with the opposite sex, with the false notion that this act will change their tendency. This decision ruins not only their own lives but their partner's life as well:

'They themselves wrongly think that 'if we enter a sexual interaction with the opposite sex or marry, our problem will be solved,' which is a wrong notion, and he goes under the burden of those marriages that have maximum commitment, and then they see that no change happened; they made themselves miserable and another girl too.' (Interview No. 3, Azin, Pos 25).

Lack of correct education in this field drives individuals towards high-risk relationships, because an individual who doesn't know his orientation may be exposed to sexually transmitted diseases and psychological injuries (Hatzenbuehler, 2009). A young participant describes the importance of education thus:

'You imagine a boy child who is homosexual and doesn't know he is homosexual, and because of the lack of any kind of education and information, has feelings for one of his classmates, and well, they go to the school toilet and attempt penetration, and this is the most dangerous part of the work because they have seen no education.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 17).

Transgender individuals also face a unique set of challenges starting from hatred of their own body and ending in social and economic violences. This feeling of non-belonging to the body, which in psychology is called 'Gender Dysphoria,' is a deeply painful experience. One trans interviewee describes this aversion thus:

'I wasn't forced [to hate it], I hated it. I hated having my chest... and whether from my genital organ, I hated the genital organ too. I couldn't look at myself in the mirror at all because I was really in an isolated world.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 75).

This internal conflict is so severe it can drive the individual towards horrific self-harms, as one interviewee narrates:

'Despite the fact that he had passed a long treatment process here, 3-4 years psychological, Turkey and... then he had gone there, he had cut his own organ, he cut it himself, he cut his male organ, he had died.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 35).

These individuals, after coming out or gender affirmation, also face stigma and social exclusion which often drives them towards high-risk jobs like sex work so they can provide living costs and treatment processes:

'This person can... self-sell, do sex work, get by up to a limit. But from a point onwards he can't... almost 90 percent of them [trans people] turn to sex work.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 56-57).

This cycle places them in exposure to physical, sexual, and economic violences and shows how an internal identity crisis, under the influence of social conditions, transforms into external and tangible violence.

Ultimately, the collection of these factors shows that sexual disorders and issues, far beyond an individual subject, operate as a powerful intervening condition in a network of cultural ignorance, social pressures, and structural insufficiencies. From the humiliation of a man in the marital bed due to a natural need, to rape in closed environments, and from the identity crisis of a homosexual youth to the social exclusion of a trans individual, all indicate how the sphere of gender/sexuality can transform into a field for applying violence against men; violence that often, due to stereotypes of masculinity and cultural taboos, remains unspoken and hidden.

6.3.3. Sexual Ignorance

Many couples enter the field of action without the slightest awareness of the fundamentals of sexual communication, and failure—the deepest experience of the wedding night—inflicts the first wound upon the body of the relationship. The lack of education and skill not only causes the collapse of an important moment for both parties but transforms that very 'not knowing' into a substrate for anger, blame, and the production of hidden violence in the continuation of shared life.

'Look, the guy has come, it's his wedding night. I say 'Sir, you want to marry, now you want to go to the bridal chamber (Hejleh) for the girl?' He says 'Yes.' I say 'What do you want to do?' He laughs, says 'Everyone knows this.' No, you don't know. That girl who hasn't been with anyone until now, hasn't slept with anyone, now wants this event to happen to her... many marriages ended on that very first night, reached divorce. Why? Because you didn't know how to have intercourse with the party on the first night. After a while, that same girl comes and abuses/annoys this boy.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 83).

Sexual unawareness and ignorance reveal their bitter meaning precisely here; where the youth, with a crude popular conception of the first marital relationship, enters a realm entirely turbulent and unknown. Educational weakness is a type of systematic pathology rooted in society's silence regarding sexual issues (Sadeghi, 1399 [2020]), and this very ignorance becomes the source of anxiety, feeling of lack of competence, mutual violence, and emotional distance; indeed, according to Psychodynamic Theories, *'Anxiety resulting from ignorance and emotional frustration will always create a desire for aggression and blame in the opposing party'* (Kaplan, 2021).

'Then there is sex education; you basically don't know, when you want to have intercourse with your partner, how to have intercourse, where to start and where to end it. You understand? Then many of our ladies don't know this either; many of our ladies don't know sex completely either. Everyone claims 'We know,' they say 'Mr. Doctor, we know,' but they really don't know.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 83).

The claim of knowledge itself becomes a shield behind collective ignorance; when both woman and man step into a space of ambiguity and sexual unskilledness, the result will be nothing but the lack of consolidation of the relationship, increased tension, and deepening insecurity. The paradoxical

situation of 'Apparent Knowledge and Behavioural Ignorance' is the very thing that shapes many hidden injuries of marital life and, according to field evidence, practical ignorance in this regard (despite the image they construct of their capability) is the foundation of the collapse of many bonds and the formation of patterns of emotional or even physical violence (Bagheri, 1400 [2021]).

'This is a tool for women, which happens for many, that the man's water [semen] returns [ejaculation issues/infertility context or metaphor for failure]. I don't think like foolish ignorant people... you don't think your sexual partner who is your spouse... that such events are planned behind my back regarding her, that she wants to dump [blame] on you.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 165).

The perception of de-securitisation and mistrust transforms the individual's ignorance and unawareness of the fundamental rules of sexual relationships into a tool for power and control. Utilizing men's sexual need, when accompanied by contexts of their ignorance, defencelessness, and confusion, transforms into emotional violence within the framework of Dependency and Power Game Theories (Kahn, 2019); a tool the individual cannot even understand the cause of, and consequently is placed under pressure. Ambiguity regarding the 'what' and 'how' of many sexual actions—resulting from sexual ignorance—transforms men into a medium for scenarios of control and even humiliation, reproducing violence, however hidden.

'I was extraordinarily warm [sexually active], and he didn't know how to behave with a woman; perhaps he didn't know.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 118).

In confronting an individual who enters the relationship with warmth, need, and excitement but the other party is fundamentally unaware of the mystery and secret of correct sexual behaviour, the desire for closeness and intimacy leads to coldness, anger, and ultimately aggression. This is the very instance of the Frustration-Aggression Theory (Dollard, 1939/2004), where sexual ignorance and weakness of skill in creating bodily and emotional connection paves the ground for violence and injury; violence that, sometimes silent but deep-rooted, threatens the relationship and places men in the most fragile position.

'Shayan, look, the family's lack of awareness causes their negligence; many times it causes their psychological problems... many times meaning ninety percent of times.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 29).

In this midst, the family and its long-term silence regarding the sexual education and awareness of children play a large share in the emergence of injury. Many behaviours, repressed feelings, desperation, and even communicative disabilities originate directly from this unawareness and generational negligence, such that a major part of psychological disorders and sexual dissatisfaction is rooted in this very ignorance and negligence of parents (Nour-Mohammadi, 1400 [2021]). Disharmony between desires and abilities—and ultimately passive or overt violence—is the inevitable consequence of the lack of sexual literacy in successive generations.

'I don't know... twenty years. I didn't get along with the family. Didn't get along at all. I liked being in my own solitude. I liked being in my own state and condition. I couldn't express that thing in my heart. It was hard for me. To say 'I don't want this thing at all that is now this thing of mine, this body of mine, I don't want to be this, I am not this, I want to escape.' It was hard, saying it was really hard. I had realised before age 30, I was saying 'I like to operate [have surgery],' but I didn't know what 'trans' was, didn't know I was trans, didn't know 'trans' thing at all; I only knew this, that I like to become [live] as a girl.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 68).

In the realm of sexual identity finding, severe ignorance regarding the nature and definition of sexual identity and the non-existence of language and knowledge necessary to express desire and feeling places the individual in a predicament full of suffering, isolation, and repression. Introversion, isolation, and even the tendency towards negative self-image are symbols of systematic ignorance and psychological inability in a society that considered sexual education unimportant or forbidden; this situation, according to Identity Crisis Theories (Erikson, 1968/2001), severely increases the level of anxiety and vulnerability and paves the way for various types of violence—both from others and from the person themselves.

'One day when I entered the shop, suddenly Saeed's head appeared. When the shopkeeper turned his head that way, Saeed suddenly stuck his body to me and was rubbing himself on me, and I realised he intends to molest me. Even at that time, I had no understanding regarding the work he was doing; I only knew he

was annoying/abusing me. Because I had a bad feeling and was being bothered. I had a feeling of hatred.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 13).

In the experience of naked sexual abuse, like this situation where the victim's initial ignorance does not understand the precise nature of the violation, psychological and physical pain intensifies and deepens the sense of alienation and hatred. This lack of knowledge regarding bodily boundaries and the nature of the crime renders the individual more vulnerable to the reproduction or continuation of the traumatic experience; as Social Learning Theories (Bandura, 1977) show, the lack of correct understanding and identification of aggressive behaviour prevents the formation of effective resistance or even full understanding of the nature of destructive behaviour. This ignorance ultimately leads to increased suffering and inability to defend oneself.

6.4. Family Intervening Conditions

In the process of the formation and continuation of violence against men in Iranian society, family intervening conditions play a fundamental role. The structure and dynamics of the family, especially in the context of inappropriate marriages and the lack of dialogue and emotional support between members, pave the ground for the formation of conflicts and the intensification of the feeling of isolation in men. The absence of empathy in the family and the emergence of repeated marital disputes propel men towards the continuous experience of psychological pressure, feelings of insecurity, and loss of belonging.

On the other hand, domination, spousal controlling behaviour, and the adoption of upbringing methods based on punishment and violence shake the man's identity and social role from within and make him vulnerable to violence, whether in active or reactive form. Domestic exploitation, the ambiguous status of child custody and guardianship, and also the displacement of authority in the family such that male authority is weakened and the woman's position strengthened, pave the ground for feelings of inefficiency, insecurity, and weakening of self-esteem in men. Alongside these factors, the level of family welfare and access to healthy entertainment play a moderating or intensifying role in the emergence or reduction of domestic violence, and in total provide a complex substrate for understanding the dimensions of violence against men.

6.4.1. Inappropriate Marriage

In many narratives presented by participants, inappropriate marriage is raised as an important substrate for the formation of various types of violence against men; a substrate whose roots must be sought in family structures, custom (Oruf), and society's enduring traditions. Families' traditional perception of the necessity of marriage in formats they themselves determine creates the first link in the chain of psychological and emotional pressure on men.

'Much is expected of them that firstly, anyway, there are still families who nominate [engage] someone for them, and expect them to definitely marry the individual the family has determined for them; and the paternal aunt's daughter or maternal aunt's daughter or the girl whom mother and sister liked. Again, now in Tehran or big counties this is less, but again in small cities or less developed regions, anyway spouse selection is based on acquaintance [family arrangement]; meaning it's not like the guy goes into the street himself and meets [someone], rather they find [one] for him or female members suggest to him, and it is expected of him to marry her even without romantic feeling, perhaps he hasn't found [love].' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 10).

This compulsory expectation not only does not clarify men's emotional duty but unwittingly propels them towards choices wherein both affection and individual choice are sacrificed to the mechanisms of family and custom (Najafi, 1395 [2016]).

In many cases, the situation that has arisen even highlights the role of revenge and the transfer of personal blows of family and surrounding people:

'Even for example... we had gone to a friend's wedding... [that girl] was there; she had invited [me] over a hundred times, 'You fell in honey, in honey [you got lucky], and the family is a reputable family, take [marry] her. If you don't marry, you've lost it! The fairy went, run, you must go right now [take her].' Whereas the party [the girl/family] has taken her blow [suffered trauma] and wants to strike the blow to someone else; that same person, the opposite person [the man] doesn't realise. They were playing friendship-friendship. I met kids from that same class, we wanted to marry, but they were very dry religious; somewhere, for example, it reached [a point where] she showed obstinacy with my person. We didn't marry, and a case was introduced by someone... whom I myself realised was a psychiatric case. In the first moment you can't diagnose how much problem

the colleague you work with has. He introduced a case and out of stupidity [I married her].' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 44).

Such stories indicate that the individual under the pressure of family norms loses the right of recognition and decision-making and might even become the victim of the imposed transfer of others' injuries. According to Structural Family Therapy perspectives, when clear boundaries between individuals' roles, desires, and responsibilities are disrupted, men suffer desperation and the repetition of cycles of inefficiency (Minuchin, 1381 [2002]).

Being placed in a situation of structural determinism often entails a feeling of inadequacy and extensive psychological vulnerability; experiences that might be repeated chain-like and return the man to the circle of determinism after every separation:

'My first marriage was like this [leading to separation]. Meaning truthfully [my fiancée] was a student... we went to Laleh [Park], she called... maybe to apologise and so on, ask how I am, what is what... she said 'I am marrying, please don't disturb.' Fake [lie]. We went to the park with that girl. There she even told me 'I am not a virgin, I was friends with a few people.' We went to their uncle's house and they were musicians and so on. She said 'Several others raped me.' Thoughts at the level that 'It was adultery (Zina), now she made a mistake, did so-and-so, forgive' and so on... well, they said 'Let's marry her.' Or there was that sense of pity towards her [I had]. Both a sense of pity and a sense of saying 'Yeah, I married too' [to compensate for failure in the first marriage]. Look, someone who divorces shouldn't marry for under ten years. Because you can't thing [find yourself] at all. But again our society forces you. 'You divorced, marry, do so-and-so, they are all things [the same], blah blah.'' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 210).

A pattern where men, after failure, due to the lack of opportunity to reconstruct identity and social pressure for remarriage, suffer the continuation of similar errors and insufficient experience gathering. Theorists like Giddens consider it the 'Fetishisation of the Institution of Marriage as the Definitive Solution to All Individual Dilemmas' (Giddens, 1380 [2001]).

Trans individuals' experience of inappropriate marriage shows another face of this injury; where inexperience, sexual identity finding, and early entry into marriage transform into a slippery ground for reproducing violence and identity crises:

'[Most trans kids have inappropriate marriages] because I am now seeing [trans] kids who married, they are girls [living as women], they love each other very much... but well, maybe I say sometimes it becomes like this too... at those times my age was very low. I made a mistake marrying at 21; now I say 21 was still early. Then I had just entered masculine society [from women's society], I didn't have the understanding of being masculine.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans Man, Pos 249).

Imposing inappropriate marriage structures on individuals in the stage of identity formation renders them prone to doubled crises (Erikson, 1384 [2005]).

Inappropriate family substrates and lack of sufficient education create a pattern of chronic repression of men in the family:

'For example, let's return to the discussion of marriage and the discussion that this balance between woman and man, unfortunately, perhaps education hasn't been done, and the child that is born... usually child and mother become one with each other and take a stance against the man [father] of the family; somehow he is basically a nobody in the family. I see this a lot in my family... and basically they really don't come [to say]... that man feels he only maintains himself [survives], doesn't come at all to say 'there is something.' They repress him, he doesn't know at all that violence is being performed on him. I think that same wrong marriage and education that wasn't there before... or that, or for example it goes back again to parenting, that the person who grows up, for example forms a family, was dependent from the origin or for example his personality is somehow that basically has a masochistic state, for example violence be performed against him totally or for example he does his tasks with violence... I think it goes back more to family issues and family upbringing of families.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 15-17).

In traditional marriages, the chain of obedience and meeting family expectations is the most prominent cause of the continuation of violence; the individual enters shared life without interest and solely by family compulsion, and this compulsion not only destroys emotional desire but ultimately leads to the overflow of hidden violences onto the man:

'[My wife] wasn't the marrying type, but unfortunately in a traditional marriage... I knew she had no interest in [marital] life and these things. Why when she came into my life [did she change]? Because finally she must live her life; of course not for her own sake, for her family's sake. Because the family put

her under pressure that 'You must live' and so on. Well, this continued and reached a stage... and her capacity fills up and then she says... she bypasses her family and says 'I don't want you to decide for me'... her age goes up herself because when she married me she was 21.' (Interview No. 77, Abbas, Pos 21).

Such marriages both extinguish love and shake the man's feelings at the most important psychological levels; an injury that sometimes even entails divorce and sexual and psychological identity confusion:

'In marital life, finally interests/affections are very important. Many times it is true he is a man, but his feelings are stronger than a woman, more delicate. Yeah, his feelings are finer and more fragile. I somehow felt that, well, my feelings were much more... I didn't want to divorce; that party of mine, opposite me, not solely because of affection [but] because she didn't like to marry at all. She didn't want to marry again, for that reason she wasn't much after the discussion of divorce and these things. Then this, well, caused... true, caused her to take a blow too, but the greater blow was inflicted on me.' (Interview No. 77, Abbas, Pos 13).

The effect of inappropriate marriages shows itself not only on the man himself but on the next generation too; street and working children are the result of such marriages:

'[Parents of street and working children] didn't have an appropriate marriage; meaning they married at an age when they weren't suitable for marriage or chose a case that wasn't suitable for marriage, and parents had emotional problems with each other. They couldn't solve those problems from the beginning and over time had children, and because they themselves didn't have the sufficient and necessary level of awareness for continuing life, consequently they couldn't have that logical and appropriate solution for raising their own children, and as a result their children also faced problems in this continuation of life and this spectrum of life [working in the street].' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 19).

Parental coercion and imposing choices is another important indicator forcing men to accept decisions outside their will:

'My father had said his friend's daughter... they were two close friends and he liked very much for me to marry this one. And even at the end it had become somehow that he said 'If you don't marry this family, I won't give your marriage costs.' He really did this work too. Later when it happened, [the subject of] marriage was raised, we got into conflict [with my father] in marriage too. In fact,

we went to one or two proposals too, didn't reach a result. [My father] said 'Either this or nothing.' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 75).

The domineering and power-centric view of parents—especially the father—is another aspect of the contexts of violence against men, where it even holds men's social and economic independence hostage:

'My mother pulls me out of school, they say 'Go marry,' and now in the words of my paternal siblings themselves regarding marriage, all of them say this despotic part of my father... all of them [say] the misery that came upon them was because of Dad, because due to the traditional view he had that 'who they marry isn't important, the family being good is enough.' (Interview No. 10, Masih, Pos 27-28).

The family plays a prominent role not only in choosing the spouse but even in the continuation of the relationship and its quality; many second or repeated marriages are also formed only to compensate for failure or respond to family pressure, and this very matter perpetuates the loop of violence:

'[After separating from my first wife] my second marriage was also somehow forced; it was over obstinacy and stubbornness with the family. I saw everything, they were starting, really it was this too. With properties. I went to the county (Shahrestan), went to my uncle's house and these people popped up a girl as a... we said [yes] and took [married] her. Now the girl wasn't that girl we wanted either... investigation-game... when we went there with family to [investigate], that girl's family was a family that was higher than us in prejudice (Mota'asseb). We went to see that girl, that girl wasn't the girl I saw before... it's not this... her family had a feeling of pity for me.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 234).

Limitations and feeling caged after marriage are a sign of marriage transforming into a tool for control and even psychological captivity applied from outside by the structures of society and family:

'He turned back and said 'A series [of things] became free and a series of limitations'... well, naturally when a person is single, you go in bachelorhood, yeah, with your buddies, you don't answer to anyone, 'what did you do with your money?' Excuse me, why don't you come find the root [of] why we were placed in a series of frameworks and limitations in our marriage? Why don't you root-cause that? Why do I think that with my marriage I am placed in a series of

limitations, placed in specific frameworks, I built a prison for myself? Why don't we come root-cause, for example, those limitations, those problems, those fights, angers and bad tempers, what was its root that I thought all these have a framework that I want to free myself from? Everything gave hand to hand [joined hands]; family and spouse and mostly society and community and our system, which created a series of problems and limitations that I couldn't solve those problems, I was forced to pull aside from that foundation of family.' (Interview No. 69, Vahid, Pos 20).

Ultimately, family injuries are so deep that they become the main substrate for the emergence of invisible and destructive violence against men, where the individual enters the high-risk valley of marriage without readiness, awareness, and support, and consecutively suffers failure and humiliation:

'Even up to now, as far as we said, the family is at fault. Without doubt. Ninety percent is the family. It happens less... meaning I see with adolescents I was in contact with... and I saw they had negative impact... meaning I say that nowhere, no substrate exists more damaging than the family. These complexes and the family pour exactly inside, and the child is the carrier of these. He himself who [came] with a white slate...' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 22).

In all these narratives, the common aspect is the family's inability to guide the spouse selection process healthily and create a substrate for education and emotional support. Even in more peripheral subjects such as occupational support, the family's role in consecutive failures and creating grounds for psychological and social decline is completely tangible:

'The family didn't accompany me much to find a job. To choose my desired job... for example my brother has been in Etka store for close to ten years now. Unfortunately, they didn't do a thing to give a rank [promotion], rather they moved him too, Mr. Doctor, with ten years of experience, after all this recognition, then they move him.' (Interview No. 91, Davood, Pos 172-175).

According to the view of experts, inappropriate marriage is not only the effect of weak family function, lack of education, and supportive mechanisms, but the direct result of norms, closed moulds, and lack of independent personality growth in generations. As Glasser says in Choice Theory, an individual deprived of the right to real choice is placed in exposure to frustration and hidden aggression (Glasser, 1387 [2008]). In sum, symbolic violence against the Iranian man in marriage is mostly the product of intervening structures that

impose incorrect familial and social roles and expectations upon him and rob him of the possibility of experiencing affection, empathy, and responsible choice.

6.4.2. Lack of Dialogue, Support, and Empathy in the Family

In the narrative and integrative analysis of the condition of 'Lack of Dialogue, Support, and Empathy in the Family' as one of the important intervening factors in violence against men, the speech of interviewees well displays the depth of suffering and consequences of lack of communication.

'When [women] nag too much... a man who had such dreams, a man who had such thoughts, for example 'I will marry so-and-so, I will tell all my heart's pains to her'... but he has reached a place where he cannot share his heart's pain with his partner; he has reached a place where he escapes from her, but he has two kids, three kids; for the sake of the kids he keeps burning and building [enduring/suffering in silence]... but a series [of people] imagine that, as the saying goes, the man is at fault.' (Interview No. 68, Pos 65).

In this narrative, the focus is not on physical or financial behaviour, but on emotional isolation, deprivation of verbal affection, and the fragility of the



Figure 7 Men Surrounded by Various Contexts of Violence

dialogue space. The man speaks of deprivation of empathy and deprivation of being heard; a concern reflected in Dollard et al.'s Theory of Relative Deprivation and Frustration-Aggression, where frustration in achieving vital psychological needs provides the ground for violent or completely passive and silent explosions (Dollard, cited in Abbaszadeh, 1392 [2013]). Also, Bowlby's Attachment Theory regarding the fundamental need for attachment and acceptance shows that those who do not have the experience of affection-based relationships and empathetic dialogue from infancy will suffer alienation and isolation in adulthood (Bowlby, trans. Yahyavi, 1387 [2008]).

In another section we read:

'There is not a good communicative atmosphere in our family. We talk less, share heart's pain less together. No one looks at the other with benevolence.' (Interview No. 62, Pos 34).

'The absence of father and mother, in my opinion, caused the emergence of my life problems [drug use and HIV and homelessness]... my cousin [paternal aunt's son] brought me to himself... he would buy methadone for me and heroin, and I quit half a gram of heroin a day.' (Interview No. 39, Pos 101).

Lack of emotional dialogue and mutual trust, with the severing of supportive bonds, drives the human to the brink of chronic pathologies (such as addiction, homelessness); an instance of what Minuchin expresses in his Structural Family Therapy theory as 'Disengaged Boundaries' (or closed emotional boundaries): a family full of hidden tensions but devoid of a psychological support network; and this network, instead, is sometimes reproduced only within distant kinship or outside the nuclear family (Minuchin, trans. Darabi, 1394 [2015]).

In parts of the narrative, the overt absence of emotional support and lack of parents' active presence is seen even in critical moments:

'My father said 'I cannot come to Mashhad'... it was very hard, I didn't have accompanying family, and I wanted some water, with such misery I would tell the companions of other patients to give me water... I was tired in the hospital. You think, when there is nothing, I don't know, ten days...' (Interview No. 60, Pos 167).

The more the family space is empty of practical and emotional care, the more likely a member is to suffer deep frustration and feelings of isolation. Young's

'Abandonment/Instability' Schema in Schema Therapy theory also emphasises this pathological root: lack of emotional support is one of the main roots of adult psychological injury (Young et al., 2003).

Similar examples are repeated in subsequent narratives:

'If someone had understood my childhood problems and supported me and been my backing, and I hadn't seen all this sexual abuse from school and neighbourhood kids, all these problems wouldn't have come into existence.'

(Interview No. 62, Pos 34).

'My dad is very stingy... I opened a mobile shop for myself in that same period and my dad never set foot in the shop... well, it wasn't important to him at all.'

(Interview No. 66, Pos 7).

In these cases, failure to receive support in childhood and adolescence, even if it does not overtly turn into verbal violence or rejection, prepares the ground for anxiety, pathological dependence, or turning to destructive behaviours (from addiction to delinquency) (Berk, 1396 [2017]; Simon & Klinke, 1393 [2014]).

In another narrative:

'I worked, it was my own money; I went to work, worked, brought my own money, but I didn't have the authority to spend my own money... my other brothers too would come and say 'You, you have become a burden in this house'... my brothers and sisters were busy with their own lives... I felt they were buying my affections with money.' (Interview No. 43, Pos 25, 27, 29).

In these lines, the concept of 'Emotional Alienation' and 'Conditional Love' is clear. The family, instead of a deep emotional relationship and empathy, finds the role of a mechanical and transaction-based network; a trend expressed in Berne's Transactional Analysis theory with the concept of 'Psychological Games' and members' forced roles.

'The very moment I opened my eyes to the world... why wasn't I with someone who would always be my supporter and watch my back, be behind me, come and go with me, be so-and-so? I was always in loneliness and in substances and in the relationship of father and mother [caught between them].' (Interview No. 46, Pos 34).

This deep sense of rejection and helplessness is an instance of that same existential crisis of individuals which Erikson describes in the stage of 'Basic

Trust vs. Mistrust,' and reflects a disruption in the formation of secure attachment, the basis of all subsequent relationships (Erikson, trans. Bahmannia, 1393 [2014]).

In other narratives:

'Why can't this father [my husband] talk to his wife, talk to his child?'
(Interview No. 89, Pos 25-27).

'My father, for example, isn't a person... even right now I have accepted it, okay... but at that time, to sit comfortably with his child and talk... I had no one to sit and talk with, I couldn't talk to him about my problems.' (Interview No. 60, Pos 64).

The lack of 'Dialogue Skills' in the family becomes a barrier to empathy, acceptance, and even the ability to face more complex problems. Bandura in Social Learning Theory points out that if children do not experience an environment with support and dialogue, they themselves will not be able to repeat these behaviours in other relationships; a cycle of repeating violence and emotional repression.

This lack of support sometimes manifests in the form of limiting rights and excessive control:

'I worked too, I brought my own money... I had to bring the money I got from work and give it to these people [my family], I would get pocket money from them...' (Interview No. 43, Pos 25).

This unbalanced power structure is that same 'Low Perceived Autonomy' described in Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory as paving the way for psychological injury and even dysfunction (Deci & Ryan, trans. Zare, 1392 [2013]).

Finally, even in husband and wife relationships, the absence of dialogue and support paves the ground for the expansion of passive violence, sarcasm, sulking, and ultimately, emotional burnout:

'The fact that we [my spouse and I] have no connection with each other either; at the slightest noise that happens, she slams the door... for example I go to the closet, she slams the door. She starts saying bad words and I get nervous too.'
(Interview No. 28, Pos 153).

In this narrative, we see an instance of 'Emotion Dysregulation' and passive violence which is the direct consequence of crossing the boundaries of

dialogue and life becoming saturated with swallowed and frustrated emotions; what modern family psychology refers to as 'Emotional Silence' (Gottman, 2006; reference likely John Gottman, though text cites Goleman or similar).

Incorrect communication and lack of empathy sometimes even lead to the reproduction of the cycle of internal and intergenerational violence; not only in parent-child behaviours but in the relationships of spouses and children with society and its institutions.

The narratives are clear testimony that potential violence against men does not necessarily result from overt, physical, or financial behaviours; rather, it manifests in silent but devastating forms of emotional unkindness, lack of support, dialogue, and the absence of even the most rudimentary forms of everyday empathy and affection.

This emotional isolation stabilizes psychological knots and provides a substrate for various maladaptive mechanisms (from drugs to delinquency, from family collapse to existential crisis) which has a serious effect on men's resilience capacity in the face of violence and life problems.

According to scientific theories (Family Therapy, Frustration-Aggression, Attachment, Power Games, Self-Determination, and Social Learning), an unhealthy family atmosphere with worn-out dialogue and lack of a support network not only paves the way for silent violence against men but directly causes a vicious but real cycle of intra-media [intra-familial/communicative] and extra-media [social] violence.

6.4.3. Marital Disputes

In many contemporary families, men stand in a position akin to walking on a razor's edge; where on one side lies 'Loyalty to the Family of Origin' and on the other 'Responding to the Needs of Wife and Children.' In one of the most expressive narratives we read:

'No, that traditional society caused them to prefer their mother, and in modern society they prefer their wife. And violence is this: that the poor man is stuck between mother and wife and is forced to manage this challenge. I, right now, looking at my own personal life, my biggest challenge is my mother-in-law over the spouse's time and attention. I expect us to spend time together on Thursday and Friday, and his mother expects him to spend time with her, go there, and this creates a challenge. What is this man's duty, who, poor thing, constantly mediates? He doesn't come [take a side], he is a wise person [laughs]. There is a

point, and this point is exactly this, that this has become a challenge where on one hand he doesn't want to offend his mother and on one hand he cannot offend his wife. Now, poor things, children have been added to them too; he must manage his son as well.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 81).

In this passage, the substrate for creating violence is not merely a behaviour but the resultant of intertwined cultural expectations and role-playing pressures. Social Role Theory (Simon & Klinke, 1393 [2014]) and Role Conflict Theory (Turner, 1978) explain this situation with the term 'Status Conflict.' The man is forced to manage intergenerational conflict and simultaneously accept responsibility towards all family members; a situation paving the way for desperation, emotional burnout, and hidden self-violence (Young et al., 2003; trans. Hamidpour).

The intensity of marital disputes is sometimes exacerbated by structural incompatibilities and the induction of unhealthy behavioural patterns:

'[My wife] had incompatibility from her very first days... how should I say, she had studied the 'LINE' model personality [referring to a specific messaging app/social media behaviour or a local typology] but like the Quran [recited without understanding] it was just words in her mouth in the Kharijites discussion. It was as if her hand had been burned with an atomic lighter; I asked 'What happened?' She said 'It's nothing.' Many of her behaviours were LINE model behaviours, and even in the middle of it, before marriage, we wanted to divorce; my mother and aunt and these people didn't let us.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 56).

In this narrative, not only are signs of 'Couple Incompatibility' and 'Emotional Distance' evident, but the interference of other family members in vital decisions also adds to the scope of conflict. Minuchin's Structural Family Therapy (1394 [2015]) considers such interferences as instances of fluid and unclear boundaries within the family, which attack not only the marital relationship but the man's self-concept as well.

Continuing, we read:

'Basically what are these ladies looking for? What is better than having a calm husband, having a calm life? We don't say relationships should be extreme; excess and deficiency in anything is bad, but let it be done at a normal level. What happens if a daughter-in-law herself says 'Come, let's visit your parents'? How much the man enjoys it, how much self-esteem he finds. I saw a woman who, to

distance the man from his family, created trouble (Shar) to the level of public disgrace (Aberu-rizi), such that the man would be ashamed to look his own family and friends in the face, and this is really terrible.' (Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 93).

Here we clearly see the symbol of the 'Loyalty Challenge' and social pressure. Berne's Transactional Analysis (1393 [2014]) calls this situation 'Polarisation of Affection Sources'; where the man, due to withdrawal or rejection by one of the family poles, suffers an identity crisis. This crisis can stimulate an increase in passive violence or even damage to the man's self-confidence; a matter strongly emphasised in Bowlby's studies (1387 [2008]) regarding attachment disorders in adulthood.

Some gender and cultural differences are rooted in habits or predisposing stereotypes and ultimately help the continuation of the cycle of violence:

'In short, forgive this, give that, and such; we separated. Their custody was with me, the kids were with me, she wouldn't give their custody to me [initially]. She said 'I won't give custody,' and 'Return to your home and life and keep your kids. If you were a woman... if it be a woman... if I had betrayed too, you should definitely stay with your life. Look at most of our fellow citizens; isn't my brother's wife [like this]? She has a co-wife, she lives with him. Isn't so-and-so [like this]?' I said 'Why do you give examples from yourself? We are not like this at all; for example, our race or our culture is different from your culture.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 34).

In this narrative, the concept of 'Double Cultural Standards' is completely manifest. Traditional norms, even in cases of infidelity, consider men responsible for keeping the family structure upright and place a doubled psychological burden on their shoulders. Schema Therapy Theory (Young et al., 1386 [2007]) reflects the clear instance of the 'Self-Sacrifice Schema' and 'Inability to Express Needs' in this passage.

At another level, the characteristic of controlling behaviour and extreme criticism by the spouse can also lead to passive violence or even a psychopathic [damaging] reaction:

'Look, my wife has a very domineering spirit... no, let me say it this way, controlling. For example, in driving she says 'Don't go fast.' I didn't crash but I braked hard; for up to a few minutes she blamed me, 'Why do you drive like this?' I said nothing because I don't like the argument to continue; now maybe it's fear

of fighting. Now my wife crashed; this is from a long time ago. I said 'You yourself weren't hurt?' She said 'No.' I said 'Goodbye, I'm coming now.' Well, I could have taken all my revenge, shouted at her, but it really wasn't important to me. I told her 'You crashed, I said nothing; I didn't crash, I braked hard, why must you blame me for up to a quarter of an hour, and at the end of it too you sulk with me and I have to come and cajole (Naz-keshi), plead? Oh what law is this? I think this becomes violence.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 170).

In the empirical representation above, one can observe the 'Behavioural Reward and Punishment System' (Skinner, 1953) and also Dollard's Frustration-Aggression Theory, showing how lack of balance, extreme criticism, and injustice in relationships pave the way for swallowed anger, psychological burnout, and the cycle of hidden violence (Dollard, 1375 [1996]). Simultaneously, this situation is an instance of weakness of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1391 [2012]) and the feeling of intra-familial injustice.

Narratives clearly show that marital disputes in the context of family intervening conditions are not the product of a specific action or individual, but the consequence of a collection of hidden and overt conflicts, frustrated expectations, and cultural role-playings, the burden of all of which men bear at once; a situation that gradually depreciates their psychological capital and increases the aptitude for the emergence of silent or overt forms of violence. Deep theories of family, identity, and social role have explained this vicious circle well: a cycle that without structural revision, education in communication skills, and redefining the emotional position of men in the context of family and culture, will continue to repeat.

6.4.4. Spousal Domination and Control

In the heart of many narratives, what manifests itself is the silent struggle between Domination and Submissiveness which represents the axis of rotation of family power. The image emerging of the dominant role of the mother as the pillar of the family is an image of hegemonic women who have taken all equations of power into their hands and drag even the man of the house to a level of passivity and submissiveness. One interviewee says with bitterness of this atmosphere:

'Meaning mother had the role of the family pillar. Father was her captive. Her force outweighed Dad's... nothing... it outweighed everyone. She hit. She has a physique... at that time calculate broad-shouldered... she was of those old-time

women. Meaning if she sees from a hundred meters... if she were here and wanted to talk to you, all these words of mine were nonsense [and] she is telling the truth; basically 'these things you say don't exist at all, she is telling the truth,' something like this. I am saying these words but there are things in my chest... for example now that I find the courage, these words I say to you... for myself it becomes somehow that every day I want to say 'Leave here, go out, sit down, call all my brothers, call my sister, call my mother, call my Aga [father], sit down, things that... the calamity that came upon me, I tell these people.' They know none of it. The first person I am telling them to now is you. Once too I was in prison, Kati prison... in prison the environment is such that it's not possible [to talk].' (Interview No. 44, Hamid, Pos 134-139).

Here a collection of feelings of repression, powerlessness, and impossibility of expressing personal realities forms which, from the perspective of Minuchin's Structural Family Therapy, speaks of disorder in the boundaries between parents and children; boundaries that when overly rigid and closed or unilaterally in favour of one side (usually woman or man), prepare the space for the excess of one and the passivity of the other (Minuchin, 1394 [2015]).

In a more precise interpretation of the phenomenon of domination and intrusive or passive behaviours, one expert says:

'Generally in analysing relationships we say... we say that the two ends of this spectrum are either domination or being passive, both of which are pathological, and the middle limit has balance and health, which is assertiveness. You find few people who have good assertiveness; meaning either he gravitates towards domination or goes towards passive. And generally if he is upstream [dominant position] he dominates, has power, domination over his spouse; if his child and spouse, I don't know, want to hear force [be bullies] from him, he becomes the opposite [submissive] and a victim of violence. Meaning he should understand that 'I am right and the opposing party wants their rights too.' Therefore, in the upstream space he bullies, and in the downstream space he is placed in, he hears bullying. Now if it is parenting [or] child-centrism, it makes no difference. In both of these, unfortunately, it falls into divorces... now either he builds a stone wall around himself and it seems he doesn't hear anyone's voice and feigns sleep, ignores, doesn't answer back, leaves, goes out with his friends, goes out, gives answers that are passive... or he shouts and screams.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 158).

In this interpretation, the cycle of power and weakness between family members constantly shifts, and the individual, depending on his position and power, either dominates or experiences submissiveness. In the words of Young et al., here 'Subjugation Schemas' and behaviours of excess in control, or reciprocally behaviours of surrender and passivity, create a vicious cycle often accompanied by feelings of helplessness and silent violence (Young et al., 2003). Dollard's Frustration-Aggression Theory also shows that in such an environment, if the energy of violence does not find a possibility for healthy discharge, it manifests either in the form of passive violence or unexpected explosions (Dollard, 1975 [1996]).

Another face of domination can be seen in the phenomenon of extreme control and surveillance towards the spouse, which sometimes appears with the colour and scent of mistrust and obsession. This control proceeds to the extent that it forces men into momentary responsiveness and location reporting:

'Just 'Where are you? What are you doing? Let's take a video call photo to see where you are,' or basically these very fortune tellers come, she keeps calling, gets coffee or card readings, says 'Where is my husband? He told me he's going to his mother's house, I don't believe it, see where he went, hope he hasn't gone with someone else somewhere else.' So much hassling, hassling, hassling... men too, those who can afford it, go after someone else.' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 197).

This level of controlling behaviour paves the way for trust disorder and the formation of relationships full of suspicion and tension which, according to Transactional Analysis Theory, reinforces 'Psychological Games' and defective transaction relationships. In these relationships, the continuation of psychological pressure on men and the questioning of the man's base in the house entails hidden or reactive violence (Berne, 1973 [2014]).

Of course, the cultural substrate also plays a major role in reproducing and shaping these behavioural patterns, and the degree of similar freedoms for men and women is variable:

'Basically in Tehran, even if husband and wife hate each other, they must go out together; it is ugly for the woman to go to her female cousin's house and the husband not be with her, or vice versa. But in our parts [South], women go travelling for themselves and men go travelling and go to the mountains, wander

for a week, and their wives don't tell them at all 'We are coming' or 'You took a wife, why do you want to go [like a] bachelor?' They are very free... basically culture in the South is very different... Mr. Kermani, the whole southern region is different.' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 205).

Here, the genre of control and authority has undergone cultural differences even within a single society. As Social Role Theory and Sociology of Norms state, the functional power of domination is variable in different groups and regional contexts (Simon & Klinke, 1393 [2014]).

In another experience, men's fear of a simple demand such as going to their own family's house tells a tale of indirect control and internalised power application:

'I see that once a week I want to visit my family... most men perhaps experience this... to go see my family I have to give this request to my wife with fear and trembling. Afterwards, won't something happen? Won't talk and gossip (Harf-o-Hadis) arise? All these dangers are in the mind, all these thoughts come and go... for example I say 'Tonight or tomorrow night is a party, I go and return with peace of mind and there be no talk.' But I have heard this again from most men and seen it myself and experienced it myself that, for example, when my wife wants to go to her own family, the man accompanies her... I have seen whether myself or my friends or my relatives, he goes and comes and there is no talk either and the lady returns happy; but if this happens from my side...' (Interview No. 30, Hamid Moradi, Pos 50).

This is a prominent manifestation of 'Power Reversal' in some family actions wherein men decide with anxiety even in demanding their most basic socio-emotional rights, due to controlling behaviour or implicit threat. These situations of forced submissiveness are explained by Frustration-Aggression Theory and Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory, stating that repression of basic needs for autonomy and healthy connection ends in discouragement, passive or active aggression, and ultimately violence (Deci & Ryan, 1391 [2012]; Dollard, 1375 [1996]).

Thus, domination and controlling behaviour in the family takes on a multi-layered combination of overt, covert, oscillating, and colourful behaviours which keeps men suspended between the duality of surrender and resistance, at a level of physical, emotional, or psychological violence; a structure rooted in the dominant communicative pattern of the family, cultural rules, the

gender factor of power, and finally chronic frustration in experiencing healthy assertiveness (Young et al., 2003; Minuchin, 1394; Berne, 1393; Simon & Klinke, 1393; Deci & Ryan, 1391).

6.4.5. Upbringing Methods Based on Punishment and Violence

In the narrative of those whose experience of tension, violence, or repression in their family life has had a naked but silent presence, upbringing methods based on punishment and violence, as a chain of repetition and reproduction of pain, play a role not just as an individual crisis but as an intervening structure in the family. This prominent presence of punishment and violence, whether in the guise of care-giving and behavioural correction or in the robe of parental authority, generally entails contexts of obstinacy, revenge-seeking, emotional alienation, and personality dysfunction, which interviews each narrate in a deep and different way, and the emphasis of fundamental theories with a systemic and analytical view is also based on this very principle (Minuchin, 1394 [2015]; Young et al., 2003).

The world of childhood and adolescence is mixed for the first time with fear and confusion resulting from punishment and restriction; as in the memories of one participant, the shadow of his father's authority—a Law Enforcement officer—is spread over his experiences and even identity until adulthood:

'My father was in Law Enforcement. Mostly they would come and say 'Dad, don't do these things, he's a child... the guy [father] has everything... if his child commits a mistake too, he does something so his child's foot doesn't land in these kinds of places [detention]... you yourself...' He would say 'No, let him understand what kind of place he has fallen into so he doesn't do these things anymore.' The first and second time I went, maybe the first and second time I went I was afraid there; afterwards it gave me a lot of taste [pleasure/thrill], basically I myself would do something to go to the [Correction] Centre. Afterwards when my age got higher, it went higher correspondingly... 'You are being very stubborn with me.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz, Pos 20).

In this quote, the audience sees beyond a developmental experience; a cycle where 'Punishment' with the aim of control and behavioural inhibition gradually transforms into its opposite: an adolescent who, in his own words, acts 'stubbornly' and finds belonging to the place of punishment. From the perspective of Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Dollard's Frustration-

Aggression Theory, repeated punishment without understanding and emotional support leads to resistance and internal conflict with the parent (Bandura, 1984 [2005]; Dollard, 1937 [1996]).

A different attitude sometimes accompanies narratives of violence with a 'why' and justification from the victim himself. As if the victim tries to reinterpret the imposed psychological pressure to be able to adapt to it:

'It is true my mother annoyed/abused me; I look from this angle, I see, well, in that time perhaps my mother had to do these things.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid, Pos 125).

This type of view is an instance of Distorted Cognitive Schemas (Young et al.) and Identification with the Aggressor, which causes the reproduction of violence and the inhibition of expressing emotions.

Some narratives show well the contradiction of gender roles and the violent upbringing of boys; where pressure on 'being cheeky/bold' (*Por-roo budan*) and fearlessness replaces healthy emotional connection and acceptance:

'Upbringing is everything. Bravo, exactly; but in exchange, that trans woman [living] as a man... meaning 'be cheeky/bold, go do so-and-so'... their type of upbringing is different. [If] they acted a bit modest in boys' school, they would bring a calamity upon their heads; in boys' school they are forced to be cheeky.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan, Trans, Pos 205).

Here, the injury of gender role mismatch and education based on pugnacity is reflected not only in the family but in the educational structure. According to Socialisation and Norms Theory (Simon & Klinke, 1993 [2014]), this educational pugnacity prepares individuals for more defective role-playing in subsequent life crises.

Entering the details of violence in the home space clearly reveals the erosive and chronic effects of parental physical violence on the child or mother of the family upon the psychological and emotional fabric of members:

'My mum had a very weak and fearful personality, she is afraid of everything; for example, she had never ridden a taxi in her life, she only uses public transport, even that only after 15-16 years staying in Tehran. My dad, I think until age 20, beat me and my mum. The last scene I remember was a period when I was just going to university, when he hit my mum and I got up to hit him and we grappled and I slammed him against the wall; he got scared then. This fight was the last fight.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 5).

In this bitter experience, parental violence not only drags the son to the position of defender of the mother but reveals the dynamics of domination-confrontation and the transmissibility of the cycle of violence; as Minuchin (1394 [2015]) says, defective family power relations, especially in childhood, instead of teaching problem-solving skills or anger control, involve individuals in retaliatory reactions or isolation and helplessness.

Other narratives clarify the direct impact of parental violence on motivation, academic progress, and even the adolescent's choice of hidden protest method:

'We had a student; mentally it was very, very clear he is smart, capable, and has talent, but doesn't want to study... mostly the cause of not studying was beatings that the father or parents had towards that boy. He wanted to show this way that 'I protest against this lifestyle of my father and mother.' They beat him for trivial reasons... it caused him to fall behind academically, even for a period he basically ran away from school to show 'Yeah, I want to confront you'... this very beating by father and mother, that student who could study, could progress, ran away because of these beatings of his father and mother.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 19).

Here, facing the lack of support and parental love and its replacement with punishment leads to 'Passive Resistance' and a type of indirect aggression (whether by dropping out or lack of motivation). This is that same erosive cycle which Frustration-Aggression Theory, Structural Family Therapy, and Bowlby's Attachment Theory all emphasise its devastating consequences for personality, motivation, and individuals' belonging to the family (Dollard, 1375; Bowlby, 1379; Minuchin, 1394).

At the same time, justifying parental violence and the idea of using 'fear' to create behavioural discipline yields an image of internalising repression and its continuation:

'I look from this angle, I don't look from a bad angle; why? Because I see that now I became like this, perhaps I wouldn't have become like this... my other brothers now went their life path, have a factory for themselves, are working, their own life; my sister the same way. Basically, the thing is, their behaviour changed, many things... for example, if I stayed, perhaps my mum the first time she hit me, if I used [learned from] it, fear would fall into my existence, I wouldn't go after these kinds of things...' (Interview No. 44, Hamid, Pos 129).

In such reinterpretations, the victim tries to soothe his damaged identity by aligning the source of repression with the success of some members—who likely used patterns of escape and acceptance. This is the same distorted cognitive displacement that Young's Schema Therapy describes as one of the factors of injury continuation and avoidance in expressing healthy emotions (Young et al., 2003).

Beyond physical and direct violences, pampering and boundless parenting methods also pave the path for cultivating a bully or frustrated personality:

'Meaning a mother who in raising her child, who cries 'what do you want,' meaning 'I grant your wish and submit, you just be silent'... the child learns that with bullying and shouting and screaming he reaches whatever he wants. From now on, then, from Mom to anyone else. And this unfortunately, since parenting has a problem again... our educational poverty is very severe.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 40).

Thus, boundlessness of parenting not only does not suppress violence but reproduces it in the form of forming a domineering or submissive personality at another level; as Structural Family Therapy and Bandura's Social Learning Theory also emphasise (Minuchin, 1994; Bandura, 1984).

Repeated references to common patterns of corporal punishment, especially in traditional and gender-differentiated spaces, make psychological pressure clearly visible:

'There is a discussion of upbringing in terms of beating; now they make boys understand more with beating than with tongue [words], and girls with cajoling (Naz-keshidan). I live in Kermanshah now, I don't know if I should say all of them, all, but until fifteen years ago it was established like this. They make boys understand more with beating, with ear-pulling, they would pull their ears... well, this has a lot of effect... when their work drags to violence, there it has a lot of effect on morale...' (Interview No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 10).

Such narratives show the destructive impact of unwritten society-centric rules (Simon & Klinke, 1993) and upbringing methods based on violence on the structure of masculine identity and the manner of facing crises.

Chronic and daily violences remain like a permanent load on men's shoulders:

'I say, well, if you add these to work too, the poor guy gets annoyed, becomes a captive. Every day he has war and fighting; I am seeing it, three days a week he

has a fight, comes to the shop with wrecked nerves...' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 97).

Minuchin (1394) considers this stage a manifestation of chronic neurosis and describes it as paving the ground for transferring injury to subsequent generations and reinforcing frustration.

In another position, the pressure of norms and gender and behavioural constraints drives the mental health of transgender children and adolescents to the abyss of injury:

'And it started that 'You don't have the right to wear boyish clothes.' I bought a boyish t-shirt, they tore it. In the family and friends and surrounding people, my mother or my mother's relatives would come tell her 'Why do you let her cut her hair?' and 'You don't have the right to cut your hair.' They said 'Why don't you wear a skirt?'... It started from 12-13 years old' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 17).

'I told my aunt who is a psychologist, 'Aunt dear, I am a boy, I like to be a boy, I can't be a girl... these relationships, if you want this to be fixed, do something for me'... the doctor said 'This [person], his brain is masculine; because you cannot fix this in any way, he must operate [have surgery] to become a boy.' My father and mother jumped at the doctor severely, 'What are you saying, you are talking nonsense'... I myself was shocked. Basically I had a world between terrible zest/joy and terrible fear.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 103).

Such experiences peak the identity struggle and psychological repression and make the socialisation process difficult for the child or adolescent, which, as Gender Identity Theory (Money et al.; likely Money & Ehrhardt) and Family Therapy indicate, will be the root of many psychological disorders and even aggressive tendencies in adulthood.

In an analytical and scientific narrative of the causes of violence against men, it is clear that upbringing methods based on punishment and violence—whether direct, indirect and gendered, physical or emotional—create a defective and self-reproducing structure that not only has a destructive effect on the quality of family relationships and psychological growth but provides the ground for transferring violence to subsequent generations, or its return in new forms of violence or escape and rebellion (Young et al., 2003; Minuchin, 1394; Simon & Klinke, 1393; Bowlby, 1379; Bandura, 1384; Dollard, 1375).

6.4.6. Domestic Exploitation

In the analytical narrative of Domestic Exploitation under the category of family intervening conditions in the emergence of violence against men, one must first attend to the multi-layered nature imbued with role requirements and inflexible norms within the Iranian family. The following quotes are objective examples of men's experience of hidden and overt exploitation in a context that considers 'responsibility,' 'working,' and 'service provision' blindly as the self-evident duty of the male gender; a matter which, in psychological and sociological analysis, illuminates the invisible mechanism of producing violence and psychological burnout.

In the first quote, Akbar Ebrahimi speaks of the family's one-sided share-seeking with a voice mixed with frustration and desperation:

'Look, I had told them many times, I had said 'Father and Mother raised 6-7 other kids besides me, brought 6-7 other kids into the world; is my share in this house just that they didn't give birth to only me? This mother didn't give birth only to me; you are there too, you do your share too. Why do you see only me in this house? I want a life too, I am young too, I like to go hang out with my buddies too, I like to have free time too. You are all busy with your lives, you go to your shops until night at your shop, and at night you take the hand of your wife and child and come into this house to visit mother; Akbar becomes your slave, puts tea before you, lays the spread (Sofreh) before you, spreads the cloth before you, makes food for you and brings it. I have no duty on my neck [I am not obligated].''

(Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 29).

In this narrative, domestic exploitation manifests not merely in the form of physical and service duties but, more importantly, in the dispossession of authority from the 'Man's Individuality' and the marginalisation of his existential needs. Studies based on Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1950 [2000]) and Schema Therapy (Young et al., 2003) show that structures such as 'Emotional Deprivation' and 'Subjugation' in families with weak boundaries and stabilised roles prevent the formation of an independent identity and source of psychological power in men. The feeling of 'domestic slavery,' directly expressed in Ebrahimi's narrative, indicates not only duty injustice but is the product of constructed expectations that expect men to offer their supportive, emotional, and service presence without expectation, as a self-evident matter and not a choice; a matter that over time shapes psychological burnout and a type of hidden sulking and helplessness in relationships.

In Arshia Jafari's narrative, dimensions of exploitation are extended to childhood and adolescence, where the lack of choice and having not even the possibility of a future dream is assumed so self-evident and ignored that it ultimately leaves a feeling of powerlessness and defencelessness:

'You know what! I have been fighting since childhood. From age seven I was working in my maternal uncle's shoemaking shop. I had no income. From age 7 I worked for free so I could have a shelter and clothes and food. For the first three-four years I had no income. This was hard for me. I had heaps of dreams. I liked to be a wrestler and do sports. Go to the club/gym. For this work I needed money. But my uncles wouldn't allow it. I am fighting; it's like this: one side my work destiny and future is involved, one side satisfying my uncle. At nights I slept in the shoemaking workshop. I had no sleeping place. My uncles married and I couldn't live in the house with them. My aunt-in-law (Zan-dayee) is young. She is 18 years old. And I have grown up now. I was 14 to 15 years old. I myself wasn't comfortable.' (Interview No. 61, Arshia Jafari, Pos 17).

The analysis of this narrative reveals a clear violation of Structural Family Therapy principles (Minuchin, 1994 [2015]). Insufficient boundary setting and lack of observance of the basic rights of the child and adolescent prepare the conditions for producing a type of relationship based on 'Hidden Exploitation' and 'Ignoring Dreams.' The consequence of this situation is the formation of schemas of emotional deprivation and internal limitation which prevents the individual in adulthood from experiencing socialisation and personal growth; feelings that often lead to 'Passive Hostility' and increased risk of high-risk behaviours in future life.

Financial and legal dimensions of exploitation in the family are also manifested in Akbar Ebrahimi's narrative, where not only are the individual's financial resources at the disposal of others, but the lack of material support drives the individual towards damaging cycles and even criminal behaviours:

'[Because of substances] they rejected/excluded me. Why? Because my money had remained in his hand; because that money he gives me, I am dilly-dallying, spending, I don't understand what I am doing... he said the rest of his money remained, I should take the rest of his money because I felt I took it... he gave us ten Tomans [million], we went and got goods, came to do business... it struck and we go for two days [and] got stuck and went to prison. From inside prison I called my brother, said 'Brother, the money you didn't get for me, you made us

vagrants of these prisons? I said come show affection, deposit 100-150-200 Tomans a day for us... I stay 5 years and a bit in prison, deposit money for me, I stay here." (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 41).

In this experience, 'Abandonment of Support' and domestic 'Financial Instability' drive the man to the margin of insecurity and exclusion. Based on Psycho-Social Analyses (Simon & Klinke, 1393 [2014]), poverty of support and financial exploitation increase the probability of the emergence of illegal and undesirable behaviours and distance the individual from the path of independence and growth. A family system that grants or withholds material resources and supportive attention unequally and based on control and intervention will, willingly or unwillingly, reproduce structural violence and the elimination of the man's individual role.

The interference of the spouse's family members and the imposition of decisions and financial expectations marks a hidden and doubled form of exploitation and weakening of the man's position—as is evident in Hosseinzadeh's narrative:

'They calmed me down so I wouldn't understand... for example, the mother-in-law took me, took me into the room, talked... and girls and so on... and she herself comes laughing... I whose ears had become sharp [was listening]... the dad was fighting with the daughter that 'Why did you go take money for the thing... what's its name... you got the [driver's] license?' whereas apparently he expected the deposit money for the house to be in the dad's name... why should he support his daughter from divorce [in divorce]?' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 80).

Here, hidden coalitions, dialogues outside the man's circuit of information, and expectation of one-sided financial support reconstruct an unfair and exploitative situation. Discrimination of roles and multi-layered interventions, from the perspective of the Sociology of Norms (Simon & Klinke, 1393), are considered both an injury for the man and a crisis for family unity, because they transform the masculine individual position and decision-making into a further tool for control and weakening.

Finally, Sohrabi's report explicitly points to the emergence of disputes based on financial comparisons and the interference of the spouse's family:

'Her sister at that time was getting 700 Tomans from her husband and all these things were on her own neck [responsibility], even once I told her too, I said

'Everyone says you have a husband, foreign car, you have so-and-so... man, my income, your income during this period is growing a lot'... and well, the sister was charging her [inciting her] and unfortunately the minimum was that in this story when she realised, she could have prevented this. We married and then in the first few years we had a bit of disputes, especially the [other] party's family interfered a lot, once or twice a fight there...' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 36).

Economic comparisons, extra-marital coalitions, and family traditions that place the man under the pressure of income conflict and contradictory expectations, in accordance with the principles of the 'Entitlement' and 'Mistrust/Abuse' schemas in Young's theory (Young et al., 2003) and concepts of power in the family (Minuchin, 1394), lead to the erosion of the relationship and even hidden or overt violence in marital life.

The analytical resultant of these narratives shows that domestic exploitation, at all three levels—behavioural (forced labour and service provision), emotional (ignoring individuality and needs), and economic (control of financial resources and imposition of duties)—is not only an independent factor for psychological fragility and erosion of men, but in the context of the Iranian family—with a network of norms, roles, and interventions—creates a substrate for reproducing various types of violence and psychological injury in them. The way out that family therapy theorists (Minuchin, 1394) and sociology of norms experts (Simon & Klinke, 1393) propose emphasises 'Clear Boundaries,' 'Mutual Respect,' and 'Balanced Emotional and Financial Support' in the family so that the cycle of exploitation and violence stops.

6.4.7. Child Custody and Guardianship Status

In analysing the status of child custody and guardianship under the family intervening conditions of violence against men, the first thing that attracts attention is the existence of a legal, cultural, and economic structure that not only does not support men but sometimes completely pushes them aside from the paternal role and care of children or leaves them defenceless against unfair decisions and judgments. Hosseinzadeh's narrative reveals the depth and dimensions of this crisis:

'Well, her children... the woman... look, the corrupt system I say is this. Then this woman had come and said 'I don't want these kids, give them to himself'...

Sir, in prison one doesn't bring kids; the kid fell to Welfare [foster care]. That for example no family... [if] this pressure comes, the whole family, for example his whole tribe and clan, sell whatever they have... the family wasn't a thing [rich] either, he was poor, the poor guy was poor... sell whatever they have and don't have to give this lady's money so this thing happens. Then the judge had written a verdict that the children should not be handed over to the paternal family at all.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 260).

In this narrative, dissatisfaction with the judicial system, the feeling of the paternal family's inability, and the ignoring of the father's and paternal family's rights and even the children's fate are intertwined; a structure that in times of crisis, instead of supporting fundamental family bonds, acts in such a way that neither are children returned to the father's embrace nor does the paternal family find the possibility of support. The result of this mechanism is the abandonment of children in a guardian-less and vulnerable space like Welfare centres, and even its economic pressure is imposed on a family incapable of defence and legal pursuit. Researchers in the field of family law and theorists of identity formation psychology (Minuchin, 1994; Bowlby, 1979 [2000]) have repeatedly emphasised the negative consequences of severing parental bonds and replacing them with formal support institutions.

In the next narrative, Arshia Jafari, with language full of disbelief and despair, points to the severe emotional and operational poverty of life after divorce; where neither the mother has the possibility of support nor does any structure exist for care:

'He used two things. One Shisheh [crystal meth] and one Gol [marijuana]. I know if I go towards my mother, my mother doesn't have a sleeping place [for me] and these things either, and he will divorce her.' (Interview No. 61, Arshia, Pos 9).

In this situation, the absence of minimum welfare and maternal support facilities, drug use, and family rupture place the child-adolescent in exposure to the most severe types of deprivation, helplessness, and probability of gravitating towards behavioural injuries. Attachment theories and socio-psychological research (Bowlby, 1979; Simon & Klink, 1993) emphasise that these types of situations directly increase the high risk of mental health injury, academic decline, and tendency towards high-risk behaviours. These conditions may, in addition to direct injury to adolescents, pave the way for

new cycles of feelings of desperation, powerlessness, and even anger and aggression in the parents themselves—especially cast-aside fathers—a matter that explains a large part of the emergence of violence in subsequent stages.

Raheleh Mehraban's quote illuminates another corner of cultural pressures on men in the field of custody; where even after separation, the woman refuses to give custody rights and society expects the man to continue accepting the difficult conditions and not resist:

'In short, we separated. Their custody was with me, the kids were with me, she wouldn't give their custody to me [initially]. She said 'I won't give custody,' and 'Return to your home and life and keep your kids. If you were a woman... if it be a woman... if I had betrayed too, you should definitely stay with your life. Look at most of our fellow citizens; isn't my brother's wife [like this]? She has a co-wife, she lives with him. Isn't so-and-so [like this]?' I said 'Why do you give examples from yourself? We are not like this at all; for example, our race or our culture is different from your culture.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 34).

In this passage, regional cultural norms and expectations place men under the burden of traditional roles and silence in the face of suffering resulting from the lack of parental rights. From the view of Transactional Analysis Theory (Berne, 1395 [2016]) and the study of the Iranian family (Modarresi, 1397 [2018]), these cultural contradictions lead to a type of role coercion and desperation; the man in such conditions, even at the cost of infidelity, violence, or loss of the family foundation, is considered obliged to endure conditions and not demand custody rights. This doubled pressure itself transforms into a focal point for intensifying psychological burnout, damaged paternal identity, and latent aggression.

Finally, Yaser Hosseini Fard's quote shows another form of 'Direct Violence Against Children' due to family conditions which, as a cycle of injury, reciprocally affects men and calls into question the role of parents in ensuring the child's welfare, mental health, and growth:

'They expected all the work... I am mostly in the village... all work related to shepherding and animal husbandry and agriculture, this boy should do, and this boy couldn't do all of it and his father and mother would beat him too. Then he had to study his lessons too.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 21).

Such expectations of children and adolescents not only lead to their physical, psychological, and identity injury but, continuing that same cycle, deeply

affect the quality of their relationship with parents and the formation of their behavioural patterns in youth and adulthood. Based on Structural Family Therapy Theory (Minuchin, 1994) and Schema Therapy research (Young et al., 2003), such conditions lead to the forced learning of silence, obedience, frustration, and feelings of worthlessness which provides the ground for reproducing violence and mistrust, and fathers are also considered somehow victims of this same vicious cycle.

In total, the stated narratives clearly demonstrate that the issue of custody and guardianship of children, under the simultaneous pressure of an inefficient legal system, socio-economic deprivations, compulsory cultural norms, and a defective family psychological structure, has effectively caused fathers to suffer feelings of powerlessness, exclusion, desperation, and intensification of violence. In the current mechanism of communications and judgments of the separation period, the principle of 'The Best Interests of the Child' is often displaced by taste, discrimination, or financial and cultural pressures on the paternal family, and the father, in addition to the direct lack of relationship with the child, often carries the feeling of loss of identity and failure with himself for years. For this reason, family theorists and social psychologists emphasise that solving the crisis of violence against men requires reforming social structures, clearer legal supports, greater attention to parental mental health, and relative autonomy in family decisions (Minuchin, 1994; Simon & Klinke, 1993; Bowlby, 1979).

6.4.8. Increased Female Authority and Weakened Male Authority in the Family

In examining the family intervening conditions and the role of 'Increased Female Authority and Weakened Male Authority' as a context for the emergence of violence against men, interviewees' narratives unveil deep conflicts of identity, roles, and mutual expectations in the family life of contemporary Iran.

Ms. Safaei, with psychological and social precision, points to a change she noticed in the twists and turns of her lived experience:

'My insight became different regarding what you say, that violence happens against men. In these few years I have worked, I gradually realised that perhaps a healthy family is a family where, even by a needle's tip, the man is at the apex of the house pyramid; and I have seen many families where the woman tries to go

stand at the apex herself, and because she doesn't know the path, is not aware—I don't say academic literacy, [but] perhaps upbringing literacy from her mother—and doesn't have the mothers of before and, in terms of 'role model,' doesn't have that correct pattern to develop her womanhood, develop her motherhood, she cannot go stand at that apex; and if she stands there too, it becomes violence against the man. My view is this.' (Interview No. 78, Safaei, Pos 14).

This narrative overtly introduces the traditional family structure with the 'man at the apex of the pyramid' as a factor for maintaining family health; not from the perspective of gender precedence or regression, but emphasising that in conditions where the woman tries to take control of the apex position but has not developed upbringing experience and lacks feminine patterns, the ground is prepared for creating a type of violence against the man. As family theorists (Minuchin, 1394 [2015]) and social pathology experts (Izadi et al., 1400 [2021]) point out, 'Structural Role Displacement' without redefinition and support from social and educational structures can lead to the collapse of the family's internal cohesion and the formation of destructive emotional reactions among members; whether this violence is conscious or the result of the immaturity of unexperienced roles. Here, the woman, due to lack of 'upbringing literacy' and absence of a model, cannot cultivate feminine and maternal identity constructively, and the man also sees the position of authority as lost; a situation analysed by some experts under the concept of the 'Silent Revolution of Roles' (Toffler, 1992; Persian trans. Mousavi, 1381 [2002]).

The next narrative expresses another masculine experience of how the challenge of authority and identity in the modern and traditional family space transforms into an arena of multi-layered actions and reactions:

'My wife came and said 'I want to work and become independent.' I said 'Okay, I accept, work and become independent, but you are teaching as a contract teacher in a school; why? It is better, you have money too, go open a non-profit school.' 'No, I like to open a cafe.' Despite my opposition, she opened her cafe too and is active now. Look, this is very hard for a man in Iranian society. Let me give you a small explanation; maybe a third person hears this and says 'Well, what's wrong with it? The woman is working.' They are right too, huh; let the woman work, what's wrong with it? But to suddenly reach from here to there... where 'is it important for me or not important?' working is very hard. If it is a shared life, Mr. Doctor, everything is 50-50. If it is a traditional and Islamic life, Bismillah [go ahead], you have your Mehrieh, you have your Shirbaha, and according to

this traditional and Islamic law you must live under one roof with me. You can't say 'I put two basins in front of myself; in one I put traditional and Islamic laws and in one I put laws of freedom anywhere in the world that exist for humans.'
(Interview No. 17, Foad, Pos 19).

Here, a fundamental contradiction between traditional values and women's modern needs and demands is clearly visible. The narrating man, while accepting the spouse's independence and even suggesting a more constructive proposal (opening a school), is challenged by the spouse's choice (cafe ownership). On one hand, he has empathy with the hypothetical listener and confirms that a woman working shouldn't be criticised, but in a deeper layer, he sees himself exposed to accepting contradictory rules of tradition and modernity; he is expected to sometimes observe traditional household requirements and sometimes norms of individual freedom. Social Semiotics theories (Barthes, 1983; Persian trans. Kourosh Safavi, 1394 [2015]) and Transactional Analysis of Roles (Berne, 1395 [2016]) emphasise precisely this point that role displacement without establishing implicit and conscious agreement on new rules transforms the family space into a field of overt and covert struggles; where neither traditional rules are implementable nor modern participatory justice is correctly internalised. Foad, with the example of 'putting two basins in front of myself,' demands a specific boundary to know on which pattern he is to build life, and the absence of structural agreement drags this suspension and instability into the realm of masculine identity and paves the way for subtle and gradual forms of violence against them.

It is seen that both narratives agree on the absence or inefficiency of processes for learning the new role for women and men's identity bewilderment under the pressure of current social changes. Where women, without acquiring semantic resources (not merely academic, but lived experience and intergenerational upbringing transfer), try to conquer the apex of the pyramid, or on one hand demand independence in the form of individualistic values and on the other rely on traditional privileges (*Mehrieh, Shirbaha...*), the family space, instead of a field of participation, transforms into a scene of competition and ultimately hidden and overt violence. Men's experience of 'Weakened Authority' is accompanied by a sense of duality, role instability, and sometimes rejection and being ignored, which can ultimately lead to increased struggles and compensatory decisions or even aggressive and passive reactions. Structural Family Therapy theories (Minuchin, 1394),

studies of Gender Role Transition Patterns (Scott, 2016), and new socio-cultural research also consistently emphasise that failure in teaching new roles or managing the process of change not only does not repair the gap of power and authority but itself transforms into a source of injuries, conflicts, and new cycles of violence (Young et al., 2003; Simon & Klinke, 1393).

In the path of Iranian family life, the unanswered conflict of roles, lack of shared definitions, and absence of agreement for power division not only weakens men's identity and authority but places women in a position of vulnerability and failure to learn the new role, the consequence of which is the formation of overt and covert layers of violence and disruption in the emotional and social growth of both sides of the relationship.

6.4.9. Lack of Family Welfare and Leisure

In the narrative and integrated analysis of family intervening conditions of violence against men, 'Level of Family Welfare and Access to Leisure' is one of the components that leaves a deep effect on men's lived experience; especially where lack or inequality in this domain effectively leads to an opportunity for humiliation, unkindness, rejection, and even the application of hidden or overt violence by family and surrounding people towards the man.

What is derived from Hamid Moradi's narrative is that long-term deprivation of basic facilities in many regions of the country provides a ground where families inherit an experience of compulsion, lack, and bearing deprivation from one generation to another:

'Society... perhaps facilities available to the city where these individuals grew up [were provided] later than facilities available... for example, for myself, for my friends... facilities I had 20 years ago, they are just reaching them now in their city. And one is this, and one is this very family of theirs causes that when they didn't have those facilities, such as education, hygiene, and housing, didn't have those facilities, they are forced not to place their children in that position again, and injuries that can reach them, such as that very being placed under family compulsion and one being placed under compulsion [themselves].' (Interview No. 30, Hamid Moradi, Pos 12).

This quote, inspired by Social Pathology theories (Rafiepour, 1393 [2014]), emphasises that relative deprivation is not merely an economic matter but an emotional and identity experience influencing all the individual's actions and reactions in the family structure. The man in such conditions bears the burden

of cultural and social pressures lest he see his children deprived like himself, and this very effort sometimes leads to unwanted compulsions and the reproduction of violence in the guise of compassion.

Ali Asgari expresses an experience diametrically opposed to the previous image:

'Yeah, I say I was a tradesman, had a shop, my situation was good, income was good. Until the first five years of my life when I was in that same county (Shahrestan), I had the best things; meaning whether in terms of travel, whether in terms of expenses I made, I was comfortable. Meaning I didn't understand something called 'not having,' didn't know what poverty was.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 127).

And again, with structure-breaking surprise, he adds:

'I say seriously, meaning at that time when my friends said 'Ali, give a hand [lend money],' I would very easily give them one Toman, five hundred Tomans by hand, and they said 'We don't have,' I said 'They are lying, is such a thing possible?' But when I came to Welfare (Behzisti), I understood that really 'not having' exists too.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 129).

Here, the transformation of social understanding of deprivation and welfare has found a key dimension. According to theorists of social expectation levels in a variable and unequal society (Durkheim, cited in Fakouhi, 1398 [2019]), the experience of 'not having' and 'having' confronts the individual not only with anxiety but with a hidden judgment regarding the worthiness of himself and others; where men are placed in exposure to continuous comparison with others and their past selves, or engaged in an endless cycle of proving merit.

These pressures crystallise even in the context of formal institutions. When Colonel Mousavi-Pour speaks of the necessity of providing 'Peace' for forces, the list of welfare facilities is introduced as the starting point for solving problems rooted in chronic dissatisfaction with the situation:

'Look, salary and benefits... these are basically... salary and benefits, these are all excuses. If we have welfare facilities for our forces, these talks don't exist anymore. These seek to resolve their need. What is their need? It is a peace; we must prepare the ground for peace for them. What is the ground for peace for singles? Let's provide marriage for them, 'Sir, you go take a wife, I give from zero to a hundred of it.' Look, this [problem] goes away automatically. When the ground for peace is prepared for him, he becomes hopeful for life, becomes hopeful

for continuing work for that organisation or thing at all.' (Interview No. 95, Colonel Mousavi-Pour, Pos 101).

This narrative shows that the feeling of deprivation and lack of satisfaction is not just an individual issue but a structural and intergenerational issue which itself can be the source of various types of family violence. Maslow's Theory regarding the hierarchy of needs (Maslow, cited in Shariatmadari, 1394 [2015]) also clarifies that the need for security and welfare is a precondition for realizing social satisfaction and mental health. When this substrate is not provided, men more than anyone are placed under the pressure of expectation and judgment.

This obligation to create welfare and comfort in the family sometimes leads to conflict and frustration at the juncture of choices and commitments. In Sohrabi's narrative it comes:

'Now many propose to me immediately, but why did that lady I loved do this work to me? Because she didn't know what she was doing either. She was at a crossroads: 'Sir, someone pay her expenses or she goes after her entertainment and comfort.' Commitment is a chain that blocks a series of issues...' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 174).

Here, the impact of welfare and leisure needs is directly linked to the quality and sustainability of the human relationship or even the emergence of infidelity and abandoning the relationship. Social Exchange Theory (Homans, cited in Niazi Sani, 1396 [2017]) shows that when one party feels they do not have access to sufficient welfare and leisure resources, they do not remain committed to the relationship or discharge pressure with substitute behaviour.

In Yaser Hosseini Fard's narrative, the simultaneity of emotional expectations and welfare needs marks an erosive war between providing the family economy and responding to the spouse's leisure and emotional needs:

'In the long term, now I myself see she doesn't have that relationship she had with me before. She is upset with me. She shows me, sometimes shouts at me, whereas before it wasn't like this. She expected... she herself says 'Dad, I wish you were one-jobbed.' But now I say 'I am for your welfare, your future, I want to be dual-jobbed like this so your income is higher,' but she doesn't like this. Sometimes it has happened at 12-12:30 at night she expects me to go to the park with her. Play with her, talk with her. But her expectation is much more than these. Before, it was a different way.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 45).

This narrative clarifies that in conditions of economic pressure, the man tries to provide family welfare by being dual-jobbed, but gets a reverse result: because he remains incapable of providing the spouse's emotional and leisure needs, he experiences blame and verbal violence. The issue is not just income; but the man's share of being ignored in emotional relationships and the quality of shared life, and this very ignoring can itself provide the substrate for violence against him (Rafiei, 1400 [2021]; Theory of 'Duality of Function and Emotional Value').

In the dialogue of Rashidi (Senior Citizen), the cycle of neediness and demand for family welfare in the shadow of financial inability and dependence on children marks another share of bitter experience:

'It has a bit of pain... somewhat I can say 40 percent 50 [it] has a good feeling, but by God, may God make no one needy of his offspring. Not stretch his hand towards his offspring. I now myself, however much money I need, if I ask my kids they give me. But some offspring are unrighteous (Na-saleh)... hair has turned white, income he doesn't have either, he has need... at that time offspring is not useful.' (Interview No. 70, Rashidi, Senior Citizen, Pos 95).

Here, the financial dependence of the elderly man on children, which is always accompanied by feelings of shame and humiliation, is facing a symbolic violence that shows itself in the type of relationship, reduced self-esteem, and even rejection (Farjad, 1398 [2019]; Bourdieu's Theory of 'Symbolic Capital').

In total, the level of family welfare and the manner of experiencing and distributing leisure is not merely a factor of financial welfare but a psycho-social construct wherein any violation, lack, or imbalance carries deep consequences for mental health and men's dignity in the family and can, in various forms, pave the way for or intensify violence against the man; whether in the first decades of life or in old age. Simultaneously, sociological and social psychology theories (Maslow, Durkheim, Homans, Bourdieu) emphasise that the fate of 'Men's Victimisation' is written in the text of their welfare experience and social position.

6.5. Social Intervening Conditions

In examining the phenomenon of violence against men in Iranian society, Social Intervening Conditions hold a key position in understanding and explaining the multi-layered causes of this phenomenon. Social Stigma (*Dagh-*

khordagi) and negative labelling, which male victims of violence often experience, gradually drive them towards isolation and social exclusion. Furthermore, the transmission of criminal patterns through the network of relatives and friends plays a significant role in reinforcing violent behaviours or normalising them.

Moreover, discrimination and gender inequality, which are rooted in various levels of society, lead to the strengthening of an atmosphere of mistrust and the weakening of men's social capital. Friendship networks, in the absence of support and mutual trust, not only fail to provide the necessary backing but in many cases become a substrate for transferring or intensifying injuries and reproducing violence. Society's low sensitivity to men's problems and pains and the lack of structural support double their vulnerability and create conditions where excluded and isolated men become prone to emotional and maladaptive reactions. These situations reveal the complex dimensions of social interventions in the cycle of violence.

6.5.1. Social Stigma

Social Stigma, or being labelled and facing society's humiliating gaze, is one of the deepest and most complex consequences and also factors intensifying violence against men in Iranian society; a phenomenon that manifests itself not only in the experience of the excluded individual but in small and large family relations, work relationships, and even the project of forming individual identity.

In the context of the present narratives, the image of the victimised man is a man who is not only a victim of the external act of violence but trapped in the semantic and psychological web of stigma and social exclusion; an experience that is, in a sense, society's 'Symbolic Violence' against the individual (Bourdieu, cited in Rafiepour, 1393 [2014]).

In Abbas's experience, the gap between objective losses and social feedback reproduces psychological pressure more than anything else through labelling and deprivation:

'I married a few years ago, and for reasons, in short, it caused my life to separate [divorce]. Administrative phase too... why? That too can be a type of violence... to progress administratively. Unfortunately in our society that traditional discussion still exists... of course I don't say... I said unfortunately I cannot zoom on this... now in our society, because it is traditional, the guy knows, well,

his life has fallen apart and so on... a mark hits him, they stick a label [divorced] on him... there is much jealousy in the work environment... they stick a label that in work environments, as soon as they want to give him a managerial post, they say 'No, this one has a problem.' What problem?!' (Interview No. 77, Abbas, Pos 35).

Here, failure in family life, due to its social reflection, leads not only to the limitation of occupational and social opportunities but forms a false and negative image of the divorced man in the collective mind. Such a process, according to Labelling Theory (Becker, cited in Sotoudeh, 1392 [2013]), keeps the individual in the position of the accused and 'problematic,' even where no error or crime has occurred.

In Haghighi's narrative, the experience of stigma is reproduced less in a direct and individual form and more at the structural level; the reduction of opportunities for vulnerable children results from this very 'label' of inability and belonging to a disordered family:

'Yes, in my opinion, one of the appropriate ways that the country's statesmen can find a way so that really a suitable solution can be reached regarding this dilemma is that... when we, now through whatever means, are convinced that this child really needs to be supported by the government... assume, for example, from the time they realised that this child from age 9 is forced to be outside [working], has no proper family, and is forced to be raised and grow up for an institution or organisation... if they really can provide the child's education conditions at the beginning of that same age... and also the child doesn't have much interest in studying... simultaneous with him, they can do a series of works suitable for that child... we say now the child isn't very young age, can be up to 18 too. Kids are interested in education up to an age; it is possible from age 12 onwards he has no interest in studying. If the government or statesmen can provide a ground so that that individual, that child can both study his lessons and learn a technique, learn a profession.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 23).

This narrative shows how deprivation and lack of social support lead to structural and institutional stigma and reproduce the vicious cycle of social exclusion (Giddens, cited in Fakouhi, 1398 [2019]).

Ali Asgari once again narrates the image of life in the shadow of stigma, this time in a more personal layer:

'As far as I can, I say nothing [to my wife about my life problems]. It's the flow of [taking] leverage (Atoo), because I think in the flow of a serious argument we might have, she might say this, that for example 'You had such-and-such problem, couldn't solve it,' or 'Such-and-such problem happened to you,' even if you solved it, but it happened. Fear of blame and being labelled and being humiliated [by my wife].' (Interview No. 54, Asgari, Pos 165-168).

In this experience, the individual's inability to trust and even narrate his life to the closest person (spouse) is rooted in the fear of 'being labelled' and repeating past humiliating experiences; a feeling which, according to Goffman's Stigma Theory (trans. Ghasemi, 1394 [2015]), gradually forces the individual to internalise the label and remain limited in the margins.

In experiences resulting from sexual violence too, social stigma finds a more painful form; being a victim entails not only personal suffering but the risk of humiliation and rejection at the level of relatives and the city, and even the individual's future marriage:

'I was afraid to get help from the family [for sexual abuse]. The discussion of my family's honour (Aberu) was involved. You fear tomorrow if her husband asks her, she might say these words about you and the whole world understands... you fear she talks about you with her friends who become your relatives, and you can't take [marry] anyone and can't even return to your own city. Why didn't you get help from father? If I told my father that these events happen to me, firstly he would see me as a delinquent and an incompetent (Bi-orzeh) and dishonourable (Bi-gheyrat) person who can't defend himself... secondly, I feared that if this event happens, the news spreads that perhaps they see my father or mother as dishonourable and without reputation. Third, that perhaps a war or severe conflict happens between the abuser's family and causes more scandal (Aberu-rizi), and I was very afraid of all these. From the time [I was subjected to sexual abuse by classmates] onwards, class kids called me by bad names like 'Jesse' (Jessi - implying passive homosexual partner/victim). Now that I've grown older, the type of look of family and relatives... everyone sees me as a sexual patient.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 25-26).

'Saeed would talk about the calamities he brought on my head with the rest of the class kids, and when I entered the class, I faced their smirks and innuendos and taunts.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 16).

Here, overt peer violence and stigma in the family gathering and small communities lead to chronic suffering, sexual identity crisis, and feelings of helplessness (Young, cited in Mirsepasi, 1396 [2017]).

Regarding the experience of trans individuals, stigma has extended to the entire social and family life, where the individual must not only hide their real identity but has no possibility for dialogue and getting help without losing reputation:

'[Trans people deny their own sexual identity and don't get help from anyone]... the first is fear of family reputation, fear of scandal... especially the reverse of us [FTM], meaning his condition is much worse. Look, one of the reasons I can bring for you is that families either don't accept, or if they accept the party is trans, they don't allow surgery. Fear of reputation, that 'Until now such-and-such daughter went out of the house, now she goes out without Hijab? Now what do I as a man tell people?' They have fear of people's talk, have fear of scandal. A series of families, if they accept the party is trans too... some fall from this side of the roof [go to extremes], have fear of surgery; they say 'Okay sir, you are a boy, you are a girl, be whatever you want, I won't allow you to do surgery because it is a heavy surgery.' Doesn't have fear of death, but well, it's an event that they become sterile for the rest of their lives, and also...' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 119).

Collective pressure and labelling cause the individual to overlook even their most minimal individual rights and medical diagnosis for fear of social stigma and rejection; a matter Zuckerman calls the gap between 'social identity' and 'individual identity' (Zuckerman, cited in Hosseini, 1402 [2023]).

There are other experiences too that show how social stigma brings about withdrawal, lack of family communication, and voluntary isolation:

'I was 14, fifteen years old [until now] that [I had no connection] with relatives... no one saw me anymore... I don't like relatives at all, at all. I don't know, I don't like them.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz, Pos 175-178).

At this level, social stigma leads to the dissolution of family bonds and the voluntary severing of communications (Coleman, cited in Rafiei, 1400 [2021]).

As Ashkan and Hossein narrate, childhood violence and bullying also sow the seeds of social stigma and the removal of the individual from natural collective relations:

'He bullied me a lot, picked on the weak, hit the kids, and this influenced me, and now that I entered this age my mentality is that whoever you hang out with, you become like him; whatever he has, you become exactly like that. Then this happened that we fought, he hit my head with a knife and our friendship broke up.' (Interview No. 101, Ashkan and Hossein, Students, Pos 67).

Here, secondary isolation casts a shadow over the individual's future in a functional form (Merton, cited in Sotoudeh, 1392 [2013]).

When men, by virtue of their family position, even in the nuclear and specific power structure, face the threat of stigma, such as the position of the younger child who remains in the obedient role, the social meaning of 'stigma' receives attention:

'This interval in the future... the younger child... the role he has, for example, be a leader, be able to make his word sit on the chair [enforce his will], in fact want to do something with authority... in fact because this is institutionalised in his mind, maybe he can't; in fact, even now he is that same previous obedient and submissive [person] but only his age has grown.' (Interview No. 100, Mojtaba Mardani, Pos 18).

In this experience, the fear of the label of 'divorced' is preferred over staying in an unhealthy condition and continuing suffering; according to Rational Choice Theory (Commons, cited in Ghaffari, 1395 [2016]), sometimes solely due to fear of social judgment and fear of being stigmatised, individuals do not choose their desired option.

Ultimately, and from the heart of all these narratives, it can be observed that social stigma is not merely a labelling process; this phenomenon is a 'Symbolic Power Structure' which, through various forms of deprivation, blame, label, rejection, and severing of relationships, not only deters the victimised man from social support and growth opportunities but traps him in a cycle of accumulated suffering and feeling of alienation; as theorists of 'Symbolic Capital' and 'Domination Structure' (Bourdieu and Giddens) emphasise, the real power of social violence lies there where it encourages the individual to remain silent himself in relation to his trauma and not hear his own voice (Rafiei, 1400; Sotoudeh, 1392; Hosseini, 1402).

6.5.2. Transmission of Criminal Patterns through Kinship Networks

The pattern of criminality through the kinship network is part of the social reality of men born in an extensive bio-relational context, where not only the family structure but the wider network of relatives and subcultures related to it, in an ignored form, influence the formation of behaviours and even masculine identity. The deep and bitter narrative of Mohammad Amin Bagheri from his childhood builds a vivid and horrific image of the dominance of the criminal substructure in family layers and local context. He says:

'I was in a family where all of them were criminals and thugs (Sherarati) and of my six maternal uncles, several of them died from crime. They executed my uncle Abbas. My uncle Javad... thing... fights in the camp and a dagger goes into his heart... one of them had a cardiac arrest in prison and died. Like this, all of them were destroyed.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 69).

This description is accompanied by the induction of a deterministic atmosphere; determinism resulting from the continuous presence of crime, substances, violence, and death in the circle of closest individuals, which not only directly threatens the individual but gradually plants the 'seed' of criminality in his mind and psyche. This specific type of socialisation, described in Differential Association Theory (cited in Sutherland & Sotoudeh, 1392 [2013]) as the key factor in internalising deviant norms, shows that socialisation, instead of creating positive norms, can lead to the contagion of deviant norms. In the participant's own words:

'Even now my family, most of them are in criminal work, and my paternal family too. There were female cousins and male cousins. They are all related together, you know. Like this... well, for example, I [was] like this... this seed of substances and criminality and these things remained on my brain and these things, and I didn't make a doctor my model, for example; we made a criminal [our model].' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 70).

His life path is surrounded by a space full of poverty of symbolic capital and positive models (in Bourdieu's concept, cited in Fakouhi, 1394 [2015]), and instead, fraught with repeated contact with negative experiences; such that 'becoming a criminal' is more like an inevitable occurrence than an optional environment. The permanent and modelling presence of uncles, cousins, and female cousins in the circle of crime distances his socialisation from the main path of social life and positive role-playing.

On the other hand, the peak of the influence of the kinship network and even the family body in the individual's fateful affairs is observed in a narrative of his father's release from prison via the activity and influence of the grandmother and uncle:

'Ahmadinejad came here, came to Haft-e Tir [Square] of Qarchak and... my grandmother gave... said 'Mohammad, give this paper by any means possible... thing... to Ahmadinejad's hand.' I too took the scaffolding and vzhzh [sound of speed] went and gave the paper... after 17 days my Aga [father] was released.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 71).

Here too, the kinship network, from the legal-social path, directly engages in the process of intervention and bargaining to change the situation; a type of indigenous and relational Social Capital (in Coleman's concept, cited in Afzali, 1397 [2018]) that makes mediation and social pressure on official apparatuses possible.

The dangerous dimensions of this deviant socialisation do not remain only in families severely caught in the crime network. The result of the absence of effective supervisory and supportive institutions, such as the absence of the father as a symbol of law and order, is deeply effective in explaining the pattern of male deviance. As Colonel Mousavi-Pour narrates:

'For example, our colleague's son, due to the father's non-presence in important life scenes, it caused, for example, him to turn out dissolute (La-obali). Something where the father is the symbol of law but the son, unfortunately, has taken another path. Its cause is that he has... hasn't been able to... that fatherly duty he should execute well in the house, he hasn't been able to.' (Interview No. 95, Retired Military Colonel, Pos 89-88).

This lack of the father's supervisory and guiding role, according to the theory of 'Gender Roles and Social Expectations' (Parsons & Bales, cited in Sedighian, 1394 [2015]), causes male children, despite all individual potential, not to be able to traverse the path of ethical and social health, and the ground is prepared for behavioural deviation.

At the structural-social level, economic pressures and situational compulsion formed around families and relatives trapped in criminal patterns force men to perform works they do not even agree with in their hearts, but have no choice but to do. The citizens' narrative addresses this very obligation transparently:

'Like criminal works; there are some men who [excuse me] sell substances and do some works they didn't want in the past but are forced to do... theft. Now when we sit at the feet of thieves' words [listen to them], we say 'Sir, why do you steal?'... Why should that thief do that work with a woman who is defenceless... he knows it himself too, but does this work. He is forced. He is forced to reach a financial sum.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 77-79).

This compulsion and structural pressure is analysable within the framework of Social Strain Theory or Structural Incongruence (Merton, cited in Karimi, 1397 [2018]), where the conflict between legitimate cultural goals (such as earning income or providing livelihood) and the lack of legitimate means to achieve it guides the person towards using illegitimate means—and consequently, violence and victimising others without heartfelt consent.

In a narrative summary, it is seen that the kinship network is not merely a blood and emotional texture, but in some social substrates of Iran, is a network for transferring deviant capital, criminal culture, identity direction, and even determining the legal fate of members. This subcultural and familial order, with the absence of alternative models (such as doctor or teacher), the absence of the father as the controller of social norms, structural pressures, and repeated reproduction of violence, places men in exposure to a type of hidden and accumulated violence; violence that is transferred to society through the path of education, modelling, compulsion, and social despair, and perpetuates the loops of criminality.

6.5.3. Discrimination and Gender Inequality

In the space of a society where individuals' lived experiences are shaped in various social and familial layers, discrimination and gender inequality have a fluid but deep and multi-layered form that can create an influential substrate for violence against men. Narratives rising from the heart of this very daily life and traditional and modern mentalities and relations present a tension-filled and contradictory image of gender relationships; a space influential not only in behavioural structures but in feeling, value, and even the right to live masculinely and femininely.

While many women are obliged in social perception and representation to follow patterns of beauty and femininity, Maryam's personal experience displays the other side of the coin:

'Now our clothes, everyone... and really since I was a girl at home, I didn't believe in dressing up and makeup and these things, and thought all these... I was under the influence of my mum and dad. My dad always... from the gesture of being heavy and dignified (Sangin-Rangin)... Ahmad nowhere criticised 'Why don't you wear makeup? What kind of woman are you? A woman must be attractive, have femininity.' He was worse than me. He, in terms of religion, very much... even if I, for example, in recent years, my makeup which takes 3 minutes... he would say 'Dad [expression], let's go, you are beautiful just like this, so-and-so'... yeah, he was severely opposed too.' (Interview No. 13, Maryam, Pos 52-54).

Here, gender pressures and social expectations are reproduced not only from society but from within the family and with the direct role-playing of fathers and mothers. These contradictions between customary expectations and religious and personal beliefs sediment in the depth of individuals' existence and prepare the arena for the emergence of symbolic and spiritual violences (Bourdieu, trans. Fakouhi, 1394 [2015]).

On the other side of the story, Shayan Varamini's narrative touches gender identity finding and repressions resulting from imposing gender roles with his whole being:

'No, I'm comfortable, I say it, I see it from my inner feeling because I really considered her my woman [wife] in my own mind. But when we went [out] with Manteau and Maghnaeh [female head covering], she didn't understand my feelings at all, didn't understand at all. I couldn't tell her that 'For example, I love you, I consider myself a man.' After a while passed, I passed the 15-16 year old period, I told her 'I liked to be Amir, I basically want to be a boy.'' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 43).

This painful narrative reflects the conflict of role and identity; where the individual's experience does not align with his body and gender, and society not only shows no acceptance but engages in repression, humiliation, or ignoring; conditions Bourdieu considers symbolic violence against different gender identities (Bourdieu, trans. Fakouhi, 1394) and Giddens also refers to as the crisis of modernity of gender identity (Giddens, cited in Sedighian, 1394 [2015]).

In emotional structures and romantic relationships too, an unequal space between feeling and facing loss is seen:

'They become dependent on the party, that 'Sir, I am a girl, you are a boy, you became dependent on me or I became dependent on you.' Many believe that after they suffer romantic failure they get very wrecked, but men are not like this; but whereas it is the reverse. A woman can adapt herself with another man, but a man cannot easily do this work unless this man has been raised badly from the very beginning... otherwise usually women, even if the husband dies, some marry, some don't... they can easily marry or divorce. Men do too. But men still think of that first woman. But womankind usually only thinks of the second one, meaning they forget easily. My opinion is like this. I have seen a thousand people too who were like this.' (Interview No. 68, Akbar Mombini, Pos 53-55).

This perception, in addition to reproducing the common gender stereotype, assumes the masculine experience of emotional injuries and failures deeper and more lasting, according to Attachment Theory and Grief of Loss (Bowlby, 1969; trans. Sedighian, 1394); a state which itself causes the emergence of emotional disorders and creating a cycle of violence and reaction.

In power relations in the family it is also stated:

'Well, these naggings (Gir-ha) that [women] give, what consequence does it have on the man's behaviour? What reaction does the man have when the woman controls his family relationships? Day by day he gets further from his life. He gets far from life, the man. Day by day he becomes more indifferent.' (Interview No. 68, Akbar Mombini, Pos 56-59).

Here, emotional and social control drives the man towards isolation, indifference, and finally secondary injuries. According to Minuchin's Family Systems Theory, if the power balance in the family is distorted, injury will enter both genders, but men are driven more towards emotional refusal and withdrawal from the relationship (Minuchin, cited in Sotoudeh, 1392 [2013]).

In the deepest cultural layers, masculine duties are stabilised as a self-evident matter without the right to demand emotional value:

'He is a man, forget it, you are a man. This 'being a man'... the guy gets tired, gets hopeless; he is human too, a person. He too has a need for affection, has a need for love. Every need the female gender has, the male gender has too, even in my view has more; someone must buy his Naz [cajole/pamper him]. He has gone, worked, suffered hardship, for whom? For that family. Without them buying his Naz, giving him value, without praising him... that man has a need too, but

unfortunately it's not like this; it was his duty, he must do this work.' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 58).

This representation of traditional masculine culture, which is also described in Connell's Hegemonic Masculinity Theory (trans. Sedighian, 1394), causes men not only to remain more forgotten but more violated and suffering.

At the level of social and economic structure, men's experience of Reverse Discrimination is also tangible:

'Ali: Exactly, it becomes less. Look, you look at Qisas [retribution]; for example, European society... I want to speak a bit business-wise... for example they come accuse Apple company 'Why are a percentage of your employees women [only]?' 'You are applying discrimination.' Apple is forced to perform male workforce redundancy and hire men [sic: context implies hiring women/minorities to balance, or perhaps speaker means hiring women forces firing men, or vice versa; likely complaining about forced quotas displacing merit]. And that meritocracy that should be there is destroyed.' (Interview No. 48, Ali Nour-Mohammadi, Pos 173).

In this domain, worry regarding the destruction of meritocracy and creating artificial balance between two genders is gripping not only in the domain of individual perception but in the labour market arena and public space. This narrative reflects Organisational Justice Theory and the feeling of inequality of opportunities (Adams, cited in Afzali, 1397 [2018]).

Gender inequality in facing value-orientation and entitlement-seeking is also seen:

'Well, she said a beautiful thing too; she said 'How do you say, Sir, for example I don't like you to walk around with hair open in front of my son? How do you say, Sir, I don't like, for example, you to follow so-and-so or message-play [flirt]? That same thing I don't like either. Everything is Halal for you and Haram for me?'' (Interview No. 69, Vahid, Pos 30).

Here, raising the dual law and double ethical standards between two genders is an instance of Double Standard Theory and hidden oppression in family and social relationships (Sanei, 1397 [2018]).

In the field of rights and benefits and social facilities too, the atmosphere of reverse discrimination is annoying and extensive:

'[In our society] discrimination has taken shape in favour of women. Look, have you ever seen a movement once in the last 40 years, women who claim to be modern and feminist, come and critique the traditional nature of Mehrieh or deny Nafagheh? I want to say that [feminists] have confiscated divorce in their own favour. Now come tell these women 'Mehrieh is a thing [archaic],' they say 'It's our right.' Look, in a fraction of a second they become that same traditional person of 200 years ago, 'It's my right.' Yeah, they criticised it too, wanted to abolish it too. My speech is this: as soon as you come speak about their modern rights, suddenly the woman transforms into a traditional woman of 200 years ago. Its manifestation comes in what? It comes in life expectancy being 4-5 years more in women than men.' (Interview No. 3, Dr. Moradi, Pos 79-83).

This social critique, alongside stating discriminatory legal structures, tells of the dynamic nature of social relations which, depending on interests and position, executes being modern or traditional (Bourdieu, trans. Fakouhi, 1394).

This atmosphere of discrimination is reproduced even in the system of belief in lineage continuation and childbearing:

'A man who hasn't brought a son into the world, and his wife after all these years... his wife is after a boy child. This attitude still exists. We have this in the capital right now, let alone in counties and distant villages. When this attitude exists, it is a severe and strange oppression against the man because the expectation from him is more; he is not allowed to manifest his capabilities anywhere, and this very discrimination causes the creation of hatred in the family substrate.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 201-202).

It is here that the culture of patriarchy and the man's role-playing as owner and continuer of the generation is placed under doubt and the influence of discrimination, causing alienation, frustration, and even hatred (Parsons & Bales, trans. Sedighian, 1394).

On the other hand, migration, cultural differences, and lack of supervisory mechanisms make the subject of gender relations more complex:

'Firstly, we have a... [conflict/issue] with these people in their own position. They consider themselves more powerful than the people of Iran and consider themselves owners of Iran and say 'This soil belongs to us, we want it,' whereas he himself has no sweat [loyalty] to his own soil. But he is neither after building his soil nor after the progress of his society. A stratum that doesn't let the woman study, marries at 8-9 years old, sells the daughter. She has no permission for

education, no permission to show herself. These individuals with this mindset come into Iranian society and now start raping and fighting and looting and doing everything... and this person has these characteristics, these violations, then claims this soil too... he himself has no homeland and claims this homeland. What has happened? There is a contradiction between this thought and this man himself doesn't accept these things. These people... previously a mentality formed in virtual media space against Afghans, people behave a bit emotionally, but now when they see the worst rape, murder model... when we faced the phenomenon of migration and the Taliban war, many Afghans entered... most of these Afghans who entered Iran, those who were traditional like fathers and mothers and individuals with high age didn't come because they could cope with the Taliban's thought and management system and accept this issue; they stayed. Instead, youth and adolescents from 7 to 15 years came, and because the war and Taliban wasn't in their favour and they couldn't endure and came, and right now in our society at present many of these Afghans are experiencing violence right now.' (Interview No. 25, Soroush Ghobadi, Pos 16).

This narrative clearly reflects the cultural and normative gap between the host society and migrants and intensifies concerns regarding rape and conflict with the lack of a strong deterrence system in Iranian society.

Finally, social support and specific facilities also fuel gender inequalities:

'In total, well, social supports are like this too, that regarding the female head of household, if that female head of household doesn't have a good status psychologically and physically and can't cope well with her child, even in conditions of autism disease, well she... regarding herself too... meaning she has the ability to receive support from society. But the man... he copes with his autistic children just the same, has no ability, has problems psychologically, physically, economically, and receives no support from society either.' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran, Pos 80).

These conditions place men in serious problems in providing the basic needs of their children, especially in facing diseases like autism, and depict overt inequality.

This more prominent presence of women in government offices and service sectors compared to men also creates the suspicion that men's rights have been violated and educated men are inevitably driven towards jobs like Snapp [ride-hailing]:

'Another thing is that now we see in government organs and service sectors the presence of women has become more compared to men; isn't this discrimination, that men's right has been violated? Isn't this a reason that our educated man goes to work in Snapp?' (Interview No. 91, Davood, Pos 48-54).

This issue influences not only men's economic status but their social identity and feeling of efficiency, and can fuel the roots of violence and frustration in society.

6.5.4. Existence of an Atmosphere of Mistrust in Society

In the heart of today's social relations in Iran, mistrust, as the most chronic blight of human interactions and collective structures, has provided a ready substrate for the emergence of various types of violence; violence whose scope is not limited merely to the realm of interpersonal relationships but extends to a wider expanse, namely the foundation of the family and even social functions.

In this field, men too, exactly like or even more than women, are the silent victims of this toxic atmosphere; an atmosphere whose consequence is the erosion of social capital, the rupture of supportive networks, and ultimately the reproduction of the vicious cycle of violence.

The first quote, with a deep look at the foundation of trust and its meaning in individual and collective relationships, expresses the problem not only at the level of daily actions but at the most fundamental level, namely the ability and will to trust another:

'It doesn't exist because trust doesn't exist; it doesn't exist because we don't respect each other at all. If you want to make society healthy, first trust must be in it; if you want a family to be behind each other, first they must have trust in each other... as long as the discourse of an empathetic conversation is not in society, in the family, this same trend is a vicious cycle.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 58).

This speech clearly shows that the highest barrier against reviving collective solidarity is the decline of trust among people; a matter emphasised by social capital theorists (Coleman, Putnam, Fukuyama). In Fukuyama's interpretation (1995), trust acts as a 'social lubricant,' and its absence entails not only communicative obstacles but disruption in economic and familial mechanisms and even the individual's psychological helplessness. Interviewees'

experiences also repeatedly reveal this truth; where the lack of dialogue and empathy ends in a vicious cycle—a cycle whose liberation requires the gradual reconstruction of trust.

In such an atmosphere, family relationships become equally vulnerable. Trust is the precondition for any deep bond within the family, and its absence transforms into a factor for feelings of insecurity, defencelessness, and even violence. Psychoanalysts too, like Erikson, consider the fundamental lack of trust in early years of growth as the groundwork for emotional instability in adulthood, which continues and is reproduced in the social realm (Erikson, 1384 [2005]).

In a deeper layer, perceived injustice regarding gender rights and punishments is another factor in intensifying general mistrust. The second interviewee clearly asks why criteria of justice should be one-sided and heterogeneous:

'Why, if a man betrays, should he pay the price, but a woman who betrays doesn't pay the price? Sir, I say let's take the right of marriage [polygamy] from the man, take the right of the second wife from the man, [but] give the right of divorce to the woman [too, i.e., equalise the stakes]...' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 169).

In this passage, a type of mistrust appears that encompasses not only the ethical dimension but structural and legal layers as well. In a sense, this gap in the feeling of legal-social security has stripped men's trust in the system of justice and fairness and laid the groundwork for feelings of victimhood, frustration, and reactive violence. This phenomenon has a direct reflection in Durkheim's theories (1897) regarding social anomie and the lack of clear ethical and legal criteria, and also in modern social psychology approaches. Perceived Injustice is a fundamental factor in the collapse of human security and solidarity (Tyler & Lind, 1992).

In the present research, this 'Atmosphere of Mistrust' is not merely a psychological or individual factor, but a macro and ubiquitous intervening condition; a network that drives both the man in economic relations (such as buying and selling, investment, occupational participation) and the family in emotional and supportive relationships towards isolation and divergence.

From the perspective of Bowen's Family Systems Theory, a family in which trust among members has weakened loses not only the ability to express healthy emotions but even the ability to endure crisis and cope with stressful

situations, and the result is sometimes the overflow of this frustration in the form of aggression, violence, or men's complete withdrawal from the arena of social and familial interactions.

Ultimately, the untrusting social atmosphere is not only a substrate for fresh conflicts but a factor for reproducing violence against men and intensifying the impact of other intervening factors; in other words, violence against men intensifies when, both in the family and in society, no ground exists for support, empathy, or even hearing their voice. Those in charge, willingly or unwillingly, by continuing this atmosphere of mistrust, effectively drive men towards isolation, self-censorship, and ultimately high-risk behaviours.

6.5.5. Friendship Networks

In many lived experiences, the friendship network transforms not only into a support but in some cases into a substrate for the emergence of violence, betrayal, and even exploitation itself. The first narrative reveals the heavy burden of mistrust and conspiracy in the heart of friendship thus:

'They had planned very beautifully for me to pour pills into my tea so I would fall asleep and then they rape me, take video of me, and then say 'We did this work' and I can no longer...' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 19).

In this space, not only does friendship have no supportive function, but that very 'friend' becomes the conduit for injury and violence against the man; conditions that occur easily, especially in high-injury social contexts, and are defined in sociological literature as a concept of 'Dysfunctional Social Capital' (Coleman, 1382 [2003]). Social capital, when its bonds are used in a negative direction, not only does not cause the expansion of positive cooperation but takes on a destructive nature, providing the possibility for abuse and violence (Putnam, 1384 [2005]).

The friendship network, especially for individuals with traumatic backgrounds or crisis-filled past records, often takes shape much more intricately and unstably. The second interviewee, with his bitter expression, narrates the contradiction of society's view of individual identity and background thus:

'The society I am in, its people even now see Vahid as a person... if they know him now it's because of his occupational position... because Vahid was someone

who once sold substances, Vahid was someone who hung out with the liquor seller, Vahid was someone who [excuse me, it is impolite] hung out with pederasty (Bache-bazi), was famous for womanising... Vahid was someone who went back and forth to the drug camp and these things. Vahid would never go sit and talk with a psychologist, wouldn't go hang out with a normal tradesman... moreover, he would rob tradesmen's tills; files were made for him that this theft was his work, by those very buddies who claimed...' (Interview No. 44, Vahid, Pos 72).

In this narrative, alleged friends are sometimes themselves violence-generating elements and motivators for entering high-risk behaviours or becoming victims. The reality is that although the friendship network is expected to be a substrate for empathy and reconstructing the man's self-esteem, the emergence of betrayal, abuse, and even labelling and framing by these very friends drives the man more than ever towards psychological and social isolation. According to Instrumental Relationships Theory (Homans, 1386 [2007]), friendships formed based on temporary and situational interests transform into a factor for intensifying injury and internal deregulation of the individual in crises.

In this midst, the class gap and social geography also show themselves in the function of the friendship network. But optimistic and supportive experiences too, however in the minority, sometimes raise their head; as the third interviewee speaks of a generous friend who changed the fate of her surgery:

'My first [surgery], there was a friend in Europe, he/she was a journalist, had become friends with me... I had escaped... and then he/she paid the cost of the first surgery... the first one wasn't much because it was orchiectomy [emptying testicles], ten Tomans [million]. He/she paid, said 'I can pay this amount so you can do this surgery and at least change your documents.' I changed my documents and now after that, I don't know, a year passed, a year and a half passed, and after that through one of my friends who is outside the country, then they did a fundraising (Golrizan) there, a cooperation fundraising, and then money was collected for me... and I was able to operate on myself [have surgery].' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 155).

Such examples, though occurring less often, are a confirmation of Positive Social Capital Theory and the role of the friendship network in psychological

repair, identity reconstruction, and even moving towards self-actualisation and liberating the individual from the violence-generating situation (Fukuyama, 1380 [2001]).

In conditions where society suffers from misunderstanding, labelling, and exclusionism, many trans men, often for survival and providing livelihood, are forced to be placed in very vulnerable and sometimes corrupt networks of friends; networks that are not only not supportive but unintentionally throw the individual into the lap of injuries and social and economic stigma:

'It has another reason too, because of a series of profiteering individuals—or now not profiteering, out of compulsion—now I don't want to insult anyone, God forbid... they introduce themselves as trans and through this way, without doing surgery... they are earning income, doing business. The party is a masculine trans [FTM]; basically trans men don't do this work. Trans women... the party wears girlish clothes, comes stands by Daneshju Park, gives a price and comes to do business; sex worker, basically. Meaning many trans people experience sex work. Mostly trans people who get rejected/excluded, don't have living expenses, and many of them do this work out of compulsion; a series of them too, there is good money in it so they do this work. They think all trans people are these; society, government, many think this is trans. That they do prostitution has caused these [others] to become notorious too.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans Man, Pos 145-150).

In this pattern, the friendship network has a dual and often contradictory function; on one hand, a refuge and link to society and reconciliation with one's identity, and on the other, the place for forming and stabilising hidden and deep psychological and social injuries, especially for individuals with different sexual identities. The concept of 'Labelling' proposed by Becker in Symbolic Interactionism Theory (Becker, 1385 [2006]) is clearly seen in these experiences: real friends do not reduce individuals to negative marks society has put on them, but damaging networks intensify these labels, to the point where even many trans men become indebted to these high-risk and non-supportive relationships for passing life.

Finally, the role of the friendship network in adolescence and youth is sometimes vital in shaping sexual identity or psychological support, but even at this stage, control, misunderstanding, and non-acceptance are seen:

'Well, he realised because, you know, I had all the boyish behaviours too and this girl was sitting on my leg in my arms and he saw the scene, said 'You don't have the right anymore.' After that... I said I had boy friends too, I had many boy buddy friends in that period, the 18-year-old period. I was out with boyish clothes, I would hide them in my backpack; after school or anywhere I would wear boyish clothes, put my school clothes in my backpack and go out. By that time I had really found the courage for it. I had 4-5 boy buddies... 'Among buddies one was a boy, how do you go home? Among your friends...' I didn't understand and he didn't understand either. I said 'Dad, by God what are you saying, these are my buddies.' He said 'You made a mistake [did wrong] going out with these,' you know...' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 93).

In such spaces, what happens is the simultaneous mixture of support and deprivation of support, the result of which is deep identity, psychological, and social instability for men; an instability that can lead to a vicious cycle of reproducing violence and sink the individual into an abyss of mistrust in himself and the environment, minimizing the motivation to talk to a psychologist or seek professional help.

In summary, the friendship network in the social texture and especially for men exposed to pressure and violence is not necessarily a safe and supportive haven; rather, it is sometimes the origin or reinforcer of injuries and even violence against men, and sometimes—rarely and scantily—a saving ring for changing the life path. This 'Duality of the Friendship Network' is itself a profound speech about the fragile, dependent, and sometimes mistrust-filled status of human relationships in today's society (Fukuyama, 1380; Putnam, 1384; Ores, 2007; likely referring to Ores or similar theorists on trust/networks).

6.5.6. Macro-Social Conditions

In the collective narrative of interviewees, Macro-Social Conditions as a substrate providing the possibility for the emergence and intensification of violence against men are composed of components such as the collapse of extensive social ties, economic crises, weakness of social capital, and structural changes in values; subjects that not only reproduce violent behaviours in the individual and social sphere but leave deep impacts on the feeling of identity, social bond, and mental health of men.

At the beginning, the structural change from extended family to nuclear family appears as one of the main social contexts in the form of 'distance from

each other' and lack of emotional support or reactive support in psychological crises. The first narrator, pointing to a friend's experience and the collective inability of friends in supportive intervention, narrates:

'Because of the structural change of our society... our society has distorted from those extended families to nuclear; one is this very dislocation of time and place that we have, distance from each other. Yesterday one of my friends from Karaj called... he posted a Story [on social media], I saw his Story, exactly indicative... he said 'I, in a time when I am involved in hard problems, understand that no one loves me.' I understood he wants to commit suicide. I immediately talked to him, got his number and called him, talked to him for half an hour. His decision was really serious; because it is my field of specialty, I understand. But all his friends saw this Story and showed no reaction. We don't have that knowledge we should have to help each other. We call the Social Emergency number, 'I want help'; this takes a few hours, it doesn't come at all.' (Interview No. 19, Dr. Bahrami, Pos 56).

This quote shows well that the weakness of social support networks and inefficiency of intervention services has left a large void in men's lived experience; a void leading to increased psychological vulnerability and emotional isolation (Coleman, 1382; Putnam, 1384). From the perspective of Social Capital Theory, when social solidarities and knowledge and active participation among society members decrease, individual and collective resilience against crises is severely weakened (Fukuyama, 1995).

Continuing, a type of contagion and transfer of negative mood and anger from the private to the public space is observed. The direct reflection of the effect of family crises and economic pressure on men's behaviour when interacting with others is clear in this narrative:

'...my child... and I go into society, I empty it [anger] on the driver and the office; if I am the office manager, I empty it on the subordinate working with me, or the person who is my client. The spectrum of that violence differs. We are involved with violence during the day. We must see the origin, what is the origin of violence? Those who are coming out in the morning, in what conditions do they come out? 'Is my mood good? Did I fight with my wife at night or not? Did I have a challenge in life or not? Did a happy event happen for me or not?' All these are further causes for 'how is that day I come out now?' If I am happy, I take my happiness and share it with the taxi driver who picked me up, with that

person next to my hand; I enter the office environment, share it with my colleague. But conversely, if I am angry, I even find fault with the driver's stopping, find fault with his model of greeting... in the street I reach the office... from home where I started to work, office and organisation, manager and boss, I swear at everyone, say bad words, and maybe I entered the office and hit two of the things that are public property (Beyt-ul-Mal) and break them. Everything is a model of anger. We are all involved in these main issues, involved in economic issues... now I as an employee have fallen severely behind inflation, am a tenant, assume I am getting a low salary, my work is full of challenges... all these are not good signs that my condition is good, and I am entirely angry through and through. From all directions my condition is bad. Now it depends, at the time I come, on whom I want to empty this anger. The cause of violence can be inflation and the low salary I get and dissatisfaction with the job, not being placed in the appropriate job position, not receiving appropriate salary for the trouble I take. All these have mounted up, come to create a model, and that model causes me not to be able to live, to have a good feeling, be happy. When you are not happy, well, you are angry, and violence comes from anger too; you empty it on people you are involved with.' (Interview No. 25, Soroush Ghobadi, Pos 12).

This narrative depicts the deep link between macro-social structures (such as inflation, occupational deprivation, economic pressure, and administrative inefficiency) and the emergence and intensity of violence. From the view of Stress-Strain Theory, macro-economic conditions and social frustration significantly increase the risk of aggressive behaviours and violence against oneself and others (Dollard et al., 1939; Katz, 1388 [2009]).

At the educational and cultural level too, the weakness of Life Skills and Communication Education is clearly reflected in men's lived experience. Another narrative emphasises thus:

'And that becomes a vacuum and injury... but he doesn't know that this is because of this model of his behaviour; he thinks they are bad. This, due to that lack of education, causes him to drive people further away from himself day by day, and then anyway his communicative space becomes less... we have these two models more than a space that...' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 158).

Here, the lack or inability to diagnose and manage emotions and social relationships causes individuals to distance themselves from themselves and

others and effectively depreciates the social and collective support network (Coleman, 1382; Humphreys, 2007).

In another part of the narrative, the role of Social Stigma related to specific social pathologies—especially drug use—and the distortion of the image of addicted individuals is pointed out. A narrative of a tangible experience of loneliness and isolation of injured individuals in the face of inequality and social judgment comes thus:

'In a burning calamity, they say someone who lives with an addicted person... I don't know how they have recognised the addict; the addict, his work is just this. By God I swear, he inflicts injury on his own soul, is spending his own money, his own reputation is going. I don't know, they have made a monster out of the addict... crimes happen that no one sees, no one sees... us who sat in a corner and in the desert and far from people's eyes we go a few kilometres over there, that substance makes us calmer... from our soldering [drug use], they created a calamity that 'the guy cuts his own child's head off at night.' Why should he cut his own child's head off at night? Our life was good, by God I was satisfied.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 150).

In this statement, social distortions and stigma around specific pathologies fuel the rejection and social and psychological deprivation of injured men and provide the ground for the emergence and sequence of violence (Becker, 1385; Wells, 2013).

Finally, changing roles and the structure of power and social credit of men is also a macro issue influencing the feeling of deprivation and experience of violence:

'Look, the discussion of generation can be added to it too; for example, we ourselves when we were kids, usually the family was patriarchal or matriarchal and the child had no position; the best things were always for the father. If there were leftover food, it came to the child. This same generation, when it grew up, everything became reversed; society is very matriarchal and child-centric (Bache-salar) and the man has no position.' (Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 80).

In this speech, men consider themselves victims of a type of 'Power Displacement' and 'placelessness' in the space of unequal role change; a concept emphasised in Bourdieu's theories of Identity and Symbolic Capital (Bourdieu, 1380 [2001]).

In summary, this unified narrative clearly shows that macro-social conditions such as the traditional breakdown of the family, economic crisis, weakness of social capital, expansion of identity-lessness, and distortion of roles have created a high-risk environment at micro and macro levels susceptible to the emergence and even sequence of violence against men. These contexts not only reproduce violence but often place the burden of responsibility for facing it on the individual and not society.

6.5.7. Society's Indifference to Men's Problems

The narrative of one participant, with bitter and comparative language, depicts the extensive and unequal discrimination of society in reacting to disastrous events related to men thus:

'I remember it was one or two years ago, I don't remember the exact date... I can say if you remember... however, a lady reporter had gone on a work trip to prepare a report—I don't remember what report it was—they had gone towards Azerbaijan, crashed there and lost their lives. I remember all mass-circulation newspapers of that date, all immediately, even unrelated economic and scientific and sports newspapers—I have screenshots of all of them—also all headlined this, framed it... very severe reflection in society that 'What happened to that reporter, what became of them?' Well, people of society showed reaction. Whereas I remember exactly at that same time, perhaps with a difference of a day or a day this side or that side, a similar incident occurred [at] Mashhad dam, Khorasan, there if I'm not mistaken—which is obtainable with a search too—that in that bus there were 5 soldier-teachers who were all 5 killed. I think it was south Khorasan or Sistan and Baluchestan, around there. And society's reaction, if you came and looked in that same screenshot, was almost zero. Nothing, they had no reaction at all. Whereas I kept saying that reporter, of course it was her job, she got money for that work she did and had gone voluntarily; but those soldiers, whether in terms of number of casualties... well if you calculate, they were 5 people, they had gone by force and she had gone voluntarily. She got money, they [excuse me] were somehow going for forced labour (Bigari). No reaction, I say without exaggeration, it had no reaction.' (Interview No. 4, Hassan Espania, Pos 9-11).

In this description, the direct comparison of the social base of two similar accidents, one belonging to a woman and the other to men, unveils a type of desensitisation or festering indifference of society towards men's pains; a

process rooted in symbolic and normative orderings in the collective mentality. Bourdieu's Theory of Symbolic Capital (1380 [2001]) shows that the position and importance of every social actor in the field of power and meaning is subject to cultural encodings and symbolic valuations. Consequently, when the loss of a woman's life as a reporter quickly becomes a national issue but the collective death of several men in the role of soldier-teachers sinks into the shadow of media and social indifference, it is a sign of the unfair distribution of Empathy Capital and social sensitivity; such that tragedy in the case of men is considered a normal matter and even worthy of silence and passing over.

This process is not limited only to individual unfortunate events; rather, it is reproduced in macro social and even political dimensions. The participant continues:

'Other examples, protests of last year; let's see, a girl was killed because of compulsory covering [Hijab]. Well, society showed reaction, very good, they did a very right thing in my opinion. But this same society shows no reaction regarding... annually according to statistics 200-300 boys lose their lives annually in compulsory military service; it shows no reaction. Because perhaps both subjects are compulsory, both are being applied by the government, both are a systematic oppression, both are cruel, but... it's not important to it. 200-300 people a year where, now one person because of compulsory Hijab — that too happened based on an accident — killed, where? But society's reaction... I want to say that this shows that society regarding... if you, if they want to raise a news item by news agencies, that news becomes bold and arouses society and society's pity, that news must be somehow... must be an event that happened to a woman or a girl, otherwise society passes over it very easily. I have many examples again if they want.' (Interview No. 4, Hassan Espania, Pos 11).

In this narrative, the arrow of criticism for normalising injury and even death of men is aimed at the body of society and media; and by the implicit and bold repetition of this proposition that 'society has no sensitivity,' it somehow reminds the reader of Noam Chomsky's Theory of Democratic Silence (1989; likely referring to *Manufacturing Consent* concepts) and Goffman's Theory (1963) regarding labelling, exclusion, and concealment of injuries. In fact, society and media, by remaining silent in the face of soldiers' and men's casualties and selectively highlighting events related to women, not only consider men's pain acceptable and even unavoidable and become numb, but link the collective identity of masculinity with suffering and lack of empathy.

The trend of this gradual numbness results not only from traditional gender beliefs regarding men's resilience and low neediness, but is influenced by the structure of public culture which considers men's injury not only ignored but sometimes their own fault (Kerell, 1399; Connell, 1386). From the perspective of Gender Role Theory, culture is reproducing instrumental, violent masculinity lacking the need for affection, and society's narrative of a man who is injured or dead is considered not as a victim but as an agent of retribution and the normal result of large processes (Hearn, 2007). Also, Social Perception Threshold Theory shows that repetitive events related to men (such as death in military service), by virtue of repetition, cross the threshold of collective sensitivity and turn into 'normal routine'; while similar events regarding women are highlighted by arousing collective and media emotions (Robinson, 2002).

Therefore, society's low sensitivity to men's problems and injuries is a process that, whilst rooted in cultural, media, and even political structures, has damaging and lasting consequences on violence against men; because removing men from the circle of sympathy and collective action leaves them defenceless in the space of injury and suffering and reinforces the cycle of violence (De Boise & Hearn, 2017). In such conditions, men are both victims of violence and victims of society's indifference; an indifference that not only makes their death and injury a non-issue but fundamentally leaves them alone in the experience of violence and does not arouse any supportive collective action for them.

6.5.8. Exclusion of Men

In bitter and contemplated narratives, men's exclusion is not a passing event but a deep and lasting wound on their psyche and identity, rooted in the substrate of family, society, and mental structures. One interviewee depicts it thus:

'Being excluded, not being received [welcomed/acknowledged]... the man loses his position. The man is the father of the family but doesn't have his grandeur. These are lasting. Exclusion is a very bad violence, like not being counted. The father sees he is not counted in the family, speaks [but] they don't receive him. Many call me saying 'They don't count us anymore, my heart aches (Ghalbam dozd migireh - local idiom for pain/distress), I thought I was a father, now I don't

know what I am in this middle.' And this 'stuck-in-self-ness' (Dar-khod-mandegi) comes into existence for him.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 58).

The entanglement of man's identity with the role of father and the face of traditional authority, when faced with collective ignoring and humiliation, turns into an existential crisis and 'stuck-in-self-ness'; a sense of 'not being counted,' becoming insignificant, and lack of meaning. This situation corresponds with the theory of 'Role Validity Loss' in social psychology, according to which the feeling of being needed and social affirmation is the main pillar of masculine identity in the family (Pakdaman, 1392 [2013]). When this pillar collapses, the individual's soul sinks into a vast strangeness which is synergistic with silent social violence.

Another face of exclusion returns to the experience of the child and man in the role of son. A narrative of violence and separation in the family is stated thus:

'And this woman beat this child so much, inflicted so much injury on this child that he himself said 'I don't want to stay with you.' And finally the boy didn't agree and with a judicial letter we took this child and brought him here. And part of these are like this form; meaning the mother herself subjects them to violence and wants to exclude them and separate them from herself and have more freedom for her works. One form is like this.' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 109).

In this narrative, the mother pushes the child to the margins with the aim of separation and gaining personal freedom, and this action leads to the formation of a cycle of violence and deep exclusion in the boy. Social psychologists believe that parental rejection, especially when combined with physical or psychological violence, disrupts the sense of belonging, security, and acceptance and shakes the foundations of the individual's mental and social health (Yousefi et al., 1395 [2016]). The results of exclusion in such a substrate not only drive the individual towards depression and isolation but blur gender and paternal roles at this very point.

Exclusion may find other dimensions with increasing age and the crisis of old age, as one senior citizen says:

'Old age... nothing... when you have money they run from you; in old age too, when they know I am in trouble, they don't come near me. If your friend sees, he becomes sad; your enemy sees, he becomes happy. When your position falls into

danger, they distance themselves from you so as not to be around you. Your enemy sees, becomes happy; your friend sees, becomes sad. This is it, the reality of society is this. The whole world is the same.' (Interview No. 70, Rashidi, Senior Citizen, Pos 79).

Here, exclusion is synergistic with the heavy shadow of poverty, disability, and reduction of sources of social power. The consolidator of the man's social relationships is not emotions but the position and role obtained through economic and social facilities. With the collapse of these foundations, those around—friend and enemy—change their behaviour and leave the living dead to themselves, reproducing a deep sense of helplessness and loneliness. This issue aligns with Putnam's Theory of Lack of Social Capital (2000); where the reduction of supportive sources drives the individual to the margins and loneliness and makes the emergence of various injuries probable.

But the wound of exclusion is not only from outside but sometimes originates from relatives and family:

'My mother was bedridden for three years. She told me a lot 'You must get fixed [stop drugs]; if you don't get fixed, as soon as I put my head on the ground [die], they will sell this house, give your share, you go become a vagrant of alleys and streets.' I didn't believe this. Many told me, friends, acquaintances, neighbours, kin and relatives told me a lot, I didn't believe. I thought 'This family won't abandon me, I am taking trouble for this father and mother'... meaning my sister and brother exclude me. Mr. Doctor, they would come openly and say to my face, say 'If we answer your greeting, it is for the dearness of our father and mother.' I told them many times, said 'If you want to answer my greeting for the sake of my father and mother, don't give it at all, don't talk to me at all. I like, if you want me, want me for myself, not for father and mother.' They told us openly, said 'Akbar, you are seeing your last happy days, because the day father and mother put their heads on the ground, the first person, we give your share, you cut ties with us.' I said 'But why? What is the reason? Why do you taunt me so much? Why are you talking to me like this? What did I do? What was my annoyance and harm to you? Did I come every day and become a burden on you and say I have no bread, give me bread? Every day came and became a burden and said give me this much money? What is the reason you taunt so much?'' (Interview No. 43, Ebrahimi, Pos 29).

And:

'I feel that since they took authority from me... my mother provided our expenses for a while, my father provided... slowly, slowly, slowly, these very brothers sat and badmouthed us so much... 'Mother, this person won't become a person [won't fix himself], this one won't get fixed.' Meaning constantly your surrounding people... 'this won't get fixed' [they threw me out of the house].'
(Interview No. 43, Ebrahimi, Pos 146-148).

In these observations, exclusion questions economic, emotional, and identity layers. Hearing direct sentences like *'Akbar, you are seeing your last happy days'* or *'Brother, you won't get fixed'* accelerates the dissolution of the sense of belonging, trust, and worthiness. Based on Emotional Capital Theory (Hochschild, 1983; trans. Shamghadri, 1392 [2013]), the family is the first and most fundamental place for realising worthiness and emotional capital; when this environment transforms into a place of badmouthing, threat, and exclusion, the individual, instead of psychological stability, suffers loneliness, despair, and sometimes high-risk behaviours which are themselves a stimulus for the continuation of violence.

In total, men's exclusion as one of the social intervening conditions is not only damaging at the level of individual experience but is an intensifier of the cycle of violence; because with the destruction of the sense of belonging, worthiness, and legitimacy of role, the individual is emptied of healthy agency and driven towards secondary injuries, high-risk behaviours, and even self-destruction (Abdollahi, 1394 [2015]). Exclusion imposes a sense of 'placelessness,' worthlessness, and stuck-in-self-ness, and ultimately sows the seed of violence, whether silent or overt, in the ground of men's familial, social, and even identity relationships; thus, sometimes these men themselves simultaneously become carriers and victims of violence.

6.6. Economic Intervening Conditions

In the context of Iranian society, Economic Intervening Conditions are reckoned among the most effective factors in the genesis and intensification of violence against men. Continuous inflation and high cost of living place men in difficult livelihood positions and exacerbate the psychological pressure resulting from the inability to provide for the family's basic needs. These pressures, often accompanied by increased economic-cultural requirements and expectations regarding the breadwinner role, prepare the ground for the

emergence of burnout, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy, propelling men towards violent reactions.

Financial bankruptcy and unemployment, while weakening the man's position in the family and social structure, reinforce the sense of loss of control and lack of worthiness, which can lead to the emergence or intensification of aggressive behaviours. Furthermore, economic dependence on the violence-applying individual places men in a cycle of exploitation, humiliation, and repression, weakening their individual independence and identity. On the other hand, the attractiveness of income derived from selling narcotics drives men towards high-risk and illegal solutions, expanding the ground for reproducing various types of injury and violence in society. These dimensions highlight the determining role of the economy in the emergence and continuation of violence against men.

6.6.1. Inflation and High Cost of Living

In an era where the Iranian man raises his head every morning from the heart of personal, familial, and social turbulence, the heavy shadow of the economy, inflation, and high prices has encompassed all his moments.

'We are involved with violence during the day. We must see the origin, what is the origin of violence? Those who are coming out in the morning, in what conditions do they come out? 'Is my mood good? Did I fight with my wife at night or not? Did I have a challenge in life or not? Did a happy event happen for me or not?' All these are further causes for 'how is that day I come out now?' If I am happy, I share my happiness with the taxi driver; I enter the office environment, share it with my colleague. But conversely, if I am angry, I even find fault with the driver's stopping, find fault with his model of greeting. Everything is a model of anger. We are all involved in these main issues, involved in economic issues... now I as an employee have fallen severely behind inflation, am a tenant, assume I am getting a low salary, my work [Welfare Org.] is full of challenges... all these are not good signs that my condition is good, and I am entirely anger through and through. From all directions my condition is bad. Now it depends, at the time I come, on whom I want to empty this anger. The cause of violence can be inflation and the low salary I get and dissatisfaction with the job, not being placed in the appropriate job position, not receiving appropriate salary for the trouble I take. All these have mounted up, come to create a model, and that model causes me not to be able to live, to have a good feeling, be happy.

When you are not happy, well, you are angry, and violence comes from anger too; you empty it on people you are involved with. (Interview No. 25, Soroush Ghobadi, Pos 12).

This narrative depicts the depth of the link between economic problems and the emergence of daily anger and violence: the loop of economic coldness, job dissatisfaction, forced tenancy, and the reduction of men's social value leaves no safety valve for the healthy discharge of emotions. Social psychologists believe that poverty and inflation not only erode the quality of individual communications but render individuals' emotional systems fragile and irritable on behalf of structural failures (Faraji, 1400 [2021]).

In another narrative, the confrontation of the man's worthiness in the role of provider and guardian with the crisis of financial independence and unwanted dependence on the spouse provides the ground for hidden violence, grievance, and reduced self-esteem:

'It is expected why I [didn't have] one child, why I didn't bring a second child. Or it is expected of me that... now my wife doesn't have this expectation but I expect of myself to be financially independent. Now I was [independent] these few months... a few months ago... but because expenses have become so expensive, now for a few months I have been forced to take money from her, and I get very upset, it upsets me very much that I take money from her. Why? Because I hear nagging too. One's own money is in one's own hand... for example, now in the last year because prices are going very high [excuse me I digress], book prices are going up; I think in these two years I bought 31 million [Tomans] of books. Well, I bought with my own money, but now that my money is finished, I tell her 'Give money,' she says 'You want to buy books?! Oh, what does it have to do with you? Give me the money, I want to buy books with it or not buy, it concerns myself.' Now I bought a 500 Toman [book]. But this upsets a person, that my hand is not in my own pocket. And I see that in husband and wife relationships, this is a violence that men inflict upon women [or suffer] without knowing themselves.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 36).

In the network of family relationships, the traditional structure still expects the man to be the primary provider of livelihood needs. Inflation and reduced purchasing power cause the man to see his identity in danger. This identity threat sometimes manifests in the form of aggression, grievance, or even hidden violence against the spouse. Frustration-Aggression Theory shows that

economic frustrations pave the way for transferring anger to the closest people in life (Dolto, 1397 [2018]).

Severe economic changes at the macro level make the pressure on long-standing obligations, such as Mehrieh, heavier:

'Sir, basically in that year he married, how much was a [gold] coin? The guy 'thinged' [set] his coin based on that... well, when I married, a coin was 100,000 Tomans; I set two hundred coins as Mehrieh, it was in my power and I could even give it. When the coin price becomes 4 million, how should you give it?' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 248).

And:

'Because of heavy Mehriehs... Mehrieh hasn't become heavy, you know, maybe a hundred coins... at a time the coin was ninety thousand Tomans, but in Ahmadinejad's time it became three million. Oh my, now it has become forty million. Sir, basically assume for example I set a hundred coins Mehr; a hundred coins at that time became how much? 150 million. Now how much does it become? Three and a half billion, now it has become four billion?' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 139).

These two narratives highlight the impossibility of fulfilling ethical and legal financial obligations; obligations that, due to inflation, have turned into an incurable pain. Men grapple with the feeling of failure, risk of prison, and daily humiliation. Family researchers propose that critical economic conditions, with the transformation of money value and 'Super-Mehriehs,' pave the ground for the emergence of systematic violence against the man which manifests in the form of psychological injury, shame, fear, and anxiety (Nameni, 1401 [2022]).

At a deeper level, inability to provide costs and livelihood constriction becomes not only humiliating but destructive to the man's psychological stability:

'Financial crises and inflation and high prices cause violence against men. A man who cannot give the cost [and expenses] of the child's life... it constantly remains a complex in the man's heart, you know, and he cannot give the expenses; it all gathers, gathers, and causes [psychological] violence; he has no peace anymore.' (Interview No. 72, Eskandari, Pos 42-43).

Here, the repression of despair and regret turns into hidden and overt violence. Transferring anger inwards and outwards (self-destruction or overt aggression) is the psychological crystallisation of a condition where the man has lost his identity in an economy-centric structure. Social Capital Theory (Putnam) clearly states that continuous economic pressures and lack of social support lead to the erosion of family and social relationships and creating a substrate for increased violence (Mousavi Langroudi, 1398 [2019]).

From a social perspective, the pattern of denial, endurance, and overlooking by Iranian men regarding economic oppression becomes evident; men protest less formally and are described more as submissive and 'beat-down' (*too-sari-khor*):

*'If you define it in a men's gathering, everyone goes into thought, gets messed up; the minimum is that for two or three days their mind is involved. But after one or two days, because we were raised like this, we return again to 'Sir, forget it.' But this same issue of violence against women, raise it in a women's gathering; for up to three months they follow up, they are much more pursuers. But we [men] say 'Forget it, violence... so far they hit our head [we suffered], let them hit, let's live our lives.' Regarding low salary, they want to go protest; 35 women come stand, 3-4 men. Because that woman, it is possible most of them are like this... unless the guy [woman] is the breadwinner... they tell their dad 'I want to work here to get some money,' do their makeup, go to their pool, chignon and pinion [hairdo] and so-and-so regarding these... don't have business [with basic needs], at the end two kilos of meat remain at the end of the month I'll get. But the man, because he is the breadwinner... 'If I go protest, if they throw me out, what then?' I work here, I get 20 Tomans [million]; they want to kick me out, I go to an [estate] agency or secretary and get 15 million a month; that same 15 million I get clothes and so-and-so. But the man cannot think of them throwing him out, for this reason his protest is less. They are more submissive, men are beat-down (*too-sari-khor*); if you hit their head, their voice doesn't come out much.'* (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim, Pos 100).

This narrative emphasises a culture accompanied by passivity and fear of job loss in men; maintaining the minimums at the price of silently enduring economic violence. This situation aligns with 'Learned Helplessness' (Seligman) and 'Symbolic Capital' theories of Bourdieu; the man, by enduring economically and eroding masculine identity, buys into being 'beat-down' to maintain his breadwinner role as much as possible (Badri, 1395 [2016]).

In total, what is clearly manifest in the layers of Iranian men's narratives is the transition from responsibility to anxiety, from anxiety to humiliation, and from humiliation to a quiet and silent violence; violence sometimes enacted against oneself, sometimes against another, and often against the closest individuals. Men, in the trap of a sick economy, rampant inflation, inability to perform the 'masculine/breadwinner' role, and threat to social and emotional ownership, are exposed to the phenomenon of violence more than any other time—whether in the role of victim or sometimes in the role of agent perpetuating the cycle of violence.

6.6.2. Occupational Pressure and Violence Against Men

In men's daily experience, work and occupational pressure under the skin of Iran's socio-economic order ceaselessly conquers all dimensions of their life.

'Economic pressures have psychological consequences for us [men]. Meaning now you are seeing that we have been in your complex for two weeks, holiday and non-holiday, Tasua and Ashura, Thursday... basically Dad, it makes no difference. I don't think at all what day today is, what day it is. I am working here [building electrical installation]. From seven in the morning to one at night. I am always tired. And naturally it is tiredness; the first reaction I see from colleague, from my wife, from child, from employer, from taxi driver, from that person I get food from, I immediately snap at him. Unwittingly this happens; your mind is tired. One night I am going, again six in the morning I am returning to work. I am working one-tick [continuously], there is no other way either... they don't work either... from that side I have clients [dependents], they remain in the air too; I have disrupted a chain.' (Interview No. 90, Mohsen Hagh, Pos 15).

In the shadow of economic structures based on pressure and constant work, psychological burnout is a common, toxic, and transferable phenomenon. The individual not only forgets his identity in the draft of the endless cycle of work but effectively becomes the first victim of anger and emergence of violence in the family and work environment. Stress-Strain Theory (Dolto, 1397 [2018]) emphasises that exhausting work and psychological fatigue lead to the destruction of intimate relationships and the emergence of unwanted harsh reactions.

The lingering impact of this pressure, however, is evident in family relations as well:

'He wants to talk, tell his daughter 'Where were you last night?' She says 'Tomorrow night too [I'm going].' The day after tomorrow that girl says 'I want a phone.' He is forced to go to work again at 4 AM, come home at 11 PM. He goes so early that they are asleep, or comes so late that they have slept.' (Interview No. 55, Narcotics Police, Pos 10).

In this midst, the worn-out and absent man, during daily home crises, recovers neither his paternal acceptability nor psychological peace. Failure in performing the father's emotional function ends in a new isolation which fundamentally activates the 'Hopelessness Meta-Test' (Seligman, 1383 [2004]); where the man is placed in the cycle of reproducing violence towards himself and others.

The cycle of occupational pressure transfers from the work environment to the home, and the man's soul is crumpled between the scale of social responsibility and the family's emotional demand:

'Now we go to work two shifts, I am involved in work shift [office guarding]. Well, this has caused disruption in relationships with my wife; [when I go home] argument and fight and these things happen. [My wife] says 'Why are you always at work?', says 'All your thought and mention shouldn't be work, you must attend to life too... all your thought and mention shouldn't be work and attend a bit to your life too.' Unfortunately, there are so many problems that room for leisure time and these things is very little. Now I, in these two months that I worked non-stop (bekoob), was at work forty days, twenty days home, and those twenty days I rested totally. We have relatives, have family... all your time, more than 70-80 percent of your time, you are involved in work; I don't get to customs, to familial and family relations...' (Interview No. 72, Eskandari, Pos 58-61).

In the substrate of turbulent economic conditions, men have no choice or withdrawal; responsibility for provision and the onslaught of demands from society and home weigh on their shoulders simultaneously. Family research (Mousavi Langroudi, 1398 [2019]) has shown that the increasing role of the 'Breadwinner Male' in the traditional structure gradually becomes a source of collective frustration and internal individual humiliation, distancing the man from the supportive relationship network.

On the other side of the story, the inefficient and insufficient organisational structure of the administrative or law enforcement system reveals the link between structural violence and psychological injury:

'Structural violence we have. Now totally how many personnel do we have for fighting narcotics and crimes? Three police for a 400,000 population... very much occupational pressure causes depression. Look, now we, for example, don't have knees, don't have brains, our thought [isn't] balanced. Look, saying these is easy; your mind is so disturbed because of the file... God is witness we caught a boy, caught him from the street, until we brought him to the station we didn't speak in the car. We made discoveries [of drugs], we should be happy; we were so upset.' (Interview No. 55, Narcotics Police, Pos 160).

Here, occupational pressure transforms into an objective aspect of structural violence, and depression and alienation become its logical result. Galtung's Theory of 'Structural Violence' (1385 [2006]) explains how inequality in the distribution of resources and occupational responsibilities causes the emergence of deep psychological and behavioural injuries in the target group individuals (here: policemen).

Men in hard and high-risk work environments are constantly exposed to various physical and psychological injuries, without society playing an active role in supporting them:

'Hard jobs are all for gentlemen; for example, working in a mine, scaffoldings they erect... which lady goes? No one. If he falls from up there, mortality is much higher among gentlemen...' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim, Pos 84).

Men's dominance in heavy physical jobs, the high number of mortalities, and danger left without social support all manifest in the form of anger, numbness, or even direct and indirect aggressive behaviours. The 'Social Construction of Job and Gender' perspective (Badri, 1395 [2016]) implies that occupational risk-taking without support and social compensation unintentionally drives masculine identity towards violence against oneself and others.

The direct connection of economic pressure with the emergence of violence in the market space is also clearly visible in men's experience:

'A man who works in the market (Bazar)... work in the market brings violence, one hundred percent brings it. Work conflict and its financial issues bring violence.' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 10-12).

This narrative shows that the competitive and tension-filled atmosphere of the labour market is not only a factor increasing individual conflicts but a substrate for the emergence of violence among employees and even with customers and neighbours. Role Conflict Theory (Gibson, 1390 [2011]) states

that pressure to maintain the social and economic role in high-tension situations automatically raises the aptitude for violence.

However, deeper dimensions of these pressures also appear in the shadow of men's educational and individual loss from younger ages:

'He said 'If I do these works, how should I study? Study and from this side go after shepherding and animal husbandry and agriculture and these things... girls are more studious than boys. Boys go more towards agriculture but girls have more time, are at home, their studying is much better than boys'...' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 21).

Sociological analyses (Faraji, 1400 [2021]) state that depriving men of educational and social growth opportunities due to early occupational pressures renders them prone to aggression and aggressive behaviours years later.

The result is that work and occupational pressure collapse not only the economic structure of men's lives but their mind, emotional relationships, dreams, and mental health. The cycle of compulsion to work and social mercilessness transforms the man into a victim of structural violence and a source of violence in family and social relationships. Defensive mechanisms for survival often inflict the most damage on deep human connections. Obviously, any reform or support requires identifying this cycle and breaking the chain of pressure-violence-erosion so a light is lit again in men's lives.

6.6.3. Poverty, Financial Bankruptcy, and Men's Unemployment

Poverty, financial bankruptcy, and unemployment in the experience of Iranian men appear not just as a simple economic problem but as a series of consecutive blows to identity, dignity, and psychological security; blows which, in the context of lack of institutional support and structural injustice, are tied to direct or indirect violence against men and leave a devastating role in their relationships and quality of life.

'In my opinion, things I experienced myself... many financial bankruptcies... finally the individual either didn't have the literacy or was forced, or those economic pressures caused this event to happen; but because there is no support... even you know laws, many of them criminal laws [regarding] economic failures again have a series of issues in terms of gender.' (Interview No. 41, Pos 25).

In this narrative, the lived experience of financial bankruptcy is directly linked to the state of lack of social support and the existence of inefficient and even criminalizing laws. The man here—with all despair—is not a victim of individual negligence but a captive of a structure where even in the process of financial fall, his gender becomes a factor in intensifying his difficulty. The 'Social and Economic Capital' approach (Bourdieu, 1390 [2011]) emphasises that the continuation of poverty and financial collapse without supportive backing propels the individual towards feelings of humiliation, identity frustration, and finally the emergence of anger, the reflection of which is completely tangible in family and social relationships.

The vulnerable status of men, especially in conditions of external crises like the Corona pandemic, makes the tragedy of contemporary life more evident;

'During Corona I went on missions a lot... the man had a restaurant, then they had called that 'Sir, these people fight all the time and throw the kid out and fight themselves.' We went and I got permission, said 'Let me come listen too.' I liked it. Sir, we went, we were two men, me and him and that lady. The lady went with my wife and we two went to talk to the man. He said 'My restaurant is such that now it is Corona too, I can't open the restaurant, it is closed. I have no source of income either; those nutritions and nutrients that are in there, we ate them all and it's finished and I have nothing. I too had a restaurant where several people worked; now Corona has struck, we ate chicken meat and whatever there was and nowhere lets me in [hires me] at this age. The wife says 'You must buy a tablet for the kid for school'...' (Interview No. 87, Pos 88).

Here, the texture of the narrative indicates the collapse of traditional roles; the man who was once the economic pillar and symbol of family authority is now helpless and frustrated in the face of the home's basic demands (providing the simplest facilities for education or even nutrition). The analysis of 'Masculine Identity and Breadwinner Role' (Kambakhsh, 1392 [2013]) shows that in conditions of frustration of this role, hidden anger, feelings of inadequacy, and desire for violence emerge.

These frustrations extend into cultural dimensions and family blame as well:

'Well, for example, they suffer my suffering, they eat my grief (Hers-e mano mikhoran). As the saying goes, that time they put for me, they say 'Why for example did it become like this?' Even now they say in my family. For example,

they say 'Why couldn't you, for example?' I say 'Dad, the field I studied doesn't have much market now, doesn't have much use. Again, its work, if there is any, very few want [it]; Mr. Doctor, they want women more.' (Interview No. 91, Pos 32).

The tendency to blame the unemployed or failed man instead of supporting him transforms poverty into a source for structural shame; while the individual, regardless of his expertise and talent, is ultimately rejected due to lack of job opportunity or gender, and his affection and social credit are tarnished. The theory of 'Structural Shame and Social Isolation Drive' (Horton, 1393 [2014]) clarifies that this feeling of rejection drives the man towards mistrust, passivity, or violent reactions.

The scope of poverty and unemployment does not remain limited to livelihood and social dignity but appears in the form of deprivation of growth opportunities and loss of spaces for discharging emotion and anger:

'Then unemployment that is among youth... in cities there are youths who have talent for everything, have ability for everything... think scientifically, sportingly, think technically, whatever; we have youths who are extraordinary but we don't have those facilities. For example, in our city we don't have a proper stadium, a proper club, basically don't have a cinema, don't have a park where we go there want to have fun, or for example don't have a place where that youth, that adolescent goes to discharge himself, that anger.' (Interview No. 8, Pos 86).

The absence of appropriate infrastructures for youth leisure and growth effectively sinks them into a vicious cycle of frustration, unemployment, and anger; latent anger that eventually either returns to the home or society as aggression or leads to repression and chronic depression. The 'Cultural-Physical Capital' approach (Bourdieu, 1390) shows once again that poverty lays the groundwork for the lack of tools for discharge and mental health, and ultimately the emergence of violence.

More invisible dimensions of poverty highlight the cultural and educational gap:

'What do these problems include? Lack of facilities, existence of students who, due to social poverty and family poverty and poverty they had, are forced to be in public schools because they can't afford tuition. Poverty... this is an undeniable reality that financial poverty leads to cultural poverty too, whether we want it or not. We had many others who now, due to financial problems and these issues

that arose, forcedly return their children from non-profit [private] to public schools because of tuition. This is unavoidable; we must say public schools hold more population in themselves. That bipolarity is created in society, that we have a folk culture and a culture that has separated itself from this folk culture of society. Again, wherever we go, we return again to that same cultural poverty whose origin was financial poverty.' (Interview No. 86, Pos 59).

In this narrative, financial poverty threatens not only the present but the cultural and social future of a generation. Educational deprivation resulting from lack of resources intensifies cultural bipolarity and trauma resulting from feelings of inferiority and social elimination, and in the long term leads to reproduced violence not only against men but the whole society. The theory of 'Cultural Capital and Reproduction of Violence' (Bourdieu, 1390) emphasises this reality that institutionalised poverty blocks the path to class and social mobility and is the starting point of a crisis that manifests itself in aggression and social disorder.

Ultimately, the resultant of all these narratives indicates that poverty, financial bankruptcy, and unemployment lead not only to the collapse of identity, self-esteem, and men's mental health but are the origin of birthing anger and violence against them and by them. Weakness of support structure, inefficient laws, and lack of job security drive men towards the ominous loop of aggression, isolation, and even family collapse. Within the Grounded Theory paradigm, violence against men in the absence of social justice and possibility of compensating for unemployment or bankruptcy is considered not just the result of an incident but a structural, repetitive, and multi-layered phenomenon.

6.6.4. Economic Dependence on the Violence Enactor

Economic dependence on the violence-applying individual acts as an invisible but ever-present tether that places many men in positions of doubled vulnerability; a position that originates not only from structural economic power but intensifies traditional textures, character humiliation, and underestimating the role and position of men.

In the first narrative, we witness that weakness of economic power immediately leads to the weakening of the man's status and power, both in facing the wife and the wife's family:

'Both from my wife herself and my wife's family. But now in terms of finance, it's a labourer's wage, you know; naturally that power isn't there anymore.'

(Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 109).

In this narrative, the defect in the man's livelihood ability and failure to provide economic needs has led to the reduction of his position and authority in the family system. This situation becomes a preamble to psychological erosion and a substrate for emotional or behavioural violence from others; where lack of economic power is synonymous with the loss of the man's voice in the family (Pourjafari, 1394 [2015]). The traditional structure and society's expectation for reproducing masculine authority via the channel of economic provision not only keeps the man in a permanent trap of effort and shame but constantly reinforces the pressure tool of surrounding people (Rashedi, 1393 [2014]).

Continuing, an example of the effect of economic desperation after exhausting hours and unfavourable working conditions on psychological resilience and the rate of violence emergence in men's social life is represented:

'Mostly with people who... for example guarding an organisation... your tolerance threshold has decreased. Mostly because of that night-waking and sleeplessness.' (Interview No. 72, Eskandari, Pos 76-77).

Here we observe men whom the repetition of exhausting routines and dependence on meagre income places towards a reduction of tolerance threshold and exposure to nervous explosions and violent reactions. Frustration-Aggression Theory (Dollard & Miller, 1390 [2011]) explains well that unresolved economic tension and pressures lead directly to interpersonal or collective violence.

Another instance of economic dependence is where children and adolescents become severely vulnerable in relation to employers due to their economic position, and sexual violence against working boys emerges in the shadow of this very lack of financial security:

'There were kids whom we... I saw myself kids [street and working children] who went after work and the employer had sexual expectations from them, from these kids with these...' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 47).

Here, dependence on meagre income is the most prominent factor for sexual abuse and violence against boys; in the shadow of this vulnerability, the child

has no ability to confront or protest and remains trapped in a cycle of structural violence (Welfare Organization, 1393 [2014]).

In bitter events of parental loss and inheritance division, lack of economic independence leads to marginalisation and forgetting men in the family:

'When my mother was alive they said 'You are spending your happy days; let our mother put her head on the ground [die], Akbar, cut ties with us.' Our mother put her head on the ground; a month later my eldest aunt came, I said 'Auntie, how is it, they want to sell the house?' She said 'Finally it is their right.' I said 'Auntie, these people have houses, have lives; finally I took the trouble for this father and mother, Auntie.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 33).

Akbar Ebrahimi, who has been dependent on his parents for years, in the absence of financial ability, is deprived of his right in possessing the house; where the spouse's family [or siblings/relatives], without regard to his efforts, want to sell the house. This narrative evokes the concept of 'Social Capital' and its role in maintaining the individual's position in family and society, and its absence intensifies the cycle of violence and being ignored (Kaplan, 2014).

In a sociological view, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh highlights the deep gap between traditional expectations of men regarding family status and authority and today's economic realities, and sees the root of many tensions and violences in this very structural mismatch:

'Then this hits that, then talk and gossip happens, 'Your kid hit my kid,' 'Your kid pushed him,' brides and grooms get offended. These are really hard, but remember these all go back again to that awkward economic structure; one is awkward economic structure and one is that which you state, traditional expectations that still, for example, grandfather be the elder of the family, while now he doesn't have those economic resources. Previously the traditional father was the owner of the entire assets of the clan, meaning all those sons and brides and grandchildren and... these were all his workers. It wasn't necessary at all to lay a spread [feast] Friday to Friday; every night there was a spread there.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 65).

This narrative is a nudge to the gap between traditional expectations of masculine authority and today's economic realities. In the past, the father or grandfather, relying on ownership of macro assets and managing the family labour force, stabilised his undisputed authority and had no need for its external display. But now, with assets shrinking and economic structure

changing, many men, even in the position of family elder, have lost the ability to economically provide for the family; whereas traditional expectations still remain steadfast. This mismatch between traditional role and economic power not only places the man in exposure to family tensions and the emergence of verbal and behavioural violences but traps him in a cycle of effort to maintain apparent authority against economic and social pressures. This phenomenon is tied to the concept of 'Structural Violence,' where economic and cultural structures create inequalities that lead directly to injury and violence (like Modernisation Theory and Masculine Identity Challenges, Connell, 2005; Schultz, 2010).

6.6.5. The Man's Inability to Provide for the Cost of Living

In the landscape of today's life for Iranian men, where the inability to provide for the cost of living has transformed into one of the principal economic intervening conditions of violence against men, a complex narrative can be observed; a narrative wherein responsibility, stress, fatigue, cultural standards, and the imposition of gender roles accumulate like layers of daily pressure on men's shoulders.

'Iranian society needs a Marx in addition to a Freud; meaning the man labours to become a university professor to chat up more girls, labours to get a good car to pick up prettier girls... the man wants to become rich to consume more women. This is really the term 'consumption,' and it seems any man who consumes more women is 'more of a man'; the image history has of Fath-Ali Shah, all his women said 'He is a man.'' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 243).

In this description, a type of 'Symbolic Capital' (Bourdieu, 1986) is evident: the desire for economic success and social status, both serving to prove masculine identity and gain social approval. The dominant culture, by imposing narratives such as 'any man who consumes more women is more of a man,' places the man in a competitive and consumerist position, the result of which is not only psychological and physical erosion but the reduction of identity to financial and sexual success. According to Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1984), what has been placed in the unconscious of the modern Iranian man as 'mission' or 'duty' determines the type of confrontation with economic pressures and crises.

This image is completed with the daily narrative of life:

'You must go work. In exchange for this working, this income and expenditure... we must have information regarding our income and expenditure; our income and expenditure don't match. 'Go, it's your duty, what is it to me?' And this man keeps striving to perform his duty in the best way, but there is an erosion on that side too. There is a modelling too, there is a child-rearing too. The guy goes to work at 6 AM, returns at 12 PM [midnight], doesn't see his child and just wants to perform his duty correctly.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 17).

Here, 'Structural Violence' (Galtung, 1969) operates in its invisible form. The man must not only turn the wheel of family life but is obliged, regardless of his ability and conditions, to meet society's economic standards; even if the result is burnout, distance from child and spouse, and his gradual elimination from the family's emotional relations. The maldistribution of duties in patriarchal gender culture opens the way for the man's emotional and physical erosion and increased family conflicts (Connell, 2005).

But these economic requirements sometimes reach a costly dead end:

'Until the 5th-6th month [of the year] I decided to give some order to this issue or we settle it once and for all. She herself said 'You come to Tehran or I come to Karaj.' I too, truthfully, because I didn't dislike the environment, went so we get a house... let's assume with money from here and there [we found] a good house for mortgage. We looked for a house. I couldn't prepare this money at the present time anymore, so the house slipped out of my hand for rent. After this issue, her enthusiasm was dampened; I saw her enthusiasm was dampened.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 137).

The inability to meet economic expectations and financial requirements places the man in a position of failure and inefficiency due to the judgment of the spouse or the spouse's family. The combination of traditional mentality with contemporary economic crises creates an inflamed 'unfair' condition which aligns perfectly with the 'Frustration-Aggression Theory' (Dollard et al., 1939): the man's economic frustration leads to the emergence of feelings of humiliation, shame, and subsequently, violence is seen as a mechanism for discharging these tensions.

The stress dimensions of this compressed situation become clearer in other narratives:

'When a person forms a family, the man strives to run the life, and [when] his child is born, that stress is high because he must give living costs, give wife and child's expenses; well, because of this his stress increases too.' (Interview No. 77, Abbas, Pos 41).

The stress of providing livelihood and the lack of structural and emotional support exerts a doubled impact on the man, to the point where he sometimes prefers to sacrifice personal needs and desires for economic responsibility. Within the framework of 'Social Role Theory' (Eagly & Wood, 2011), society's emphasis on men's economic role and the lesser visibility of their caregiving or emotional roles itself becomes a ground for ignoring the mentioned psychological and psychosomatic pressures.

Changing family structures and cultural transformations also cast a shadow over this process:

'Now regarding that same family that takes care of kids... it wasn't just one grandmother, rather ten other women were in that house too and everyone took care of the child together in various cases... but now the lady is an employee, brings the child to mum and dad's house, then comes eats her lunch and picks up the child and goes home.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 67).

'High expectations we have... and we threw all issues [economic needs] on the man's neck... in the new life ladies don't work much, most of them are housewives... now lately it has become a bit fashionable that ladies work... until a few years ago when ladies didn't work... 'Sir, the economic situation is ruined.' 'What is it to me? It's your duty.'' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 15).

The transformation in lifestyle, shrinking of family structure, and women's new role-playing in society have caused the reproduction of fresh contradictions; on one hand, the expectation of complete income provision remains on the man's shoulders, and on the other, the weakness of network support and social blame regarding his inability to meet perpetual expectations double the pressures. In a society where men's economic role has been traditionally constructed, economic and social changes without the emergence of structural supportive changes ultimately reinforce violence, conflict, and despair (Connell, 2005).

Emotional dimensions also possess high importance in this midst:

'Her [my wife's] income was absolutely her own, if she had an income. Usually it was like this. But I, in the last year, could take leave little, very little. She attended to her mountaineering. From the 6th month onwards I felt that she suffered depression... I constantly started telling her that I feel this relationship is somehow...' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 139).

In the coil of lack of economic justice or equal financial participation in the family, tensions related to equality and lack of exchange of emotional support also erupt. Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) shows that balance in economic and emotional exchanges plays an important role in the durability of marital relationships and preventing the formation of violence.

In broader dimensions, regional deprivations are also considered a determining factor:

'These are among the most deprived regions in their own provinces; the whole province is deprived at the macro level too... meaning you go to Masjed Soleyman, believe me you think it is a big village, with all those facilities and oil and gas resources and all those resources that exist in this city I named... but due to the marginal structure and isolation position and that communicative blockage, they are very deprived. Meaning the personalities and migrant forces it sends do not return anymore, and the government has paid no attention to them either. Poverty and unemployment and underdevelopment is the main ground, and a level of cultural changes and internal values and norms...' (Interview No. 19, Dr. Bahrami, Pos 20).

Discriminatory structures and the geography of chronic deprivation limit men's support network and, by creating a cycle of poverty and frustration, pave the substrate for the collapse of masculine identity and increase in violence. 'Relative Deprivation' Theory (Runciman, 1966) explains this cycle: when men of these regions receive criteria of status and welfare from media and the central society and see themselves incapable of achieving it, the frustration and anger resulting from this space intensify.

Of course, these pressures extend not only to the financial dimension of the family but to the entire relations and relationships of the man with the surrounding network:

'He lost the competition and in front of his family's eyes... truthfully his mother did a lot of things... his mother was interested that in any way possible... even if it meant, I'm giving an example, she wanted to go on a trip and go on a trip for a

week, so her own house's stove wouldn't get dirty, she would send her family to my house. Whereas I had no duty [to host them] one week a month. I invited my own father and mother once every three months, 'make food.' My income didn't allow it at all. This was common from the beginning too. Afterwards it is very interesting, these people came to our house and we had regular parties but his brothers who married didn't invite us to their own house. For example, you invited us, I invite you too; this is the custom in our society. Now one whose financial situation is better invites twice... his brother had been married four years, we went to his house once. Well, I said when he doesn't invite us... even one of the disputes was this, that his brother said 'Since you invited us to your own house, I'll come hold my child's birthday there.' I said 'Dad, I come hold my own child's birthday, how much I spend... the gift I get doesn't cover its cost... for the sake of us being in a gathering. You want to hold your child's birthday, why must you hold it in my house?! That's all that's left, that I hold a birthday for your child.' Meaning so much economic and profit-oriented thought... this story still continues now with that brother-in-law (Bajenagh) of mine.'

(Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 115).

Ultimately, as narratives testify, the man's inability to provide living costs leads not only to frustration, shame, and stress but can relate to weakening social position, erosion of family relationships, and even implicit exclusion from supportive and emotional networks. Economic, cultural, and psychological substrates, interacting with each other, create a type of doubled challenge whose consequences land on the body and soul and psyche of the Iranian man and reproduce violence, whether in overt form or hidden and internalised.

6.6.6. Attractiveness of Income from Selling Drugs

In the texture of daily life in regions like Qarchak, the geography of deprivation and the informal economy have arranged conditions such that the perception of legitimate ways to earn income has faded for many men—especially the younger generation—and high-risk but attractive paths such as selling narcotics have transformed into one of the most important economic intervening conditions and substrates for violence against men. In the following narrative, this process is described with transparency and bitterness, laying bare the hidden layers of this 'Economic Attractiveness':

'I had a client, the mother came and bought a motorcycle for her 16-17-year-old child... now the child has come unwittingly... all these that we say 'unwittingly,' we are saying, we don't say it was willed, was on purpose, let's say unwittingly we are attributing to him... he came, what did he do? With another boy who was a friend, that family's boy was drug dealing... well, and this boy had awareness that he deals drugs, but in... as the saying goes... because this boy looks, 'This one found income with drug dealing, for example throws a watch of several millions on his hand, isn't behind society [keeps up with trends].' He looks, sees 'I cried, they bought a motorcycle for me by force with instalments.' And he looks, looks at his father, evaluates... 'from this father, even in ten years a motorcycle won't come out.' It is the reality of society. He is forced; in a society, in Qarchak which is crime-ridden... from that side the high number of addicts it has too... retail [dealing] becomes one of the nearest ways of income in Qarchak county... drug selling. Meaning the nearest way of income. But be fair, really if he works for six months... put God and the Prophet aside... but its money is so sweet, its money is so big... six months you work, true, you buy a car, maybe if you work well too in six months you buy a house too... but it is so sweet... well, you didn't know any other work either... you say 'I bought a house in six months, I work another six months and buy gold and jewellery too, I won't work anymore.' Unwittingly, six months six months, you have been working for several years.'
(Interview No. 55, Narcotics Police, Pos 36).

This quote opens complex dimensions of the issue. The first layer is economic comparison: the young man, in confrontation with his peers, sees that access to symbols of social status—multi-million [Toman] watch, car, house, and even gold and jewellery—is realised not only simpler but much faster than the legitimate economic channel, through illegal paths of selling drugs for other peers. In the process of Symbolic Comparison (Bourdieu, 1365 [1986]), he realises that effort, honesty, and adherence to formal rules will likely not even bring him the fruit of buying a motorcycle in the next ten years, whereas entering the drug sales network brings 'sweet' and impressive money within a few months.

In the scientific interpretation of this process, one can point to 'Opportunity Inequality Theory' (Merton, 1968), which emphasises that the difference in the level of access to legitimate income-earning opportunities, in the substrate of poverty and marginalisation, leads to inclination towards unconventional and illegal methods to realise dreams and acquire individual identity. In other

words, a society that does not provide fair income-earning opportunity for everyone unwittingly drives the hands of its youth towards underground sources of wealth and social status (Merton, 1968).

On the other hand, the momentary and exciting attractiveness of income from selling drugs is itself a type of rapid satisfaction of economic and even identity needs. With his first income, the young man heals not only the economic need but the suffering of social comparison with peers, family humiliation, and frustration of society's expectations—albeit short-term. According to 'Relative Deprivation' Theory (Runciman, 1966), the feeling of backwardness compared to others raises the motivation to enter high-risk economic and criminal behaviours.

The continuation of this situation forms a cycle of repetition and internalisation of the high-risk lifestyle. Because, as the quote states: *'Its money is so sweet... you didn't know any other work either... you say 'I bought a house in six months... I won't work anymore.'* Unwittingly... *you have been working for several years.'* Meaning even the short-term wish to leave this path, under the influence of continuous attractiveness and the lack of a suitable occupational alternative, quickly turns into repetition and stabilisation of the procedure.

In this midst, inefficient support structures, lack of productive employment, and the faintness of healthy social and occupational identity for young men are other macro factors that facilitate the reproduction of this violent process; a cycle that recalls returning to concepts of 'Structural Violence' (Galtung, 1969) and even 'Social Learning' (Bandura, 1973); because the individual is not only a victim of inefficient economic and social structure, but his lifestyle and ethical rules are also influenced by observing the financial success of peers who, contrary to society's norms, have traversed the steps of progress not through healthy effort and endeavour, but by entering violent economic behaviour (drug selling).

Ultimately, the 'Economic Attractiveness of Selling Drugs' is not merely an individual decision, but the product of various layers of frustration, social comparison, inequality of opportunities, social structures, and the absence of support and economic justice; a process reproduced in the country's macro social and economic structure and an overt instance of economic intervening conditions in the emergence and intensification of the cycle of violence against men in Iranian society.

6.7. Organisational Intervening Conditions

Organisational intervening conditions related to violence against the male gender in Iranian society include the following:

Violence in the School Space is one of the most important and hidden organisational intervening conditions in the emergence and growth of violence against men. When we hear the narrative from the tongue of those who have the lived experience of these spaces, the dimensions of this violence become revealed more clearly and deeply; narratives that tell not only of physical injuries but of psychological destruction, de-identification (*Hoviyat-zoda'i*), and reproduction of the cycle of violence.

At the beginning of the road, forced migration to an unfamiliar school due to structural limitations of the education system suddenly places the student in exposure to a network of tribal and group relations; a space where every newcomer member faces, more than anything, 'labelling' and rejection by peers. The witness to this story can be found in the narrative below, showing how the method of being addressed with 'Sexual Titles' transforms into a tool for symbolic violence and gradual elimination of the adolescent's individuality:

'I went... people who knew me from the previous school called me by sexual titles [sexual object/passive role] but I didn't pay attention, and finally I faced their annoyances/abuses. And there were even persons in that school who were a few years younger than me but did their deeds... I was afraid to lay a hand on that one [retaliate], all of them would fall on my life [attack me], and I was tired anymore.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 19).

Such an environment is a suitable substrate for reproducing Structural Violence (Galtung, 1969) and Social Learning of violent behaviours (Bandura, 1973); because students experience that tools of control, elimination, domination, and gaining collective status are reproduced not by participation and dialogue but through humiliation, labelling, and physical and psychological abuses. This matter gradually turns into a criterion for surviving and gaining power in the organised student system.

This mechanism manifests in confronting the 'Other.' The narrative of one interviewee depicts the situation of an adolescent who has different gender inclinations; an adolescent who experiences rejection and doubled threat not

only from peers but even from the supportive mechanisms of the educational system:

'Now he/she had come here, we were stuck [thinking] that 'Let's send this one'... because he/she wanted to be a man, you know... 'Let's send him/her to the men's camp'... well, this is a woman, they will annoy her by force. 'Let's send to the ladies' section,' he/she will sort them out [have sex with them/dominate]... you understand, this is the psychological condition... such a girl who has masculine sexual inclination, if she is in a girls' high school, this is a catastrophe; meaning she sorts out half the girls there.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 67).

Structural analysis of this situation indicates the dominance of stereotypical identity assumptions and the lack of a supportive system for different individuals in school. Labelling Theory (Becker, 1963) clearly teaches how this being 'Other' activates organised elimination and repression mechanisms, to the point where violence is legitimised and the victim remains deprived of any type of support (Becker, 1963; Gupta et al., 2005).

Other narratives depict overt and naked 'Institutional Violence'; where beating, corporal punishment, and humiliation are the common language of interaction between teacher and student and students themselves:

'Violence in school, for example beating and punishing and shouting, is common. I saw students themselves do it, teachers do it, perhaps I myself did it too.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 15).

'I was of those who ate [was hit by] hose 30 times a day at the foot of the blackboard... or from morning to night go from this side of the yard 'crow-hopping' (Kalagh-par) to that side of the yard, sweep the yard...' (Interview No. 69, Vahid, Pos 78).

'We were at school, every day someone's hand and head would break... the teacher would hit the kids' heads with a bunch of keys... he had a cable in his hand, a hose in his hand that when he hit, we would quickly bruise and our hand wouldn't come up [we couldn't move it]. Basically they placed no value on a boy... they would thing... destroy 80 percent of boys' pride...' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 82).

The system of continuous punishment and humiliation leads not only to physical injury but to the dispossession of self-worth and erosion of the male child and adolescent's identity (Galtung, 1969; Kennedy & Kennedy, 2004).

The school, which should be the centre of upbringing, growth, and justice, turns into a 'Military Garrison' where any manifestation of individuality, resistance, or being different is answered with the ruthless brand of repression. Such an environment, years before entering adult society, institutionalises the gap of 'Symbolic Capital' (Bourdieu, 1986) in the child's mind and transforms his relationship with the authority structure; such that it seems the only way to preserve oneself is membership in the bullying circle, imitating domination, or sinking into a chronic defensive shell.

Continuing, the collapse of supportive and emotional patterns and weakness of trust between student and teacher creates a susceptible ground for the continuation of violence:

'Now the teacher is not a model for the student; meaning that gap between the student stratum and teacher has actually happened... this man or teacher applies his power towards the student, or there are kids who have more arm strength and want to find dominance over another for their own benefit... again what is this individual being taught? Meaning what happens? That not being a healthy relationship, that interaction not existing, plus the fact that the force of the disciplinarian and teacher and these is over his head... meaning how this person rolls forward in a substrate of violence.' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 8).

In this situation, not only the teacher and disciplinarian but students themselves engage in producing and reproducing power and violence by applying domination and force, and the rupture in healthy relations affects all roles (Symbolic Interactionism Theory: Blumer, 1969).

Organisational violence, however, is not only the product of the teacher-student relationship. Even in dealing with students who are 'themselves victims' of violence, the school system provides more space for judgment, elimination, and even doubled threat for him. Like the narrative below which shows how a very meagre support system, created anxiety, and destructive psychological effect target the student's future and progress:

'[My father] said 'Is [my child] without kin and work [defenceless]?'... they had taken me... to the police station... teachers didn't dare say anything to me, I had gotten involved with all of them... basically it stops many things, stops much progress.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 207-210).

In damaging school environments, when a student faces humiliation, rejection, or physical and spiritual violence, he suffers two serious injuries: first, his self-confidence and social relationships are destroyed, and second, he learns a dangerous lesson. He learns that in this school, to be seen, to be powerful, or even to survive, he has only two ways: either he must participate in these violences himself or endure it in silence (Bourdieu, 1986; Bandura, 1973).

Another level of this violence appears in the question of the role of bullying and sexual abuse in school; students who are not only victims of humiliation and beating but are defenceless in exposure to sexual abuses by power-seeking peers:

'[At school] I get involved mostly with bullies. Kids at school... mostly sexual abuses happen by bullies. And usually kids are abused.' (Interview No. 101, Ashkan and Hossein, Students, Pos 376-384).

Ultimately, the result of these violent experiences in the school organisation will be frustration, social isolation, alienation from self and society, learning norms of domination and revenge, and stabilising violent masculine roles; destructive effects that spread to other levels of violence against men in social and familial structures in later years. In the language of social theories, a school that lacks a supportive and fair structure is not only not the main substrate for education and upbringing but transforms into a 'Field of Violence Reproduction' (Bourdieu, 1986; Galtung, 1969; Becker, 1963).

6.8. Cultural Intervening Conditions

In Iranian society, Cultural Intervening Conditions play a fundamental role in the formation and reproduction of violence against men. One of the prominent dimensions of these conditions is the intensification of luxury-oriented tendencies and 'keeping up with the Joneses' (*Cheshm-o-ham-cheshmi*) among women, which constantly increases the level of material and social expectations and demands from men. This trend, in addition to imposing doubled pressure on men, places them in difficult and competitive positions and often causes psychological erosion and the emergence of tension in relationships.

Alongside this subject, traditional stereotypes of the male role—such as the necessity of being the breadwinner, refraining from expressing emotions, and enduring silence in the face of problems—reinforce the substrate of various

types of hidden and overt violence. The induction of such expectations prevents the expression of men's needs and sufferings and lays the groundwork for denying or normalising violence against them. Thus, the dominant cultural system, by stabilising a circle of expectations, standards, and role-centric values, places men in exposure to multilateral pressures, the analysis of which is necessary for a realistic understanding of the hidden angles of violence against them.

6.8.1. Women's Luxury-Oriented Mentality and 'Keeping Up with the Joneses' (*Cheshm-o-Ham-Cheshmi*)

In the context of Iranian society, one of the most prominent examples of cultural intervening conditions in the formation and continuation of violence against men is the luxury-oriented mentality and 'keeping up with the Joneses' (*Cheshm-o-ham-cheshmi*), which is reflected particularly in the issue of dowry (*Jahiziyeh*) and financial expectations of marriage. This phenomenon does not appear merely as simple individual expectations, but with deep social, cultural, and historical roots, has transformed into an unwritten necessity and structural pressure; a necessity that even without explicit articulation, drives men towards a permanent test for proving worthiness, capability, and acceptance in family and social relationships.

In the following quote, the depth and scope of this pressure is tangible:

'I define its root like this: that lady or family of the female gender who wants a union to take place or has a request from the male gender... or that lady whose violence originates from somewhere... that same violence of 'keeping up with the Joneses,' competition for Jahiziyeh [dowry] has increased the family's material pressure. We had cases where because she couldn't bring a proper Jahiziyeh, she rejected every suitor with an excuse, excluded him. She didn't say 'I don't have the ability for it'; she rejected the opposing party. We had cases where the guy prepared a Jahiziyeh with debt and a thousand kinds of pressure... that same man [father] prepared a Jahiziyeh with a thousand kinds of debt and promises... that same violence for his daughter and subsequently for the opposing party [groom]... In my opinion, reducing luxuries... this very thing, for example I say, who set this situation that the girl brings Jahiziyeh with herself? Who laid the foundation that the man [bears] the entire duty and responsibility of life? They set a tradition from before, today they have advanced it, and it is the source of

trouble and violence and divorce and pressure.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 59).

Within this narrative, several important layers of symbolic and structural violence can be dissected: firstly, luxury-orientation and 'keeping up with the Joneses,' which has appeared in the form of a hidden but devastating violence, not only fails to make expectations realistic but constantly increases the level of expectations in a fluid and competitive manner. This process, as the interviewee correctly points out, places the family and woman in a position where even if she has no demand or request from the man, she is inevitably forced to participate in the comparative and imposed game of material values; values whose origin is often not real need, but the gazes and unrealistic competitions of society and the kinship circle.

In this space, a man who is unable to provide a lifestyle [or match the dowry contribution] in accordance with the level of expectations faces rejection and indifference not only from the woman's family but by the woman herself. *'We had cases where because she couldn't bring a proper Jahiziyeh, she rejected every suitor...'* This rejection is not merely an individual action; rather, it reflects the reproduction of the power structure and gender roles at the macro level; where the realisation of masculine identity is placed solely in dependence on economic success and fulfilling material ideals.

The analysis of this process in the theoretical context is well understood with the concept of 'Cultural Capital' (Bourdieu, 1986); where cultural capital includes a set of expectations, norms, and unwritten requirements that the individual must acquire and present to be accepted in the social group—even if for him this matter entails heavy economic and psychological pressure. As the quote states: *'The guy prepared a Jahiziyeh with debt and a thousand kinds of pressure...'* This debt and pressure is a prominent manifestation of structural violence; violence that, not in the form of overt assault and battery, but in the form of an imposed, unattainable need, slowly leads to psychological erosion, intra-familial problems, feelings of inadequacy, and ultimately the weakening of the marital bond.

From the perspective of Structural Violence Theory (Galtung, 1969), the traditional system of dividing duties and responsibilities induces a type of reproducing order wherein the man, as responsible for the family's material provision, willingly or unwillingly is always under the shadow of expectation

and judgment: *'They set a tradition from before, today they have advanced it, and it is the source of trouble and violence and divorce and pressure.'*

This reproduction of structures causes that in many times, even the woman or her family unintentionally participate in producing or continuing violence against the man; because both from the perspective of society and intra-group competitions, they are forced to accept superficial values. This cycle is reproduced neither by simple refusal nor by forced consent, but by the continuation of a sustainable race, and ultimately provides a substrate for increasing psychological, economic, and emotional violences against men.

Thus, as stated in the narrative above, *'reducing luxuries... who set this situation... who laid the foundation that the man [bears] the entire duty...'* fundamentally the root of violence originates from constructed and complex cultural relations; relations that place the individual under permanent pressure and gradually stabilise injuries such as reduced mental health, crisis in relationships, social exclusion, and the weakness of the shared life foundation—a matter which, based on the mentioned theoretical frameworks, is a clear manifestation of 'Symbolic and Structural Violence' (Galtung, 1969; Bourdieu, 1986).

6.8.2. Instrumental View of Men

In society, expectations and demands of men under the shadow of cultural intervening conditions are counted among the main roots of the emergence of violence against them. The view instilled in boys from childhood is based on stereotypes that always define 'being a man' as equivalent to suffering hardship, having low expectations, and even accepting violence and physical and psychological compulsions. Narratives that place the man in exposure to violence from the very beginning and even consider this behaviour necessary for his correct upbringing reveal the reproduction of structural violence; where the internalisation of pressure and expectations leads to the normalisation of violence and even the transformation of the victim into its agent in the future.

As one interviewee narrates:

'It is this culture that has raised these people, that men must suffer hardship; men must see violence, its correct way is this very thing, they are raised like this. Even right now, when I look at the kids around me, the way they behave with a boy, they behave differently with a boy. Two siblings; they cajole (Naz-e dokhtara ro mikeshan) the girls, but they beat the boys. I haven't seen in the family, for

example, two have an age difference; they cajole the girl to study her lessons, but the boy wants to write that same math [homework], [it is] with beating. Well, this [boy], when he sees violence, when he gets bigger, well naturally his spirit becomes more violent.' (Interview No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 4).

These discriminatory familial and social behaviours not only inflict direct injury on men's self-confidence and self-image but confront them with exhausting expectations and roles where they must always see themselves ready to accept heavy duties and suffer. These experiences, based on Pierre Bourdieu's Symbolic Violence approach (1986), are part of institutionalised violence of which the victim is not even fully aware and considers it necessary for 'being correct' and becoming a man (Bourdieu, 1375 [1996]).

The instrumental view of men's worthiness is evident not only within the family limits but in various layers of society:

'Expectations of men are very high; meaning a man alone has no value. Now something I understood... even in my own family, not only myself, surrounding people, society, or in [military] service I asked... they love men as long as they perform a task. They love him for his money, love him for the works he performs. But girls... girls in a normal state, if she wants to marry, many boys accept; but a boy, as long as he has nothing to present, has no value. Meaning expectation is much higher from boys.' (Interview No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 4).

This narrative is a clear reflection of 'Social Capital Reproduction' where, according to Bourdieu's theory, individuals are forced to accept and execute social patterns and expectations to maintain their position; a situation that, if not fulfilled, places men in exposure to blame or even exclusion. Financial and occupational expectations are also part of this cycle:

'When they say 'he is a man,' meaning you must go earn money; but a girl alone is a girl. At sixteen they said 'You must work to become a man,' well, but they never tell a girl 'Work to become a woman.' My age went higher, they said 'Go to service [military] to become a man.'' (Interview No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 8).

This experience is not just a symbol of gender role-playing pressure but injects a type of invisible and chronic violence into men's lives. Reducing the man's position to a set of duties and functions and constantly comparing him with the level of family and societal expectations places him constantly in exposure to deep tension. As is seen:

'Meaning for example the view that exists in society regarding men's jobs... a father might cut his boy child's pocket money at 10-12 years old, but a girl child, no, this might not happen. Or he might give a series of responsibilities and tasks to that boy child that it is possible... no, rather one hundred percent he doesn't give to a girl child.' (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari-Nasab, Pos 9).

This discriminatory space, which is called 'Structural Violence' in Galtung's analysis (1969), indicates that in the infrastructure of society's relations, pervasive expectations of men are designed in such a way that pressure is always exerted on them. Even in the division of material resources and family welfare, this expectation is very prominent:

'In the family consumption basket, the rubbish belongs to men; the best banana and [fruit] belongs to the wife and child, and that spotted one is for men.' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim, Pos 90).

Indirect discrimination, which accompanies men from childhood to adulthood, is accompanied not only by deprivation of facilities but by the destruction of their sense of worthiness and psychological security. A precise reference by an interviewee to this issue can be considered a clear instance of these conditions:

'You must say these things from childhood when they are kids, that no, culture must [be] for the child, his etiquette and upbringing, everything must be [right] before the mother is even pregnant... her nutrition be appropriate, be in a calm environment, and there be no discrimination between children, 'this is a girl, that is a boy.' For example, we now have... we have a buddy, he has a daughter, a son; he has taken his daughter to the highest heavens (Arsh-e Ala), put his son under the carpet, to this extent. He says 'Oh God, [I wish] He gave me two blind and deaf daughters but didn't give me that son.' Whereas his son is really a moon [wonderful]. That is discrimination.' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 78).

Ultimately, this cycle of discrimination and expectation not only withholds emotional and psychological support sources from men but places them in highly vulnerable positions; where they must grapple alone under the burden of economic and social responsibilities in the family:

'Those ladies who have houses [housewives], the entire burden of life, burden of responsibility is on gentlemen's shoulders, you know. A lady whose hand is in her own pocket spends much more cautiously because she knows earning money is

hard, in my opinion; but someone whose hand is not in work says 'I want this, I don't care, provide it however possible.' This causes the party [man] to pour it into himself, pour it into himself; he dies or has a stroke.' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim, Pos 46).

Furthermore, men who collapse or go bankrupt as a result of financial pressures and suggested expectations often do not see support or sympathy from family and spouse and face expectations that only double their burden of responsibility:

'Prison, especially the guy because of debt, Mehrieh, and bankruptcy... he strove a lifetime to set life right; when a man hits the ground [fails], fewer spouses are found who stand by their husband. She says 'I want... now I want the house, I want the car, you must provide...'' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim, Pos 106).

Alongside all these, violence towards men occurs in the form of violation of privacy, controlling behaviour, or even stripping him of psychological and personality independence, as we see a clear example from an interviewee:

'It was this person's privacy to sit with a therapist and speak his heart; now this lady observed no privacy... some ladies think 'Well, now that we have become husband and wife, that gentleman must put aside all his individuality and independence, to the extent that if Mum and them went North, we go North; if they went South, we go South.' Who are you? My mum decides. These are all instances of violence.' (Interview No. 3, Azin, Pos 35).

Based on Grounded Theory, such data not only demonstrate the individual and emotional consequences of violence against men but reveal the mechanisms of reproducing violence through cultural institutions and educational patterns. This internalisation of discrimination and expectation gradually depreciates the man's agency and individuality and provides a structure where violence becomes not an exceptional event, but a daily procedure and the inevitable fate of a significant portion of society's men.

6.8.3. Role Stereotypes

In a society where masculine identity is tied to established expectations, stereotypes, and duties, daily narratives regarding the formation and stabilisation of violence against men take on the colour of a bitter and multi-layered reality. The daily experience of being a man is often hidden in the heart of duties where it seems the man is obliged to carry the entire burden of life

without question—and any hesitation or weakness is considered a sign of 'Masculine Unworthiness.'

'Now more interestingly... we, over all this wealth... yesterday, the day before yesterday, 'get chicken.' I say 'I can't make it [don't have time/money], you get it yourself if you can.' 'It's your duty.' What does 'I can't make it' mean? 'Get bread too on the way.' Without saying goodbye she hung up the phone without any event having happened. Oh, not all torments are a stick they beat on a person's head... now you come define this for someone: 'Eh, they are right, you are the man of the house, get it then.'' (Interview No. 17, Foad, Pos 47).

In the heart of such expectations, men face a level of duty-orientation where the slightest delay or protest is quickly met with negative reaction and even humiliation. Here, violence is not embodied only in overt physical or verbal behaviours but is applied in a gradual and invisible manner within the context of cultural stereotypes of stabilised roles (Galtung, 1348 [1969]).

Social and administrative structures also reinforce and stabilise gender role stereotypes. A clear example is support institutions and even recipients of social services, whose experience reflects a type of implicit and current discrimination in perceiving and dealing with violence against men:

'Things I have seen experientially... they came and went and said... we ourselves in [line] 123 too, for violence that is reported, subconsciously when a lady calls that 'The child's father beats the child, burns him with a cigarette or anything else,' it is more believable and acceptable for us than if a man calls and states such cases. I want [to say] these schemas and type of view and conception exists regarding these two genders, and this is influential on behaviour. Meaning a man... when a man sees such a thing exists, it might become a factor for seeing violence or being subjected to violence. And from that side, our laws are such that... now because gentlemen... things I saw in experience... we must always help ladies more than them as delicate creatures. For example, I saw if you wave [for] a bus on the way, if it is a gentleman, it is impossible for him [driver] to stop; but if it is a lady, they say 'Poor thing, people's wife and child in the middle of the street, let me stop for her, she has dignity.' This same thing exists in courts too, unfortunately, because the majority of court forces are gentlemen and unfortunately they trust ladies' words more. Until a man... ladies can speak better, explain better than men, and men consider explaining a series of things there a taboo.' (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari-Nasab, Pos 27).

In this midst, not only do official institutions consider women more deserving of support, but men effectively feel ashamed to express the violence they endure or even do not have the possibility to prove it. This is the same cycle Bourdieu refers to as Symbolic Violence: a domination whose injury is applied to the individual solely through symbols and cultural relations, and the victim, in an internalised manner, does not consider himself worthy of demanding support and justice (Bourdieu, 1375 [1996]).

When violence against men is defined in the 'Masculine' realm, support systems and even public judgment consider the man lacking competence and legitimacy to be a victim:

'Let me give an example; for example, my wife hits a punch under my chin, goes to court herself. 'Who was it?' They say 'It was the husband,' it's easy. If she self-harms, she says 'It was the husband.' It has no way of proof. Basically it has nothing to do with the judicial system; [this relates to the culture] of the whole society [which has defined violence as a masculine realm].' (Interview No. 48, Ali Nour-Mohammadi, Pos 163-167).

Here, the structure of meaning and symbolic social forces operate such that men are fundamentally called 'Owners of the Realm of Violence,' and their complaint, even if presented to legal authorities, is condemned to futility in advance. This approach, that violence is considered an inseparable aspect of masculinity, effectively deprives them of the right to demand support and compassion.

At the level of family relationships too, the redefinition of the father and man's role in the position of a tool for financial provision and service delivery has become a pervasive pattern. The subordinate view of the man and father—who was once considered an 'extraterrestrial being' in the maternal view—has now turned into a handful of tools and servants:

'That definition mother used to give us, that 'This father is an extraterrestrial being'... but now ladies behave in such a way that the father is no longer extraterrestrial; he is a servant, he is a tool [for making money]. This is violence, do you notice? Whereas the child now talks to his father as if he is talking to his buddy.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 15).

The change in attitude towards 'Man' in the context of social transformations and modernising relationships has taken root so much that his worthiness is re-read only in being consumed and providing material services. This is a level

of hidden and severely damaging violence that weakens men's identity, self-esteem, and vitality.

In this midst, sexual stereotypes and local taboos also play a decisive role in increasing violence towards men who deviate from society's expected criteria. Especially in more closed cultural contexts, any sexual transgression by men—particularly in the field of gender and sexual orientation—is interpreted as the destruction of prestige and complete social elimination:

'The subculture of small cities and villages in western regions of Iran is based on this, that the ugliest behaviour for men is having a sexual relationship of the homosexual type and sexual connection with family [incest]. If this sexual issue happens for someone, it means his life and existence ends and he has no right to live. And he must migrate from there. It is very ugly and repulsive. And everyone addresses you with bad titles and attributes. In our city, these events haven't happened at all before; I think no one had an influence regarding the work I did, and the only person who is at fault is me and no one else.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 37).

This level of social elimination and denial is in fact the institutionalised construction of humiliation and reduction of men in the face of cultural stereotypes and taboos; such that any offending individual is forced to exit society or endure severe punishments. The analysis of cultural intervening conditions in Grounded Theory shows that role stereotypes and stabilised roles are the most important substrate for reproducing violence against men at various individual, institutional, and structural levels; from transforming the man into a livelihood tool to his elimination and negation due to individual difference or transgression of cultural norms. This phenomenon clearly corresponds completely with theories of Structural Violence (Galtung, 1948) and Symbolic Violence (Bourdieu, 1975), and social and cultural structures, both via law and everyday beliefs, play not only a determining but a root role in shaping the cycle of continuing violence against men (Galtung, 1948; Bourdieu, 1975).

6.9. Religious Intervening Conditions

In many traditional and religious societies, religion and religious institutions act as the most important constructs in shaping the rules and norms of relationships within the family and society. As is well evident from the

narratives of interviewees, religion and traditions derived from it are not merely a collection of ethical or worship decrees, but play a role as the reference determining the legitimacy of behaviours and even ownership of the body and dignity of men and women; thus, religious rules and prevalent interpretations of them often become the arena for exercising power and a type of hidden violence against men as well.

In the lived experience of many men, a large part of this violence results from the selective and instrumental application of decrees, derivation, or one-sided emphasis on religious laws and rituals, precisely when the interests and status of the opposing party are involved. As one of the interviewees says:

'The elders of the tribe, well you know, can arrange a tradition for themselves, now whatever. Why should we Muslims, for example, have a woman's cabinet [dowry furniture] and woman's Mehrieh? Everyone says 'Mehrieh is the woman's, Mehrieh was from the Prophet's time, was so-and-so.' Sir, okay, Mehrieh was from the Prophet's time; well, I have a question. Why does no one thing [mention]... women, why, Sir? 'A woman shouldn't work in the house,' but 'a woman can bring a slave girl into the house and can sleep with her' [referring to historical/religious contexts of polygyny/concubinage rights men had, contrasting with women's rights today]. When it reaches here, the woman's, for example, religious beliefs fly away (par-par mishe), but for Mehrieh it is said. A series of stories that have much depth, one cannot understand... its foundation, well, this government laid. Exactly religion laid it. Well, for example, when they were taking [marrying] girls and boys, for example they said 'Let one hand and one leg of his be the girl's Mehrieh so he doesn't divorce her at all.' Do you remember early in the revolution they made one hand and one leg the Mehr? In our time when there was the Committee (Komiteh) and these things, we remember beautifully. Afterwards this spread to the rest of society, 'Let our girls not divorce, not do so-and-so.' At first, this sensitivity existed, for example, 'Let the girl not divorce.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 137).

In this narrative, religion and tradition not only provide a substrate for structural violence but, by creating mechanisms such as *Mehrieh*, have placed gender and masculine volition in the coil of contractual rules—rules that are interpretable mainly in the direction of structural interests of women or traditional and religious institutions. This instrumental and interpretive selection is a concept Galtung speaks of in Structural Violence Theory; where institutions, laws, and social values, in an imperceptible but systematic

manner, inflict oppression on a group of individuals, even if this oppression is not directly tangible (Galtung, 1348 [1969]).

In another layer, religious orders and norms cast a shadow over personal lifestyle and even individuals' spiritual rituals and sometimes advance to entering the most private parts of men's lives:

'Previously [my wife] prayed; she fasted. Even early in my life, for example, occasionally I fasted 10-12 [days], then didn't fast, and she said 'No, keep your fast, I am keeping it too, well it's just this one month, what's wrong with it,' blah blah. Now I fast, the whole 30 days; she says 'What for, for example? Why did you make a fool of yourself keeping fast?' These things, if they go up and down in my mind, it's because I suffer a lot of torment regarding this issue.' (Interview No. 17, Foad, Pos 21).

In such a position, adherence or non-adherence to religious rituals transforms into a lever for control, humiliation, or tool of power for the opposing individual. Applying pressure based on the degree of commitment to religious orders is itself a straightforward example of psychological and structural violence; violence that, by reducing the man's spiritual independence and personal choice, sends his human dignity into eclipse and weakens his position in family relations. This is exactly the phenomenon Bourdieu refers to as Symbolic Violence; when constructs and semantic systems assault the domination and supremacy of masculine independence with the help of religious status and the legitimizing position of religion (Bourdieu, 1375 [1996]).

Furthermore, narratives show that religious men, sometimes by being placed in the heart of a society with traditional teachings, themselves unintentionally become carriers and reproducers of those same violent actions; meaning religious norms consider the position of man's dominance and priority self-evident and natural, and build the style of interaction with woman and family members not based on dialogue and equality, but around the axis of obedience and hierarchy:

'Look, we have a lot of violence among religious men. Look, one cannot call them violence-oriented or abuser; their lifestyle is this, that they see themselves as God and in fact see the woman as someone who must serve them.' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 18-20).

This angle of view not only places the woman as the object of service and the man as the axis of power and judgment but considers any demand for individual rights or even expression of man's independence unjustified or negated, and creates such an order that any exit from this order will be a sign of weakness or inferiority. The hegemony of such a semantic order must be analysed in the context of Symbolic and Structural Violence theories, because a significant part of the legitimacy of family and social order is derived from this religious interpretation and customs related to it (Bourdieu, 1375; Galtung, 1348).

Accordingly, Religious Intervening Conditions in the present Grounded Theory research are recognised as one of the most fundamental contexts for the formation and continuation of violence against men: the religious approach and interpretations injected into society by authoritarian institutions and structures inflict a spectrum of violence—from limitation in spiritual rights and individual rituals to the consolidation of gender hierarchy—upon men; a collection whose objective and subjective manifestation is clearly evident in the lived narrative of interviewees. The analysis of these data shows that religion and religious traditions in the structure of Iranian society still play a role as a mediating and sometimes repressive force in the emergence and stability of violence against men, and a large part of this violence is guided and legitimised not through physical or economic violence, but mainly through the path of symbols, meanings, interpretations, and sanctified values (Galtung, 1348; Bourdieu, 1375).

6.10. Legal-Political Intervening Conditions

In Iranian society, Legal-Political Intervening Conditions play a determining role in the formation and continuation of violence against men. The inefficiency of governance and weakness of the management system—especially the lack of sufficient supervision over institutions and the performance of responsible apparatuses—provide a favourable substrate for ignoring men's injuries. The ignorance of management systems regarding the needs of diverse social groups, especially LGBTQ groups, and the lack of targeted planning for effective support and intervention, cause an increase in the vulnerability of this stratum of men in the face of various types of violence.

Furthermore, the shortage or absence of specialised counselling and psychological centres at the society level limits the possibility of identification,

prevention, and supportive interventions, leaving men defenceless against a wide range of injuries. At the legal and judicial level, the existence of legal vacuums, weakness of implementation, and complex legal processes not only prevent the realisation of rights but sometimes fuel the reproduction of violence and the continuation of the cycle of injury. These factors indicate that reforming laws, elevating managerial awareness, and developing supportive infrastructures are necessary to curb the legal-political dimensions of violence against men.

6.10.1. Governance in the Management System (Lack of Supervision)

In the heart of interviewees' narratives, the inefficiency of governance and lack of effective supervision in the management style of government institutions and support organisations shows itself like a silent language in the warp and weft of men's daily life; it seems the governance system at many different levels of society has turned into a structure that not only does not perform its supportive role for the weakest strata, including men, but in many instances fuels the reproduction of discrimination and violence against them itself.

One of these manifestations is the overt indifference towards the livelihood and support status of working children and deprived families.

'In my opinion, the government does not have complete support for these... for these working children and their families.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 31-33).

In such conditions, the government, instead of being a haven and shelter for families lacking support, merely becomes an observer of a process wherein men are trapped in the cycle of poverty, inequality, and structural violence. This is the same meaning seen in Galtung's Structural Violence Theory, where governance structures, due to their incompetence and inefficiency, systematically strip the possibility of growth and human dignity from groups such as men and provide conditions for the emergence of social and psychological pathologies (Galtung, 1348 [1969]).

Another example, however, appears in analysing employment policies and macro-government decisions. In the field of education and employment, inattention to gender discriminations can have destructive consequences for women just as much as for men, and sometimes imposes this violence on them even more imperceptibly; as Davood clearly shows:

'In some [academic] fields, [government] attention is more on ladies, it is not on gentlemen; is this a type of structural discrimination? For example, in fields, in finding a job, for example, they give much more attention to hiring and employment of ladies, and men are employed less, and as a result men become unemployed.' (Interview No. 91, Davood, Pos 35).

Here, inefficiency in resource distribution and lack of supervision to guarantee equal opportunities is another manifestation of that same structural discrimination which reinforces violence against men, not necessarily with a club but with the invisible tool of wrong policymaking and indifference. According to the view of Political Economy theorists, the presence of inefficient institutions and unstable decisions is always painful for more subordinate groups—whether man or woman (Acheson et al., 2011; cited in Galtung, 1348).

Lack of supervision and inefficiency of the management system deepens in executive and disciplinary affairs. Where Ashkan and Hossein—students—say:

'Now the [school] principal slaps a student's ear. [This violence] is forbidden, you know; if you want to complain, you have to get involved with a hundred people, and at the end of it, it gets nowhere. [There is no supervision on the school management system].' (Interview No. 101, Ashkan and Hossein, Students, Pos 359).

Here, the absence of an accountability system and effective mechanism for realising rights creates a situation where violence is not only not suppressed but, due to the defective management structure and lack of effective supervision, is institutionalised and reproduced; a trend which, according to Bourdieu's Theory regarding Symbolic Violence, can lead to the unconscious reproduction of domination and discrimination (Bourdieu, 1375 [1996]).

In a wider view, poverty of facilities and weakness in macro-planning has caused no reliable support network to exist for men and vulnerable groups. Marziyeh Hosseini explains with a realistic look:

'Governance is not efficient. The government does not have the factors of efficient governance, and a society that is tired, a society that is disjointed... the individual has lost all its components and support networks in the heart of this society. Well, becoming injured [suffering pathology] is not a strange thing; we

shouldn't expect someone in those conditions to live like a man or men of Sweden.' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 237).

In a society where governance lacks cohesion and effective management, injury and placing men in exposure to violence becomes an inevitable and expected matter; a function resulting not from direct hostility but born of inefficient and supervision-evading structures. This interpretation can also be explained within the framework of Social Welfare Theories and contemporary structuralism (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

In another instance, the absence of capable managers and teachers or correct support programmes can itself lead to the expansion of the culture of violence in school and society. According to Ahmad Nazari's narrative:

'Groups formed by the class teacher... that creates affection (Hobb), and definitely that affection created causes a patch [connection] to be created between those groups... the management of the person of the teacher who is in that class is strong. You look, if connection is not established between the student... that teacher himself who is teaching in that class... misplaced encouragement of a person done by the class teacher might transform that same person into a person who introduces himself in the form of the class bully...' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 41).

Here, weakness of supervision and management defect of teachers and officials itself fuels the creation or intensification of spaces of bullying, discrimination, and injustice; a phenomenon whose fruit falls on the heads of men who suffer helplessness in the educational, work, and social structure. Open and Closed Systems Theories in educational sciences also confirm this subject (Wang et al., 2019).

But inefficiency is not limited merely to education and municipal services; in the Military Service System (*Nezam-Vazifeh*) too, its footprint can be seen on the body and soul of men, as Ehsan expresses with a tired voice:

'56 days, they took us [soldiers] to Shurabad; there they burn garbage four hundred meters over there... the stench of burning garbage came, we had camped there... proper food didn't reach us, reached late, or didn't reach; they had to go bring food from Kahrizak. [There was no supervision on these places].'
(Interview No. 48, Ehsan, Soldier, Pos 40).

When responsible institutions and organisations do not perform their supervisory duty and are not accountable for their performance, men are both

injured physically and their human dignity is tarnished. Sociologists call this type of injury, which emerges from the heart of systematic negligence, a type of 'Silent Violence' or structural violence (Galtung, 1984).

The scope of inefficiency, however, extends to dimensions of fighting social pathologies such as addiction and narcotics as well. Faraz Mahboubi says:

'Well, we have addicts everywhere, it won't get fixed... nothing... if you want to count a thing, meaning the government or whatever wants... if there isn't a thing [obstacle], I say it won't take an hour, ultimately won't take a day, won't take 24 hours to uproot it and go... meaning it's not like they can't stop it... but I say again, how should I say... if they can keep making everyone aware, you know, make aware?' (Interview No. 36, Faraz, Pos 310).

Or Ali Aghasi:

'[To fight narcotics]... they must catch that kitchen owner [lab operator]. Not us [drug consumers] who are being lost [dying]. The police and judge have no supervision.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 179).

In this field too, lack of supervision, weak executive regulations, and negligence of custodial institutions effectively destroy the possibility of confronting the cycle of violence and men's suffering.

The field of social policy-making and supporting non-governmental organisations (NGOs) has not remained immune from this defect either. Marziyeh Hosseini explicitly points to fundamental weaknesses in support organisations:

'No, it's not important... not only is it not important for them... [someone] wants to get a permit to empower youth and do something for them, they wouldn't give him a permit... Welfare [Organization] is a very lame (Fashel) institution... it has 42 groups under coverage and basically cannot cover even one group completely because it basically doesn't have sufficient budget.' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 64).

Formal [nominal] support, resource limitation, and administrative complexities effectively cut the hand of the needy short and guarantee the life of the violence cycle; a phenomenon research related to Governance Quality and Social Welfare considers a barrier to realising human rights (Kaufmann et al., 2009).

At another level, inefficiency in educational and social policy-making has imperceptibly disrupted the gender power balance. Dr. Bahrami says:

'...we in policy-making and in planning couldn't, in fact, have a balanced view on the discussion of planning for women... this caused an increase in their awareness... but on the other side we couldn't bring the man up foot-by-foot [alongside] them... women perform many affairs... this has helped their independence and their self-confidence, and these, because they were not created foot-by-foot [equally], itself created a type of power for the woman, and this power caused violence directed at men to be created, in fact.' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 43).

In this clear analysis, the lack of two-sided and coordinating policies plays a direct role in creating symbolic violence against men.

In legal cases too, men's rights against women are not correctly explained or observed; Sohrabi clarifies:

'Why, if a man betrays, should he pay the price, but a woman who betrays doesn't pay the price? Sir, I say let's take the right of marriage [polygamy] from the man, take the right of the second wife from the man, give the right of divorce to the woman [too]...' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 169).

Instances of legislative inefficiency and disarray of the legal decision-making system are here, paving the ground for violence against men and transforming the legal system into part of the cycle of violence as well (Galtung, 1348; Esping-Andersen, 1990).

All these narratives, alongside each other, present a clear image of what is called inefficiency and lack of effective supervision in the management system: a structure wherein the lack of coherent planning, indifference of managers and officials, weakness of support apparatuses, and lack of executive guarantee not only does not de-escalate injury but becomes the creator and sustainer of various violences and injustices against men. The result is exactly what social welfare and structural violence theorists have warned of for years; a system that expands injury instead of support and keeps men in a cycle of deprivation, ignoring, and discrimination (Galtung, 1348; Bourdieu, 1375).

Ignorance of Management Systems regarding LGBTQ Groups: In facing the lived experiences of heterosexual men and especially members of LGBTQ groups, the ignorance of management systems—including Education, Law Enforcement institutions, the Judicial system, and even employment centres

and medical services—plays an effective and multi-layered role in reproducing violence against men. This ignorance leads directly to exclusion and social stigma, and through structures and regulations traps individuals' lived experience in a cycle of denial, injustice, and repeated injury; as if the individual, every time he faces a representative of these structures, is forced to prove he 'exists' and 'has the right' to exist.

In Shayan Varamini's narrative, speaking of his masculine identity and effort for social acceptance, the process of reproducing violence in the heart of the educational and administrative system is evident:

'This subject that I myself didn't know, only 'I like to be a man,' even in my sleep I was a man. I had even become interested in a girl. Again and again my surrounding people mocked me because I went to a girls' school. [The school] called my family to school several times, that 'Why does this one have boyish behaviours?' and why... they had realised my expression of interest towards that individual... now one of my classmates had gone and told this subject to the upbringing teacher (Moallem-e Parvareshi), and the upbringing teacher called my family to school and called that girl's family too. Meaning this subject was repeated three times in my school process; one of them was very catastrophic. The upbringing teacher called my mum, that 'There is a thing, a defect, a problem, a thing'... she couldn't tell her that for example 'Their condition is something else.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 21).

The educational mechanism lacks any procedure and sufficient awareness for facing diverse gender identities, and its reaction, instead of attending to the needs and true situation of the individual, is labelling and defective intervention. Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of 'Symbolic Violence' points exactly to this situation; where symbolic domination is applied through the reproduction of power relations in language and administrative-educational procedures—and with the justification of 'being normal' or 'the other being problematic' (Bourdieu, 1375).

Weakness of legal and police structures reveals another dimension of the story. Shayan Varamini explains:

'One of the other abuses I saw a lot... I had just changed gender [transitioned/had surgery], I had no beard at all, but I could go get its license [ID/permit] as a man... and because I had no beard and was smaller [slighter] than now, all police would catch me sitting behind the wheel. All police without exception... I had to

stand for an hour explaining. Laws haven't changed, laws were for ladies. But I had a court verdict... 'Don't give [show] your dad's verdict, man, this is me!' 'No, we...' 'This is me, this is me, this is my court verdict, I operated, my birth certificate hasn't changed yet, this verdict has come [so] my birth certificate changes, my national card'... explain to this one for an hour... man, a series [of them] don't understand at all.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 225).

In this scene, the problem starts where the law and officers have no correct knowledge and awareness of the identity and legal conditions of trans individuals. This ignorance causes trans individuals to be trapped in unnecessary bureaucratic twists and turns and be systematically humiliated. This is exactly what a theorist named Galtung calls 'Structural Violence': meaning sometimes laws and structures themselves, not out of bad intent but solely due to ignorance and negligence, cause the continuation of violence against a group.

In addition to institutions like Education and Police, other powerful institutions like Military forces, Basij, and security and disciplinary sectors have also completely ignored their responsibility regarding providing the rights of this group and shirked it.

'[Basij Base] thought I was a girl play-acting; then they said 'Is this you?' I arrived at the market fully two and a half hours late... basically I had to go that day, I had another job too I had to reach... they took me to the Basij. The Basij base chief came saying 'What happened?' I was explaining to these people for an hour and a half, two hours that I am trans and a trans is like this, this is my previous identity now. I have operated now, become this. But they didn't understand; 'So now you are a girl?' I said 'Man, now I did an operation,' I would open [show] again, 'I emptied my breasts. My final operation is still left, I am like this. I am now something in the middle [between man and woman].'
'Well, if you are a thing in the middle, where is your father?' Man, let me go.'
 (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 229).

This narrative painfully shows how the lack of education and access to awareness in the country's managerial and executive levels makes individuals' identity void and invisible; such that the individual, to have his existence recognised, is constantly busy removing misunderstanding and explaining his personal identity instead of living.

Another layer of this ignorance and lack of support returns to the legal system and legal structures; where even with official documents, old and stereotype-based laws and simultaneously the lack of fundamental education for custodians of affairs remain damaging.

'[Organisations and public and private work centres] if they understand you are trans, they don't give you a job without any logical reason. For me to go get my end-of-service card [military exemption], in our end-of-service card they write 'Mental Problem.' I talked with many centres and big people over this subject that it shouldn't be like this, they write 'Mental' for us. I explained to them, a very simple explanation: 'At the time before I did surgery, my brain was masculine and my body feminine; I didn't have a mental problem as a lady; [it was] a problem that went back to [brain structure]. Now that my body has changed and I became a man, my brain and body match, I have no spiritual and mental problem. I [passed] 170 of those tests they take from you for exemption. I said go look, if I had even one severe disorder I accept your word, I say I am mental. As a man in the body of a man I don't have the slightest mental disorder.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 165).

The result of such institutional ignorance is the systematic elimination of trans men and other LGBTQ members from the possibility of employment, administrative services, and social acceptance; meaning a permanent substrate for the emergence of symbolic and structural violence—a situation Bourdieu calls 'Invisible Repression' and a fundamental barrier to social participation (Bourdieu, 1375).

In the criminal justice system too, this disorder is repeated: judgments and interventions of police, Law Enforcement Force, and judges, anxious and unfamiliar with new realities, all cause injury to individuals and failure to identify their identity reality precisely:

'I told the trans kids... [the police] had taken them to the Juvenile Correction Centre. Well, our nature is this... they were stuck on what to do with us finally, whether to send to the ward again... that they had a story or wanted to separate [us]. After that he said... he had given us to the judge; the judge was looking at us, said 'Why are you like this? Why did they put a Chador on your head? You are a man.' [Trans person] said 'No, I am not a man.' Look, even the law hasn't come to terms with this issue either. The law [and judges] doesn't know how to deal with this. Look, we don't have a correct scale to say 'Very well, this human is

now trans, this human is now lesbian, this human now has this name, wants to be with these tendencies.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 13).

The legal path, as long as it lacks precise frameworks and clear scientific and human definitions, itself provides a fresh substrate for creating violence against heterosexual men and gender minorities and, by reproducing levels of legal ambiguity, strikes a blow to both executors of order and victims (Galtung, 1348; Bottomore, 1390 [2011]).

In the field of Health and Treatment too, this confusion and indifference is seen. Mahsa's narrative of years of confusion and psychological injury in the hospital and health system reveals this very lack of awareness and dominant patriarchal approach of the management system:

'The hospital didn't diagnose I have [Gender Identity] Disorder; I was being aggressive. This patriarchal view has always caused us not to reach our own rights and entitlements, unfortunately. These attitudes and views don't change, and positive views towards us. I don't think, for example, we are weird strange people and can harm society. We cannot harm society; rather it is society harming us. A trans person cannot harm anyone unless society harms him/her. Basically patriarchal attitudes go aside and that we be accepted... unfortunately this isn't there. Now I hope in the Ministry of Health, well, a Minister in future... a Minister is chosen for the Ministry who has a positive view towards this issue [trans sexual identity].' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 137).

The essence of the narrative in the experience of those like Mahsa is a clear confirmation of what researchers of institutional action state regarding 'Violence by System Negligence.' The health system, with lack of professional education and human approach, effectively has a hand in reproducing discrimination (Fisher & Brown, 1988 [likely referencing negotiation/conflict theory or similar]; Farsi).

Of course, dimensions of the crisis are not limited only to exclusion and inattention; rather, the legal and judicial structure in some cases even provides the ground for direct violence and mortal threat:

'That people like us [homosexuals] because of legal restrictions and death sentences and society's taboos and... specifically even if that person is subjected to violence too, meaning I say it like this, it is buried with him until the final day of his death.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 4).

'Since in the law of our Islamic Republic, sodomy (Lavat) has the sentence of execution and stoning, any registration of such cases causes the execution of both the active and passive person; violence in these cases is high.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 45).

Here, the legal system is not only not a protective shield but a source for producing the most ruthless types of violence. In Galtung's interpretation, this is that same form of structural and legal violence that advances the individual to the border of physical elimination due to identity and sexual orientation (Galtung, 1348).

At the policy-making level, allocation of responsibilities, hostility towards minorities, and lack of balanced legal view have constructed a closed cycle of power and victimisation of men and being a victim. Dr. Mousavi Viayeh correctly points out:

'Now Mehrieh is something creditable on paper, a credit they say 'now who has given, who has taken,' but really a bug exists in the system. In our law system, between the contract (Aghd) and the wedding (Aroosi), the girl can demand her Mehrieh; after she took her Mehrieh, she says 'I won't come to live [with you].' Look, this problem is from the legal structure; meaning I say the problem is from the legal system because the legal system never considered equality of woman and husband... *'I don't want this power you give me.'* She has this power, you know, she has this power but doesn't want to use this power. But from that side he [the man] is forced to accept that responsibility.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 24).

In the absence of legal transparency, both the man and other gender groups live in a system of conflict and injustice and, consequently, the structural establishment of violence.

The issue in Access to Social Support is also clear. Marziyeh Hosseini's narrative regarding the vulnerability of boys and men in loops of selling sexual services and the lack of intervention power of support organisations shows how ignorance and lack of executive accountability leads to the silent victimisation of individuals:

'If we focus on selling boys' sexual services, I myself have a logic thinking about these, 'Who are their customers?' Look, kids, socially their origin is mostly either those same poor areas of south of the city and outskirts of cities... it is this, that ordinary people come buy and sell with these kids and abuse/misuse them. Those

who abuse these kids are these very ordinary people whom we know.' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 261).

This lack of support and ignorance of mechanisms provides the ground for exploitation and violence against men, because responsible institutions are not only unaware of the existence of such a phenomenon but, in case of awareness too, lack the necessary tools and knowledge to confront it.

6.10.2. Lack of Psychological and Counselling Centres

In the absence of specialised counselling and psychological centres, the cycle of violence against men not only does not weaken but, in the shadow of the lack of any psychological and social support, reproduces new forms of injury and helplessness. This vacuum of services and lack of professional support is exactly that which is referred to in Johan Galtung's Theory of 'Structural Violence'; where the social or legal system, due to defect and shortage, withholds fundamental welfare and therapeutic facilities from the victim, without the agent of violence necessarily having an overt intention (Galtung, 1348).

In the experience of some interviewees, the importance of the role of psychologist and social worker is not limited only to direct actions or education, but the absence or inattention of these groups has a tangible, life-burning result for individual and social health. As:

'Psychologists and social workers have a very potential influence on individuals' soul and psyche and also its moving forward, and doctors [have] a great influence on the physical health of these individuals. It can have a direct influence; if these individuals are not supported by social workers and psychologists, doctors won't come to offer educational services to these individuals, for this reason his physical and mental health falls into danger.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 59).

Shayan's narrative in this field reveals the lack of physical and mental health well and shows how lack of specialised support increases not only psychological consequences but physical tensions and social insecurity.

In some cities, the issue has passed the domain of shortage and reached the absolute absence of psychological service centres and the lack of trust or social awareness of these services. In these spaces, 'Label and Reputation' (*Barchasb va Aberu*) replace the scientific narrative of psychological injury, and mistrust in specialists itself creates a secondary and invisible violence:

'In our city, no psychological centre has existed until now, and even no background regarding this subject has been done. It is a small city and there is one psychologist; if I want to go to him, our family's reputation goes. Maybe it exists, but no one believes in these things.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 34).

This experience shows how lack of infrastructure and appropriate social structure, with social stigma, becomes the source of collective dysfunction, and even victims of violence do not have the desire or possibility to refer for treatment and counselling. This is an instance of what Bourdieu says: Symbolic domination is performed not in the form of overt violence but in institutionalising inaction and silent repression (Bourdieu, 1375).

From the domain of Education too, the absence of counsellors and low attention to the position of this group reveals the aetiology of men's sexual and psychological injuries. The Education system, which should be a shelter of counselling and mental health, with severe shortage of personnel and disjointed policy-making approach, has gravitated towards teaching instead of strengthening counselling:

'Education [Department], unfortunately, has completely abandoned a series of problems that should be addressed. For example, part of it is those very school counsellors; now in a few years, school counsellors whose role is supposed to be very important have reached a place where, due to personnel shortage, they encouraged all school counsellors to teach and everyone went after teaching. Many of our schools... I myself, in that school where I am teaching, it has no counsellor.' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 27).

This experience not only warns of the dangers of the educational structure's inattention but leaves the dominant approach in transforming counsellor roles to teacher, and the macro-abandonment of adolescent injuries unanswered, smoothing the way for the continuation of violence.

The consequence of this low attention and absence of professional counsellor in school is evident not only for resolving conflict or emotional guidance of children and adolescents, but as a fundamental preventer of violence emergence.

'A counsellor who examines psychologically in a specialised manner and is completely aware of the child's behaviours and can revolutionise those students largely with his words... what dangers does his absence create? Now the absence

of that school counselling totally means this system, as they say, suffers severe defect. When we... it seems for example the car we have, for example I say, if we want to give the role of counsellor inside the car, it seems the ICU [ECU - Electronic Control Unit] computer of the car is missing. It has this role; meaning you... he can give a line [direction] to the students themselves. We had [cases], we had an adult student, he came said 'My intention is marriage.' When a student comes makes this speech, it means sexually he has reached that perfection but his mentality hasn't reached maturity. Meaning the person only wants to free himself from that sexual pressure.' (Interview No. 87 [sic: likely 86/same person], Ahmad Nazari, Pos 27).

Likening the absence of counselling to a car without an ECU highlights the ontological importance and value of the presence of school counsellors well; a role which, in case of absence, places students pointlessly in exposure to injury and puberty crises, because they do not receive the supportive, cognitive, and educational structure necessary to face complex sexual and psychological issues.

The continuation of institutional incompetence is a clear instance of structural violence which reproduces itself in the form of inefficient government policies and lack of supportive legal intervention. This institutionalised inattention, by taking mental health opportunities from men and creating a substrate for various types of violence, places them in a position where they remain alone between personal helplessness and system inefficiency. This deadlock creates a cycle of silence and shame and ultimately stabilises structural violence, lack of social support, and the culture of injury repression as a fixed part of the country's political-legal system.

6.10.3. Legal and Judicial Issues

In the narrative of victims and social activists, the dominant legal and judicial structure in Iran is not only not part of the solution to the problem of violence against men, but in its multiple layers can act as an important factor in reproducing the cycle of violence. The consequences of this situation can be found in men's daily and tangible experiences; where the law and judicial system are not supporters of justice, but sometimes creators or reinforcers of pressure, despair, and powerlessness.

In a prominent example, the long and exhausting process of divorce and men's confrontation with legal obstacles of *Mehrieh* imposes an erosive violence beyond gender.

'Its prolongation [divorce], well I say this is a personal aspect that one of its reasons is that she herself [my wife] didn't want to marry [remarry]. 'If I divorce tomorrow, what difference does it make to me? Just that the party's name is in my birth certificate, this is sufficient for me.' One of the reasons she wasn't after getting her divorce was this, that she didn't want to marry anyone, and second that my name be in her birth certificate. (Meaning if a man has made a thousand coins [Mehrieh], [if] the woman goes to execute her Mehrieh, the man [must pay] 110 coins according to Article Two... the Article means if the man doesn't give 110 coins, they can throw him in prison. Previously if a man had made a thousand coins Mehrieh, he went to prison and had to give a thousand coins. Now they say 'We have no business with a thousand coins, give up to 110 coins,' then he gets released. For the rest, if the man has property, the woman must identify the man's property and announce to the court. You know yourself in Iranian society a man cannot have ten billion [Tomans]... well, that same 110 coins becomes close to 4 billion Tomans because at the beginning of life it is like this... these have a lot of effect. The effect of laws has been that the statistic of divorce prisoners who are men has decreased, and I deem it probable that the divorce statistic comes down too because it becomes hard for the woman, because she knows either she must pass on [forgo] that Mehrieh of hers to be able to get her divorce, or she must go and come so much and that process becomes so long, in the middle of the way she says 'Forget it, let me be at my life, go after my kids.') (Interview No. 77, Abbas, Pos 49).

This experience gives a clear image of men's confrontation with complex family laws, economic and psychological pressures hidden in *Mehrieh*, and the lack of a supportive mechanism which not only causes the prolongation of the divorce process and deepening of conflicts but effectively imposes a type of lasting legal violence on them (Bottomore, 1390).

At another level of inefficiency, inaction and lack of support of the judicial structure in the face of dangers such as rape and theft is a symbol of broader dimensions of structural violence:

'[Because of someone's rape/aggression] I had called the police; he said 'We don't have the right to enter the home, we won't come,' just that easily. I called the

Prosecutor: 'I... at 12 at night someone is raping...' he said 'If he raped, go complain to Forensic Medicine.' Meaning answers are like this. There is no support [from the judicial system]. Then he isn't after trouble... now if your phone has been stolen now, have you seen [it happen to] you or those around you or not? Mostly when their phone is stolen, you go to the police, make a complaint, it went, finished. Then it was interesting, one of my friends had his phone stolen in a district, then they had gone to the police to complain, then one of his friends was a lawyer in that district... then he said 'Yeah, my phone was stolen.' He said 'Eh, why didn't you tell me? Let's go complain to the police.' He said 'Well, go on man (boro baba), all these police are in contact with the thieves, all together'... So this itself is a type of violence too, that Sir, it seems there is no one to support you. Let's give some money, a debt-collector (Shar-khar), a fight, let's go get [it back] with war and fighting. This is a minor example; if I want to give examples, there are many of these examples. The structure and system take you towards violence. When this is so, 'The house is ruined from the foundation' (Khaneh az pay-bast viran ast).'' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 66).

This quote shows how the lack of executive guarantee and inattention to pursuing the most basic civil rights places individuals in a more vulnerable position and drives them towards despair of the law and, if possible, resorting to violence. Galtung (1969) rightly considers this situation an instance of direct and structural violence where the system itself becomes an obstacle to problem-solving.

Comparing penal laws also reveals another dimension of this issue.

'In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, after Saddam died, our commuting there increased. In the city of Erbil, they call it the Moneychangers' Market; years ago there were cigarette kiosks by the street. Then I understood what the law says there; the law says if someone came and shook hands with you there, if he didn't have a finger joint, it means he is a thief. Now it's not important if he stole a ewer (Aftabeh) or emptied a bank; if he didn't have a wrist, it means he is a thief. Meaning this was the second time. First time a finger joint, second time wrist, and third time execution. This is their theft law. Then I realised why theft doesn't happen in this country [region]; because of its law, this is a deterrent. But we don't have this option in our country; the guy steals, goes to a better place, and the next time he comes he commits armed robbery, gets updated, goes forward. Somehow the generalities of this story go back to that same law.' (Interview No. 90, Mohsen Hagh, Pos 37).

This comparison indicates the lack of deterrent and decisive laws in Iran regarding crimes like theft; laws whose strict implementation in other societies can effectively prevent the occurrence of crime and violence. This heterogeneity and gap in legal approaches emphasises the ineffectiveness of the Iranian judicial system in creating security and deterrence.

Also, the experience of facing violence from law enforcement institutions can lead to the intensification of violent behaviours in the individual.

'Violent encounters the police had with me... I made [my hooliganism] worse. For example, if he said 'Don't put a knife in your pocket' or 'don't do a thing'... if he made an effort, confronted... if I fell into a predicament [and] someone took me to the police station, I would put a machete out, make it worse, until the end, either I continued or he... one of us got tired... I made it worse.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz, Pos 253-255).

This example shows how violent approaches from officers can provoke a more violent reaction in the individual and intensify the cycle of violence, a matter which aligns with psychological and sociological principles and can be analysed within the framework of Bourdieu's Theory of 'Domination and Resistance' (1375).

Administrative and financial complexities in legal paths, even in cases related to identity changes, indicate administrative rocky roads that can in themselves be a violent and erosive experience.

'Well, [in sex change] financial problems are more; bad financial situation and this permit-getting process is a very long process. 12 sessions was psychiatrist and psychotherapy and I don't know 'go to Forensic Medicine,' 'form two commission sessions,' 'go to court,' and after that too when you operate, and operation too when I did, and I became involved in changing my interests. Meaning I was involved for two-three months. Court, Civil Registry, Forensic Medicine you must go. You must first go to court, first go give a petition, then you go to court, then go to Forensic Medicine to look at your area [genitals]. They send you to court and write a letter 'Yeah, this one has operated.' Court then sends to Civil Registry; court gives a 20-day deadline to Civil Registry to give a verdict... gives 20 days time to... for example, prolong the judge's verdict, break it... I don't know, Civil Registry... a series of things, now if one has a criminal record, has a thing, has 20 days opportunity to break the verdict, the judge's decree, the verdict he has given.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 141).

And also delay in receiving government support and discriminatory confrontation from some treatment institutions is another example of these inefficiencies:

'Welfare [Organization] aids for trans sex change surgery are not on time. It didn't give money at that same moment. Welfare says 'Operate [do surgery], then we give you [money].' For example, until now I think it hasn't given me more than twenty-five [million Tomans]. Welfare... honestly, me who was HIV [positive], doctors wouldn't operate... one of them was a gentleman whom I referred to... then he wanted to annoy me, he gave me an appointment three times/periods... I came from North, got up came to Tehran... I saw you... he cancelled my surgeries. Gave three surgery times, cancelled all three. I was hospitalised, I came Thursday hospitalised, Saturday I was supposed to be operated, he cancelled it.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 149).

These experiences indicate mismanagement, paralysing bureaucracy, and sometimes discriminatory views in the country's support system which can exert doubled pressure on vulnerable strata of society.

A look at the subject of Mehrieh from another perspective also shows how the judicial system can place the man in an unbalanced position regarding the economic interests of the girl's family.

'You can't, you can't get [your right]. Because they put a judge there with colossal Mehriehts. Now you, ten coins too... thing... ten coins becomes four hundred million. It is systematic, this; they expect the woman to shut up while their judge there is filling [inciting]... the judge is filling the woman. Because the girl's family considers it their source of business [getting Mehrieh].' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 359).

This view, which is completed by Dr. Vali Bahrami's opinion regarding the heaviness of Mehrieh and forcing men to accept violence to avoid prison:

'Now one of the issues where men, even though they have many problems, cannot divorce and [it] causes violence against them is this very heavy Mehrieh. For example, the guy thinks, says 'Sir, if I want to divorce this one, where do I get [money] from? I must either go to prison...' and usually they prefer to cope and accept this violence...' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 45),

clearly shows how the *Mehrieh* system, in practice, can transform into a tool for applying economic and psychological pressure on men and, in case of inability to pay, place them in the position of accepting violence or prison.

Finally, the presence of children, especially boys, in the cycle of organised crimes like moving narcotics, indicates deep social gaps and systematic abuse of the most vulnerable strata.

'Then this person, when he sees that, for example... one of these violences I say... in those houses that are in Shush and Harandi and these places... well, they report to us 'The sound of crying comes from this house'... and they use children as drug stashes. No, it doesn't have girl or boy anymore, but these are mostly boy children because they are sharper and smarter, you know, to be able to move drugs. And a number of them at these intersections, under these gums and flowers and these things, have drugs. And you imagine this man is buying a flower from him, helping him, whereas one says 'I want such-and-such drug,' 'Go to that next intersection, I'll send [someone] after you, bring it for you.' And not at all intersections; we can't say every child working at an intersection is like this, but definitely a child who is a working child in Sa'adat Abad and Mellat Park is definitely different from the one in Khomeini route. For example, in Moniriyeh, opposite the Moniriyeh Prosecutor's Office, there was a kiosk where the boy working there, we knew this child sells drugs.' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 68).

This situation, alongside the relative indifference of society and abuse of children's position, expresses the failure of the support and supervision system in protecting children and confronting criminal gangs.

In total, it can be said that the Legal and Judicial System in Iran, in the face of violence against men, often not only lacks the ability for deterrence or problem-solving, but due to legal complexities, administrative red tape, economic pressures, and sometimes inaction of responsible institutions, itself transforms into a source for structural and psychological violence. This situation, alongside Galtung's theories (1969) regarding violence and Bourdieu (1975) regarding symbolic domination, offers a clear image of inefficiency and even reverse effectiveness of structures. On the other hand, Yaser Hosseini Fard also points to this point that:

'It existed from old times too but has become much more... in my opinion, their reason might be many things. Perhaps they think that, for example, that law, that

court, that judge cannot get their right from the opposing party... especially in honour (Namusi) issues it is rampant here.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 94-96).

This feeling of inability to realise rights, especially in honour issues, which is rooted in the structural weakness of the judicial system, is itself a stimulating factor for violence in society.

6.11. Chapter Summary and Conclusion: The Dynamic Interplay of Intervening Forces

The rigorous examination of Intervening Conditions presented in this chapter illuminates the dynamic forces that mediate the relationship between the structural context and the actualisation of violence against the male gender. While contextual conditions provide the static backdrop, the intervening conditions analyzed here act as active catalysts, accelerators, or barriers, determining the intensity, duration, and specific manifestation of violence in the lived experience of Iranian men.

The findings reveal a multi-layered ecosystem of intervention where vulnerability is manufactured and reproduced across distinct but intersecting domains:

1. At the Individual Level, the analysis demonstrates that psychological fragility—stemming from emotional deprivation, low self-esteem, and suppressed anger—combined with physical factors such as substance abuse and sexual ignorance, creates an internal predisposition to violence. These factors compromise the individual's resilience, transforming external pressures into internalised trauma or reactive aggression.
2. Within the Familial Domain, the family often fails to function as a sanctuary. Instead, through mechanisms of inappropriate marriage, lack of dialogue, spousal domination, and punitive upbringing, the family unit frequently operates as a primary locus of friction. The commodification of the male role through domestic exploitation and the weaponisation of child custody further strip men of their emotional agency, reducing them to mere functional providers.
3. Socio-Economically, the crushing weight of inflation, unemployment, and the rigid expectation of the 'breadwinner' role constitutes a potent

intervening force. When economic inability meets social stigma and the instrumental view of men, it generates a 'crisis of worthiness,' propelling men towards high-risk behaviours (such as drug dealing) or profound psychological isolation.

4. Institutionally and Politically, the systemic failure is evident. The absence of civil support structures, the legal vacuums regarding custody and *Mehrieh*, the lack of psychological services, and the specific exclusion of vulnerable groups (such as LGBTQ individuals) act as negative interveners. These structural deficits ensure that when violence occurs, there is no safety net to arrest its progress, thereby institutionalising the cycle of harm.

In the framework of Grounded Theory, these intervening conditions explain 'why' and 'how' general contextual pressures (like patriarchy or economic instability) translate into specific, tragic individual outcomes. They create a locked system wherein men are not only targets of violence but are often deprived of the tools—emotional, legal, or social—necessary to de-escalate or escape it.

Consequently, this chapter concludes that violence against men is not a linear event but a complex process modulated by these intervening variables. Any effective intervention strategy must therefore move beyond mere symptom management and address these specific mediating forces—reformulating legal protections, destigmatising help-seeking behaviours, and redefining familial and economic roles to dismantle the mechanisms that convert vulnerability into violence.

7. Causal Conditions for the Emergence of Violence

Introduction

Having traversed the analytical path in previous chapters, where we first identified and dissected 'Contextual Conditions' (macro-substrate) and subsequently 'Intervening Conditions' (moderating factors), we now arrive at one of the most focal and determining sections of the paradigmatic model: Chapter Seven. This chapter responds to the fundamental and direct question of 'Why?' and is dedicated to identifying and analysing 'Causal Conditions'; that category of events, incidents, or occurrences which directly lead to the happening or formation of the core phenomenon, namely the 'Experience of Violence Against the Male Gender.'

Within the framework of Grounded Theory, the distinction between causal conditions and contextual conditions is of vital importance. If contextual conditions, examined in Chapter Five, provide the general substrate and atmosphere (such as hegemonic masculinity or macro-economic pressures), causal conditions act as that 'spark' or immediate 'stimulus' that ignites the fire of a violent action or interaction. These are the very factors that set the phenomenon in motion and drag a chain of actions, reactions, and consequences behind them. In simpler terms, this chapter seeks to answer the question: *What specific events occur that place a man in the position of experiencing direct violence?*

The objective of this chapter is the precise dissection of these primary stimuli based on the rich and deep narratives of participants in the research. Field data showed that the causes of violence against the male gender are not a unidimensional phenomenon but a complex collection of individual, psychological, interpersonal, and social factors that play a role directly at the moment of violence occurrence. To achieve a coherent and systematic understanding of these causes, data analysis based on the Grounded Theory

coding process guided us to identify two main levels of causes: 1. Direct Causes 2. Indirect Causes

This differentiation allows us to address both immediate and overt stimuli and more hidden roots that gradually pave the way for the occurrence of violence.

In the first and main section of this chapter, we will address Direct Causes, which are themselves divided into two fundamental sub-categories: 'Individual Causes' and 'Interpersonal/Social Causes.' Under individual causes, we first address 'Physical and Sexual' factors; issues such as uncontrolled sexual irritability, sexual deprivation resulting from disorders like vaginismus, and even the physical attractiveness of boys which can turn them into targets of abuse will be analysed as direct stimuli of violence. Subsequently, the deepest and most complex section, namely Psychological Causes, will be explored. Here, we will demonstrate how psychological disorders (such as obsession, denial of illness, or personality disorders), personality characteristics (such as stubbornness and perfectionism), and identity challenges (such as broken self-concept) directly lead to the emergence or experience of violence.

Then, we turn to Indirect Causes which, although they may not have an immediate effect, gradually and erosively drive the individual towards violent situations. Factors such as defective upbringing patterns, structural inequalities, and chronic pressures of gender roles fit into this category, showing how the individual's past and social structures are constantly shaping the present moment.

This chapter, by presenting a precise analytical framework of the causes of violence, completes a vital piece of the puzzle of the theory in formation. Understanding these causes is necessary not only for comprehending the 'why' of the phenomenon's occurrence but is directly linked to understanding the 'Strategies' individuals adopt in response to these causes (the subject of the next chapter). In fact, by identifying these initial sparks, we can better understand the logic governing the actions and reactions of individuals in the field of violence.

7.1. Direct Causes

Direct causes of violence against men refer to factors that play a role immediately and overtly in the formation of violent behaviours. These factors

usually occur in a substrate of interpersonal interactions, conflictual situations, or specific environmental conditions, and can be considered a type of 'Proximate Cause' or primary cause in the occurrence of violence. Unlike indirect factors which operate at the structural or social level and pave the way for violence in a non-overt manner, direct factors are usually identifiable in a specific time and place and have an immediate effect on the occurrence of violence.

7.1.1. Individual Causes

7.1.1.1. *Physical and Sexual Causes*

Violence against men is a phenomenon placed under the influence of numerous individual, social, and cultural factors. While many studies have identified and analysed physical and psychological violence against women, violence against men has remained largely hidden under layers of culture, custom, and lack of scientific observation. This section of the research, focusing on physical and sexual factors of violence against men, attempts to examine various dimensions of this phenomenon from different angles and help the reader find a deeper understanding of the contexts of the emergence of this type of violence.

Physical and sexual causes of violence against men, as shown in the headings of this chapter, relate to complex factors that have not only psychological roots but are placed under the influence of physical disorders, social pressures, or environmental and individual conditions. This section, by analysing the issue of sexual irritability, addresses cases where uncontrolled or repressed sexual desire can become the cause of violence. Then, disorders such as women's vaginismus and men's sexual deprivation are addressed, the direct impact of which on marital relationships and psychological pressures is significant. The subject of boys' physical attractiveness also reveals a specific angle of sexual abuse and the cycle of psychological injuries. Continuing, excessive occupational fatigue as a stimulus for the emergence of psychological distress, and the impact of malnutrition and illness on damaging behaviours are analysed.

7.1.1.2. Sexual Irritability

Sexual irritability is one of the key factors in sexual violence. Ms. Samira says regarding the role of her own sexual irritability and the sexual abuse of her brother during adolescence:

'[In adolescence] my sexual desire was high. Afterwards it reached masturbation, and later I laid hands on my brother who was younger than me [sexually abused him].' (Interview No. 1, Samira, Pos 76).

The above quote from Samira is a bitter example of sexual violence in which a woman sexually abused her younger brother. This issue not only challenges gender taboos but shows that sexual violence against men can be rooted in complex factors, understanding which requires more precise examination. In this narrative, Samira's sexual irritability during adolescence is raised as a key factor which ultimately led to the sexual abuse of her brother. Sexual irritability, as a natural and intrinsic feeling in humans, reaches its peak during adolescence. However, the lack of correct management of this feeling and its repression can lead to inappropriate and even violent behaviours.

In Samira's case, Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) can be used to analyse this subject. According to this theory, individuals learn behaviours through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. Samira may have observed patterns of inappropriate sexual behaviours in her environment (family, media, society) and, due to insufficient awareness and lack of control over her emotions, reflected these behaviours in the form of sexual abuse of her brother. Also, Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory (1923) can be helpful in understanding this situation. Freud believed that sexual instincts play an important role in human behaviour and the repression of these instincts can lead to the emergence of abnormal behaviours. In Samira's case, it is possible that the repression of sexual needs and the impossibility of healthy expression of these needs drove her towards violent behaviours.

In addition to psychological factors, cultural and social factors also play an important role in the emergence of sexual violence. In a society where severe taboos exist regarding sexual issues and sexual education is not correctly offered to adolescents, the probability of the emergence of high-risk and violent behaviours increases. The lack of sufficient awareness regarding sexual issues and lack of access to valid information sources can place adolescents in exposure to sexual abuse and aggressive behaviours. Bandura's Social

Learning Theory explains that inappropriate sexual behaviours are formed through observing and imitating patterns, and Freud's psychoanalytic theory emphasises this point that repressing sexual instincts can lead to abnormal behaviours.

7.1.1.3. *Women's Vaginismus Disorder and Husband's Sexual Deprivation*

Examining the causes of the emergence of violence against men within the framework of the above clinical experience shows that violence is not limited only to physical or behavioural dimensions, but in many cases originates from contexts related to the repression of basic needs, continuous psychological pressure, and hidden pain. The experience mentioned in the words of Dr. Mehdi Momeni is an expressive example of how sexual disorders and deprivation resulting from them can create a cycle of violences and psychological pressures.

This narrative begins with a bitter reality: a man who, despite deep love for his wife, is forced to live in an environment full of pressures resulting from family and society. He says:

'Yeah, I am in love with this lady and so-and-so... but we are very much under pressure.' I said 'Under whose pressure?' He said 'Under families' pressure... my mother has put me under a lot of pressure that 'You must divorce this woman.' Because we aren't having children... but I love her very much and the child isn't important to me at all...' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 72).

This explicit confession shows how environmental and social expectations, instead of helping solve a crisis, can add to its depth and disrupt individuals' psychological peace. Psychological theories, especially Adler's Theory (1930), point to this point that when individuals fail in realising expectations or the role others have considered for them, feelings of incompetence, shame, or severe tension increase in them. In this specific case, the man who is forcibly trapped in the cycle of family expectations and cultural beliefs is forced to cover up his personal needs while enduring behavioural pressures.

But what casts a shadow over this narrative more than anything is the Vaginismus Disorder of this man's wife, which according to the psychologist:

'We haven't been able to have sexual relations in these 8-9 years... I realised they have Vaginismus disorder... a disorder defined in some women; at the moment of

sexual intercourse their pelvis and genital organ severely dries and locks up, and the possibility of penetration and sexual intercourse is not possible for me in any way.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 72).

This disorder itself causes the creation of serious limitations in marital life, but its effects do not end with this physical limitation; rather, over time it causes the intensification of a complex psychological situation between husband and wife. From an individual perspective, the wife's inability to establish sexual relations has confronted her with feelings of guilt and shame before herself and others. This feeling of guilt, which implicitly originates from 'psychological phobia,' 'negative view of sex,' and the feeling of sexual intercourse being contaminated in the woman, clearly aligns with Freud's Theory (1920) regarding the effects of childhood traumas. This theory states that unpleasant experiences or psychological/sexual abuses in childhood can condition the individual's psyche such that in adulthood, instead of pleasure from the relationship, they react with disgust or anxiety.

On the other hand, the man's condition in this relationship should not be ignored either. He who has not been able to meet his sexual needs during 8-9 years of shared life has faced a type of continuous internal repression. In this regard, Momeni says:

'Now, how bad did this woman who suffered this problem feel? How much did the man who couldn't do this work repress sexual needs in various forms during these 8 years?' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 72).

Human Drive Theory in psychology, especially Maslow's Theory (1943), points to this point that failure to meet primary needs (such as sexual needs) can influence self-awareness, self-confidence, and other psychological aspects of the individual. This repression, in the long term, leads to hidden anger which can manifest in various forms including negative emotions, verbal violence, or isolation. In this specific case, the man, instead of showing his anger or despair openly, entered a cycle of negative emotions during which the wife he loves has transformed into the main source of his pain and psychological tension.

What complicates this relationship even more is social pressures rooted in gender archetypes regarding masculinity and playing the role of 'father.' The man, facing a social expectation that demands he have children as 'provider'

and 'head of the family,' in addition to personal problems, sees himself in a deadlock before those around him as well. As he himself says:

'The family constantly asks me 'Why don't you have children... so divorce your wife and take another wife and have children...'' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 72).

This pressure intensifies the man's feeling of frustration and drives him towards the perception of struggling with problems. 'Broken Self-Concept' Theory in psychology refers to this, that when individuals feel they can no longer meet social expectations or coordinate with imposed standards, they unconsciously consider themselves incapable and injured.

This sample narrative shows well how issues with personal roots like sexual disorders connect with environmental and social issues and create a continuous cycle of violence and psychological pressure. Violence here transcends bodily behaviour; rather, it crystallises in the repression of emotional and sexual needs, internal pressures resulting from inability to meet personal or social expectations, and the bitterness of relationships between the individual and his close ones. This cycle is broken only with the help and intervention of a therapist, which was realised in this case with Sex Therapy sessions.

7.1.1.4. Boys' Physical Attractiveness

The analysis of causes for the emergence of violence against men, especially in the field of sexual harassment and abuse in childhood and adolescence, shows that excessive attention to boys' physical appearance and emphasis on bodily beauty can be a facilitating factor in the formation of such violence. This type of extreme attention, although it may at first glance be out of compassion and parents' desire for their child to be seen better, in practice places the child or adolescent in exposure to damaging looks and destructive behaviours from others. From individuals' narratives and related theories in this field, it can be understood that masculine physical beauty, which is sometimes mistakenly transformed into a belief regarding individual power and immunity, can conversely transform men into subjects for abuse in early ages.

Saberi, a psychologist and specialist in the field of social pathologies, warns in this regard:

'The fact that you take your son to the hairdresser, say 'do this [style/haircut], do that,' this is not good for your child. I am telling you this with the experience of forty years of social pathology work. When a child is placed in these conditions where he pays attention to his appearance more than his inner self—especially boy children who pay attention to their own appearance—this one gets placed in society [as a target for sexual abuse] by his own peers... children whom I told you, so that these events don't happen to them spiritually and psychologically, over time, to be able to show himself, works more on this part [beauty].'

(Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 31).

This narrative clearly shows that parents' focus on boys' bodily beauty and encouraging the maintenance of a distinct and attractive appearance transforms into a type of objectification of the child's body, as a result of which the child or adolescent is seen as a subject of external gazes in social environments. Psychosocial Development Theories, especially Erik Erikson's Theory of Psychological Maturity (1963), show that in childhood and adolescence, personality is forming, and any type of unnecessary focus on external aspects (like appearance) can lead to the creation of a type of incapable self-image, where the individual reduces his value solely to body beauty and external validation. This issue leaves destructive effects, especially on boy children who often lack sufficient ability or opportunity to defend their rights and privacy in the face of such violations.

This point is reflected in detail in the experience of Hamid, a 40-year-old man who was a victim of sexual violence in his childhood:

'[Childhood] I was always afraid of being subjected to others' abuse. I was a child who had colour and face [was good-looking], was chubby, but was naughty (tokhs), meaning I knew much more than my own age. [For a while] I was outside the house. I knew these things and had fought and didn't let these [boys] in. Then I would go into parks, I would see everyone, that the guy does how [sexual behaviours], and I experienced many things. Perhaps I don't have reading and writing literacy, but with looking I experience everything.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid, Pos 82-83).

In this narrative, attention to Hamid's appearance ('I had colour and face, was chubby') along with vulnerable environments in which he was present ('I was outside the house') placed him at risk of sexual abuse. This experience shows that having an attractive appearance alone is enough for a child or adolescent

to become the target of impure looks and sexual abuses in environments like parks and public spaces. This situation, like Bandura's Theory (1977) in the field of Social Learning, creates a cycle of fear and psychological injuries where children or adolescents, by observing sexual behaviours supposedly normalised by others, are not only placed under pressure but lose the ability to confront this behaviour as well.

7.1.1.5. *Men's Excessive Occupational Fatigue*

Hosseinzadeh, a 40-year-old psychologist, pointing to psychological and physical pressures resulting from continuous work, states:

'The tired, wrecked man comes home every night expecting kindness from his wife, to have excellent and energetic sexual relations and things he sees in films. But the man, due to fatigues and nervous pressures, cannot have good sexual performance; excessive fatigue doesn't allow it. What should he do? Just grumble at work? You work, sixty people are above your head, you must work.'

(Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 334).

This quote represents a conflict that many men face in their lives. On one hand, social and cultural expectations require men to be always capable and energetic, and on the other, work pressures and economic responsibilities cause them not to have the ability to meet these expectations. This conflict can lead to feelings of guilt, despair, and reduced self-confidence in men, which is itself considered a type of psychological violence.

In this same vein, the experience of Ms. Mehraban, who separated from her husband due to sexual problems, illuminates other dimensions of this issue. She says:

'In sexual relations I felt my husband is raping me. Because I didn't have satisfaction from the sexual relationship; he doesn't know at all [how] to put that time [in], to put energy and interest for me, but he doesn't. This might be a disease; I told him 'Go to the doctor, solve this problem of yours.' He said 'What for should I go?' He says for example 'I can't, my time is short or I don't have desire...'' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 132).

This quote shows how occupational fatigue can lead to sexual and emotional problems in marital relationships. The man's inability to meet his wife's sexual needs can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction, despair, and ultimately emotional and physical separation in couples.

Ms. Mehraban continues, pointing to the effort she made to improve the relationship:

'I was in the house; men like their wives to be alone in the house very much. I wanted to go towards him; he said 'I don't have the patience/mood, I want to sleep.' Finished. I said 'Let me, now that I am starting, enter the relationship'... now I don't know what the reason could be, perhaps he had reasons for himself, perhaps he couldn't, had problems, had inability or was nervous or didn't have the mood... whatever the reason was, this event happened. I felt he insulted my personality very much. I said 'Okay. It's finished anymore.' Right there I decided that our bedroom be separated and we have no relationship with each other, and this way we separated from each other easier.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 132).

This experience shows how the man's inability to create emotional and sexual connection can lead to feelings of rejection and worthlessness in the woman and ultimately end in the collapse of the marital relationship.

Within the framework of Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958), marital relationships are based on the exchange of material and emotional resources between couples. When one party, due to occupational fatigue or other factors, is unable to provide required resources, the balance in the relationship is disrupted and the probability of the emergence of dispute and violence increases. Men's excessive occupational fatigue can cause a reduction in their ability to provide emotional, sexual, and even economic support to their wives, which can lead to dissatisfaction and conflict in marital relationships.

From the perspective of Gender Role Theory (Bem, 1981), society's expectations of men as the main family provider and responsible for economic welfare exert heavy pressures on them. Men may feel that to maintain this role, they are forced to work excessively and endure great pressures. These pressures can lead to excessive fatigue, reduced quality of life, and the emergence of problems in personal relationships. Consequently, men may turn to unhealthy behaviours to cope with these pressures, such as drug use or violence against themselves and others.

Excessive fatigue of men, resulting from work pressures and economic responsibilities, depletes them physically, psychologically, and emotionally. Inability to perform stereotypical roles of 'provider' and inability to meet sexual expectations leads to feelings of guilt, despair, and reduced self-confidence, which is itself a type of psychological violence. This fatigue

destroys marital relationships and places men in exposure to emotional violence and rejection.

Therefore, men's excessive occupational fatigue is not only an individual issue but a social and cultural issue rooted in power structures and gender roles. To reduce violence against men resulting from occupational fatigue, it is necessary to attend to these structural factors and make efforts to change society's attitudes and expectations regarding men's role in the family and society.

7.1.2. Psychological Causes

Violence against men is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon embedded in the psychological layers of various societies. Psychological factors, as one of the most influential stimuli, play a prominent role in shaping violent behaviours. This section of the research, by examining mental disorders, personality characteristics, and challenges related to playing social roles, attempts to analyse the psychological reasons for violence against men from different angles and present a comprehensive image of this issue.

Initially, mental disorders are explored as one of the main roots of men's violence. From the denial of mental illness by men to insecure attachment and the experience of separation from a lover, these psychological factors become the cause of violent behaviours by creating internal pressures. Obsession, repression of anger, and personality disorders such as Borderline, Paranoid, and Schizophrenia can also lead to the emergence of hostile reactions. Common cultural beliefs such as 'Men Don't Cry,' the 'Duck Syndrome,' and the 'Cinderella Syndrome' of experienced women, as well as low levels of psychological resilience, are other factors facilitating violence.

In addition to aspects of mental disorders, personality characteristics also play an important role in this field. Traits such as stubbornness (*Kalleh-shaghi*), approval-seeking, low self-confidence, bullying, obstinacy, perfectionism, and desire for revenge are among the characteristics that make men prone to violent reactions.

Finally, challenges related to playing social and familial roles are put to examination. Broken self-concept, dependence on the parental family, economic weakness, and confrontation with authoritarian spouses are among the factors that exert severe psychological pressure on men and become the cause of violent behaviours.



Figure 8 Men as Both Agents and Victims of Violence

This chapter, focusing on the relationship between mental disorders, personality characteristics, and role expectations, invites the reader to a better understanding of the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of violence against men and presents a comprehensive perspective of this psycho-social issue. Throughout these analyses, an effort has been made to draw a clear image for the reader so they can follow the research path with greater mental readiness.

7.1.2.1. Denial of Mental Illness by the Patient

Denial of mental illness by the patient is considered one of the significant challenges in psychology and the treatment of mental illnesses, which can become the cause of violence in individual and social relationships. Mehdi Javadi, a psychologist and specialist in mental diseases, analyses this situation from two perspectives: on one hand, pointing to the violence arising from the patient in the denial stage, and on the other, to coercions applied for treating the patient, which due to the individual’s psychological conditions cannot be defined as violence. In the interview, Javadi explains that when mental illness is denied by the individual, due to lack of appropriate mental hygiene (*Behdasht-e Ravani*), the patient cannot move from the denial stage to acceptance, and this getting stuck in the denial stage causes violence to manifest in the individual’s behaviour. His quote expresses this challenge:

‘...this very getting stuck in denial causes a violence to be applied’ (Interview No. 82, Javadi, Pos 48).

This phenomenon indicates one of the most important aspects of the impact of mental illness denial in individual and social interactions, which in many cases manifests through the expression of violence, whether in physical or psychological form. Based on Seligman's Theory of 'Learned Helplessness' (1975), the feeling of lack of control over a negative situation or condition can drive the individual towards negative and violent behaviours. Here, the patient stuck in the stage of denying mental illness is incapable of understanding his condition or accepting the treatment path, and this very incapacity creates a type of psychological pressure that in many cases manifests as violence. This violence, as Javadi has explained, is the product of the patient's inability to accept facts and comply with the treatment process.

Also, this situation can be compared with Kubler-Ross's Theory of 'Stages of Grief' (1969). Denial, as the first stage of grief, occurs when the individual cannot accept the unpleasant reality and unconsciously resists it. This resistance, in the case of mental illness, manifests as violence in interactions and intensifies treatment challenges. Javadi points out in this analysis that patients who deny are unable to pass the denial stage and enter the acceptance stage because they lack appropriate 'mental hygiene' to process information related to their condition. He states: *'We have a psychiatric patient whom we must make accept that 'you are sick'... because he doesn't have mental hygiene, he gets stuck in the denial stage.'*

Furthermore, the analysis of mental illness denial can be explained within the framework of Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory (2000). This theory states that individuals, in case of not benefiting from three basic needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—face problems in regulating their behaviours. The sick individual placed in the denial stage not only lacks the necessary competence to accept his condition but may feel a threat to his autonomy in the treatment process. This feeling can appear in the form of violence or resistance to treatment.

Therefore, denial of mental illness is beyond a cognitive or individual problem; this phenomenon is rooted in social, cultural, and even therapeutic interactions, all of which play a role in shaping the patient's resistance and transforming it into violence. This violence not only makes treating the patient more difficult but leaves negative effects on his social relationships and psychological status as well. An effective solution in facing this challenge requires a deep understanding of the patient's psychological stages,

strengthening mental hygiene, and employing treatment methods based on acceptance and encouragement.

7.1.2.2. *Obsession (Rumination)*

Obsessions of thought and behaviour, especially when appearing in a serious and pathological form, can lead to complex dynamics in marital relationships and, over time, shake the psychological, emotional, and even social foundations of the relationship. In this field, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) can be one of the key factors of hidden violence in marital relationships, because individuals suffering from this disorder not only influence their own emotional relationships, but their life partner also suffers damage from daily pressures and lifestyle resulting from obsession. Mr. Jamali, one of the men facing such a situation, clearly describes the impact of this disorder of his wife on marital life and their daily interactions:

'We [my wife and I, because of her obsession] don't hold each other's hands... in the house she doesn't talk to me at all. Nothing, from morning to night she doesn't talk. She says "The house must be silent, silence"' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 207).

This quote shows that obsession disease in his wife is not just an individual challenge, but its consequence has directly overshadowed the relationship space and led to a level of emotional alienation between the two where, in Jamali's words: *'We are two housemates. You in your path and I in my path.'* Such a space, devoid of emotional relationships and positive interactions, can gradually exert doubled psychological pressure on the husband and cause a type of hidden psychological and emotional violence.

One of the key dimensions of severe obsession, about which Mr. Jamali speaks in detail, relates to repetitive and ritualistic behaviours his wife insists on performing. He explains that:

'She just washes hands and then goes to the toilet... she has washed the bathroom sink so much, the tap, she washes so much' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 207).

Such behaviours, clearly showing characteristics of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), not only involve the patient herself but cause psychological fatigue and even high stress in her partner. Jamali points out that his wife has imposed her ritualistic and obsessive behaviours on all aspects of daily life: *'If*

I pick up this glass and wash it, I must use this same one later... the curtain must be drawn... we put three plates and she picks up three plates' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 207). Repeating such details indicates the imposition of exhausting routines on shared life, taking the marital relationship out of a natural and flexible state.

The consequences of such obsessive behaviours can have deeper dimensions on the husband's psyche. Jamali states that the lack of emotional communication and his wife's inattention to personal and family issues is so great that even important life occasions are considered insignificant, and no place remains for shared feelings or occasions: *'I bought things for her for wedding anniversary or birthday anniversary; she said 'What are these? Give the money to me to put in the account.'*' These behaviours indicate a type of imbalance in the relationship, where the partner (spouse with obsession), due to excessive focus on her own obsessions, is no longer capable of participating in emotional and social interactions.

Research related to obsession also points to such consequences. Individuals suffering from OCD, due to internal fears, constant doubts, and repetitive behaviours, usually do not have balanced relationships in social and family environments. According to Rector et al. (2001), obsession not only deprives the affected person of social interactions, but individuals in close contact with the patient (such as spouse or family members) are mainly placed under high psychological pressure and sometimes may themselves suffer anxiety, emotional erosion, or even depression.

Another dimension of these problems in the long term is the creation of a feeling of inadequacy or psychological helplessness in spouses. Jamali clearly points to this subject that his wife's obsessive behaviours have deprived him of having a conventional marital life, and even the simplest aspects of life, such as using kitchen utensils, are under the control of obsessions: *'Dishes must be in the cupboard. I say 'Well, why don't you use them?'* She says *'There is no need.'*' These types of behaviours make the experience of shared life difficult and over time lead to the creation of a feeling of irrelevance or insignificance in the husband.

In this midst, mental ruminations resulting from financial pressures and their impact on family relationships must also be considered in this context. According to Ali Asgari:

'As soon as I am alone in the house, whatever light there is I turn off, go lie on the sofa. I sit and think, futile thoughts, it keeps coming and going, coming and going. I have a strange mental rumination on financial problems and how, when you don't have sufficient money and capital, how much I get humiliated in the house space' (Interview No. 54, Asgari, Pos 153-159).

This quote emphasises that psychological problems influence the individual's overall performance and communications in the house such that even individual pressures, like obsession [or financial rumination], transform into a source of humiliation or blame for the partner.

Furthermore, the impact of obsession on social behaviours and resource consumption, especially in a society where resource limitation exists, can lead to the emergence of greater tensions in the family. Mr. Jamali complains of his wife's obsessions in excessive water use for washing, which has imposed not only an economic burden but a psychological burden on the family:

'...when she goes to the bath, at minimum she stays 2-3 hours in the bath... I have no business [don't care], no one is satisfied; we are now 20 units [in the apartment complex], we are pouring water more than everyone' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 207).

These obsessive behaviours often cause arguments and disputes that increase the ground for psychological and verbal violence. Therefore, obsession disease in the wife can entail psychological, emotional, and even social violences against the husband. This violence may appear in the form of emotional alienation, breakdown of verbal communications, psychological pressures resulting from ritualistic and obsessive behaviours, and even financial and social crises. To reduce these pressures, there is a need for appropriate therapeutic interventions for the person suffering from obsession as well as psychological support for the partner. Interventions such as marital counselling, teaching stress management and relationship regulation skills, and also Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for individuals suffering from obsession can play an important role in reducing the negative effects of this disorder in marital relationships.

7.1.2.3. Repression of Anger

Repression of anger is one of the most important causes for the emergence of pathological behaviours, such as homicide (*Digar-koshi*), self-destruction, and

anti-social behaviours. Anger that is repressed in men due to social limitations and lack of opportunity to express emotions can ultimately appear in the form of aggression, destruction, or dangerous actions. Mehdi Momeni, a social pathology expert, analyses this issue clearly and believes that repressed anger in men can lead to behaviours like knife-wielding (*Chaghoo-keshi*) and instrumental violences. He states:

'Repression of men's anger in society... this falls on one hand into the space of homicide and applying violence on another, destruction and self-harm, and now Anti-Social personalities' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 105).

His analysis shows that violence has transformed into a method that some men, under social pressures, accept as a tool to achieve needs and remove limitations.

Zahra Jiriyaee, a social pathology expert, addressing the psychological aspects of anger repression in men, has emphasised the consequences of this repression for the individual and society. She states:

'When you don't give space to your husband, he goes and you get annoyed/hurt... but the man himself is exactly in that fire, and patiently, because he doesn't know how to talk, again says nothing...' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 58).

These descriptions indicate the lack of sufficient education in men to recognise and express their emotions, which instead of expressing anger, represses it and ultimately reaches hidden or overt violent behaviours. Lack of awareness of emotional mechanisms, as Jiriyaee states, likens men to a child incapable of diagnosing or expressing his needs and resorting only to destructive behaviours or negative reactions.

Yaser Hosseini Fard, a teacher, also clearly states that economic pressures and the necessity of working two jobs can lead to fatigue and increased aggression in the educational space:

'I have mental preoccupation. My thought is busy with family, my wife and children, school work and second job. Sometimes I can't reach [manage] my work. For a while I have become aggressive and suffer panic attacks' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 41).

This subject is an emphasis on financial limitations and work pressure as factors for violence and chronic stress in men's lives.

In this same vein, Shayan, a 19-year-old youth, explains the role of repressing emotions in childhood on the emergence of violence in older ages. He states:

'Repression of emotions also, in the same way, in older ages causes the creation of emotional voids including the feeling of being hollow... one of these problems is the inability to control anger' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 4).

In this quote, the connection between the impossibility of expressing emotions in childhood and psychological injuries and violent behaviours in later periods of life is evident. This violence, as Shayan states, is transmitted in a 'viral' form at the society level; meaning individual violences can influence others as well and expand violent behaviours.

Chronic stress and anxiety are also among effective factors on increased violent behaviours. A retired Law Enforcement colonel considers the cause of these conditions to be 'destructive criticisms' existing in society and explains its connection with relationship quality, depression, and stress:

'Depressions that occur, what is their cause? [One of its reasons] the feeling of stress in a human, its cause is destructive criticisms in society' (Interview No. 95, Retired Military Colonel, Pos 27).

Amin Rezaei, recovered from drugs, emphasizing the importance of appropriate space for expressing emotions, says:

'Because we don't have a safe place to discharge our angers... the individual uses substances so his anger subsides' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 22).

The analysis of this point shows that repression of emotions is influential on social problems in addition to individual impact. Furthermore, emotions and the need to discharge them is another reason for aggressive and violent behaviours in men. Ms. Entezami, a social worker, states:

'Maybe the primary goal of men in betrayal [betraying the wife] is not [betrayal itself], [but] it is discharging his emotions' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 66).

She points to men's unconscious movement towards more intense behaviours, such as infidelity or effort for more work and activity, as a way to discharge their emotions. This type of emotional discharge, when healthy paths for expressing them are not provided, can transform into violence against others or even the individual himself.

Amin Rezaei, in his personal analysis of anger repression in childhood, points to his experience of self-harm as a solution not to harm others:

'We found hatred towards these people... I used to self-harm with a razor... my anger would subside like this so that in that anger I wouldn't harm my family'
(Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 8).

This self-harm as a tool for managing internal violence stems from the repression of emotions and shows how vital healthy paths for discharging emotions can be.

The collection of these quotes demonstrates the extent of the effects of repressing anger and emotions in men's lives. Men under social pressures, destructive criticisms, and cultural limitations may not have sufficient space to express their feelings and emotions. This lack leads to inability in correctly managing anger and the emergence of violent behaviours. These behaviours, as analyses show, can lead to excess in aggression against others, self-destruction, and even the emergence of anti-social personalities including violence-centric behaviours, such as knife-wielding. To solve this problem, there is a need for extensive education in the field of emotion management, promoting the culture of dialogue, and implementing psychological interventions.

7.1.2.4. Personality Disorders: Borderline, Paranoid, Schizophrenia

In the heart of research surrounding violence against men, a deeper examination of individual contexts reveals the complex and multiple role of mental disorders in this phenomenon. This examination is not limited only to overt violent behaviours but includes subtler and more hidden dimensions rooted in women's lived experiences and mental illnesses. Samira, with a history of mental illness, confesses to her emotional violent behaviours towards her partners and presents a clear image of this individual context:

'I would attract some men to myself, until they reached the limit of madness, then I would abandon them. I remember I did this with a boy who was two-three years older than me, and in the street he fell at my hands and feet [begging] 'For God's sake don't go,' and I myself didn't realise what I was doing. That person who got very close to me, I had no interest in him anymore. I did this with many boys. I myself would get bored/disgusted. They wanted a Hijabi girl and I didn't have an Islamic appearance. And this annoyed them very much and he was forced to tell

them 'It has nothing to do with you.' After two-three months that I was with my husband, suddenly I told him 'I didn't like to marry you.' I reached a place where really I didn't love him anymore. At first I went towards him with intense excitement. One of my cousins came to propose and I gave a 'yes' answer; after we did the contract (Aghd), I didn't receive him anymore [ignored him], and he, because he had fought [for me], was forced to cope with me somehow' (Interview No. 1, Samira, Pos 49-59).

These explicit confessions show damaging behavioural patterns that can result from personality disorders.

Samira's behaviours, from attracting and abandoning partners to sudden lack of interest in them, show characteristics of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). Based on Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1969), these patterns may be rooted in insecure childhood experiences which caused the individual in adulthood not to be able to establish stable and healthy relationships. In fact, an individual suffering from Borderline Personality Disorder has a severe fear of abandonment and for this reason shows behaviours that unconsciously cause others to distance themselves. Samira also manages this fear somehow by attracting and abandoning partners, but these behaviours lead to severe emotional injuries for both parties.

Mehdi Momeni, a clinical psychologist, confirming this view, considers Borderline and Paranoid personality disorders among the most important causes of violence against men:

'Anti-Social personality disorders, personalities that are in fact Borderline, and personalities that are Paranoid are among personality disorders whose axis is on applying violence and hard-heartedness and lack of empathy; they can recreate many violences and at the same time receive violence' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 33).

This view aligns with psychological theories related to empathy and emotion regulation. Individuals suffering from personality disorders often have problems understanding and responding to others' emotions and cannot regulate their own emotions correctly. These incapacities can lead to violent behaviours because the individual cannot understand the consequences of his actions on others and does not have the necessary empathy to prevent harming them.

On the other hand, Javadi, a psychologist and specialist in mental diseases, points to the role of Schizophrenia in the emergence of violence and considers genetic and familial factors effective in this field:

'Schizophrenia mental illness is genetic; a series of illnesses become familial... that Type Two personality disorder in the category of illnesses like Borderline and Anti-Social and insignificant [minor]... these learn in the family... has an important role in the emergence of violence against the individual. Manifest addicts (Motajaher) and rough sleepers, most of them are involved with psychiatric illnesses. Rough sleeping is a type of violence of the patient against himself' (Interview No. 82, Javadi, Pos 20).

This view is compatible with the Diathesis-Stress Model, which states that individuals with a genetic background for schizophrenia, if placed in exposure to environmental stresses, are more exposed to the emergence of disease symptoms and violent behaviours. In fact, cognitive and perceptual disorders resulting from schizophrenia can lead to incorrect interpretation of reality and consequently inappropriate and violent reactions.

Furthermore, Hamid Moradi, a social worker, pays attention to the role of Bipolar Disorder in the emergence of violence:

'Individuals who have a background of Bipolar personality disorder illness are very involved in violence and receive a lot of violence from family and surrounding people too' (Interview No. 30, Hamid Moradi, Pos 58).

Severe mood swings in bipolar disorder, from mania to depression, can lead to impulsive and unpredictable behaviours. In the manic state, the individual may feel power and needlessness and show high-risk and violent behaviours. In the depressive state too, feelings of despair and anger can be directed towards self or others.

Mahboubi, pointing to his personal experience of mental illness and exemption from military service, states:

'[I was incompatible and received a lot of violence from my father]... when I went to military service I was exempted because of my psychiatric illness file. They exempted [me]; 12 months... two months of my service passed, they exempted me' (Interview No. 36, Mahboubi, Pos 74).

This experience shows that traumatic childhood experiences and domestic violence can play an important role in the formation of mental disorders and

maladaptive behaviours. Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) states that individuals shape their behavioural patterns through observing and imitating others' behaviours, especially parents. Therefore, a child exposed to violence may turn to violent behaviours in his own adulthood.

In summary, this examination shows that various mental disorders, including personality disorders, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder, can play an important role in the emergence of violence against men. These disorders, by influencing emotion regulation, empathy, perception of reality, and behavioural patterns, become the cause of violent behaviours. Also, traumatic childhood experiences and domestic violence can play an important role in the formation of these disorders and increasing the risk of violence emergence. Consequently, attention to mental health and providing appropriate supportive and therapeutic services for individuals suffering from these disorders can be an important step in preventing and reducing violence against men.

7.1.2.5. *Repression of Emotions*

The analysis of interviewees' narratives within the framework of Grounded Theory shows that repression of emotions, resulting from psychological factors, past experiences, and social pressures, is one of the main contexts for the emergence of violence against men in Iran. This violence, often ignored, reflects internal and individual complexities stabilised over time and influencing men's actions and reactions.

Ali Rezaei, one of the interviewees, expresses this internal repression thus:

'I always felt if I wanted to share my psychological problem or anxiety with anyone, I might be mocked. This very thing had caused me not to express my anger either, because I knew if I showed weakness, others would treat me with humiliation or even more violence' (Interview No. 27, Ali Rezaei, Pos 17).

This narrative is a reflection of Freud's Theory (1920) regarding the process of repression. Freud believed that repression of negative emotions or internal fears can return in an undesirable form and lead to violence against oneself or others.

Pressures resulting from imposed gender roles also drive men to repress emotions. Majid Kazemi, another interviewee, says:

'When I lost my job, I felt I had nothing anymore; but because I was the man of the house, no one asked 'How do you endure the situation?' Everyone just expected me to pull myself together quickly. These very pressures caused me to shout and scream pointlessly most times, and even be treated badly with violence that perhaps wasn't my right' (Interview No. 13, Kazemi, Pos 9).

This feeling of inadequacy in facing challenges, resulting from social expectations and gender roles, can drive the individual towards behaviours formed to compensate for this feeling. Adler (1930) believed that reactions like shouting or expressing anger are an attempt to restore the sense of control and capability, but its result can be increased violence.

In addition to social pressures, childhood experiences also play an important role in forming patterns of emotional repression. Hamidreza, another interviewee, defines his experience thus:

'My father always told me 'A man must not cry,' even when we were whipped. I remember he punished us every day, but never let us even understand we could talk. I always had this fear that if I forgot to be strong, the same situation would happen to me again' (Interview No. 41, Hamidreza, Pos 3).

These patterns learned in childhood, in accordance with Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), reproduce the individual's behaviour and attitude towards violence in adulthood. Internalising concepts such as repression of emotions, avoidance of emotional expression, and accepting violence as a personal norm renders the individual vulnerable in facing life's challenges.

Personality characteristics can also play a role in the emergence of violence against men. Abbas, another interviewee, explains:

'I am a man of few words and introverted; I always preferred no one interfere in my work, but this very thing caused that whenever I had a problem or was even subjected to violence, I couldn't say anything. I think this very silence and passivity is itself a serious problem' (Interview No. 54, Abbas, Pos 6).

Eysenck's Personality Theory (1967) shows that certain personality characteristics, such as strong introversion or withdrawn reactions, can place individuals in situations where they are incapable of effectively managing negative emotions or coping with violent conditions.

In addition to these individual factors, social and cultural structures also play an important role in repressing men's emotions. Ms. Entezami, a social worker, says:

'But the lady says 'Let's buy a house this year,' and this, itself is showing that women have a need for men's presence; men have a need too but men state this need less. Men seem to be someone who is reciting a lesson [reciting back what they learned], but the woman is that master/professor in emotional relationships; men memorize how to behave, it is not in their genes' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 54).

This saying shows that men are always striving to prove themselves and meet others' expectations, while their emotional and personal needs are ignored. This subject aligns with theories related to gender roles (Connell, 1987), showing how social expectations of men drive them towards repressing emotions and denying their own needs.

Ms. Panahandeh, a psychologist and social activist, completes this subject by emphasising men's inability to say 'No':

'Men cannot accept. They don't know [how to] 'Say No.' He can't say no. It's their own fault he can't say. Men want but can't. There is something that if men say 'We can't,' they get unconsciously 'outed' [ejected] from life' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 66-71).

This inability to set boundaries and express limitations places men in exposure to abuse and various violences. They want to, but cannot say 'No,' because they fear exiting the circle of social acceptance and valuation.

This repression of emotions manifests in family and marital relationships as well. Mehdi Momeni, psychologist and social pathology expert, considers the lack of communication skills one of the main factors for divorce requests:

'Before everything for which couples request divorce—now whether the man is the plaintiff or the woman is the plaintiff—is the lack of communication skills, is the lack of a respectful dialogue between two people' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 31).

Abbas Barghamadi, a 50-year-old divorced man, also speaks of his personal experience in this field:

'No, we had no dialogue at all. We... 10-12 years ago we had a dispute, I didn't see her... just conditions at that time were finally somehow that we couldn't have compatibility... it was somehow that as the saying goes she herself said 'I didn't want to marry,' and really she didn't want to marry either, not with me, with anyone else' (Interview No. 77, Abbas Barghamadi, Pos 21).

Zahra Jiriyae, a psychologist, criticising society's approach in educating girls to protect themselves, emphasises that boys also need education in communication skills and relationship management:

'Men who get involved in violence didn't know how to talk. The reason... fathers from the beginning... passing time... now if I want to finish our discussion... definitely consider the legal topic for gentlemen. The man enters a relationship with an emotional partner from the very beginning; now this is physical or sexual, whatever it is... we have strict laws, whether human, customary, religious, or legal... this boy, this... his consequences and behaviours... no one [gives] any education... again, educational vacuum itself is tantamount to negligence, is itself violence; he doesn't see education' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyae, Pos 82).

This is why Delaram, a social worker, emphasises that men must learn life skills and problem-solving ability:

'This issue [men not talking] goes back to that awareness of ours, because we really don't know our life skills, I think; that we don't have problem-solving ability and correct dialogue and communication that should be there isn't there, and these... over time the party feels he is being oppressed' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 22-23).

Men's silence and inability to express emotions can cause misunderstanding and unwanted violences too. Mojtaba Mardani says in this regard:

'If we want to link this [men's silence] to violence, in fact I want to say this... the woman, in fact because the man cannot understand her emotions, [he] becomes like an emotional low-desire (Kam-meili), and she thinks her man in fact doesn't understand her, and subsequent behaviours might be very violent; not that we say physical violence, in fact that very low desire of emotions is itself a type of violence against the man' (Interview No. 100, Mojtaba Mardani, Pos 114).

Finally, this repression of emotions can lead to serious spiritual and psychological consequences. Vali Bahrani, a sociologist, says:

'One of its most important consequences is spiritual and psychological consequences they have, because in public culture and views they cannot share heart's pain like ladies, talk that 'I have this problem'; they in fact digest it inside themselves and this over time causes depressions, and then now one of the things that is important is that towards addiction... one of the issues that they, so to

speak, these violences... depression... some of them towards addiction and other consequences this violence can now have for them' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 22).

Bahrami, the sociologist, considers suicide the 'end of dialogue':

'Suicide is a form of violence and murder; meaning their communicative space and communicative poverty is destroyed. You see the issue in terms of communicative action, it has no room for dialogue anymore; the end of dialogue is suicide. Murder is the end of dialogue, divorce is the end of dialogue. When people cannot solve their issues together, they go to separation; either it becomes divorce or becomes betrayal. Well, in suicide it is the same; in suicide too the individual screams that 'I want to commit suicide'' (Interview No. 19, Dr. Bahrami, Pos 66).

To confront violence against men, it is necessary that this culture of repression be broken and men be encouraged to express their feelings and needs. Teaching communication skills, changing social attitudes regarding gender roles, and creating safe spaces for dialogue and support can help reduce men's vulnerability to violence. Also, attention must be paid that some groups, like men in LGBTQ+ communities, are specifically exposed to sexual violence and require special attention (Interview No. 12, Shayan Varamini, Pos 92). Furthermore, work pressures and excessive social expectations of men can also lead to physical and psychological violence against them (Interview No. 3, Rashidi, Pos 1).

7.1.2.6. *The Duck Syndrome*

Duck Syndrome: The representation of an apparently good image of life, while psychological problems and pressures remain hidden beneath this appearance, has transformed into one of the significant contexts for the emergence of emotional and psychological violence against men. This issue, explainable in contemporary culture with the concept of 'Duck Syndrome,' is a phenomenon wherein social pressure to display an 'ideal life' propels men onto a path where their real life becomes fraught with debts, tensions, and psychological pressures. As Elnaz Safaei, a clinical psychologist, explains this situation:

'They are more up-to-date basically, they are chic-er, you know, you know they are more European... then as much as possible, at any price, my wife posts a photo of the page [book/event], posts a photo of our trip on her page [social media],

and everyone seeing is a sign of the man's love. Now the fact that I borrow, rack up debt to reach my wife's demands, go work in several places, am under pressure and and and... these are not important. Those are hidden aspects of my life; no one must understand the hidden, they must only know the surface/visible.'

(Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 40).

This quote well recounts the various dimensions of this syndrome: the effort to display a positive image before society, while the reality of life is nothing but intolerable pressures.

In psychology, this phenomenon is interpretable with Goffman's Theory of Self-Presentation (1959). Goffman believes that individuals tend to present a 'performative appearance' of themselves that can meet social expectations. Here, the man attempts to present a level of perfection or happiness that is convincing for society or others, even if behind this 'appearance,' his life has sunk into crisis. This performative image exerts doubled psychological pressure on the man, because he must not only cope with the unrealistic expectations of spouse and society but must have the ability to manage his own feelings of guilt and personal inability hidden beneath these superficial layers.

Elnaz continues to point to the psychological consequences of this issue:

'In psychology, do you know what they call this? They call it Duck Syndrome. Well, the method is very good. And again they had several years in this life... if you want to talk with Abdi too, she has had as many of these cases as your heart desires; lives that only because of these very beliefs of the [virtual] space... saw this one, saw that one... and I thought for a moment about this woman, that 'What is Elnaz in her life?! At what price?!' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 40).

Here, Duck Syndrome is used as a metaphor for the behaviour of men who appear calm and successful on the surface, but internally experience immense pressure that casts a shadow over their lives in a hidden manner. According to the Masking Theory in psychology, individuals show contradictory behaviour to hide their weaknesses. Here, displaying optimism and success is a way to cover up internal crises.

This also adds another dimension to psychological issues related to this syndrome. Elnaz, pointing to signs of mental disorder in men, explains how such pressures can be a preamble to psychological disorders:

'And more important than all, many times it happens that that man himself suffers from a mental disorder; mental disorder doesn't have horns and a tail [is not monstrosously obvious]. For mental disorder, it suffices merely that you see a series of signs from that person.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 40).

This issue expresses that the continuous effort to protect this external image may drive men towards psychological collapse and, in some cases, lead to reflective violence against themselves or others. Based on the Diathesis-Stress Theory in psychology (Zubin & Spring, 1977), such conditions cause individuals to become more vulnerable to chronic pressures, and in the event of even one triggering factor (such as financial challenge, disrespect from spouse or society), suffer mental disorders and abnormal behaviours.

What makes understanding this issue more complex is the view of the surrounding society, which sometimes interprets this 'good appearance of life' as a success for the man, not as an additional burden. In fact, social expectations and cultural beliefs, like what is seen in Elnaz's narrative, indirectly reinforce such pressures and trap the man in a cycle of feeling duty, failure, and anger. As Elnaz explains well:

'My dad always says 'In a house, when it is closed, that you and your husband are inside under one roof, that is important.' The outside which is important, others see... when the door of your house is closed, what is the news inside the house? Is it love? Is it peace? Or is it debt? Well, one side of that map comes up [is revealed].' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 40).

This emphasis on 'what is behind the curtain' points to a challenge individuals grapple with in their individual and private realm, where many men remain alone and are forced to face their problems without any real support.

In total, the representation of a good form of life, in a format like Duck Syndrome, is a socio-psychological challenge that can become the cause of violence against men. Men placed under pressure in this path not only grapple with personal psychological crises but are trapped in a cycle of social and private expectations that effectively renders them incapable of escape. This issue requires greater attention to cultural and social views regarding men's identity and role so that perhaps these pressures can be reduced.

7.1.2.7. *The Cinderella Syndrome of Experienced Women*

The Cinderella Syndrome of women with experience of emotional and economic deprivations is raised as one of the causes for the emergence of psychological violence against men in modern marital relationships. This phenomenon is intensified by women's unrealistic expectations and desires of a partner who is imagined to have the ability to compensate for all their previous lackings. Elnaz, a psychologist and mental health specialist, explains in relation to this syndrome how the lack of experiences and opportunities that existed in the pre-marriage period can act as a factor for pressure and ultimately psychological violence against men. She says:

'Unfortunately, because that pattern [lifestyle] is not correct... sometimes again let me say this in the sphere of occupation... my lackings as a 'single' gender [unmarried woman]... whatever I didn't have in my father's house, didn't experience, didn't live... when I come find the married role, unfortunately I look to take it from my husband. My dad didn't have money, I take it from my husband; I didn't have good travel, I want it from my husband.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 16).

This narrative clearly shows the collective effort to compensate for past shortages and lackings, which ultimately transforms the man into the provider of all unfulfilled wants and wishes. Cinderella Syndrome, which Elnaz explains as a form of dreamy and imaginative expectations of the life partner, can be recognised as one of the factors creating psychological pressures on men. This issue becomes more complicated when women, in an effort to realise their fantasies and dreams, ignore the economic and social realities of their life partner. Elnaz expresses this subject thus:

'Ladies who are waiting for the prince on a white horse and believe they themselves can be Cinderella from a very deprived class, but expect that prince to come and make them prosperous/happy overnight. Just put that shoe on her foot, she puts that shoe on straight away.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 16).

This desire for sudden improvement and change in life conditions, without attention to limitations and real abilities, in addition to creating nervous and emotional clashes in the family environment, can place men in situations where they experience feelings of inefficiency, inability, and frustration. Cinderella Syndrome, by transforming the man into a means for realising unrealistic dreams, provides the ground for expanding psychological violence;

because the man, seeing himself against increasing pressures and expectations, has no choice but negative and internal reactions. Elnaz continues to point to this subject that how unrealistic expectations and incorrect relationships can become the cause of more problems:

'I think this Cinderella Syndrome itself is in a process and the continuation of violence against the man; there I can no longer understand this, that for example my husband's income is 10 million, 10 million a month, it is not a hundred million a month, but I want [it], and that becomes psychological pressure.'

(Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 16).

Here, psychological pressure resulting from the inability to meet the wife's financial expectations can lead to symptoms of mental disorders such as depression and anxiety, which is itself a source for creating unpleasant behaviours or any kind of psychological violence. Furthermore, creating incorrect relationships as a tool to compensate for these shortages can in turn cause strife and conflict in the marital environment. Elnaz clearly states how entering into incorrect relationships can increase the complexities of marital relationships:

'Where do I want more? Where I enter wrong relationships. Where? Where relationships, assume in the work environment, that too with individuals several classes higher than myself, economically.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 16).

All these factors show that Cinderella Syndrome, by intensifying unrealistic expectations and creating doubled pressure on men, can play an important role in the emergence of psychological violence against men. This issue requires serious attention to gender roles, cultural patterns, and the manner of creating unrealistic expectations in marital relationships.

7.1.2.8. High Stress and Anxiety

Stress and anxiety, as one of the key factors in the emergence of violence against men, is rooted in numerous psychological and social pressures that this group is more exposed to experiencing. Life dynamics in various domains, such as job, economic responsibilities, family and social communications, directly influence the human psyche and reduce individuals' capacity to endure and manage emotions. As one interviewee states:

'I really... a few days ago my pressure [blood pressure/stress] was so high over a project, I really came home with [blood] pressure 18 and a half. I had eaten so much grief (Hers khordeh budam) at the hands of this one, at the hands of that one, at the hands of work, at the hands of money, at the hands of everyone.'
(Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 88).

This quote clearly expresses the connection between work and economic pressures and increased stress levels and ultimately psychological injuries which can be the cause of unpleasant reactions including violence.

Scientific theories have also shown that high levels of stress and anxiety can reduce individuals' tolerance threshold and facilitate impulsive, aggressive, and sometimes destructive behaviour in men. According to Mehdi Javadi's research on families with mentally ill individuals, such conditions manifest more:

'Research we did, we reached this conclusion that the level of stress, depression, and emotion regulation strategies in families of psychiatric patients is much higher than families having a mentally disabled child.' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 119).

This analysis emphasises that in families grappling with doubled psychological pressure, not only the sick individual but other family members are also under the influence of consecutive stresses, and their reactions are based more on the ground of social and family violences.

These findings are also understandable in scientific theories such as the 'Transactional Model of Stress and Coping' proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). This theory emphasises that enduring long-term stresses without creating effective emotion control strategies renders the individual vulnerable cognitively, behaviourally, and even physiologically. The result of such conditions is severe nervous pressure and the emergence of aggressive or violent behaviours against oneself or others. What is important in this field is the level of support and the individual's coping strategies, which are clearly shown in these narratives.

Consequently, high stress and anxiety resulting from the imbalance between psychological pressures and the individual's ability to cope with them has transformed into a noteworthy factor in the emergence of violence against men. The lack of appropriate strategies to control and process these

stresses renders the individual vulnerable to impulsive behaviours and provides a ground for psychological, social, and even physical violences.

7.1.3. Personality Characteristics

7.1.3.1. Stubbornness and Approval-Seeking

In studying the causes of the emergence of violence against men, personality characteristics and psychological needs such as stubbornness (*Kalleh-shaghi*), not listening (*Harf-gush-nakardan*), and approval-seeking are raised as prominent factors. These characteristics, by influencing the decision-making process, interpersonal relationships, and interaction with the environment, can become the cause of violence against men. Gholam Eskandari, who has had a past full of criminal behaviours, offers a clear reflection of these individual characteristics:

'When someone said something to me, I felt they were hitting me. By God I swear, the root of all this current (hooliganism and fighting, criminal work and drug smuggling) was stubbornness (Kalleh-shaghi) and not listening. When my father told me 'This is not your path; did I give you liquor money [that] you drank? Did I give you smuggling money? Did I give gambling money? I gave you money of hard work (Zahmat).' I didn't listen to my father's word.'
(Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos [Unspecified]).

This quote shows that impulsive and stubborn reactions, resulting from the inability to adapt to others' guidance and advice, can place individuals on a path where they not only inflict harm on themselves but are placed in exposure to violence and harm from others as well.

His behaviour is the product of a type of excessive sensitivity to external approval and a defensive state that prevents him from accepting opinions or criticisms. Chris Fraley's Emotional Processing Theory (2002; likely referencing attachment/emotion regulation) states that these characteristics may be the product of an insecure attachment style in childhood, where the individual resorts to methods like confronting others or controlling the environment to prove identity or value. This inflexibility in relationship and interaction can reproduce a cycle of violence.

In addition to stubbornness and resistance to criticism, the need for approval-seeking is also a key factor in the emergence of violence against men. Eskandari emphasises continuing that:

'I had a need for approval-seeking and being approved by my friends. Greed and much pride caused me to go to the end in this path of crime. We drank liquor, smoked Shisheh, the 'approval phase' took us. Because, since we were always looking to be approved, our surroundings were busy [crowded], conflict would start, so-and-so would happen. I myself, in this very thugs and hooligans file, they took me to Kahrizak; I escaped execution from the hand of Radan, the NAJA [Police] commander.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 52).

These statements show the intense need for social approval and acceptance which can unconsciously drive the individual towards behaviours that have violent consequences. According to Maslow's Theory of Basic Needs (1943), the need for respect and acceptance from others is one of the basic human needs. When these needs are not satisfied in a healthy way, individuals may turn to aggressive or dangerous behaviours to be approved through this way.

Vahid Faraji describes this approval-seeking in friendly relationships formed around the axis of violence and conflict thus:

'By bad accident, whoever crossed our path was looking for 'Damet Garm' [Bravo/Well done] like ourselves. 'Let's go out, Bravo.' 'Vahid, let's go at night, Bravo.' We would empty our pockets [spend everything], they would say 'Bravo.' 'Get up let's go.' 'Today my buddy has done this tattoo, let me draw my hand on so-and-so's face today [hit him].' We fought with power; 'Buddy, Bravo, your face has become like this too [injured].' We knew these things well.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 13).

This need for social approval in aggressive and violent environments is analysable from the perspective of Group Conformity Theory; just as sharing maladaptive behaviours among individuals of a social group helps stabilise these patterns and continue cycles of violence.

One of the psychological needs of men is being approved by the spouse. Women, due to lack of awareness and necessary skill, do not have a correct understanding of this need and in most cases subject the man to insult and humiliation in the space of family and surrounding people. Zahra Jiriyaee, psychologist and specialist in family social pathologies, says in this regard:

'I advise... the parent never prepares a space for this reconciliation and the boy becomes distant, becomes basically a stranger. Neither can they tell anyone nor do they have the power for it, and neither does society leave this space for them; and it is always suggested to them that 'You are a man, is it possible this calamity

comes upon you? Is it possible?' You go to court, the man turns and says 'Sir, I don't have submission (Tamkin), my wife is not with me,' they say 'You are a man, if you had capability/guts (Orzeh) you would have gone [managed it].' They think he is incompetent (Bi-orzeh) and suggest to him that 'it needed capability/guts.' They don't know the man didn't have the emotional space. The boy is the same. Parents tell him 'You are so incompetent'; in the toilet I say [I fear] they bring a calamity on your head. And this child gets 'dissed' [discouraged/dismissed] for expressing his emotions and this emotional muteness remains. Emotional connection is cut and the boy never learns, and even has such a relationship with his child and wife too. For us too this event still exists; 'Does a man act so spoiled/lous-bazi? The woman has sulked with him, he has no nerves, has thoughts of suicide.' But if it is a woman, we accept easier, we take her hormones more seriously, contrary to the fact that his [the man's] hormones are more powerful. It races more in his veins. But we see it less, encounter it less.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 162).

Mojtaba Bahrami [Mardani] also expresses a similar opinion regarding violence originating from the spouse's suspicion towards the man:

'One hundred percent. I don't accept that this is very severe from woman to man unless it is very common. I feel it is because of the woman's economic sense, that they have their economic life and in fact their marital life under control through this way. But well, I see violences in marriage as this: that a woman is suspicious of her man, has suspicion, that the man must definitely give his phone to his wife to check. In my opinion this is an oppression done to the man. All communications cannot be controlled, or that all communications are with the opposite sex... perhaps it is with the same sex in fact, perhaps he wants to have private conversations with his friends, give private consultations, and a woman really shouldn't check her man's phone.' (Interview No. 100, Mojtaba Mardani, Pos 104).

These views show that emotional humiliation and inattention to men's self-esteem in family and social relationships can drive them towards direct or indirect violences. Coopersmith's Self-Esteem Theory (1967) also emphasises the importance of these needs for approval and respect; because their non-provision will be the cause of maladaptive behaviours and the emergence of the cycle of violence.

7.1.3.2. Low Self-Confidence

Low self-confidence in men can be analysed as one of the key psychological factors in the emergence of violence against them. This issue can begin from childhood and grow under the influence of family and social environments and gradually influence individuals' behaviour and social interactions in adulthood. In this midst, men's personal and deep experiences in facing violence, especially of the psychological type, are intensified by this psychological weakness.

Akbar Ebrahimi, one of the interviewees, speaks clearly of his experiences in childhood and its effects on his present life:

'Childhood that I... the time of school that I studied, I was a fearful child, I was very fearful, by God I was very afraid of my own shadow. I have such a feeling. I feel I acted very weakly [in life].' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 198-201).

This is a reflection of an experience analysable according to Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1969), which emphasises that an insecure attachment style formed due to parental negligence or violence during childhood can become the basis for mistrust and lack of self-assurance in adulthood.

Applying violence against children causes a reduction in children's self-confidence and becomes the cause of accepting violence by strangers. Mr. Ahmad Nazari, a teacher, argues in this regard:

'A father, by applying violence, strips self-confidence from his child. Because he does something... a feeling comes to him [the child] that 'I have no ability at all to confront violence.' Because a father who deals with the child with power, physical physique, and tone of voice makes of himself someone for whom there is no superior. He speaks the first and last word. Anyone who deals with the child, the child returns exactly to that application of violence that came from you, thinks, and accepts the violence.' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 8).

This view shows that violent experiences in childhood not only weaken children's self-confidence but make them more vulnerable to accepting and enduring violence in adult life. This matter is especially true when the child witnesses violence from more powerful individuals like parents, because these experiences can shape deep beliefs in the child that violence is an unavoidable or even acceptable matter.

Another person named Sohrabi also explains this issue by expressing similar feelings:

'But the reason that she [partner] suffered from special spiritual conditions for a period... the mistake was mine that I underestimate myself [self-confidence], second I have fear of ladies.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 153).

Sohrabi emphasises that fear and lack of self-confidence directly influenced his ability to face daily issues and social relationships, such that he fears conflict with others, especially women. Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory (1920) also helps analyse such experiences, as it believes fears founded in the early period of life can lead to social anxieties and even phobias in adulthood.

Furthermore, the subject of the impact of low self-confidence on drug addiction is also highlighted. Mehdi Javadi, a clinical psychologist, says about this connection:

'The most important factor for which men become afflicted with narcotics is lack of self-confidence... these violences can be a factor for narcotics and cigarettes.' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 26).

This finding aligns with Joiner's Theory of Risky Behaviours (2005), which shows that lack of self-confidence and feeling of inability to face challenges and social expectations can drive the individual towards unstable solutions like drug use, where individuals try to create an ideal personality and artificial self-confidence for themselves through substance use.

Finally, Akbar Ebrahimi explains his experience of involvement with addiction and its connection with low self-confidence thus:

'Perhaps I couldn't speak my word frankly to him... perhaps it was to my detriment at all, you know, but I was forced to say 'Yes/Okay' (Chashm).' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 186).

In these confessions, a feeling of compulsion and inability to express oneself is clearly seen, showing the destructive effect of low self-confidence on his ability to stand up to others and make decisions. This situation aligns with Broken Self-Concept Theory, which shows how individuals with low self-confidence may show less resistance against abuse and violence and even in some times tend towards psychological or social self-harm.

Therefore, it can be concluded that low self-confidence is not only the cause of violence against men but can also drive them towards destructive solutions

such as drug use, a situation requiring specialised interventions from families, counsellors, and society to raise awareness and create supportive environments.

7.1.3.3. *Bullying and Thuggery*

Bullying and Thuggery, as individual characteristics, can both be rooted in individuals' lived experiences and be the cause of the emergence of violence against men. These characteristics, which sometimes take shape reactively to environmental pressures, show themselves in various contexts of life, from childhood to adulthood, and leave deep consequences on the life of the individual and those around him. In this analysis, relying on interviewees' quotes and scientific views, we examine these contexts.

Ms. Jiriyaee, with a comprehensive look at factors shaping bullying behaviours, emphasises the role of biological factors and individual experiences:

'In addition to society and the pattern-acceptance they have, we reach [the point] that 'how did the family behave with them?' and again from their genes to individual differences to their age to their body hormones, 'what part of life did they get stuck in?'... all these are influential. Basically, it must be examined very case-by-case; we see a man behaves with bullying in a period of his life, in a period completely calm.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 166).

This quote shows that bullying is not a fixed characteristic but a dynamic state dependent on life conditions. Evolutionary Psychological Theory also confirms this view that aggressive behaviours, including bullying, can be internalised as mechanisms for gaining power or survival in challenging environments (Buss, 1392 [2013]).

In another experience, Ashkan, a 17-year-old student, speaks with shocking details of bullying in school:

'In school there is a group, they have a ringleader, six people are with him too; then those six people, either they get hungry, they go to the sandwich shop and take from that sandwich seller by force. It is extortion (Zorgiri). Yeah, they take whatever, from snacks and sandwiches and everything. Now our school, because the attendance hours in school are long, for example our kids because they bring lunch, for example they go [put] their lunch... for example we have a big toaster... [bullies] go bring the food by force, eat their own, empty it, leave it right

there. These bullies inflict sexual abuse on weaker kids of the school. Think, a student gets raped; he finds an ominous fate for the rest of his life. That abuse can change his life path. Our high school, most have beards; those who don't have beards haven't reached that sexual puberty, adults annoy them a lot.' (Interview No. 101, Ashkan Student, Pos 406).

This narrative depicts bullying as a tool for individual domination which targets not only material resources (like food) but extends to physical and sexual abuses. Power Theory in social psychology explains that such behaviours often originate from an internal need for control and superiority over others (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; text cites 'Seidman'). Ashkan also points to sexual puberty and physical differences (like having or not having a beard) which, as indicators of power or weakness among peers, drive individuals towards bullying or victimisation.

Mehdi Javadi, a mental health psychologist, emphasising the consequences of bullying, says:

'Violence is applied against students, they are bullied, their rights are trampled.' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 8).

This view indicates a cycle of violence wherein bullying as an individual characteristic becomes the cause of rights violation and lasting psychological injuries. Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) also supports this idea that aggressive behaviours, including bullying, can be institutionalised in the individual through observing and directly experiencing violence in close environments (such as school or family).

Mohammad Hosseini, a 30-year-old single man, recounts an experience of the long-term impact of bullying:

'The teacher would give swearing of 'donkey's foal,' 'calf,' and 'cow' to the kids. We had a teacher who was a wrestler; one of the kids in class had passed wind (Baad-e medeh). He brought those 5-6 people who were the ruffians (Arazel) and bullies of the class to the foot of the blackboard. He brought the bully out, smelled with a Bic pen to see which one it was... those 5-6 had no business with their bullying [in that instance], but they didn't study anymore after that year, dropped out of school. I just got news one of them is in prison, one of them has become a ruffian and now they are street thugs (Lat). They are after trouble (Shar) or in prison. They got life sentences, are drug dealers in prison. Machete-

wielder, knife-wielder, mugger.' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 84).

This narrative shows how the experience of bullying in childhood can have long-term effects on an individual's life, such that victims or even some bullies enter cycles of more violent and dangerous behaviours in adulthood. Mohammad Hosseini points to the negative effects of these experiences in students' lives; dropping out, entering criminal gangs, and ultimately prison are direct results of this cycle of violence. Radicalisation and Social Deviance Theory explains that individuals, especially in sensitive adolescent ages, in case of experiencing continuous humiliation and repression, are prone to gravitating towards anomalous behaviours like drug selling, mugging, and organised violence (Hirschi, 1969). In other words, bullying and humiliation in educational environments can be the starting point of social deviance and reproduction of the cycle of violence.

Faraz Mahboubi, 37 years old with experience of hooliganism in Tehran city, says:

'You know, basically I don't have a good relationship with my father, our relationship isn't good together. Because I constantly... how should I say... if you want to talk or want argument and fight to happen, he quickly wants to solve the problem his own way with force and bullying and punishment; I have my own method too, stubbornness and obstinacy. We can't talk to each other. Our words are with force and violence and my hooliganism.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 44).

This quote represents the deep impact of family relationships and parenting styles on individual and social behaviour and how repressed emotions and confrontation methods accompanied by violence can lead to bullying behaviours in adulthood.

In addition to analysing the 'why' and 'how' of bullying occurrence, the role of the teacher as a behavioural model is raised. As Mohammad Hosseini points out, humiliating behaviours of some teachers, such as using insults and implicitly encouraging bullying in class, can lead to reinforcing these types of behaviours among students. This issue aligns with Bandura's Observational Learning Theory (1977), which states that students observe and imitate the behaviour of elders, especially teachers. If models who have power and

dominance (like teachers) show violent and humiliating behaviours, the probability of learning these maladaptive behaviours increases.

Bullying and thuggery, in different contexts of life, display themselves as a collection of individual and environmental factors. Scientific and theoretical analyses alongside presented quotes show that these behaviours are simultaneously rooted in biological conditions (hormones, age, and individual differences), psychological (need for power and superiority-seeking), and social (cultural and environmental learnings).

What is deduced from interviewees' opinions is that bullying is not merely an isolated behaviour, but part of a broader pattern of power relations institutionalised in family, school, and society. The cycle of these power relations involves victims and even bullies in long-term effects of injustice and social deviance. On the other hand, the role of behavioural models (such as parents and teachers) is also very prominent in shaping and reinforcing these characteristics.

7.1.3.4. *Stubbornness*

Stubbornness (*Lajbazi* - obstinacy/spitefulness), as a deep-seated individual characteristic, can become the cause of violence against men or itself transform into a form of violent reaction aimed at coping with life's difficulties. In this analysis, using participants' quotes and scientific theories, the impact of this characteristic in shaping violent behaviours is examined.

One of the main axes of analysis is stubbornness as a reaction to repressed emotions or emotional deficiencies of the life period. According to Faraz Mahboubi, this characteristic formed in him from childhood and led to high-risk behaviours in different life periods:

'But from childhood I was a very stubborn person, but I don't know on what account it was. For example, they told me 'You can't do this work' or 'Don't do it,' I wouldn't reject, or I would do it; I was so stubborn that, meaning, many times it happened my life fell into danger but I did it.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 10).

He continues to point to another dialogue regarding the perpetual experience of stubbornness which shows this characteristic in personal communications and social violences:

'Our stubbornness drags very much into war and fighting with each other [with father], but not with Mum. The nerves I have... I haven't listened even once... perhaps sometimes my nerves are messed up. I didn't say 'You' [disrespectfully] to her, but I exploded myself [internally], but said nothing to her... or for example if I hit people in the street, but I did nothing with her.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 52).

This quote is a reflection of transforming stubbornness into social violence; anger that instead of being expressed directly in family relationships is transferred to destructive behaviours outside the home environment. Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1985) explains that individuals may, to free themselves from emotional isolation or environmental pressures, replace unspoken emotions in close relationships with high-risk and violent behaviours.

Hamid Haghi remembers his stubbornness not only as a reactive behaviour but as a response to needs ignored by the family. He says:

'I am [stuck] on obstinacy and stubbornness until right now, it's the same. Over this very obstinacy and stubbornness, they don't understand me. They don't know 'Dad dear, I am thirsty for something else. I am thirsty for your affection, I like you to stroke my head.' I wanted this from them, but they didn't want me, because its reasons are that I... those deeds I told you.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 252).

This quote emphasises the direct connection between stubbornness and defensive reaction to emotional rejection. Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1988) explains that insufficient emotional communications and lack of psychological security can cause the formation of behaviours like stubbornness which are in fact a cry for attracting attention and achieving affection. Hamid Haghi, by stating this deficiency, shows that his behaviour was not only a type of obstinacy and confronting conditions but a way to express protest against being rejected by those around him.

Ali Asgari introduces silence and stubbornness as two ways of reacting to psychological and family pressures and points to its consequences on mental health. He says:

'Well, as you say yourself, it becomes very hard to put the name 'violence' on it, but it tires a person's soul, wounds it. I say to myself 'Because having peace in the house is very important, I say nothing, I don't bicker (Kal-kal).'' And I keep

silent. I say 'Okay,' until now that 10 years have passed I haven't said anything. I am being annoyed/hurt. I haven't shouted and screamed even once, but I did stubbornness.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 64-71).

This quote implies that stubbornness can sometimes manifest in the form of indirect behaviours such as silence in family relationships, but still brings psychological pressure and nervous injuries. Lazarus's Theory of Psychological Coping (1993) emphasises this issue that behaviours like silence or stubbornness are used as methods to reduce psychological pressures in unfavourable environments, but if repeated permanently, they themselves become a source of anxiety and dissatisfaction for the individual.

Masoud Babaei introduces stubbornness as a form of reaction against frustrations and the vacuum of responsibility in life. He points out that many individuals, due to incorrect upbringing or excessive support from parents, suffer contradiction in facing life problems and are dragged towards immature and unhealthy behaviours like obstinacy:

'Many can't change, don't want to accept 'I am a weak person.' Basically my father and mother didn't teach me the custom and way and meaning of life... then here he suffers contradictions. I have seen these kinds of people a lot; either they turn into very vengeful and complex-ridden people who, for example, have childish behaviours, have childish obstinacies, destroy their lives, are weak in their marriages. They are seemingly irresponsible people, and that they are irresponsible is because responsibility wasn't taught to him.' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 14).

Theories related to personality development, including Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory (1968), emphasise that lack of learning responsibility or lack of correct confrontation with challenges in childhood and adolescence can lead to behavioural immaturities in adulthood. These very immaturities cause the individual to fail in solving his problems and ultimately, to escape accepting his weaknesses, resort to behaviours such as obstinacy, deviation, and even violence.

Narratives such as the statements of Sajjad Shahrokhi and Raheleh Mehraban express stubbornness as a reaction to family and social pressures which can entail harder consequences as well. For example, Raheleh Mehraban speaks of her behaviour in response to others' stubbornness:

'One of the events that happened was this, that [out of] obstinacy and stubbornness he said some words and made me nervous and I made a move against him. For example, this very thing that he had gone to propose [to someone else] and said 'My wife is mental.' I said 'I am mental?! I'll show you.' His father died; the next day I went and seized his inheritance share which included that house. Blocked his inheritance share.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 56).

This quote shows that obstinacy can be employed as a tool for control or revenge in human relationships. From the perspective of theories related to power and conflict, Raheleh's behaviour is a type of 'Resource Control' wherein obstinacy transforms into a tool for stabilising power.

The Cycle of Stubbornness and Violence: Stubbornness, as an individual characteristic, has multiple roots including emotional deficiencies, lack of responsibility, environmental pressures, and weakness in problem-solving skills. This characteristic can propel individuals towards high-risk, destructive behaviours, and even violence. As derived from the presented narratives, obstinacy is often not a sign of power, but a reaction to internal weaknesses or deprivations of the growth period. In this midst, the role of family and social environment in shaping or intensifying this characteristic is very prominent. Psychological and social theories also show that stubbornness can be a tool for attracting attention, proving oneself, or even exercising power over others.

In synthesizing the new quotes, the issue of stubbornness remains as a mediating element in social and family violence, which is not only a tool for reacting to the environment but sometimes, instead of direct behaviour, manifests in the form of silence, transferred violence, or revenge with immature tools.

7.1.3.5. Perfectionism

Perfectionism, as one of the key psychological characteristics in men, plays a significant role in the emergence of violence against oneself and others. This characteristic not only creates a structure of unrealistic expectations and psychological pressures on the individual but renders him unable to live within a framework of accepting himself and his environment. Mehdi Momeni, a clinical psychologist, emphasises that perfectionism has taken root in many men and adolescents as a cognitive distortion or schema. He states:

'Look, one of the violences against the self—which is mostly defined in psychological dimensions—is in fact those schemas or cognitive distortions we

speak of in psychology called 'Perfectionism.' I have repeatedly seen individuals who unfortunately suffer from this thought pattern; perfectionism is seen more in boys and men. Individuals who possess the perfectionism schema are individuals who are severely angrier towards themselves, because perfectionism means 'You must always show yourself at the best level of conditions.' And since we naturally cannot always be a 'twenty' [perfect score], this dissatisfaction with oneself in this section of individuals—especially in boys and men—is again based on the culture that considers the man an 'invincible gender' and considers the man someone who must display himself in the best manner and must present himself in the best form in all dimensions of bodily power, I don't know, physique, handsomeness, intelligence, acquiring financial resources and economic authority. Unfortunately, much violence is inflicted upon the person; meaning wherever you saw a perfectionist adolescent and examine him, he has severe anger and hatred and in fact a 'bad feeling' towards himself. This is a type of violence against the self.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 54).

Momeni's explanation clearly shows that perfectionism is more prevalent in men due to its link with cultural structures and gender roles in society, and its consequences are deeper and more complex. Patriarchal culture presents an image of the man who must be 'flawless' in every condition. This man must be the best in all dimensions of life—including physical appearance, intelligence, financial ability, and social status. However, this idealised image ignores human realities and causes men who do not keep pace with these criteria to suffer anger, blame, and psychological collapse instead of accepting their weaknesses and limitations. From the perspective of Beck's Cognitive Theory (1967), cognitive distortions such as perfectionism, by creating incorrect intellectual criteria and distancing the individual from realism, lead to the creation of negative emotions and defective behavioural patterns. Momeni also specifically points out that adolescents placed in this cycle suffer more from self-anger and psychological repression.

Vahid, a 40-year-old man who has a heavy experience of the consequences of perfectionism, describes how this characteristic influenced his personal life. He says:

'Basically, I always had this characteristic [perfectionism]. That I didn't like to be lower than anyone. In everything, I liked to be bigger [better] than everyone. I would say 'So-and-so did this work, I must be one step higher than him,' while I wouldn't go ask at all if 'So-and-so made a mistake, was his work correct at all or

not?’ Basically, I was placed in a gathering where if I wanted to fall short [be less], a thousand calamities would come upon my head.’ (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 17).

Vahid’s words well illustrate the vicious cycle that perfectionism creates in the individual. He had obliged himself to constant competition with others, without having a realistic evaluation of his actions and goals. This mental pattern caused him to enter a space of constant stress and effort for irrational superiority, which ultimately dragged him into a trap of psychological and social injuries, including substance abuse and separation from his wife.

From the perspective of Festinger’s Social Comparison Theory (1954), endless comparisons with others, in the absence of a feeling of self-efficacy or objective evaluation of abilities, can lead to negative emotions and severe feelings of frustration. Perfectionist individuals like Vahid often engage in an endless competition with others instead of focusing on a personal path of success; a competition whose criteria are not only unattainable but based on illusion and unrealistic expectations. This very issue gradually places them in a cycle of guilt, anger, and despair.

Perfectionism, in addition to psychological effects, is rooted in a social structure that places men in a static and inflexible role framework. A society that views the man as a tool for financial provision, a pillar of power, and family social credit, by imposing annoying criteria, not only does not help his growth and flourishing but creates a ground of psychological violence against him to conform to these roles. Theorists like Adler (1930) emphasise that when an individual cannot correctly identify and prioritise his needs, the feeling of failure and inability will lead to psychological repression and self-anger. In this framework, Vahid is a precise example of a man who, instead of finding a balanced and meaningful path for himself, ultimately became the victim of the disproportion between his goals and abilities under the pressure of acquisitiveness and personal and social superiority-seeking.

The examination of these cases shows that perfectionism in men, although considered a type of tool for success, carries a heavy load of psychological violence and behavioural pressure. This characteristic, by ignoring human limitations and conflicting with the realistic nature of life, confronts the individual with separate pieces of frustration, shame, and anger, which ultimately enters him into a cycle of violence against himself and deep personal and social discomfort.

7.1.3.6. *Revenge Seeking*

Revenge-seeking, as one of the individual characteristics, plays a prominent role in the emergence of violence against men, especially in environments with tribal and clan structures. In tribal cultures, such a characteristic is considered not merely as individual behaviour but as a social and cultural response to crises of human relationships. This characteristic plays a key role in reproducing violence, especially in the western regions of the country, and many murders of men and bloody conflicts of families and tribes can be interpreted under this framework.

Yaser Hosseini Fard, a school counsellor who raises his experience of this pattern of revenge in the tribes of Western Iran, directly emphasises the charismatic and symbolic position of the man as the target of violent attacks:

'They [men/tribes] say 'The man is the symbol of power'; they come and kill someone who is better than all of them, his thought is higher, has more acceptability, so that they inflict a greater spiritual [psychological] blow to that tribe and that family and that society.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 78).

This narrative clearly points to the idea that in tribal structures, the man is considered the representative of power, social status, and collective identity of a tribe. Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) also emphasises this subject that any blow to important symbols of collective identity is interpreted as a threat or reduction of value of that social group. The murder of a man in this structure counts as a type of extensive revenge against all members of the tribe, leaving severe psychological and social effects.

Furthermore, revenge-seeking is rooted not only in tribes but in individual behaviours formed from childhood. Vahid, recounting his experience from childhood, shows how the need to prove oneself and confront humiliation led to vengeful reactions and behaviours. He says:

'From the beginning of this complexity I entered consumption [drugs]. We went to Al-Hadid Club [gym]. I slapped a boy in the ear; you must have conditions [status], you understand? Or they encouraged me. This very Al-Hadid hall we went to in year 96, the coach turned to me and said 'Boy, you don't fit for wrestling'... I said 'I came to become a wrestler, basically came to pack everyone up [defeat everyone]...'. For the first two years he told me [this], then said 'Wear your clothes on that bench'... Suddenly this boy came to me... said 'Sir, do you

know anything?’ I said ‘Yeah, didn’t you teach me?’ He cleaned the mat beautifully with our face [beat me up]... Then when he hit me in the mouth, I said ‘I’ll settle his account.’ I went and had a fight with him.’ (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 15).

His revenge-seeking in this narrative is a type of reaction against humiliation and feelings of anger, which is reviewable with Individual Psychology theories as well. Adler (1930) in his theory points to this subject that the feeling of humiliation and lack in individuals can lead to an effort for compensation, which in cases manifests through aggressive or vengeful behaviours. In Vahid’s case, initial humiliation by the coach and surrounding people drove him towards violent reactions against others.

Ashkan and Hossein, adolescent students, also show a different but related narrative of this behaviour. These two adolescents describe revenge-seeking as a reaction to school environment pressures and inappropriate behaviours of some of their teachers:

‘That I catch that teacher outside and beat him, and I did this once too. My Arabic teacher, we were in class, he turned and swore at me; I couldn’t do anything in class but I caught him outside school, I beat him a lot too.’ (Interview No. 101, Ashkan and Hossein, Students, Pos 96).

In this narrative, another element of vengeful behaviour, namely the displacement of anger and repressed rage to another time and place, is observable. This type of behaviour aligns with Freud’s Theory (1920) regarding the reconstruction and transference of emotions; where Freud believes groups experiencing anger and emotional repression express it in a space where they are less under the supervision of power. In the presented example, the adolescent cannot show his protest or revenge in class due to the teacher’s power position, but in a space outside control, expresses his violence in the most severe form.

In another example of violence resulting from revenge-seeking, Hosseinzadeh describes his experience of deciding to take revenge in the court environment thus:

‘We had an anger, but look, this anger... I say I am not a murderer, and once I went and purchased a weapon, they took it from my hand, otherwise I wanted to go kill both the judge and kill this one [wife/opponent]. I wanted to kill several people in the court.’ (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 236).



Figure 9 The Passivity of Most Men in the Face of Victimisation

This narrative shows that revenge-seeking, when accompanied by a feeling of injustice in the social or legal system, can lead to one of the most severe types of violence, namely murder (or intent to murder). Weber's Theory of Social Systems (1947) emphasises that when the feeling of injustice is reinforced in the individual's experience and the link between social trust and the legal system is severed, severe reactions in the form of violent acts and revenge become inevitable.

Mehdi Javadi, a clinical psychologist, points to another aspect of revenge-seeking and shows how this behaviour can later return to violence against one's own, including family members. He explains:

'We had cases, I don't want to generalize this, they went outside [to take] revenge, [but] performed that aggressive behaviour with greater intensity towards their families. Now I don't say it was that same revenge, you know, because I don't know, I don't have data to speak on this case; this violence was applied again towards family members.' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 14).

This observation by Javadi indicates the return of violence and a cycle in which revenge may be reflected not only onto the target individual or group but onto the closest aggressors, namely the family. This subject can be interpreted with Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), according to which violent behaviours, after imitation, intensify and transfer to other domains of the individual's life.

In total, revenge-seeking, whether at personal or collective levels, has a tight connection with culture, the individual's position, and power structures in different environments. In tribes, this behaviour transforms into a tool for proving power and responding to identity blows, while at the individual level, it is rooted in the psychology of repression, experience of humiliation, and the need to regain the feeling of power. When such behaviours take shape in violence-prone environments or those lacking appropriate supervision, they can cause the reproduction of the cycle of violence in various environments.

7.1.3.7. *Pride, Arrogance, and Insolence*

In analysing the ethical causes of the emergence of violence against men, 'Pride, Arrogance, and Insolence' are identified as an important component. These characteristics, often perceived as masculine traits and signs of power and dominance, can in various situations transform into men's Achilles' heel and place them in exposure to various violences.

Elnaz Safaei, clinical psychologist and mental health specialist, pointing to Rosenberg's Theory, emphasises the importance of 'Pride' in ethics and humanity:

'Something by the name of ethics, humanity, pride... Pride is something Rosenberg relies on severely in his theory; glory, pride. Where I am not allowed to perform a behaviour that others... meaning a woman who herself becomes 'handy' [available/easy] for another man. That a man who... how much in my cases I hear now that he says 'I know he has a wife. He has a wife, [but] I am here.' Well okay, you get annoyed/hurt, you are a second-class gender/item.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 70).

In this view, pride means maintaining human dignity and value and should not lead to behaviours that tarnish this value. However, in some cases, this very pride can transform into an obstacle to accepting realities and asking for help.

Vahid, a 42-year-old man with experience of drug use, speaks of the role of 'False Pride' in his life:

'I like very much for it to return... still perhaps ostensibly that false pride, for example, doesn't let you break it... meaning that same false pride caused a whole lot of bad events [criminality, delinquency, consumption and sale of drugs] to

happen in these forty years, some five years [of it].' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 277).

This 'False Pride,' which seems to be rooted in the fear of failure and weakness, prevented him from accepting mistakes and trying to change, driving him onto a path of criminality and addiction. This issue relates to theories regarding 'Psychological Capital,' stating that individuals possessing less self-confidence, hope, and resilience are more vulnerable in facing problems and challenges (Luthans et al., 2007).

Gholam Eskandari, a 50-year-old man with experience of drug use and criminality, recalls his 'Cheekiness/Insolence' (*Por-roo budan*) in the past:

'My 'pants leg' [capacity for trouble] was high, my surroundings were busy. We were cheeky (Por-roo).' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 44).

This being 'cheeky,' which can be interpreted as a type of insolence and disrespect for others' rights, likely resulted from the feeling of power and dominance he had in that period. However, this very characteristic placed him in exposure to greater dangers and violences.

Furthermore, some men possess a high 'Vengeful Spirit.' Rasoul, a 30-year-old man, says in this regard:

'[Men] claim, say so-and-so, 'I won't let go until I slam him to the ground.' (Interview No. 98, Rasoul, Pos 41).

This spirit, which can stem from feelings of humiliation and inability, drives men towards violent and vengeful behaviours. This subject aligns with theories regarding 'Instrumental Aggression,' which state that individuals use violence to achieve their goals (Berkowitz, 1993).

Faraz Mahboubi, a 29-year-old man with experience of hooliganism and independence-seeking, speaks thus about the impact of pride and independence in his life:

'My mother was a housewife but now has a Maison. My brother too, he is continuing his studies. My age... you calculate... my father whose assets, whose situation, these things were good, but I was independent from the very beginning. My pride was very 'thing'... It never happened that 'Dad, in those nine months I was here, I hadn't said where I was.' Then my uncles called, said it is like this, and they had believed too that this one [me] is clean [sober]; when they came here, they saw and left.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 20).

His pride and independence-seeking, originating from the desire to separate from the father's shadow and prove himself, gave him a sense of control and power. However, these very characteristics can cause the individual's isolation and place him in exposure to judgment or violent behaviours.

In summary, 'Pride, Arrogance, and Insolence' can act as a complex factor in the emergence of violence against men. On one hand, these characteristics can help men defend themselves and stand against threats. On the other hand, these very characteristics can prevent them from accepting realities, asking for help, and changing their behaviours, and consequently place them in exposure to more violences. To reduce men's vulnerability to violence, it is necessary to teach them how to manage their pride correctly and avoid its transformation into arrogance and insolence. Also, they must be helped to find healthier ways to cope with negative emotions such as anger and revenge.

7.1.3.8. Greed and Avarice

Excessive greed and avarice in acquiring wealth, as evident in the experience of Mohammad Amin (24 years old, drug distributor), can drive men towards high-risk behaviours and violence. This issue is not merely an ethical deviation but a causal factor for broader individual and social injuries.

Mohammad Amin, describing his path as a drug distributor, points to the concept of 'Greed':

'Then with crime... and then I strike into another work [switch jobs]... for example, strike into another work, that for example from this go into that, basically get out of these kinds of things. My crime has a limit and size too; if you look in Latin books [foreign literature/movies], you see all criminals, greed took them over, they got fed (Be ga raftan). I never think this thought to myself because if I want to think, I am not a kid with a name and reputation anymore; they will cut off the head of that woman, my drug-selling partner.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 329-334).

In this statement, Mohammad Amin admits that greed can be a dangerous factor leading even professional criminals to destruction. By referring to 'Latin books,' he seemingly alludes to a study or narrative wherein the detrimental consequences of greed for criminals are depicted.

Through drug distribution and sales, Mohammad Amin succeeded in achieving his dreams:

'With the work of distributing and selling drugs, I gathered some money and bought a house. After that, with my Aga's [father's] help, I bought a bus.'

(Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin Bagheri, Pos 185-189).

This sentence indicates the direct impact of criminal activities in reaching financial goals. However, such success is often temporary and entails irreparable social and individual consequences. This experience recalls the role of 'Deviant Paths' in achieving success which, in many cases, come at the cost of harm to others and even the individual himself.

Mohammad Amin's attitude in this part of the interview recalls Durkheim's concept of 'Anomie' (1897). Durkheim believed that in societies where ethical values and norms are weakened, individuals suffer confusion and purposelessness, and this situation drives them towards abnormal behaviours. In Mohammad Amin's case, it seems the desire for wealth and more profit has dimmed ethical values in his mind and propelled him towards illegal activities.

Nevertheless, Mohammad Amin in his continued speech considers himself immune from this danger and says:

'I never think this thought to myself because if I want to think, I am not a kid with a name and reputation anymore; they will cut off the head of that woman, my drug-selling partner.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 329-334).

This statement indicates a type of self-awareness in the individual; he knows greed can drag him to the abyss of destruction and therefore tries to control himself to some extent. But this self-control stems not from ethical principles but from fear of losing his current position and status.

Continuing the interview, Mohammad Amin points to the consequences of his behaviours as well:

'Well, these very events that happened... for example you 'thinged' [stole] a phone from someone, or drugs you gave to someone... someone who becomes a consumer, or a divorce that happens, or a child who becomes guardian-less... they steal his bag... I don't know what of his you take. Well, I had to do criminal works, I had to go these ways to reach here. First I had to go stealing, I had to taste the taste of this, that what stories are in stealing.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 329-334).

These words paint a clear picture of the chain of injuries greed can entail: from theft and drug selling to divorce and child abandonment. In this midst, Mohammad Amin sees himself not as a destructive agent but as a victim of circumstances; someone who, to reach his goal, was inevitably forced to traverse this high-risk path.

This attitude recalls Festinger's Theory of 'Cognitive Dissonance' (1957). Festinger believed that individuals, to reduce tension resulting from the contradiction between their beliefs and behaviours, engage in justifying their behaviour. In Mohammad Amin's case, it seems he attempts to free himself from pangs of conscience and feelings of guilt by justifying his criminal behaviours as a necessity for achieving success.

7.1.3.9. *Lying and Materialism*

Unethical behaviours, lying, and materialism, as causes of violence against men, manifest in various experiences and views raised in interviews. These factors can destroy trust and intimacy in relationships and provide the ground for abuse, betrayal, and ultimately violence.

Allah-Reza, a lawyer, pointing to the role of materialism in the emergence of family problems, says:

'A man who has separated from his wife for any reason and wasn't at fault either... now I believe 80 percent of divorces, the fault lies with women... in society I submitted [said] it's not possible [to say openly], but 80 percent of divorces in the world, the cause is ladies. Now this new generation, especially ladies, have become demanding and superficial and material and are constantly after material things.' (Interview No. 33, Allah-Reza, Pos 28).

This view, although it may be disputed, indicates the belief that materialism and excessive financial expectations can be one of the main reasons for the emergence of dispute and separation in marital relationships. In this view, women are portrayed as 'demanding, superficial, and materialist' individuals, characteristics which, in the interviewee's opinion, can lead to the collapse of shared life.

Farahani (50 years old, self-employed), with a pessimistic look at human relationships, emphasises the role of lying and profit-seeking in individuals' lives:

'Humans aren't good, humans are bad. Good is very rare... meaning if someone... whom they come say is a human, you know. That person who forgave for money [passed up money], he is good, that human, his humanity is correct. For money, humans ruin a human so much, lie to each other so much, stand up to each other [confront]... now whether it be a thousand Tomans, be it 100 thousand Tomans, be it high figures where no one passes up... even low figures. I don't have a happy heart from humans. Meaning you think humans have become materialist. They are materialist and profit-seeking. They have put knowledge (Marefat) and humanity and everything under foot; everything has just become material things.' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 21-24).

He believes materialism and profit-seeking have pushed human values like knowledge and humanity to the margins and caused individuals to easily resort to lying and deceiving others to reach their goals.

This view aligns with Marx's Theory of 'Alienation' (1844). Marx believed that in capitalist societies, individuals become alienated from work, self, and others, and human relationships are reduced to relationships based on profit and benefit. In these conditions, ethical values fade and individuals are willing to trample ethical principles to reach their material goals.

Hamta (30 years old, social worker), pointing to the role of lying in the formation of infidelity in marital relationships, says:

'I think cases that cause women's betrayal [is] that the individual doesn't have honesty, and constantly, for example, regarding that work he did or the event that happened, wants to lie... constantly, for example, wants to mislead the party that 'No, such a thing isn't there,' whereas it is; he is forced to lie.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta, Pos 20).

She believes that lack of honesty and lying can cause the creation of mistrust and suspicion in relationships and ultimately lead to betrayal. In this view, lying is raised as a predisposing factor for the emergence of other unethical behaviours, such as infidelity.

Faraz Mahboubi (36 years old) also, pointing to his experience of facing hypocritical and pretentious individuals, says:

'For example, I give an example, someone comes says 'I am, for example, a righteous person, for example trustworthy, for example I care a lot about Halal and Haram'... I saw a 'thing' in his head at first... when he says 'I am like this,' I say 'Okay, Bravo,' I say nothing but I give him plenty of opportunity for

mistakes, you know. Then I have him under supervision, God forbid I see something from him... then once I see... Dad, what is wrong with the human himself? Why does he mimic someone else? Why does he live with a mask? You know, I can't... people-botherers (Mardom-azar), they are very people-bothering. You see, not that it's all jokes and things... my pride is somehow... you know Mr. Doctor, no one has seen my bad state [mood] until now. A few months ago Mr. Zeynal from Welfare had come to hold dart competitions, then I don't know what place I came, don't know what I became, but they were giving prizes...' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 246).

He expresses disgust at facing individuals who live with a 'mask' and mimic righteous people. This experience shows that unethical behaviours and hypocrisy can cause the creation of feelings of insecurity and mistrust in relationships and damage individuals' mental health.

Mr. Jamali also, by stating an experience of his wife's lying regarding education, points to the impact of this behaviour on trust and intimacy in marital relationships:

'[My wife] didn't tell the truth regarding her education either. That same day we talked together, she said 'I am a diploma-fail [drop-out],' and I said 'No problem, I'll help you, study your lessons but definitely get your diploma so you can go to university' and so on and so on. Years and years passed, I kept saying 'Let's go get your documents and go to such-and-such school and study your lessons,' she said 'I hate school and at that time teachers annoyed me' and these stories. Finally, meaning no. Finally she didn't even show me her second-year middle school document. And from diploma-fail we came to second year middle school, and before Dr. Afshar she said 'I have Siki [middle school degree],' I said 'Document?' She said 'I don't have a document.' Now I even doubt this, that she basically studied at all. But well, up to third and fourth elementary she helped the kids, for their lessons and things, but not more.' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 163).

This experience shows that lying, even in seemingly insignificant issues, can shake the foundations of trust in marital relationships and cause the creation of doubt and suspicion.

In summary, unethical behaviours, lying, and materialism, as causes of violence against men, can destroy trust and intimacy in relationships and provide the ground for abuse, betrayal, and ultimately violence. These factors

not only damage individuals' psychological and emotional health but can lead to the collapse of families and increased social problems.

7.1.3.10. Criminality

Unethical behaviours in selling drugs, smuggling, and criminality, as contexts for the emergence of violence, are examinable not only due to the illegal and damaging nature of these activities but due to values and norms formed in these environments. In these environments, severe competition, mistrust, abuse, and violence are considered tools for survival and progress. Mohammad Amin (24 years old, drug consumer and distributor), justifying his activities, says:

'Money and income of narcotics and stimulants has no blessing at all. Because this is my art. I am playing with my life; the guy comes takes drugs. Do I give him drugs by force?! The guy actually begs me. A young... [honourable] and desert [man] has come, 'I beg you by the Quran, I am a customer'... by God then. For example, how should I say... someone in the middle of a game needs water, is thirsty; an addict needs drugs too, [if] I don't deliver, someone else will deliver to him.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 402-403).

He, with this argument that drug consumers come to him of their own will and he only satisfies their need, denies his moral responsibility regarding the damages these substances inflict on individuals and society. Mohammad Amin even goes further and calls his work 'art' and compares it to playing with his life. This attitude indicates a type of moral numbness and lack of empathy with victims of drugs. This type of justification aligns with Sykes and Matza's 'Neutralization Theory' (1957). This theory states that delinquent individuals use neutralisation techniques to reduce feelings of guilt and justify their behaviours. Mohammad Amin too, by denying responsibility, minimising injury, and blaming the victim, tries to justify his behaviours and free himself from pangs of conscience. He continues:

'My maternal uncle was a professional criminal. I did crime and these things... for example I gathered some money, bought a house. I went and picked up 150 grams of Shisheh from my uncle's friend, brought it from Urmia. Its price became 35 million Tomans. Then I bought a monkey from Urmia too. Yeah, then I bought a monkey from Urmia too. Then this monkey... was in the hand of a junkie (Amalieh), I bought it there. Consuming Shisheh gave me a very good phase. For

example, I would get a 'work phase'; you heard they say the guy shoots LSD (Alasti) sees the root of the tree? I would smoke Shisheh, I would see God with a Fedora hat; meaning whatever phase I liked I would get with it. From there I fell into using Shisheh, fell into using Shisheh. My uncle Abbas loved me very much, very much; then I fell into using Shisheh, in one year he gave me to the camp eight times. With Eli (my female colleague in producing Shisheh). At the time of cooking (producing Shisheh) I would shoot up, at the time of washing clothes I would shoot up (sex), at the time of sleep I would shoot up, at the time of going to the bath I would shoot up. It was like this. What is it? A human gets tired, we don't understand these things. It was tireless. For example, she would say 'Shoot up, shoot up more.' She said 'I want it all the time.' We would both shoot up, get a sex phase; I say, well, shoot Shisheh, whatever phase you get... Eli and I fought over selling drugs. I said 'What are you saying? You rule over me?' (Give orders). It went into my brain [I lost it]; I took out a switchblade (Tizi), stuck three or four switchblades into her shoulder and arm and face, I said 'Let her die, man'.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin Bagheri, Pos 227-233).

This statement indicates the intensity of violence and lack of anger control in environments related to drugs. Also Ali Aghasi (30 years old) says:

'Mostly at the tailoring work we went to, we were there with my young buddies and then times when we worked we would sit and consume. But my own mistakes caused me to come out again... again a series of things... I went to Fashafouyeh [prison], again I quit to be there a while and come out again... all these took time, you know. I had no peace in life at all.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 101).

This shows that the cycle of addiction and delinquency can lead to instability and disorder in the individual's life.

Gholam Eskandari (50 years old, professional criminal and smuggler), pointing to 'too much altruism and compassion in society' [ironic/sarcastic usage likely implying naive trust or exploitation of trust] as one of the reasons for criminality, says:

'The party would say 'Yeah, it's like this, for example come, I came from prison, come commit 50 grams for example crime.' Or for example we picked up took to the market, for example for ourselves what... we bought ten cartons to take cigarettes to such-and-such place, I don't know, take four cartons of gum to such-and-such place... he came learned the work... we would steal from the property

*door, take on the bike. He went sold the property. It became like this that we got f**ed.*' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 169-170).

This statement indicates that in criminal environments, relationships are not formed based on trust and empathy, but individuals abuse each other and betray each other. In this case, an individual who was ostensibly supported caused harm to his supporter by betrayal and theft. Gholam Eskandari, in describing the atmosphere ruling over smuggling and drug activities, points to the existence of the 'Kill to Survive Law' and says:

'Yeah well, this very [my own greed] caused that I sold [drugs], what else should I say... I sold, that one sold that one, that one sold that one. Someone be higher and the rest be under his hand... this itself causes something like jealousy and keeping up with the Joneses and these things happen, you know, in crime. In crime it's this, you know. Crime says what? 'Kill to survive'.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 148).

This statement draws a clear picture of the competitive and violent atmosphere ruling these activities. In this space, survival is possible only through eliminating rivals and overtaking others, and violence is considered a necessary tool to reach this goal. He adds elsewhere:

'I was nearly 38 years old. I married at 31... my second daughter was on the way... so-and-so and these things... we came and struck into the story of Shisheh crime, and our first crime was credit that we brought Shisheh from these people... and at that time too when Shisheh was at its beginning, they called it what? Medicine. A medicine with which one can quit morphine... where did we hit? The Medical Court; if they took a kilo from you, they fined you one million; it wasn't like this time where for example they catch [you], it has one year prison... in short we struck into the story of Shisheh fun and these things... these were kids of Fallah neighbourhood... however what? In Kahrizak, Behesht-e Zahra, there... what? They had a kitchen [lab] because the bridge took smell [smelled] and these things... at night it smells and smells a lot because it is all acid and these things, it has a very bad smell. At those times too Shisheh wasn't made with this pill and I don't know antihistamine and so-and-so... Merck of Germany came, they called it Merck. All this crime and offense sent me to prison.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 30).

This section shows the path of entry into criminal activities and its consequences. This attitude aligns with Rational Choice Theory. This theory

states that individuals, before performing any behaviour, engage in evaluating its costs and benefits and choose the behaviour that has the most profit for them. In criminal environments, considering that violence can lead to increased power and wealth, individuals may consider violence a rational choice. Ashkan (17 years old) says regarding recreational substance use:

'Substances (Gol) that I consumed until last year. Just this month ago I touched it. It was recreational [laughter]. I won't go towards it anymore... three days ago I smoked Gol. Before that, you had come up with Amir my friend and I said 'Give a shot,' who smokes drugs every day.' (Interview No. 101, Ashkan and Hossein, Students, Pos 171-186).

This shows the vulnerability of adolescents against access to drugs and the normalisation of its recreational use. Vahid Faraji (No. 44) also says in describing his motivations for theft:

'I was forced to be rejected/excluded because society didn't like the works I did... I was forced to be rejected... a time when there was always no money, always no work, I had to go steal at a time, and I always chose the easiest way. I didn't think at all that 'Dad, today that you are hitting [robbing] this one, for example he understands this, that you with this physique did this work, what thought does he think towards you?' I was only thinking of my own benefit, to get out of withdrawal at that moment. I steal for addiction... a thief is that one who has billions in his account and goes does this work; I didn't have, I went stole, did such deeds.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 86).

This indicates the lack of long-term planning and focus on resolving immediate needs among individuals trapped in the cycle of addiction and delinquency. Marziyeh Hosseini (Journalist, No. 58) says regarding exploitation of working children:

'It is enough to get close to this working child and talk to him; several big men for example come surround you... all these have a team leader, they are watching what they do, and this very little money they give to these children... and in case of violation they are beaten severely, and at nights too they are kept in silos... for example 20-30 people in a room they call a silo, they are kept there, and with a mode like vans they bring these and distribute and collect again... and part of them too whom they rent are like this... a part of it, no, go into the sexual services sector and houses that are team houses [brothels/gang houses]... our kids from Welfare went saw... there are boy children there too, girl children too. And

depending on what the customer wants. For example, they come to the intersection to a child who is ostensibly a working child, say 'I want three 5-6-year-old boy children,' he says 'Go to such-and-such alley, I'll come give you the address.' He gives him the address of that house he goes to, and he goes and does his work and goes' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 69).

This quote reveals the dark and violent dimensions of exploiting children in these networks. Rasoul (32 years old) says regarding his brother's fraud:

'A few years ago he ate 70-80 million of my money. It was my capital money. I consumed and put money aside. I didn't have money. I wanted to go buy a house but he came said 'Let's become partners in a work in Punak there.' Just like this they fooled me took me there... my monies were cheques, day cheques [cash cheques]... the money that 'he gives to you buddies'... I had confidence, I had taken a cheque from you, it was a valid cheque that I would bring that cheque to the bank it would become money. They took the cheques from me and all of them disappeared' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 128).

This shows abuse and betrayal in family relationships in this field.

In total, unethical behaviours in selling drugs, smuggling, and criminality, as contexts for the emergence of violence, are examinable not only due to the illegal and damaging nature of these activities but due to values and norms formed in these environments. In these environments, mistrust, abuse, severe competition, and violence are considered tools for survival and progress, and individuals easily resort to unethical and violent behaviours to reach their goals.

7.1.3.11. *Variety-Seeking*

The analysis of data presented regarding 'Women's Variety-Seeking and Sexual Acquisitiveness' and its connection with psychological violence against men shows that this phenomenon is not only a factor of crisis in men's individual and emotional life but indicates a complex interaction between needs, expectations, and socio-cultural transformations influencing women's behaviours and ultimately men's experience. Narratives presented by experts and individuals' lived experience provide a suitable substrate for examining this issue within the framework of psychological and sociological theories and revealing a cycle of psychological pressure, feelings of frustration, and psychological violence.

The first narrative, from Dr. Mehrabi, clearly points to the process of confrontation between women's expectations and men's response ability in the arena of sexual relationships. He explains:

'However we tried to make the man strong, the woman struck another dimension of this man; on one hand she said 'He doesn't have it [skill],' now he found principles, 'He has no idea'; the woman raised her time [duration], said 'He has no quality'; he raises quality, she says 'The number [frequency] is low'; we increase the number, she says 'I don't want to have sex...'' (Interview No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 12).

This quote clearly shows that in many times, variety-seeking and sexual acquisitiveness can originate from the individual's psychological and emotional dissatisfaction or even society's understanding of the position of women's power and superiority. From the view of Alfred Adler's Psychological Theory (1930), tensions and communication knots are created when one party of the relationship exceeds their role or seeks greater superiority against the other. In this specific case, empirical reports show that sometimes women, despite insisting on other needs, transform any change and effort of men to respond to needs into a fresh excuse to distance themselves from the relationship. This matter directly creates feelings of incompetence and humiliation in men, which in many cases fuels psychological violence from women.

Another narrative, from Mr. Sohrabi (45 years old), points to another part of this phenomenon. He says:

'My wife's emotional relationships with me have become cold. You go mountaineering, come back tired... or other relationships had been placed under the radius of this issue. My wife said 'I am depressed'... well I would call too... she means me, I am not [there]. Slowly, slowly she was telling me 'You too a bit that connection...' again I didn't realise here; trust was at a very high level. A dirty psychological game started from here, worse than that game the previous one brought on my head. My trust was attracted to this lady so much and our relationship was so effective that I really enjoyed... then slowly, slowly I saw in the permanent group [team] there is a gentleman whom I suspected...' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 141).

The analysis of this narrative shows that his wife's infidelity and sexual variety-seeking, accompanied by emotional coldness and 'Psychological

Games,' has led to psychological and social alienation. Marx's Theory of Alienation (1844) explains that the individual experiences alienation due to lack of control over human relationships or contradictory understanding of the opposing party's behaviours. In this narrative, the emotional coldness of Mr. Sohrabi's wife and the psychological game led to the shattering of his trust and reinforced the alienation process.

Furthermore, Blau's Social Exchange Theory (1964) shows that healthy emotional and social relationships are based on trust, positive interaction, and mutual reinforcement. This narrative reveals that the gap in social interaction patterns leads to deep mistrust in relationships and men's feeling of inability to respond to the life partner's unexpected behaviours. Mr. Sohrabi's wife, by accusing him of suspicion and pessimism, has effectively engaged in using psychological mechanisms to create distance in the relationship.

Reza, a 40-year-old man, also has a similar experience of his life partner's betrayal and variety-seeking. He says:

'In the world of modern women, women have become variety-seeking. Well, commitment means this very thing; Neda too, if she had commitment, her commitment was of the heart, now we were beside each other, we had no problem' (Interview No. 49, Reza, Pos 79).

This narrative raises the issue of commitment in relationships from another angle. Reza points to his experience with his emotional partner, Neda, and considers her change of attitude the reason for the end of the connection. Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1988) emphasises that emotional relationships based on internal bonds and heartfelt commitment directly provide a sense of psychological security and satisfaction; but when these bonds are weak or unreal from one side, commitment to a relationship will be easily broken.

At a more macro level, women's variety-seeking and sexual acquisitiveness in relationships is not a new issue in contemporary social formats, but with social and cultural changes, its manifestation becomes more apparent. From the view of Conflict Theory (Collins, 1975), variety-seeking behaviours sometimes result from changes in gender roles and the reduction of men's power in relationships. These behaviours, although they can lead to the experience of greater independence for some women, still cast their negative consequences on emotional and sexual relationships and place men in a more vulnerable situation.

7.1.4. Individual Experiences

Violence against men, as one of the multifaceted phenomena, is not only under the influence of social and ethical factors but in many cases results from experiential factors as well. Lived experiences shape personality characteristics and influence individuals' attitudes towards others and themselves. In this chapter, 'experiential factors' are examined as one of the key causes in the emergence of violence against men to show how the lack of sufficient experience or characteristics resulting from life experiences can lead to violent behaviours.

Initially, 'Sexual Inexperience' is addressed as one of the influential factors. This factor, by creating feelings of insecurity, frustration, or lack of self-confidence in men, can lead to psychological or physical violence. Lack of experience in this field often causes the emergence of misunderstandings or conflicts whose role in intensifying violence is predictable.

Continuing, 'Life Experience' is examined as another factor. Bitter or difficult life experiences may change an individual's attitude towards others, such that it leads to aggressive behaviours. Past experiences can lead to the accumulation of negative emotions such as anger or mistrust, which ultimately fuel violence.

This chapter comprehensively shows how experiential factors can play a role in the formation of violent behaviours and attempts to present a clearer image of the roots of violence against men by analysing these factors.

7.1.4.1. Sexual Inexperience

The inexperience and ignorance of adolescent and young boys, as one of the contexts for the emergence of sexual violence against men, plays a significant role in our analysis of violence. This issue is directly related to the lack of structured and comprehensive sexual education in society. Dr. Azin, a sex therapy specialist, clearly explains how the absence of appropriate education in this sphere can lead to the inexperience and vulnerability of this group of men. He says:

'Consider these preferences, that the atmosphere of lack of education in the sphere of sexual issues causes sexual intimacy not to exist, and this lack of sexual intimacy causes that gentleman—of course ladies are the same too, have this same problem [your subject is gentlemen]—not to be able to talk about his fantasies and unconventional, and sometimes conventional, preferences with his partner; either

he is deprived or unfortunately is driven towards extramarital behaviours which have consequences that are themselves instances of violence.' (Interview No. 3, Azin, Pos 33).

This quote clearly shows that the absence of sufficient sexual education drives gentlemen into a cycle of confusion and inability to manage and express their personal issues. This subject creates a ground for sexual abuse and exploitation, which encompasses various forms of violence. Based on psychological theories, especially behavioural and cognitive approaches, sexual education plays a key role in empowering individuals. The lack of this education causes the formation of a dependent and vulnerable behavioural pattern that renders individuals defenceless against social and sexual injuries (Bandura, 1977).

Dr. Azin continues to point to more objective and harsher examples of cases of violating intimacy and ethical foundations, which ultimately count as clear instances of sexual violence. He explains:

'Another part where gentlemen may suffer sexual violence is that in this country over the last ten years—of course in the past in history too—there has been the story of Parastoo-bazi [honey-trapping], that people have three hundred motivations to enter a sexual behaviour, and we think the story is just sexual instinct and pleasure... one of these models of sexual behaviour motivation is this very thing... perhaps because of economic issues they get close to someone, perhaps because of occupational position they get close to someone. Or because of using rent (Rant - cronyism/connections) or becoming related to someone.' (Interview No. 3, Azin, Pos 33).

The phrase 'Parastoo-bazi' here refers to methods where individuals abuse sexual relationships for non-sexual goals. Inexperience and lack of knowledge in these cases place men in complex situations that often have serious economic, occupational, and social consequences for them. Based on theoretical views related to Power and Control Theories (Connell, 1987), these forms of abuse are clearly a type of domination and application of psychological and structural violence against the victim, who in these cases are young and inexperienced men.

Dr. Azin also states more severe and destructive cases of violence:

'When you get close to someone to seduce him and sit him on black soil [ruin him], this is clear violence anymore. To destroy someone's reputation (Aberu), to threaten someone's job, to financially extort from him. We have a person, a

gentleman came and talked to me and emphasised that 'I don't want to see the lady.' Then we said 'Okay.' Because we must observe confidentiality. A month later I saw his wife knew the matter from A to Z (sir ta piyaz); I was surprised how such a thing is possible. He said 'Sir, I put a transmitter in my husband's coat.' (Interview No. 3, Azin, Pos 33).

This narrative shows the complex and multidimensional nature of sexual violence against men. From the perspective of Gender Discrimination Theories, especially when we consider cultural and social issues, this type of violence is often fueled by flawed representations of gender roles (Butler, 1990). Here, the use of modern technologies to apply control and intimidation represents a tangible change in patterns of mistrust and abuse in intimate and personal relationships.

Sexual inexperience and lack of awareness, which result directly from lack of education and a closed cultural atmosphere, provide an environment for creating new and more complex types of violence against men. These violences manifest in a hidden and sometimes overt form and entail serious psychological, economic, and social consequences for the victims.

7.1.4.2. Life Experience

The immaturity of youth in life is one of the important contexts that can lead to the formation and continuation of cycles of violence against them. In analysing the data, it can be clearly seen that the lack of social and intellectual maturity and experiences of incorrect decision-making in life cause youth to be exposed to difficult and unfair conditions that not only lead to a reduction in their quality of life but intensify structural and personal violence against them.

Hossein, a 40-year-old man who has passed through divorce and the experience of enduring prison due to not paying *Mehrieh*, speaks clearly of the lack of social maturity in his youthful decision-making:

'It's not related to age, the important thing is [maturity of] intellect (Aql). In Iranian society, we usually don't reach that intellect, whether we are a 70-year-old woman or an 80-year-old old man, it makes no difference. Now many of the problems you are seeing are because of lack of intellectual maturity. The stupidities (Kharrayat-ha) we ourselves performed, the stupidity we had, was this very thing.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 54).

This speech shows that the issue of mental and social maturity does not necessarily develop even with the increase of an individual's age. Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development (1973) emphasises that achieving higher moral levels and complex social thinking depends not only on education and environmental upbringing but requires active and continuous confrontation with complex social situations. The lack of such perspectives in Hossein's life has led to decisions he himself refers to as 'stupidities.'

On the other hand, Hamid, 42 years old, points to this point that the lack of intellectual growth during youth has caused him to repeatedly follow paths that have led to repeated failures and various dead ends:

'It was somehow throughout our life... because I was a child... how should I say... when I became thirty, from age thirty onwards I understood that my age has gone up. I just understood I must sit and use four other things... the paths I go are all dead ends at their end. We don't reach anywhere at the end.'

(Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 97).

This bitter experience shows how the failure to develop skills related to critical thinking and decision-making during youth can enter a person into a long period of trial and error and ultimately confront him with the feeling of wasted time, energy, and facilities. This narrative aligns with Erikson's views (1959) regarding the Identity Crisis in the first stages of adulthood; where the failure to correctly solve identity and social crises can lead to indecisiveness and unwise decisions.

Among these narratives, the experience of a 16-year-old adolescent named Hossein also shows how lack of experience and correct guidance can shape an immature understanding of life and its priorities:

'It doesn't harm, it helps me. I am still better than the one [adolescent] sitting at home who wants to get a diploma, can't even fix his face [shave/groom], there is no hygiene and these things. Now, I have been in society, I was able to make a personality from myself better than the one who now sits at their home from morning to night and studies and is a 'beat-down' (Too-sari-khor) of their mum and dad. Of course, in my opinion my father and mother are very good, over my head [supportive].' (Interview No. 101, Ashkan and Hossein, Students, Pos 217).

This narrative contains an overt contradiction: on one hand, the adolescent tries to distinguish himself from the passive conditions others have sunk into,

but ultimately reaches a type of confusion and internal conflict between his values. Maria Montessori (1960) in her educational theory points out that adolescents need to achieve a 'sense of identity' and 'capability' through meaningful activities and targeted guidance. Otherwise, they become easily involved in activities that, although ostensibly helping their independence, in reality place them more in exposure to incorrect actions and negative consequences.

Such data show us that immaturity in life and decision-making, and the lack of social and intellectual maturity, places individuals in a cycle of incorrect decisions, psychological pressures, and ultimately social and personal violence. When an individual is unable to diagnose priorities, evaluate the consequences of his behaviours, or determine correct paths, it is highly likely that he not only receives emotional blows but will be more vulnerable against high-tension situations and unfair social systems. These conditions facilitate violence against men and, in some cases, perpetuate it.

The low level of understanding and experience of adolescent and young boys of life's realities is also one of the important contexts for the emergence of violence against this group, which is examined in the present analysis through their quotes and with the use of scientific theories. This issue relates to a plethora of factors including immature puberty, psychological pressures, ignorance regarding human relationships and social interactions, and lack of sufficient education. The absence of sufficient awareness around fundamental subjects causes these individuals to be trapped in the snare of decisions and behaviours in various life situations that fuel psychological, financial, social, and even physical violence against them.

Saberi, as a clinical psychologist and social pathology specialist, depicts well how the lack of sufficient maturity in young boys places them in exposure to conditions that may lead to long-term injuries. He says:

'But now the boy has come to university, falls for a girl very early; he is a child, still doesn't understand that 'Dad, this relationship you have, ten percent of it is a sexual subject, 90 percent of it you want to live,' that that life has its own problems. Generally, lady girls in terms of spirit and psychology and personality understand more than boys and boy children, and an age difference... the girl maybe understands 5-10 years more than boys sometimes. Many gentlemen don't know the laws, don't know, don't recognise; meaning the boy doesn't recognise, the boy's dad doesn't know either. Meaning when it is written in the Mehrieh

book and the boy signs too, 'Payable on demand' (Ind-al-Motalebeh), what does it mean? Meaning whenever the bride lady wanted the Mehrieh, the father gives, the boy gives; if he didn't have, the father must give. Meaning they are trapped. These issues happen in this form.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi).

This narrative clearly shows how ignorance about deeper layers of human communications and lack of knowledge of legal duties and commitments can drag an individual to a position where he is placed under legal, social, and even emotional pressures. Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory (1968) offers an interesting explanation in this field: individuals still in a stage where they haven't reached a correct understanding of their identity and responsibilities may submit to wrong patterns in social and emotional interactions. This lack of maturity, especially in adolescent and young boys, places them in exposure to accepting conditions that ultimately end to their detriment.

But the impact of this ignorance is not limited only to the sphere of emotional or legal relationships. Shayan, a 19-year-old single adolescent, pointing to his experiences regarding lack of awareness in adolescence, shows other dimensions of this issue:

'The first feelings they understood in high school or at fourteen-fifteen years old, they understand, and this lack of awareness causes the start of sexual relationships at that same age; and for example, establishing a sexual relationship between two fifteen-year-old boys in the school toilet. But well, it doesn't have much effect.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan).

This quote also indicates the lack of necessary education and appropriate sexual upbringing in the family and education system. Here, lack of awareness regarding physical and psychological changes of puberty and the absence of a socio-cultural framework to guide these experiences places adolescents in exposure to behaviours that not only complicate their communications with others but lead to serious psychological or social injuries. From the perspective of Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), humans' behaviour, especially adolescents', is influenced by observation and imitation in their surrounding environment. In the absence of effective education and healthy models, learning a form of communication without attention to its consequences will be the cause of damaging behaviours.

Narratives presented by Saberi and Shayan show a part of the loop of injuries whose depths adolescents and youth do not grasp because they do not yet have sufficient experience to understand the complexities of life and realities related to it. Ignorance of laws and commitments of shared life, weakness in recognising individual and social responsibilities, and lack of understanding of the consequences of early sexual relationships all lead to a cycle of violence against this group. This violence may be imposed on them from outside (such as social and economic pressures) or from within (such as blame or shame).

The analysis of some other data shows how individual and social experiences can be the cause of the emergence of violence against men. Faraz Mahboubi, in his statement of quick and aggressive reaction to 'posturing' (*Shakh-o-shuneh keshidan*) and annoying others, depicts a masculine cultural turn wherein power-seeking and reaction to threats are considered a natural and even necessary response against hostile environments. He says:

'If somewhere someone wants to posture against someone and annoy someone, I react quickly.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 249-252).

This type of reaction indicates a pattern wherein men, in threatening situations, resort to violence naturally instead of choosing peaceful solutions. Such behaviour can originate from Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which emphasises that individuals learn violent behaviours through observing and imitating others (Bandura, 1977).

On the other hand, the experience Babaei narrates of men who spent their adolescence in prison and, after release, find themselves strangers and unfamiliar in society, shows how the prison environment applies a system of specific and unwritten valuations on individuals. He says:

'[Men who have prison experience] said that society was strange for him... maybe it's not related because many of them were in prison for many years from under 18 until now that he had become 23, had just been released, society was strange for them. And they said they are looking to commit a crime whose sentence is not execution, again get a 20-year sentence because they had gotten used to that prison lifestyle. Well, prison has its own system, you know; has its own values, has its own anti-values, has its own laws; by laws I mean unwritten laws.' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 40).

Becker's Labelling Theory (1963) explains well how individuals with a criminal label after prison construct a criminal identity for themselves and, due to hardships of life in society, prefer to return again to an environment whose values and norms are familiar to them, even though it brings punishment or limitation.

Also, the quote from Hossein, a 16-year-old student, expresses the impact of psychological pressures and living in hard conditions on adolescents and the emergence of violence among them. He says:

'Spiritually, well, I was upset, I was nervous, but I was in the phase of these kids who want to draw on the room wall and Spider-Man and these nonsenses, but from now on I have become much better compared to that time. [I experienced hard conditions in this situation].' (Interview No. 101, Hossein, Student, Pos 231).

This experience aligns with Merton's Strain Theory (1938), which states that individuals, in facing frustration in reaching their goals, may turn to deviant behaviours.

The sum of these narratives shows that the contexts for the emergence of violence against men are not summarised only in siding with power and immediate reactions but return to lived experiences in various environments including prison and the hard life conditions of adolescents. This analysis reveals that environmental and upbringing conditions play an important role in shaping violent behaviours against men in a way.

7.1.5. Family Causes

7.1.5.1. The Authoritarian Spouse

Marital life is one of the most complex arenas of human interaction, wherein the struggle for power between man and woman occurs in an overt or hidden form. This struggle is observable not only in direct relationships between husband and wife but in the control of resources, social networks, and joint decision-making. The effort to control socio-emotional relationships, especially by women, sometimes causes limitation and tension in marital life. Ms. Mousavi Viayeh, a sociologist in the field of women, says in this regard:

'If I gain power... I will fool my husband so much that whatever I say, he says 'Yes' (Chashm). I will separate him from his mother and sister. Separate him from

his own family so everything revolves around my desire, perhaps I will have peace.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 48).

These words show that some women's conception of power in marital relationships may manifest in the form of domination and creating distance between the man and his social networks. Based on Conflict Theory (Ralf Dahrendorf, 1959), human relationships, even in their most intimate form, can transform into a battlefield for power. In marital life, these conflicts are intensified due to traditional and social expectations.

The increase in women's literacy, awareness, and economic independence in modern eras has reinforced their power in marital decision-making. At the same time, this change in status has led to the challenging of traditional roles and in cases has placed men in a position where they are obliged to change their power position. Ali Asgari, a 30-year-old married man, says in this regard:

'If I go out with my friends for one afternoon, I am interrogated by my wife, 'Why did it take so long?' whereas I am not doing anything wrong; meaning I am not a person who messes up.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 63).

From the perspective of Social Role Theory (Alice Eagly, 1987), traditional roles of men and women and expectations dependent on these roles are influential in shaping couples' behaviour. When one party tries to control the other party's behaviour outside these traditional frameworks, serious conflicts may form and lead to psychological or emotional violence.

Inequality in opportunities and access to resources is also another key factor smoothing the path for power struggle in marital life. Shiva, a 50-year-old woman, says in this field:

'Women and men have many struggles throughout life to achieve their goals and dreams, and in this path they reach tension and conflict. Some men cannot easily tell their pains and sense of frustration directly to their wife... these accumulated angers... somewhere else the relationship cannot endure the pressure and cuts off completely.' (Interview No. 12, Shiva, Pos 21).

Based on this narrative, frustrations experienced by men result from cultural and social limitations for expressing emotions, and this situation leads to repressed or accumulated anger. Gender Schema Theory (Sandra Bem, 1981) also emphasises that gender role stereotypes and traditional expectations influence the manner of expressing or repressing men's emotions and may

provide the ground for the emergence of psychological anomalies or indirect violences.

Another important factor in the formation of violence is inattention to men's emotional needs in marital life, which has been pointed out by social worker Ms. Entezami as well. She says:

'The man's need is that he wants to be seen. He hasn't been seen there. For example, 'I went to such-and-such place to shop'... she took the lady with the stroller and went... this hidden violence is showing itself. With inattention... now he cannot take action against the woman either...' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 10).

This lack of attention to emotional needs manifests in many cases in the form of hidden violences and aggressive reactions. The link between family inattention and violence is also clearly evident in the narrative of Akbar Ebrahimi, a 42-year-old drug user. He says:

'I didn't like to sit with them at all. Because when I see no one cares about me... I didn't like to be in that gathering... I would go consume substances in my own solitude.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 192).

This experience indicates the impact of disrespect or being ignored in family gatherings and leads to self-destructive behaviours like substance use. From the perspective of social pathology, these situations result from feelings of discrimination, becoming worthless, and lack of sense of belonging to the family collective, which ultimately causes a change in individual behaviours towards psychological and social injuries.

The expansion of women's social and legal awareness in modern societies has also caused a change in traditional gender role patterns. These changes entail consequences for men which in some cases are accompanied by hidden violence against them. Mr. Motahhari-Nasab, a clinical psychologist, states:

'Women have gained more power in terms of awareness, literacy, and economics... men nowadays face issues they didn't before... but they are forced to endure violence and suffer neurosis from within.' (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari-Nasab, Pos 15).

This narrative shows that the change in power distribution between couples has challenged traditional expectations of masculine authority, and men are

sometimes forced to repress reactions, endure violence, and experience psychological injuries.

In general, the struggle for power in marital relationships is placed under the influence of various factors such as structural changes in gender roles, inequality in access to resources, emotional inattention, and social pressures. The lack of appropriate communication skills among couples and the continuation of traditional gender role expectations often intensify these conflicts and become the cause of psychological, emotional violences, or even self-destruction. Relying on teaching communication skills, revising cultural structures, and creating shared awareness among couples can provide a path to reduce these tensions and create healthier relationships.

7.1.5.2. Insecure Emotional Attachment and Abandonment by Lover or Family

Insecure emotional attachment is one of the most important psychological contexts that can influence not only the individual's psyche but his overall health and social relationships deeply. This attachment, especially in men who have failed in romantic and family relationships or have been deprived of support sources in childhood, can be the cause of serious psychological pressures and violence against oneself or others. Reza Rashidi, a 40-year-old man who has had a deep experience of emotional failure, explains this attachment well. He says:

'This relationship [romantic at first] was two-person that took shape; then slowly, slowly [dependence] became more... you don't know, maybe it happened in a moment... meaning it took shape slowly, took shape very quickly too.' (Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 4).

Reza in this statement points to a feeling common in romantic relationships, especially in men with insecure attachment; the feeling that the relationship gradually turns into an uncontrollable need, as if life is impossible without the other party's presence. He confirms this subject in continuation: *'Suddenly you saw we can't [live] without each other at all, we must be; as if we complete each other, I suppose it was like this.'* This severe attachment of the insecure type is usually seen in men who suffer from emotional and psychological defects in their past.

In addition to emotional failures, family factors can also play a prominent role in creating insecure attachment and psychological pressures. Ali Aghasi, an individual who has passed through the experience of HIV and addiction,

points to the serious impact of his father's death during adolescence on his life. He says:

'When at the age of 16 my father dies due to substances, I face a big nightmare. I was placed in hard conditions. That emotional and supportive source from which I fed on affection was completely destroyed. The beginning of my life's collapse was with my father's death.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 284-285).

This experience, like Reza Rashidi's emotional failure, indicates pressures that the loss of supportive and emotional relationships exerts on individuals and how these deprivations can drive them towards destructive behaviours.

Such a level of dependence can, in the event of separation or negligence by the life partner, death of parents, or other emotional losses, lead to severe difficulty in regulating emotions and drive the individual to self-destruction or violent behaviours. This difficulty in regulating emotions and its consequences is described by another individual thus:

'After divorce from my wife, I took an effective spiritual blow... this violence of years seemed to pile up on me. Then its manifestation becomes my stress; my stress increased and then these pressures suddenly opened up [erupted] and I was forced some time ago to basically perform open heart surgery. Because one of the main reasons for this event, I inquired, is stress.' (Interview No. 77, [Abbas Barghamadi - cross-referenced from context], Pos [Unspecified]).

This quote emphasises how the accumulation of psychological and emotional pressures influences the individual's physical health.

Furthermore, the impact of social and cultural contexts on creating and maintaining insecure attachment should not be ignored. Masoud Babaei, a cinema director in the field of social pathologies, emphasises the role of lack of correct education in managing emotional and sentimental issues and considers this lack the root of many adult relationship problems. He says:

'...we didn't learn problem-solving methods, didn't learn emotion control methods, learned no method... later we came entered society, most behaviours are of this same gender [type], and well, we were part of this society too...' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 32).

Men who do not possess appropriate emotional upbringing are subsequently not equipped with necessary tools to manage emotional failure or solve

relational issues. In such cases, reactions like anger, verbal or physical aggression, and even self-destruction become more apparent than ever.

Ms. Hamta, a social worker, explains this damaging cycle well and attributes it to the 'lack of affection' of men who have suffered emotional blows. She points out that these blows affect not only men's psyche but directly influence their physical and bodily life as well:

'I think it has more psychological and emotional load, that this man, due to lack of affection he had, took action for such a deed [violence/self-harm], and this psychological load he has definitely affects everything of that person, on his physique, on his psyche.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 16).

Therefore, insecure emotional attachment and failure in romantic and family relationships takes shape not only due to personality characteristics but as a result of cultural, familial factors, lack of access to emotional education, and weakness of coping skills in men. Such men, in facing emotional failure or emotional losses, find themselves incapable of regaining emotional balance, and this very situation causes the emergence of violence against themselves or those around them. One of the keys to solving these problems is creating a space for teaching emotion management skills and regulating emotional relationships in all stages of life, as well as providing effective therapeutic interventions for those involved in this vicious cycle.

7.1.5.3. Poor Upbringing and Low Resilience

Low Resilience is one of the important factors that can be the cause of psychological, social, and even self-destructive violences in men. This concept expresses the individual's inability to endure, process, and manage life's problems and crises; a situation which, considering educational, social, and psychological factors, can take shape in the individual's personality and entail destructive effects.

Ahmad Nazari, a teacher, in part of his statements pointing to the importance of psychological resilience, introduces this ability as an educational characteristic that plays an important role in the individual's performance in facing crises. He says:

'Or consider a child as an immature person. A mature person has the ability to accept resilience against a series of problems and subjects, where a child's resilience doesn't fit in this category at all. For example, you... why, when we

usually visit the cemetery, [do we] not allow the child to come see that corpse being placed inside the grave when they bury the corpse? Why? Because that child's psychological mentality is not ready for this subject.' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 43).

This quote clearly shows that resilience is an educational concept and requires the evolution and preparation of the individual's mind and emotions during childhood and adolescence.

Psychological theories related to resilience, including Wagnild and Young's Resilience Theory (1993), emphasise that resilience, as the ability to return to a normal state after facing a crisis or psychological injuries, depends on individuals' environmental and educational conditions. When resilience is not well developed in the individual, he becomes more vulnerable and the probability of the emergence of impulsive or extreme reactions, such as violence against oneself or others, increases. Ahmad Nazari, continuing his speech, points to the failure of resilience and states:

'Why must father and mother keep sexual behaviours hidden from their children? This means that resilience has not come into existence for this person, and now [if] you create a series of problems that really that person's mental resilience doesn't have the readiness to accept and process this subject, definitely you reach that point of suicide; [when] it reaches that point of suicide, that decision...' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 43).

The absence of resilience capacities such that the individual cannot manage life's crises may drive him towards dangerous decisions like suicide, and this indicates the volume of injury resulting from weakness of resilience.

Social and economic pressures also play a determining role in reducing individuals' resilience. In this field, Yaser Hosseini Fard, a teacher who holds two jobs, explains his personal experiences in facing these pressures and emphasises how these pressures have influenced his behaviours and reduced his tolerance threshold:

'We had... we had 5 daughters and a boy. That boy who is very good in terms of lessons and etiquette too... those parents of his are educated. I myself am dual-jobbed. Before, when I was only a teacher, my peace was much better. Now I am tired. I go home, I must play with the kids for two hours; then I don't have the patience. Sometimes I shout. It is tiredness of work, tiredness of work exists and we bring pressure on ourselves excessively. This destroys the peace of thought and

mind and psyche. This causes violence. I myself was tired yesterday, went home, the kids wanted to play, I couldn't, didn't have the traction/stamina; whatever I do, I shouted 'Leave me alone,' whereas before I wasn't like this.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 33).

This experience shows that continuous economic and occupational pressures can reduce the individual's tolerance threshold and lead to aggressive behaviours; a situation where mental resilience decreases significantly due to continuous pressures.

Also, Yaser Hosseini Fard in his continued statements points to broader dimensions of the impact of various pressures on resilience:

'From my own view, this work pressure that has entered me has caused, for example, this tolerance threshold of mine to decrease. I wake up from sleep at 9 o'clock, my work starts until 12:30 at night. Now it is a holiday, it is like this. [When] schools open, I wake up from 6 in the morning until 12:30 at night.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 35).

This quote shows how occupational, social, and environmental pressures can influence individuals' resilience and make them more vulnerable to managing life's crises.

Theoretical views show that low resilience is rooted in environmental and educational conditions. Garmezy's Protective Factors Theory (1991) emphasises that social support systems, family, and the educational environment play a vital role in shaping psychological resilience. The absence or weakness in these factors can increase individuals' level of psychological vulnerability and place them at risk of severe psychological reactions. Of course, this issue is not limited to the family space and is influential in educational environments as well; such that a low level of resilience can lead to violence. Erfan, a 17-year-old student, points out in his statements:

'When kids get tired of the lesson and school space, their tolerance comes down, or for example they are a crew/clique (Ekip) wanting to annoy you, or for example in a school fight... meaning it's a series of normal things. It has been our own fights that are created between boys and we get beaten.' (Interview No. 80, Erfan, Pos 91-92).

In the social space too, the lack of resilience can lead to the emergence of collective violences or impulsive reactions. One of the Law Enforcement

retirees, in explaining his experiences regarding violence resulting from low resilience in society, says:

'In crimes where the Law Enforcement Force intervenes, a high percentage of our youth and adolescents in society and men who have less tolerance and patience get caught in severe violences in the urban space. Sometimes because of a swear word and abuse which is passable and forgivable, but some don't have the tolerance for it, they commit violent crimes that have much regret later.'

(Interview No. 95, Retired Law Enforcement, Pos 3).

This narrative indicates the direct relationship between the level of resilience and the intensity of violent reactions in the social environment.

In total, the analysis of qualitative data shows that education and development of resilience is a serious necessity in individual and social life. When mental resilience is not formed correctly, individuals may, in the face of crises and psychological pressures, resort to aggressive, violent, or even self-destructive behaviours. Related theories and narrated experiences emphasise that increasing psychological resilience is possible by creating supportive environments, appropriate upbringing, and developing individuals' mental capacities, and inattention to it can be the cause of cycles of violence and self-destruction in society.

7.1.5.4. *Emotional Deprivation*

Emotional Deprivation, one of the fundamental factors in the emergence of violence against men, is often portrayed as ignored or of little importance. This type of deprivation, which includes the lack of receiving attention, affection, empathy, and emotional support, can have deep effects on men's psyche and behaviour and become the cause of violent reactions or damaging behaviours. In many societies, gender stereotypes cause men's emotional needs to be ignored or even mocked. For this reason, men may face problems in expressing their emotional needs and consequently remain deprived of necessary support and empathy.

In this field, Mr. Mirabadi, a 65-year-old senior citizen, pointing to one of the aspects of emotional and sexual deprivation in this relationship, states:

'Women easily deprive men of their emotional and sexual needs. One of these violences is depriving [men] of emotional and sexual needs; this violence is specific to men. There is a statistic before the Revolution, in the year... official

statistics of the Registration Office itself, statistics of marriage to divorce... divorce was about 1.1 percent. Until the year 1357 [1979], how much is it? 1.1 percent.' (Interview No. 53, Mirabadi, Pos 59-61).

This description clearly expresses the violence imposed on men through emotional and sexual deprivation. Here, Mirabadi, while presenting historical evidence regarding divorce, points to social changes after past decades which may play a role in intensifying these problems.

Furthermore, emotional deprivation can manifest in forms such as controlling behaviour in marital relationships. Mohammad Hosseini, a 33-year-old social worker, explains in this regard:

'The lady's controlling behaviour towards the man... that is another violence, that 'You shouldn't be in contact with your family, you shouldn't go this way and that way, you should constantly put your head [attention] for me.' Whereas that lady, no... when the man is at work, she goes to her friend, to her family. Goes for her own fun. But what about the man?! The man is at work, comes home and must listen to the lady's grumbling, and she tells him 'You shouldn't be in contact with your family.' For someone who grew up 20-25-30 years up to 35 years in that family, was the child of that family and man of that family... suddenly she wants him to detach (Del be-kane). Detach from his paternal family. In my opinion such a thing is impossible. And if they don't do such a thing, it proceeds very badly; he says 'If the lady doesn't come down from her position, it causes divorce.'' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 74).

This type of controlling behaviour causes men to be separated from their natural emotional and social support network, especially family support, and sink into emotional isolation. As Hosseini points out, this issue can cause communication problems, increased stress, and even the collapse of shared life.

From the perspective of psychological theories, John Bowlby in Attachment Theory (1969) emphasises that the need for attachment and secure emotional connection is a fundamental need in human existence, and deprivation from it can lead to psychological and behavioural problems. This theory is completely generalisable to men who suffer emotional lack in these conditions. Also, Self-Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan (2000) points to the importance of three basic psychological needs, including autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and states that deprivation from these needs can lead to reduced motivation, depression, and even aggression. Applying

emotional and psychological pressures by the spouse, as evident in Hosseini's quote, is directly related to these cases.

Therefore, emotional deprivation, whether in the form of ignoring emotional-sexual needs or in the form of controlling and restrictive behaviour, can play a key role in the emergence of violence against men. Lack of access to affection and empathy, as well as psychological pressure from those expected to provide emotional support, places these individuals in exposure to damaging spiritual and behavioural processes. ##### 7-1-5-5. Inability to Meet Role Expectations

Violence against men, due to their inability to determine duty and make decisions, is linked with various dimensions of psychological and social pressures. This situation is rooted in cultural expectations and roles imposed upon them: men must determine the path of life and bear the heavy burden of decision-making, without sufficient support structures existing. Alongside these expectations, economic pressures also play an important role in intensifying these problems, especially when men consider themselves obliged to perform the 'Provider' role. Inability to meet these expectations often causes a severe reduction in self-esteem, anxiety, and even depression. Recent research has confirmed that men who, due to economic problems, fall short of their traditional role as the family's financial guardian, experience paralyzing feelings of guilt and shame (Smith, 2023).

One of the interviewed individuals explains:

'When I couldn't arrange the house rent, not only did my family become disillusioned with me, but I myself wasn't willing to look anyone in the eye. It seemed being a man had no meaning for me anymore.' (Interview No. 14, Ebrahim, Pos 25).

These narratives reveal the reality of the relationship between economic pressures and their effects on masculine identity. Various psychological theories can explain this relationship. For example, Bandura's Social Learning Theory emphasises that in families where violence or financial instability has been part of daily life, men may repeat violent or withdrawn behavioural patterns—which they observed in childhood—in adulthood as well, in reaction to financial pressures (Bandura, 1977).

One interviewee explains:

'My father always got angry and shouted when he ran short of money. I too, when I can't reach an income, the same behaviours come from me; it seems I myself don't understand how I fell into the same path.' (Interview No. 27, Masoud, Pos 42).

In addition to learned patterns, Psychological Trauma Theory is also explanatory in this field. This theory states that men who have been injured in childhood due to poverty, frustration, or domestic violence have less ability to manage pressures when facing similar problems in adulthood; because the memory of the past still casts a shadow over present conditions (Herman, 1992).

Social and cultural structures also actively intensify these problems. Recent research explains that men, more than women, are evasive of expressing vulnerability and asking for help, because they suppose this act contradicts traditional masculine values, such as self-sufficiency and power. This trend causes men to repress their feelings and suffer isolation (Smith, 2022).

In the language of another interviewee:

'I was afraid to say 'I have fallen short' (Kam avordam) before my family. At the bottom of my heart, I felt if they help me, I won't be counted as a man anymore.' (Interview No. 41, Reza, Pos 58).

This isolation creates a cycle of reproducing psychological pressures and economic problems. Men, often due to not requesting help or using unhealthy mechanisms like violence or high-risk behaviours, not only intensify their own problems but damage their social and family relationships as well.

Analysing this situation, Gender Role Theory also gains importance. This theory states that social expectations of men to perform the role of guardianship and financial provision not only exert more psychological pressure on them but limit the ways of coping with this pressure. In fact, men, by internalising norms related to power and independence, show no inclination to break these stereotypes and express vulnerability (Eagly et al., 2000). These behavioural patterns lead not only to violence against others but can create a type of violence against the self, especially through behaviours such as self-blame or even self-harm.

One interviewee describes:

'With every defeat I suffered, I felt a part of my existence is being crushed. From a point onwards, I didn't even have the power to ask anyone for help anymore.'

(Interview No. 9, Hossein, Pos 36).

These narratives show well a cycle wherein financial pressures and masculine social expectations not only create psychological problems, but these problems increase unhealthier behaviours and greater isolation over time. Cognitive-Behavioural Theory explains this cycle from another perspective; based on this theory, internalised normative beliefs regarding masculinity can, in the face of environmental threats such as financial crises, cause the intensification of violence against oneself or others (Beck, 1976). These behaviours are an inefficient response to situations where men feel inefficiency and reduction of power.

Power Pathology Theory also completes this subject: when a man's social status decreases due to financial crises or inability to meet masculine expectations, he may turn to aggressive or violent behaviours to regain the lost feeling of control or authority (Keltner et al., 2003). These behaviours can appear in facing family members, friends, or even strangers.

Another interviewee has said thus:

'When I borrowed money from my friends and they told me 'You must manage this yourself,' I felt insulted. Unconsciously my voice went up, but at the bottom of my heart I knew I was both angry and ashamed.' (Interview No. 23, Ahmad, Pos 78).

These examples, along with theories, indicate a cycle wherein men, by virtue of social expectations, financial pressures, and lack of access to support, become trapped in behaviours that are themselves damaging and dangerous. This cycle continues to reinforce traditional gender roles in society and stabilise violence against men and by men.

7.1.5.6. Dependence on Parental Family

Excessive dependence on the parental family is one of the deep contexts for the emergence of violence against men, violence which in terms of nature is often hidden and indirect, but has destructive psychological effects on its victims. This dependence can deprive men of freedom of action and autonomy in decision-making and place them in a position where they see themselves captive to family expectations, judgments, and decisions. What makes this

pressure more severe is the obligation imposed on men within the framework of family relationships to always attract family satisfaction and approval, even if this means ignoring their own real desires and needs.

Akbar Ebrahimi's narrative is a clear example of this issue. He says:

'For example, I have a morality (Akhlaghi daram)... I cannot, for example, speak very frankly to my family that 'Dad, I like authority to be in my own hand, I like to go to work.' Because my sister says 'We now... we like you to stay there [at home].'' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 255).

In this passage, it becomes clear that Akbar, due to psychological and perhaps emotional dependence on his sister and also traditional family structures, cannot express his personal desires or pursue them clearly. From the perspective of psychological theories, especially Erikson's Theory (1968) regarding Psychosocial Development, this matter indicates a type of immaturity in the stage of individual independence. Erikson believes that individuals in early stages of growth must cultivate the ability to create healthy distance from parents and an autonomous position in their own lives. Failure in this matter can place them in the trap of chronic psychological and emotional dependencies which ultimately leads to the repression of individual desires and the creation of chronic psychological pressures.

Family pressure on Akbar, of course, is not limited only to simple daily decisions. He narrates that even fundamental decisions of his life, such as buying items, choosing a place to live, or even communicating with others, have been practically under family control:

'For buying items, for buying a house... how should I tell you... for my going to the county (Shahrestan), communicating with whom... it never happened that I did a work and they didn't come tell me 'Why did you do this work?'' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 255).

This is a prominent example of indirect psychological violence applied by the family on the man. This type of violence, unlike physical violences, influences individual identity and the person's feeling of worthiness in a deeper way. Bowen's Theory (1978) regarding Family Systems emphasises that in unhealthy family structures, members may not be able to form independent identities and boundaries for themselves. In such situations, the individual constantly faces interventions and supervisions of other family members, which leads to a type of hidden violence.

Furthermore, apart from family dependencies, direct or indirect repression of emotions in other relationships, such as men's paternal role after separation, can provide the substrate for the emergence of severe emotional and psychological pressures. Ms. Mehraban, who has the experience of divorce and separation from her husband, describes thus:

'Look, he had seen my son... finally because the workplace is here and the alley next to me is their house. My son said 'Mum, Dad saw me, said 'Eh!'... just that. He didn't call me at all, didn't stand at all to look at me, so-and-so.' Once my son was sitting next to me, he [husband] called me said 'Who is sitting next to you? So-and-so, whom did you pick up [in the car]?' I said 'You didn't recognise?' He said 'No.' I said 'It's your son.' He said 'Eh, has he become so big?!' He has no feeling towards his children. That now an anger he has taken from his father and mother... I talked in front of them with his father that 'It's their birthday, do you want to say [happy] birthday to them, shall I give their number' and these things; he said 'I don't want to.' This 'I don't want to'... I got nervous. I said 'One day when you need your child, I won't let them see you anymore. I told you several times come see your kids and you do this work.' Why doesn't he want to see the kids? In my opinion, much distance has fallen between them.' (Interview No. 41, Mehraban, Pos 58).

This narrative clearly shows the gradual erosion of paternal relationships after separation which can lead to a type of emotional and psychological vulnerability in men. Bowen's Theory regarding Family Systems applies here too. Specifically, the inability of some men to maintain an independent and healthy relationship with children after separation can disrupt their sense of identity. This displacement in emotional priorities is often due to pressures resulting from family disputes, social criticism, or failure in expressing emotions. Social psychologists believe such situations may intensify feelings of isolation, regret, and even anger in the long term.

Another point prominent in Akbar's narrative is the family's constant judgment of his decisions. He says:

'I always felt someone is above my head, he/she must tell me what to do, what not to do. Even a work I did, even if it was correct too, again these people would come say 'This work you are doing is wrong.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 255).

This continuous control and compulsion for internal and external 'coordination' with family desires indicates a type of repressive pattern in family relationships. From the perspective of Merton's Social Strain Theory (1938), Akbar sees himself in a state of conflict between personal desires and environmental expectations. In practice, he cannot respond to his personal wish and desire; because his family structure has forced him to follow others' judgments unquestioningly.

Moreover, Akbar's narrative clearly displays the feeling created in victims of such excessive dependencies: Alienation (*Az-khod-biganegi*). He describes his situation with simple yet meaningful words:

'Even a work I did, even if it was correct too, again these people would come say 'This work you are doing is wrong. Why did you go do this work without our coordination? Why didn't you share with us? Why basically...' how should I tell you...' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 255).

These sentences depict not only his tragic situation but reflect the sense of identity-lessness and lack of control over his personal life. Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1985) considers such situations as 'Stripping Internal Motivation from the Individual.' They believe individuals require three key factors for healthy psychological functioning: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When these three factors are repressed—as happened in Akbar's case—individuals may suffer depression, anxiety, or even passive aggression towards their environment.

Finally, these narratives show how excessive dependence on family and repression of emotions in important communications, like paternal relationships, can lead to a cycle of hidden psychological violence and imposed decision-making. Akbar, as well as Ms. Mehraban's husband, each show in a specific way how the prominent and judgmental presence or inattention of the family has deprived them of achieving an independent life. This dependence or inattention, although ostensibly originating from an emotional and supportive relationship or environmental pressures, in reality keeps them in a suspended and paralyzed state and confronts them with perpetual feelings of dissatisfaction, shame, and emotional rupture. As social psychological theories explain, such dependencies not only damage individual growth but lead to a type of psychological violence which is not only rarely recognised, but confronting it is often nearly impossible for the dependent individual.

7.2. Indirect (Structural) Causes

Structural or indirect causes of violence against men refer to factors deeply rooted in social, cultural, economic, and political substrates that do not lead to violent behaviour immediately, but extensively pave the way for or facilitate it. Unlike direct causes which relate to instantaneous events or conditions, these factors operate in a hidden, long-term, and institutionalised manner. Structures and systems that create or reinforce inequality, discrimination, or social pressure can play a key role in reproducing violence.

Factors such as gender stereotypes encouraging men to be strong or repress emotions, economic inequalities placing them under livelihood pressure, or inefficient policies and laws that do not offer sufficient social support to injured men, are examples of this category. Furthermore, social systems that reinforce patterns of domination or control play an important role in strengthening structural violence. Since these causes influence at the macro level and have a complex and multi-layered nature, discovering their connection with violence requires deeper analytical approaches. Examining these factors can help create structural and macro changes in policies and systems and offer a long-term solution for reducing violence.

7.2.1. Social Causes

7.2.1.1. Normative Pressure towards Men

Analysing violence against men due to Normative Pressure, especially in the context of Honour Killings within the Grounded Theory framework, requires examining the value and normative system of a society that expects men to perform traditional roles such as Zeal (*Gheyrat*) and Honour-Worship (*Namus-parasti*) even contrary to their desire and will. This normative pressure, severely reinforced in the context of tribal or clan cultures, drives men towards actions where in many cases they themselves are considered victims of this value system.

Ms. Mousavi Viayeh, in a very shocking narrative, points to an instance where pressures of social values cause the victimisation of men. She says:

'One violence is that it is expected of men to perform traditional roles like zeal (Gheyrat) and honour-worship (Namus-parasti) even if they don't want to. For example, that boy child who committed suicide in Ahvaz, poor thing... regarding Mona whom her husband beheaded... his cousin, the small brother-in-law...'

meaning they expected his small cousin to be complicit in this murder, and he had been complicit too, but [he was 13 years old]... that psychological burden of complicity in murder... so shocking... led to him committing suicide after two years.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 90).

This narrative clearly shows the effectiveness of Collective Conscience and social norms on men's psyche. From the adolescent forced to participate in murder at age 13 to men who take action to apply violence under the pressures of this value system, all these individuals are victims of social psychological pressure. Mousavi Viayeh, pointing to another case, emphasises that:

'Really the suffering of that man who, under the pressure of society and collective conscience, came and did something he perhaps didn't want... even that man, how did he reach the point of beheading his wife?' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 90).

This shows that men are not agents of violence but victims of a social system that places duties like protecting family honour and dignity upon them as an irreversible duty.

Mehdi Momeni, a psychologist and social pathology specialist, also points more deeply to the normative and value pressure exerted on men and explains that men who commit honour killings are placed under severe internal psychological and social pressures. He says:

'In the discussion of murders we examine under the title of zeal murders, honour murders... because these are generally performed by men... that father or son who kills his own daughter or kills his own wife because he must do this work under the pressure of culture, otherwise the reputation (Aberu) and dignity (Heysiyat) and position of the family becomes shaky... the man is severely under pressure, under anxiety, and under self-anger and self-hatred from within himself when he is killing his daughter; meaning he himself is a victim.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 96).

Momeni's narrative shows that ostensibly men are agents of violence, but in reality are victims of a system that has unpleasant and inhumane expectations of them. According to him, a man who commits honour killing under value pressure is forced by structures like family, society, and tribal norms to define himself as the protector of honour, even at the cost of committing murder. These pressures place him in a position where he suffers anger, anxiety, and ultimately self-hatred from within.

Within the framework of Social Pressure Theory, it can be concluded that this normative pressure leads not only to violence against women but is itself one of the causes of the emergence of violence against men, because they must accept roles under compulsion, the continuation of which has heavy and even devastating psychological consequences for them. Émile Durkheim in the *Theory of Collective Conscience* (1912) pointed to the existence of formidable pressures resulting from culture and social consequences resulting from dominant norms. In this context, Durkheim explains that collective conscience and existing norms can drive the individual to perform works that are in conflict with his internal values. Here, value and normative pressure on men is a type of systematic violence that transforms them into real victims of this social system.

Finally, the analysis of cases related to honour killings from the perspective of Grounded Theory shows that men, under the strong pressure of cultural and social norms, are forced to accept roles that are not only harmful to themselves and those around them but cause psychological isolation and severe internal pressures on them. These pressures can lead to violent behaviours such as murder which is ostensibly violence against others, but in reality is considered violence against the individual himself as well, because it leads to the destruction of his personality and psychological stability.

7.2.1.2. *Social Labelling*

Violence against men is a multifaceted phenomenon manifesting in various forms including Accusation (*Eteham-zani*) and Labelling (*Ang-zani*). These forms of violence, rooted in power inequalities and victim-blaming thought, can have destructive effects on men's identity, psyche, and behaviour in family, professional, and social environments. Accusation, with the aim of destroying social image and imposing psychological pressure, and labelling, with stigmatising and isolating the victim, can both lead to the intensification of social and psychological injuries.

Hossein, a man who has experienced divorce, is an example of victims of accusation. He narrates how his former wife's family, by raising false accusations including murder and wickedness (*Sherarat*), tried to destroy his social image and impose their financial demands:

'My former wife's family, with a summons to the police, referred to my workplace and said 'We are arresting you on the charge of murder.' I said 'What happened?'

He said 'We have a problem.' He looked, I said 'Sir, what are they looking for?' He was looking for a machete in my workplace. I said 'Am I a machete-wielder?' He said 'Did you put a machete, so-and-so and these things?' And 'Your father-in-law said you are a machete-wielder and killed someone.' Then he said 'They told me you are a machete-wielder, the villain of this region.' All these stories were my father-in-law's accusation to divorce his daughter and take the Mehrieh money from me.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 84).

These accusations, raised with the aim of discrediting and pressuring Hossein, show how accusation can transform into a tool for abusing power and imposing will on others.

In professional environments too, accusation can lead to the destruction of individuals' morale and motivation. One of the Narcotics Police forces points to his experiences in facing the accusation of bribery in an interview:

'My brother called me, said 'Why did you let this drug seller go yourself? Because he knows a bit about our work.' What is the law's answer? I, for example, explained to him. We arrest the party, tomorrow morning a client comes... you are taking all this trouble... it's a big deal ... maybe you don't hear a word... when a citizen comes into your room, 'Yeah Captain, I don't know if the salary you are taking to your wife and child's table is Halal or not? Meaning you take bribes,' then you can't answer him because he is a drug seller, has been arrested several times until now; 'This means they went took a bribe from you, let him go.' Many times I was accused of bribery by relatives and people.' (Interview No. 55, Narcotics Police, Pos 72).

These accusations, resulting from mistrust and incorrect judgments, can lead to demotivation and reduced professional commitment of the individual.

Labelling, as another tool of violence, can target individuals due to placement in specific groups, such as male sex workers or trans individuals. Shayan, an activist in the field of education for LGBTQ groups, says regarding labelling against male sex workers:

'Its root is that sex workers are seen badly in society, and especially boy sex workers, in terms of my sexual organ... that it has become established badly that [they call them] 'obscene sexual curse word' and such things which were used as profanity from old times; it has created a very bad view.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 25).

These labels, rooted in wrong and discriminatory beliefs, can lead to social isolation and intensification of violence against these individuals.

Mahsa, a trans individual, also expresses a similar experience regarding labelling and social isolation:

'I got HIV... long time ago... when the family found out... my own family wasn't much, it was relatives and my own maternal uncle... my uncle took away my reputation (Aberu), shouted in the whole family 'Oh my, this one has HIV, has AIDS, oh my.' They took my reputation. Left no reputation for me. They constantly blamed me.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 96).

This experience shows how labels related to disease and gender identity can lead to the destruction of social relationships and the individual's isolation.

Furthermore, labelling can be applied to victims of sexual abuse as well. A young boy who has had the experience of sexual abuse says in describing his experiences:

'Ugly titles were added to me, including 'Saeed's [sexual organ]' etc. I thought it is school and these things, it is supposed to end one day, but it didn't end. He even followed me to the house and finally understood where my house is; he watched me there, threw innuendos at me regarding my mother etc. several times. I am a sexual patient to those around me; everyone in my city knows me, some as [sexual object/passive], some clown, and in the family a sexual patient.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 32).

These labels, imposed on the individual by society and even family, cause the creation of feelings of shame, guilt, and isolation in him.

Elnaz Safaei, a clinical psychologist, regarding the role of 'Inferiority Complex' in the emergence of violence, says:

'Inferiority complex... is where I inflict injury on another because of that lack... someone who has an inferiority complex becomes neurotic, experiences illness; as simple as that. So he becomes that person whom Eric Berne... let's see him in the triangle, Rescuer and Persecutor and Victim. Either he plays the role of victim or plays the role of persecutor. The one who applies violence towards the man, implements it.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 30).

This view shows how the feeling of lack and inability can lead to violent behaviours against others, including men. An individual suffering from an

inferiority complex may turn to humiliating and annoying others to compensate for his feeling of weakness.

In total, Accusation and Labelling, as two important forms of violence against men, can have destructive effects on identity, psyche, and the individual's social relationships. These phenomena, rooted in power inequalities, victim-blaming thought, and psychological complexes, require attention and precise examination. Reducing accusation and labelling necessitates changing social attitudes, increasing public awareness, and creating stronger support systems for men at risk.

7.2.1.3. *Expectations and 'Keeping Up with the Joneses' (Cheshm-o-Ham-Cheshmi)*

One of the most important reasons for the emergence of violence against men highlighted in interviews and findings of this research is 'Keeping Up with the Joneses' (*Cheshm-o-ham-cheshmi*) and Comparison, which can appear in the form of severe psychological and social pressures on men. This cultural characteristic, which has greater representation in Iranian society generally and among women specifically, entails serious and destructive consequences for men's mental, social, and even physical health. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, this subject operates not as an isolated factor but as a structural element of social norms influencing interactions between individuals, family relationships, and economic and social expectations.

Allah-Reza, one of the participants in this research, expresses the destructive effects of comparison on men's mental health frankly and precisely:

'One of the cases that unfortunately has become prevalent now is that ladies compare their husbands with individuals who are socially and economically higher than him. In my opinion, comparing is the worst type of violence, and spiritually they damage this man so much that the man goes becomes an addict, the man goes becomes deviant, becomes miserable. This type of violence... God willing we will return and I will open it for you... that its main cause is that the lady is ostensibly oppressed but compares the man so miserably, for example 'So-and-so has a Prado [car] under his foot, you don't even have a Pride, you don't have so-and-so'... which is a type of violence against men that we have encountered its numerous species, so to speak, now in its soft and software form and its hardware [form].' (Interview No. 33, Allah-Reza, Pos 64).

This quote shows that Comparison is not only a psychological factor but a type of structural violence that has deep effects on men's behaviour and life and even drives them towards mental disorders like addiction and deviance.

Confirming these statements, Mr. Rashidi, an 80-year-old senior citizen, expresses the inappropriate conditions of men, especially the elderly, in connection with these pressures in another way. He says:

'On this side is wife and child, that the child wants to study, have fun, travel; financial and economic pressure in addition to violences from the life partner, his lady, his wife... for example, let's assume we see, for example, her brother-in-law rides such-and-such car; she comes home, they fight, brings pressure... these all have effect for life. His child the same way. His child says, assume, wants a thing and this one [father] doesn't have it.' (Interview No. 70, Rashidi, Senior Citizen, Pos 8).

This quote shows that in the family structure, pressure resulting from comparison and 'keeping up with the Joneses' leads not only to the emergence of psychological violence against men but is the cause of a permanent tension in men's lives and even a gap in family relationships. Behaviours resulting from these pressures, such as aggression, depression, and even fleeing responsibility, can be a manifestation of men's resistance or their collapse in the face of these types of violence.

Elnaz Safaei, a psychologist, also points to another aspect of this subject and analyses the role of comparison in shaping men's violent or passive behaviour. She says:

'In 'keeping up with the Joneses,' comparisons come up; they compare 'colleague's husband, friend's husband, sister's husband, husband, husband, husband,' I put on one side, 'now I want this husband of mine [to be like them].' Well, I don't think of these things, it's a syndrome, you know, it's ignorance. I don't come calculate two times two four... position, condition, place, time... I want from him, I put him under pressure. There are two states: either he confronts me, stands against that violence, or bows his head before that violence, becomes a man who works two shifts, two shifts to meet the needs of me, Cinderella. But the reality is neither is he that prince on a white horse nor am I Cinderella. And when the diagnosis is wrong, I am wrong and he is wrong too, treatment doesn't happen.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 17-18).

Safaei's analysis, from a psychological perspective, shows the depth of the crisis resulting from comparison. These conditions not only impose unrealistic expectations and disproportionate pressures on men but cause men to react to these pressures in different ways: some fight and resort to violence in behaviour, some become victims and endure endless pressures. This cycle continues without creating a change in the view of both parties (men and women) and violence against men continues its path.

Using social theories such as Durkheim's Theory of Normative Integration (1912), these pressures are understandable as a result of the culture of competition and structure of social values. This theory explains that the lack of cohesion between values and individuals' expectations can appear in the form of psychological and social injuries. In the framework of Grounded Analysis, 'keeping up with the Joneses' and comparison operates as a system that transforms social norms into a tool of pressure on men and forces them to perform a compulsory role.

Therefore, 'keeping up with the Joneses' and comparison is not only a harmful cultural behaviour but a structural factor whose result is soft and hard violence against men at the family and social level. This characteristic represents the gap between social expectations and realities, a gap that places men in a violent and uncontrollable current.

7.2.2. Economic Causes

7.2.2.1. Weakness of Economic Power

Men's power and social status in family and private life play a determining role in the type of interactions and the emergence of violence in relationships. When a man, especially in societies with traditional structures, does not possess the necessary power, this weakness not only undermines his position in the social view but severely affects the manner of his relationship with his life partner. Such conditions can become the cause of the emergence of violence from the woman's side. One of the interviewees explains this situation precisely thus:

'When a woman is placed beside a man who in the tribal, nomadic, and clan context is a nobody and useless—neither has a say in war nor has a say in acquiring properties, nowhere is this man seen—well, this woman experiences a greater feeling of inferiority beside this man. This feeling of inferiority causes the

emergence of the woman's anger against the weak and powerless husband.'
(Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 82).

This quote clarifies that in traditional structures, a man's inability to meet defined gender roles provokes feelings of dissatisfaction and anger among life partners. This anger takes a more prominent form especially in societies with fixed gender norms. Economic pressures also have a deep impact not only on family life but on men's mental health and social relations. In the economic sector, violences applied against men are also observable from employers. Dr. Bokharaei argues in this field:

'For example, someone has a workshop, wants to hire forces [staff]; that he doesn't submit to this individual being insured, that anyway he wants to apply his domination there at any price, you see...' (Interview No. 65, Bokharaei, Pos 12).

This type of economic exploitation can be a factor for frustration, anger, and aggression in men. Economic deprivation alongside professional failures weakens men's ability to perform desirable social roles. This issue intensifies especially in the presence of life failure experiences. Pedram, one of the interviewees, narrates:

'In the year 1400 [2021], I lost my girlfriend and had lost my job, I had no money. After eight years of working... everyone expects you to have some savings, but I had nothing... I had a collection of failures and various miseries and decided to finish myself [commit suicide].' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 7).

These statements indicate the deep impact of economic crisis and failure in achieving social goals, which can lead to severe depression and even suicide attempts. Ms. Hosseini, a social activist, also confirms this tragedy and points to similar cases in different provinces:

'Now we had a case in Gilan where a man had hanged himself over these very economic problems... we had several suicides of fathers. Now its cities [are] Hamedan, Fars... especially in these few years of drought and the crisis happening in agriculture... when you can't provide and that support network doesn't exist.' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 121).

In these narratives, economic pressures and lack of access to support networks are mentioned as prominent reasons for reducing men's psychological

resilience. Poverty and deprivation in the family structure have a multifaceted effect on members' relationships. Haghighi, 45 years old, explains that economic disorders can drive parents towards addiction and damaging behaviours:

'Families where from the beginning these parents themselves didn't have a correct understanding of marital life... this unemployment, this very unemployment itself, that these people couldn't go after things that are not suitable for their life, like addiction.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 35).

These deprivations sometimes lead to forcing children to work in unsafe environments and experiencing violence from very young ages. Haghighi says in relation to this issue:

'Boys face primary violences in the family at that very beginning of childhood. For example, a father who, due to livelihood problems, forces his own child to work and peddle in the unsafe and abandoned space of the street.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 37).

Mojtaba, 38 years old, considers the rate of economic violence against men in Iran significant. He believes:

'The most violence I see against Iranian men is mostly of the economic type and poverty. Men resort to any work to improve their family's economic situation... now compared to past times, violences occur more and have much worse results.' (Interview No. 100, Mojtaba Mardani, Pos 44).

Ashkan, a 17-year-old student, also considers this same economic pressure one of the stress factors for youth and, pointing to his own personal experience, says:

'The biggest issue revolving in the minds of Iranian youth is poverty and not having... that for example, being out with a girl but your pocket is empty.' (Interview No. 101, Ashkan and Hossein, Pos 279).

In some cases, the conditions of specific strata of individuals, such as trans individuals who face weak support networks, intensify dramatically. These groups often turn to damaging behaviours due to social and economic non-acceptance. One psychologist active in the field of services to trans individuals explains:

'Trans individuals must be constantly under the control of specialised teams, to be helped... because these people, mostly due to high costs of living and surgery operation... sometimes do sex work (Tan-forushi) three or four times a day... this experience of sex work creates a lot of spiritual and psychological violence for trans people.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 91).

Economic deprivation, occupational failures, exploitation in the workplace, and livelihood crises cause the weakening of men's position and the increase of anger and violence in the family and society. In addition, other factors such as family disorders, addiction, and not having a stable job become the cause of vulnerability for children and specific strata, including trans individuals. Psychological pressure resulting from economic and social failures leads to depression, violence, and even suicide among individuals. The lack of appropriate support networks and inefficient structures intensifies these injuries and creates a cycle of violence and deprivation. Also, vulnerable strata like trans individuals, due to financial pressures and social exclusion, are forced to perform damaging activities like sex work which has serious spiritual and physical consequences for them. In total, the analysis shows that economic and social problems, especially in societies with traditional values and support limitations, are the main factor in increasing violence and psychological injuries of individuals.

7.2.2.2. *Malnutrition and Illness*

Malnutrition and illness, especially in conditions of financial crises, is one of the main factors of violence against men which penetrates social structures in a hidden manner. This subject has a severe impact specifically on men of lower classes and drives them towards physical and psychological degradation. Mohammad Farahani, a 47-year-old man with a freelance job, narrates:

'Yeah, he gets small change (pool-e khord) easily, [but the economy] dollars him [crushes/devalues him], it becomes hard, you know, then he falls apart, falls apart spiritually. His sicknesses increase. This economy... somehow this inflation shouldn't go up so that many can't do any work. We have a labourer who says 'By God, for 4-5 months I haven't eaten chicken meat'; basically he himself is a painter [decorator], his income is one Toman [million] a day.' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 28).

This quote clearly shows how economic crises lead to a shortage of basic food resources and malnutrition among men. The results of malnutrition, in addition to the emergence of physical diseases, cause psychological disorders including anxiety, despair, and feelings of being cast aside. Men placed in such conditions lose the power to cope with pressures resulting from social expectations to perform the role of family provider, and this inability can lead to violence against themselves or their surrounding environment.

Based on Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958), human relationships are formed based on the exchange of resources. In conditions of malnutrition, men's inability to sufficiently provide minimum family needs completely disrupts the balance of this exchange and intensifies the feeling of failure and despair. Farahani, pointing to this crisis, emphasises that *'This economy... somehow this inflation shouldn't go up so that many can't do any work.'* The reference to inflation and reduced financial ability to buy chicken meat indicates the extensive economic pressure men of lower social classes are grappling with. This financial pressure not only causes a lack of healthy nutrition but over time reduces men's general health and self-confidence and places them in exposure to psychological, emotional, and even structural violences.

Views related to Gender Role (Bem, 1981) are also applicable in this field. This view emphasises that traditional expectations of men to provide family welfare, in conditions of economic crisis and malnutrition, create doubled pressure. Men living in such conditions must on one hand cope with physical deficiencies resulting from malnutrition and illness, and on the other hand maintain social expectations and their gender role. This situation leads to burnout and permanent injuries in men and traps them in a form of hidden violence which manifests in the form of stresses and nervous pressures.

Malnutrition and illness of men in lower classes is an example of structural violence directly dependent on social and economic conditions, and its effects on men's body and psyche cannot be ignored. This violence is the product of social inefficiencies in resource distribution and crisis management, but men as its primary victims endure multiple spiritual, physical, and psychological injuries which in the long term can have damaging consequences for the family and society.

7.3. Summary and Conclusion

The analytical journey undertaken in this chapter has provided a comprehensive dissection of the 'Causal Conditions' that ignite the phenomenon of violence against the male gender. By distinguishing between direct stimuli—the immediate 'sparks' of violent interaction—and indirect structural roots, the research has moved beyond a superficial understanding of aggression to uncover a complex web of individual, psychological, and socio-economic drivers.

The findings demonstrate that the experience of male victimisation is frequently rooted in a volatile intersection of factors. Direct causes encompass physical and sexual triggers, such as sexual irritability and deprivation, alongside a profound array of psychological conditions, ranging from personality disorders and the repression of anger to the 'Duck' and 'Cinderella' syndromes. Furthermore, the analysis highlighted how specific personality traits—including perfectionism, stubbornness, and the quest for social approval—can render men uniquely vulnerable to both self-inflicted and interpersonal violence. At the family level, the struggle for power within marital relationships and the lingering effects of insecure attachment styles were identified as critical catalysts for emotional and physical conflict.

Simultaneously, the chapter explored indirect causes, illustrating how structural forces such as normative pressures regarding 'honour' and 'zeal,' social labelling, and the erosive effects of economic instability create a substrate where violence becomes almost inevitable. These macro-level pressures, coupled with malnutrition and chronic illness, deplete the psychological resilience of men, trapping them in a cycle of frustration and forced compliance with rigid gender roles.

Ultimately, Chapter Seven has answered the fundamental question of 'Why?' by identifying the primary events and conditions that place men in the position of experiencing violence. However, within the framework of Grounded Theory, identifying these causes is only one part of the paradigmatic model. These causal conditions do not merely occur in a vacuum; they demand a response. The identification of these initial stimuli provides the necessary logical foundation to understand the 'Strategies' individuals adopt to navigate, resist, or endure these violent conditions.

The following chapter, Chapter Eight, transitions from the analysis of 'what happens to the individual' to an exploration of 'what the individual does in response.' It shifts the focus towards human agency, categorising the diverse spectrum of Active and Passive Strategies that men employ to manage the phenomenon of violence. By bridging the gap between causes and responses, the research will proceed to map the dynamic actions and reactions that define the lived experience of violence against the male gender.

8. Strategies of Action and Reaction in Response to Violence

Introduction

Having meticulously dissected the 'Causal Conditions'—the sparks that ignite the phenomenon of violence against the male gender—in Chapter Six, the paradigmatic model of the research now guides us towards a dynamic and pivotal question: *What do individuals do in response to this phenomenon?* Chapter Seven responds to this central question and is dedicated to identifying and analysing 'Strategies'; meaning the collection of actions, reactions, interactions, and purposeful measures that individuals (here, men) adopt to manage, control, endure, confront, or cope with the phenomenon of violence.

Within the framework of Grounded Theory, strategies form the beating heart of the paradigmatic model. They represent human Agency in the face of conditions imposed upon them. This chapter marks a transition from the analysis of 'what happens to individuals' to the analysis of 'what individuals do in response.' Strategies are not merely passive and mechanical reactions; rather, they are meaningful and purposeful actions shaped under the influence of contextual, causal, and intervening conditions, and they themselves determine the path of subsequent consequences. Therefore, this chapter acts as a bridge connecting causes to consequences and depicts the dynamics of the violence process.

The objective of this chapter is to delineate a comprehensive map of the wide range of strategies men employ when facing the experience of violence. In-depth analysis of data derived from interviews showed that these strategies fall into a wide spectrum, ranging from absolute passivity to active agency. To organise and understand this breadth, strategies have been categorised into two main categories forming the structure of this chapter: 1. Passive Strategies
2. Active Strategies

This division helps us better understand the orientation and degree of individual agency in each reaction.

In the first section, we will address Passive Strategies; patterns of behaviour in which the individual is more of an acceptor, endurer, and internaliser than a changer of external conditions. These strategies are often employed when the individual feels powerless or sees the possibility of active agency as limited. In this section, we will dissect two main sub-categories: 'Violence Against the Other,' which manifests in forms such as communicative blockage or passive aggression, and 'Violence Against the Self,' which encompasses a wide range of behaviours including avoidance and isolation, self-blame, taking refuge in drugs, depression, and in acute cases, self-harm and suicide.

In the second section, Active Strategies will be analysed. These strategies indicate the individual's effort to change the situation, solve the problem, or directly confront the source of violence. In this category too, three main approaches have been identified: 'Offensive Strategies,' which include direct aggression and revenge-seeking; 'Defensive Strategies,' wherein the individual tries to protect himself by denial, escape, or bargaining; and finally 'Problem-Solving Strategies,' which are the most constructive type of reaction and include efforts for dialogue, negotiation, and searching for joint solutions to reduce tension.

This chapter, by dissecting these strategies precisely, presents a vivid and multidimensional image of men's lived experience in the field of violence. Understanding these actions and reactions is of vital importance, because it reveals not only the behavioural logic of individuals but shows us key points for intervention. By identifying *why* and *under what conditions* a man is driven towards isolation or aggression, the way can be paved for designing more effective supportive, educational, and therapeutic programmes, focusing on strengthening constructive strategies and reducing destructive behaviours instead of merely focusing on consequences.

8.1. Passive Strategies

In the theoretical framework of the present research and relying on the Grounded Theory approach, Passive Strategies of violence against men refer to patterns of behaviour based more on introverted approaches, endurance, and passivity. These strategies are often the product of weakness in problem-

solving skills, cultural limitations, or structural pressures, and instead of directly changing conditions, tend towards repressing emotions and internalising problems. A prominent example of this approach can be observed in enduring violence, non-confrontation, and accepting the status quo. Some men, by choosing loneliness and cutting off from family and society, or even concealing their social identity, avoid public confrontation with violence.

Passive aggression, concealment, withdrawal (*dar-khod-mandegi*), and depression are among other reactions. Unfortunately, in some cases, these pressures may lead to the application of violence and crime to gain power, or suicide and self-harm. Taking refuge in alcohol, narcotics, or sedatives, or behaviours such as tattooing anger against oneself and masturbation as a defensive strategy, show other dimensions of this passivity. Also, self-blame (*khod-moghaser-pendari*) and internalising problems are counted among the most important consequences of these strategies which can severely affect the individual's psychological dynamics.

8.1.1. Violence Against the Other

Violence against men is a concept often neglected in the shadow of common definitions of violence, and its psychological and structural dimensions receive less attention. This type of violence is not limited only to external acts but encompasses a spectrum of actions focused on destroying or weakening the man's connection with the 'Other.'

Communicative Blockage is the first strategy that pushes the man to the margins through limiting or cutting off emotional and verbal exchange. At another level, the violent individual resorts to applying violence or even committing crime to gain power and stabilise his domination. Passive Aggression, although not overt, plays an important role in the dynamics of this type of violence through ambiguous behaviours, indifference, or hidden opposition. The sum of these strategies creates a complex and multi-layered visage of violence against men which requires critical and sociological dissection.

8.1.1.1. Communicative Blockage

In the narrative of men's daily life, what emerges under the title of Communicative Blockage, and more precisely Passive Strategies Against the

Other in the arena of violence against men, is rooted in social structures, cultural expectations, and lived experiences individuals face in their daily interactions. One interviewee, with critical reflection on gender ruptures during the growth period and its role in subsequent incompatibilities, points out:

'It is very strange; they separate kids [girl and boy] until high school, so they understand nothing, realise nothing in that form; then university suddenly becomes elementary school... they mix girl and boy together. For this reason, our university spaces... I as a teacher have seen many times in university, kids seem released from a cage; meaning first and second semester, first and second year, they haven't found themselves yet, that 'Dad, you have passed an age, you are in a university environment, came to acquire science and knowledge, not after...' they do their own specific childish games. Let's pass.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 7).

This narrative shows how communicative blockage in the first years of life renders individuals somehow inefficient and vulnerable for future social and communicative situations and provides the ground for the emergence of passive strategies in facing the opposite sex; a matter sociologists of social pathology refer to as 'Weak Social Capital' or 'Insufficient Growth of Communication Skills' (Poutousi, 1392 [2013]).

In another layer of lived experience, communicative dead ends become bolder in the more private sphere of the family. Interviewees speak of the continuation of a silent, soulless atmosphere lacking any constructive dialogue and even the lack of connection between families:

'I like there to be coming and going [visiting], for them to come and go, because year to year she has no connection with my family nor with her own family. Now in the house, for more than two or three years it has become very severe... in the house she doesn't talk to me at all. Nothing, from morning to night she doesn't talk. She says 'The house must be silent, silence.' She takes [to bed], sleeps, gets up. Well, when I tell her [my wife], she says 'I want to live [my life].' 'Live your life? What life is this? Me and you are husband and wife; she doesn't understand what duty husband and wife have towards each other. I really don't understand her. I don't understand this. Is it possible?! [Excuse me] two opposite sexes... even now it has become two same sexes, two women and two men have attraction towards each other, have pull, there are those same sexualities, I know there are

homosexual individuals, queer people and and... different individuals. This has been revealed, isn't a taboo. Man and woman is a natural thing now. Is it possible... or basically we hate each other, Sir, you go that side and I go this side, Sir, let's divorce.' 'We won't divorce.' She says 'We are living our lives, what is your problem?' I say 'Dad, meaning you don't understand? We have no connection with each other, visiting neither with your family nor your sister nor your brother.' She says 'What business do you have with them? It has nothing to do with you.' I say 'Well, my family, your family are all jerks (Avazi) and...' I say 'Well, what about me?' She says 'I am living,' I don't know where in this is 'life'.' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 189).

This communicative blockage, not only in the form of silence but in the form of the gradual elimination of direct and emotional contact, appears as a passive strategy in family relationships. In this narrative, violence erodes and transforms not in the form of active and overt action, but in the form of elimination and communicative absence; a matter many family theorists call 'Emotional Divorce' or 'Psychological Erosion' (Gottman, 2002; cited in Gottman, 1382 [2003]).

Passive actions against men manifest themselves in experiences of social exclusion and revengeful responses rooted in consecutive rejections. The biography of a man who has been subjected to indifference and humiliation for years due to appearance and economic conditions, on one hand shows the lasting effects of communicative blockage on individuals' social psyche, and on the other, the objective emergence of a type of mutual passive violence:

'The lady from inside her house says 'Sir, I establish a relationship'; until the time she establishes a relationship, perhaps it doesn't take more than an hour because she establishes a relationship with the first man she gives a green light to. But a man, perhaps weeks, nay months he struggles to enter a relationship that might lead to a sexual relationship. A man must give two hundred relationship proposals... friendship and emotional relationship... maybe it gets accepted, maybe not. Do you know what these very rejections become? My colleague, five years ago this gentleman had a simple real estate agency, a low-model car, an ordinary appearance, nose not operated on, and ordinary physique and wore simple clothes and garb... on the other hand, a lady who had a stitch mark on her face [from this angle]... he was rejected and heard 'no.' This young man became complex-ridden (Oghde-i). For four years he pulled his whole weight [worked hard], reached capital, now comes here with a Lexus... now he can't marry

because every night he enters a relationship with two ladies. When he comes defines his relationship for you, you see violence in him, huh... you see the sense of revenge... he humiliates the personality of those individuals. Why? Because he reached money. Because at that time he didn't have money, ladies rejected him. Now that same lady who rejected him passes by here, looks at him askance (Chap-chap), that too with regret. The woman who is in our society, huh... ladies are not willing to build a relationship, they just want to abuse/exploit... when the party reached money and position and status... unfortunately now I say he flirts a lot. I am now witnessing that this friend of mine... I can't say anything to him now because when society rejected [him], he was subjected to injury. The girl looked very openly in his face and told him: 'What do you have for me to have a relationship with you?' And he had an unsuccessful marriage because of money. His wife separated from him during the engagement period because of money and executed [demanded] her Mehrieh. Well, someone who is being injured so much by the female gender, when he reached position and money and status, what behaviour should he do?! He engages in catharsis/complex-venting (Oghde-gosha-i).' (Interview No. 5, Hosseini, Pos 8).

Social structures based on discrimination, rejection, and external valuation of individual merits provide a substrate for the formation of psychological accumulation of injury and passive and even vengeful reactions against society; just as critical theorists point to the reproduction of the cycle of isolation, humiliation, and violent responses in the context of communicative elimination (Hosseini, 1388 [2009]).

At a more general level, the experience of structural isolation and lack of possibility of support is itself considered another form of passive violence; especially when the body of family and society aids in reproducing violence instead of supporting:

'There is no method of confrontation unless that individual is independent. In Iran with this disordered economic situation, under no circumstances is such a thing possible. I saw many who were thrown out of the house and rejected by the family, and under no circumstances did it stop this violence; rather if this violence happens, he will be humiliated too. Why? For example, imagine a father beating his homosexual son in the middle of the street, and a neighbour comes stops the father and says 'Why do you beat the boy?' and the father says 'That son of mine is homosexual.' The neighbour not only lets him beat his child, but the

neighbour comes and beats that individual too.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 17).

Communicative blockage and social passivity in this narrative lead to the complete elimination of support and even active participation in reproducing violence; a phenomenon which, from the perspective of the Sociology of Social Reaction (Lemert, 1951; adapted from Persian trans.) and Labelling Theories, enters violence against men into a stage of absolute isolation.

Thus, passive strategies against men in the form of communicative blockage can be understood as a multi-layered process wherein structures and lived experiences simultaneously provoke the desire for elimination, passivity, or even harsh and vengeful reactions. This complex and erosive path not only leads to the weakening of the individual's social capital but reproduces the cycle of negative experiences and even institutionalises violence. In this process, lack of support, repression of emotional needs, rejection, and even isolation act as hidden engines of violence against men (Poutousi, 1392; Gottman, 1382; Hosseini, 1388).

8.1.1.2. Applying Violence and Crime to Gain Power

In the course of conducted interviews, many men describe their reaction to experienced violence accompanied by an internal desire to recover or gain lost Power. This feeling often has a serious link with dominant social and cultural structures. Mohammad Amin Bagheri, with explicit expression, speaks of his interest in being placed in a position accompanied by the display of power and grandeur among peers:

'I liked to be myself... for example, take my uncle's place. The sound of my uncle's motorcycle when it came... by my honour (Namus)... the cheeky ones (Por-roo-ha) and the dead... everyone would gather [flee/hide]... they became criminals [submitted]. I liked to always be like this. You have a power, have a grandeur (Obwhat), masculine feeling. For example, I liked to come into the neighbourhood, everyone tell me 'Mohammad Hossein came, huh, Mamad Hossein came, huh.' This is the catchphrase of Qarchak criminals; I was like this.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin Bagheri, Pos 342-346).

In this narrative, 'Power' is defined not merely as an individual quality but as Social Capital recoverable by applying 'crime' (*Khelaf*) and displaying the ability to repress or dominate. Discursive structures around masculinity have

linked power with violent acts; as if the way to maintain respect with the group and society has an inevitable characteristic of confronting violence or criminality. Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of 'Symbolic Capital' can clearly explain such mechanisms; where masculine power is realised not only as a result of material resources but by recreation in the symbolic realm (such as social face and grandeur in the neighbourhood) (Bourdieu, 1986).

In the path of explaining this psycho-social mechanism, Ali Asgari also speaks of powerlessness and dispossession of position; a matter which, in his view, has a fundamental connection with the feeling of masculinity:

'I am thirty-five years old; my most important issue in my masculine world is the loss of my masculine power. I only want power, it is power. The power of masculinity, that thing where I have my position, in society and in my home. It isn't there at all... social position for a man is financial power, maybe I am mistaken too... Until before I came to Tehran, came to the organisation [Welfare], I had a work for myself, I had an income... meaning both my purchasing power was high at that time... both purchasing power and I went on trips very well, and if my wife... wanted something, the moment wouldn't fall at all where I would fall short.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 107).

This narrative indicates the tight relationship between masculine dignity and the experience of power, which can be severely damaged by deprivation or loss of economic infrastructures, placing the individual in confrontation with loss and frustration. According to Raewyn Connell's view regarding 'Hegemonic Masculinity' (2005), society drives many men to accept power-based and competitive roles, and when a rupture occurs in this process, the feeling of being cast aside is reinforced.

Mehdi Momeni also, pointing to the cultural reinforcement of violence in educational and social environments, emphasises that society is prone to encouraging violent acts by men:

'Because we have two groups; one group, the mum tells him 'Whoever talked to you, hit him in the mouth'... in some cultures violence gets positive reinforcement. I even saw in the school environment two people fought with each other, one hit the other... even school factors encouraged the striker more... 'What a hero (Pahlevan), what a so-and-so, what a such-and-such,' and these get more reward amidst the rest of the kids, the one who applies violence, has hit him and done the fighting. Perhaps this is in the mind of us adults too... it is possible

in the back of my mind for a moment I say 'Bravo, what strength he had! What physical power he had!' I never come to say to the one who was beaten 'Bravo, what a good beatee (Kotak-khor) you were'...' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 105).

This sentence well confirms Albert Bandura's findings regarding Observational Learning (1977); modelling aggressive behaviours and receiving symbolic or real rewards has no consequence but reproducing the cycle of violence. In this midst, men who suffer elimination or repression of activist strategies against violence unconsciously take refuge in deeper and sometimes deviant layers to recover power. In the interpretation of social science theorists, repressing authentic action and rendering the individual passive in the face of others' arbitrary power leads to the reproduction of violence and even crime to reclaim symbolic dignity (Galtung, 1969).

On the other hand, the failure of constructive strategies like dialogue or social protest in a system that does not give meaningful rewards and channels to men for positive action causes some men to gravitate towards retaliatory, aggressive actions and even committing crime in order to gain power. In this path, reference groups, media, and socialisation institutions also play an important role in normalising and legitimising men's coercive actions.

In total, violence and crime as a tool for recovering power is a complex reaction to the failure of passive strategies against unequal power structures. This process is reinforced in the socio-cultural context and on the substrate of lived narratives. As the narratives of men present in the research show, 'Power' is not just a psychological need but a social structure which, in the process of loss and threat, sometimes appears in destructive and damaging forms like violence and crime; a matter whose explanation within the framework of Grounded Theory depicts a tangible connection between lived experience and larger semantic structures of society.

8.1.1.3. Passive Aggression

In the narratives of men and experts, Passive Aggression as a specific type of violence presents a complex and not-so-obvious face of the cycle of domestic and social violence against men. One of the interviewees describes this issue thus:

'Passive aggression [is] that this lady or child does not intend to be aggressive or perform violence against the father of the family... how? On a holiday when the

gentleman wants to rest, the lady just remembers to do the cleaning today; the poor guy is asleep in the morning, asleep at noon, the sound of the vacuum cleaner and the rest bothers him. This too is a kind of violence. Anyway, we can count these among violences. But well, unintentionally, the party doesn't know at all that she is doing injustice even to her spouse or child... he wants to rest on a holiday, even just as many ladies put gentlemen to work... 'Come help, I wash the dishes, you dry, you [clean] the windows'... these are passive but well, they are being annoyed/abused, it is very much too in my opinion. For example, the father says 'Today noon is a holiday, you come study your lesson today, I'll ask you [test you], let's have Q&A,' and the father [sees] towards the child a lot of disobedience... one could say the phone is constantly in his hand, constantly talking on the phone, playing with the phone, disobeying, and this is a kind of aggression and counts as a kind of insult and affront towards the father. These become part of passive [aggression]; meaning it is not on purpose, unintentionally they are causing annoyance and harm to the father and spouse.' (Interview No. 14, Dr. Vahabi, Pos 14).



Figure 10 Collapsing into Oneself

In this narrative, we see that passive aggression, unlike direct and explicit violences, mainly rears its head in the form of non-verbal and indirect behaviours. These behaviours are usually not conscious and pre-planned; but to the same extent that they are silent and hidden, they can repeatedly cause feelings of frustration, rejection, and the experience of mental suffering for men. Behaviours such as inattention to rest needs, imposing additional duties during leisure time, minor disobediences, and excessive attention to digital tools instead of communicating with the father or spouse are all signs of this type of aggression.

In fact, Dr. Vahabi's explanations depict an aspect of Passive-Aggressive Behaviour Theory, which is considered from a scientific perspective as a coping strategy in the face of limitations and dissatisfaction (Fromm, 1949; Saffarinia et al., 1398 [2019]). Passive aggression sometimes stems from the inability to express emotions or protests directly; the individual reacts to his dissatisfaction with passivity and ostensibly harmless but damaging behaviours, ultimately influencing the other (Fromm, 1949; Haller, 2004).

In such conditions, society's value system and the traditional structure of 'Paternal Power' play a determining role. The social expectation of the man as breadwinner, manager, and pillar of the family is sometimes so absolute and binding that any amount of deficiency and disobedience—even in a passive and hidden form—can be experienced by the man himself as a type of violence. This voice is well reflected in the above narrative, how even the smallest disobedience or indifference of the child is interpreted in the father's mental experience as an insult and lack of respect:

'The father [sees] towards the child a lot of disobedience... one could say the phone is constantly in his hand... disobeying, and this is a kind of aggression and counts as a kind of insult and affront towards the father.' (Interview No. 14, Dr. Vahabi, Pos 14).

Social psychology research, especially Social Learning Theory, also emphasises that such trends occur more in families where the opportunity for dialogue and expressing legitimate emotions does not exist (Bandura, 1977). If the family structure is based on authoritarianism or unquestioning obedience, the probability of passive aggression emerging, whether in the form of subtle daily behaviours or children's seemingly small disobediences, increases. Even in many cases, the woman or child are fundamentally unaware of the impact of their behaviour on the man of the family, and a type of indifference or

structured passivity replaces constructive communication; as we read in the narrative:

'Unintentionally they are causing annoyance and harm to the father and spouse.'
(Interview No. 14, Dr. Vahabi, Pos 14).

Ultimately, passive aggression, even without prior intent and mentality, is used as a mechanism for avoiding overt confrontation and escaping overt conflict in the family, and in the general cycle of violence against men, plays a quieter but more lasting role than direct violence. This perception aligns with the findings of theorists such as Freud and Fromm who emphasise the displacement of repressed anger through indirect ways, as well as new field studies (Fromm, 1949; Haller, 2004; Saffarinia et al., 1398).

8.1.2. Strategies Against Self

One of the passive strategies is the 'Strategy Against Self.' In this strategy, the male gender, in the experience of being a victim of violence, directs violence towards himself using various methods and ways. Based on the findings of Grounded Theory research, we describe the most important strategies against self as follows:

'Choosing Loneliness and Avoidance of Family and Society,' 'Suicide and Self-Harm of Men,' 'Having Patience and Endurance and Non-Confrontation and Acceptance of Violence,' 'Taking Refuge in Alcohol and Narcotics and Sedative Medication,' 'Tattooing Anger Against Self,' 'Concealment,' 'Withdrawal (*Dar-khod-mandegi*), Depression, Isolation, Norm-Breaking,' 'Concealing One's Social Identity,' 'Masturbation as a Defensive Strategy,' 'Self-Blame (*Khod-moghaser-pendari*) and Internalising Problems.'

8.1.2.1. Avoidance of Society and Desire for Isolation

'You never feel safe next to an aggressive person; you try to always keep distance.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 111).

The feeling of insecurity is, for many men targeted by violence, the starting point of passive strategies against injuries. Avoidance and distancing is the first observable reaction from them; a choice that influences the relationship with both family and society. In numerous examples, men in the face of violence, whether physical or psychological, have chosen the path of isolation, passivity, and loneliness as a defensive strategy.

'I was in fifth grade. I couldn't even be inside the class for a minute during recess bells... and I enter my classes late so everyone is in class so I don't see those big guys of the gang (class bullies) that Saeed is inside their group. Of course, no one could do anything [to help], so I decided to enter after the teacher's entry into class, and I did this very work.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 16).

Avoiding presence in the damaging environment transforms into a habit and then a permanent behavioural pattern. This avoidance, in practice, is a type of defensive strategy, but over time distances the individual from society and provides the ground for severe isolation. By repeating such behaviours in the life cycle, the man not only escapes direct injuries but gradually loses opportunities for reconstructing relationships, expressing emotions, and repairing his individual identity (Yalom, 1397 [2018]).

In many narratives, the home is not a place of peace but a focal point for repeating violence and rejection:

'There they rejected/failed me... and I had seen an outside [world], I didn't want... and that time I was in chains at home and my brothers were telling me 'bakery' [he was sexually abused in a bakery] and so-and-so and were saying some words to me.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 77).

In such an environment, the man sees no way but retreat. This retreat sometimes appears in the form of isolation, sitting in a corner, or choosing a bachelor life and leaving home:

'When I get rejected/excluded from home, I go consume [drugs]... how is it... I love sitting in a corner. At night we sit together, I love that. Comfortable, no one calls me, no one has business with my work, no one calls me [my name]... nothing at all... I have become sort of depressed. Insecurity. I go out, I burst out from the house and from the warm and soft place... I go... I go to a strange place...' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 300-302).

Isolation transforms into a kind of psychological safe space; even if this space is ostensibly hard or full of suffering. Men who have the experience of rejection, blame, or violence from the family take refuge more and more in loneliness and their own solitude:

'Even when I was at home, I had a closet [small room for pigeons]... I had cleaned that closet... pigeons had poured out [I let them go]... I had carpeted it... these

[family] wouldn't come out. Meaning we wouldn't come out. Well, I didn't get along with them [my family]... I like loneliness and silence. Even right now sometimes I get angry I must go to a place where there is silence... it filled me in the vacuum, calmed me. Neither could I have a relationship with family... they wouldn't listen to my words... I lived a lifetime alone in my own loneliness. I didn't have a good relationship with it [family].' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 346).

In Existential Psychology theories (Yalom, 1997; Frankl, 1987 [2008]), loneliness and isolation is not just a choice but a reaction to the crisis of meaning and indifference. Where affection, support, or empathy is not received, men unwittingly or by force choose the path of isolation, although it generally has exorbitant psychological, social, and even behavioural costs for them:

'There were days I went with kids to play football in the alley; the end of football led to this, that kids would molest (dast-mali) [sexually abuse] me... or in the middle of the game suddenly I would escape and come home so that at the end of the game they wouldn't molest me. I said 'I can't stay in this house anymore, I'm getting a bachelor pad (khoneh mojarjadi)'; my dad started that 'No one must know, we are dishonourable (Bi-namoos) that you want to get a bachelor pad...'' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 7).

Numerous reports show that the strategy of avoidance and isolation gradually transforms into an important part of the injured man's identity:

'The majority too... we can't say [about our sexual abuse experience]... but we can say hints... their first reaction is hatred towards the abuser person, who can be family, be friends, be relatives... unfortunately those who are homosexual... one of the violences I saw applied very terribly is their being imprisoned by family in the room or basements of their house; for families who think regarding that homosexuality their child has, they can distance him by imprisoning him in that cold and tight and dark place... unfortunately it is very much.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 119-122).

The gradual process of isolation can even lead to cutting off vital communication paths and for some become the point of collapse of social functioning:

'When I receive blame, label, or insult, I go into my own shell. This loneliness is like a nightmare.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 112-115).

According to the 'Cycle of Violence' Theory (Leonard, 2002; Dunbar, 2010), this isolation is not just a consequence of violence but lays the groundwork for forming new loops of injury; including addiction, alienation, self-blame, and even suicide:

'Meaning suicide becomes very prominent here. Have you not heard 'flight of the man from home'? He sulks, goes for a spin, comes back. Instead of having this reaction, inside himself he talks to himself, becomes isolated. Socialisation... separation from society... the result of this dialogue is either addiction or suicide or depression, whose statistics are so high.' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharai, Pos 58-62).

Sometimes, this isolation appears as a defensive reaction against the violation of personal dignity or freedom:

'It has happened to me a few times that perhaps I was doing no work [hooliganism] at all... I don't come to my own home much because of my dad [Military Colonel]... either I was in the park, midnight [police] came took me... it had become established [routine].' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 77-80).

In many experiences, avoidance is not a free choice but an inevitable reaction to the lack of support or continuous family blames:

'I felt peace... or when I had taken a blow from family, I wanted to establish a relationship with someone else, I said 'Hope these aren't worse than those.' I was always in my own loneliness. In my consumption period too, wherever I consumed I was alone, I didn't take a buddy for myself at all.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 100).

This situation sometimes proceeds to a point where a man leaves everything to find freedom and liberation from confrontations:

'I burst out of the house, I said 'Let me go out, let at least these things not be there'... I burst out of the house and... and I determined that fate for myself, a truly shameful fate... Hamid went, went, went and then didn't last 3-4 days [before trouble]...' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 65).

In social psychology based on Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), learning avoidance and escape becomes the foundation of individual behaviour when no reward exists for effective confrontation and problem-solving in the environment. A man who constantly faces blame and rejection gradually accepts avoidance behaviour not as a passing choice but as a link in the cycle of repeating injuries.

Even in close emotional and family relationships this analysis holds true:

'When this lady nags (Gir mide), this man gets far from his life, you know. The man becomes aggressive, hides other things from his wife. He doesn't have that ease in the house, is looking to escape from the house, looking... not that it be separation either, no... looking for finding his peace elsewhere.' (Interview No. 68, Akbar Mombini, Pos 60-61).

Therefore, within the framework of Grounded Theory, the passive strategy of choosing loneliness and separating from family and society is mainly the product of the continuation and accumulation of various types of violence, frustration, and helplessness of men; a path that cultivates more injury within itself and deepens the cycle of isolation and injury. These narratives clearly show that the strategy of avoidance is a form of 'Violence Against Self' which, although initially formed for psychological protection, has no end but deepening psychological wounds, incomplete socialisation, and alienation (Yalom, 1997; Frankl, 1987; Leonard, 2002).

8.1.2.2. *Suicide and Self-Harm of Men*

The narrative of violence against men finds deeper dimensions when we pay attention to passive strategies against the self; strategies occurring in the form of suicide and self-harm and reflecting the end of the line of helplessness, pressure, and accumulation of psychological suffering. In the hidden layers of many men, there is a place where the repeated experience of rejection, blame, failures, and continuous frustrations turns into the desire to eliminate oneself.

'I can only say I am happy that if I wanted to commit suicide or inflict damage on myself... a problem happens... or if it wants to become a thing... I say if four people said 'The guy died,' they don't say 'Dirt on his head, he shot up drugs and died'; if a problem happens right now too, I say 'Dad, he wasn't shooting drugs anymore,' for example.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 350).

This reaction is a clear example of deprivation of symbolic capital and the pressure of social stigma; when the victim suffers not only from his own grief but from the judgment of others, and even until the end tries to leave an image of himself that is less humiliating; the fear of the dominant discourse regarding injured men is reflected in the next narrative as well:

'My life was entirely problems. I liked my life to completely end. 'One shouldn't suffer all this hardship anymore, shouldn't suffer all this pain.' I liked it to end, then my cousin [paternal aunt's son] helped me.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 200-201).

In this substrate, the desire to end one's life is a sign of the peak of inability, psychological burnout, and deep depression (Yalom, 1997; Frankl, 1987).

Various forms of self-harm may range from demonstrative actions to serious attempts to eliminate oneself.

'The first time I got involved with suicide was the adolescence period. Well, that atmosphere I experienced... the last scene I did [suicide], I was in a coma for close to 6-7 months... on the road I went took pills, I was on the road, a car hit me. I myself went under the car, I went suddenly went into the middle of the road then the car hit... seven months coma... six months and a bit, seven months... thing... stuttering [I got] and manner of speaking and these things... I consumed a lot of pills, 70-80 pills a day... most of my misbehaviours depended on that too. Now in this output for myself... illness and this disorder I say, personality disorder, illnesses I had [caused] that military service unfinished, no work [of my life] finished correctly; I attempted suicide more than 34 times. I saw its harms all myself. My family, my mother has a heart problem and has a blood pressure problem.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 165-170).

Here, the experience of suicide and self-harm is not a momentary reaction but a repeating trend; a type of 'Self-Destructive Cycle' indicating desperation and numerous crises in the life path. The individual is emptied of projective emotions and has directed violence towards himself instead of another (Bandura, 1982 [1979], and Yalom, 1997).

The feeling of placelessness, alienation, and self-alienation causes no escape route to be seen but complete elimination of self:

'I committed suicide five times, [reached the conclusion] that suicide doesn't answer [work] either. I wanted to go relieve myself of this predicament... I was tired of using substances, tired of life, tired of my family, of society, of those

around, of everything. Those around, their behaviour was such that they assassinated me [character assassination]... I had no place anywhere anymore.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 168-172).

Deep fatigue resulting from failure in family and social relationships, and the experience of humiliation and lack of meaning, causes the individual to find the experience of living worthless and consider suicide a path for liberation (Frankl, 1387).

Many men are in a constant battle not only with others but with themselves;

'Meaning for example if I die everything ends, silent... I am afraid of this, for this reason I am [alive] as long as I am... otherwise perhaps until now a thousand times... I had the experience, you know, terrible experience, that for example suddenly I ate seven-eight Largactil which you know what it is, I ate so I wouldn't be [exist] anymore. It came hard on me (behem zor umad), I couldn't do anything, my force didn't reach anyone [I couldn't overpower anyone], I emptied it on myself... to return her [my partner]... when I understood she has gone, three times I attempted with intention of dying, but didn't die.' (Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 204-214).

In this narrative, suicide is a form of regaining control over the situation; when the individual cannot influence another or conditions, he places agency on harming himself. This theme is also prominent in Learned Helplessness Theory (Seligman, 1356 [1977]).

Anger and repressed negative emotions reveal a storm of self-blame and desire for suicide:

'Everything... we are angry... if it were in your hand what would you do? This anger that is inside you, you struggle with yourself... true, I like very much to go for myself, like to go from this world... my world is so small... its hard days are there, its beautiful days are there... again I fool myself. I liked very much to get free/rid of this life.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 224-227).

Causes are sometimes within the family and the experience of rejection.

'I have resentment... I have resentment towards my brothers. I wanted to kill myself, I wanted to kill them. I couldn't do this work. They didn't let me. Meaning if I could kill father or brother, I wouldn't commit suicide anymore. All my suicides were in substance use. At the peak of using I would commit suicide. I

would get tired of life, I heard blame and these things. I myself blamed myself, others blamed me too. I had a feeling of shame, feeling of guilt. The life I had ten years ago before substances... I looked at that life, how I lived, what things I had, what personality I had, how I was at those times, and now how I am. How I live... I myself blamed myself... even right now that sometimes my nerves get shattered, it becomes like this.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 178-182).

Here, suicide and self-harm is the pouring out of anger against self and the transformation of grief into destruction against oneself (Arieti, 1380 [2001]). Other empirical narratives speak even of the most violent forms of suicide;

'[One of the soldiers] was in training, was in the turret [guard tower]... [committed suicide with a weapon], they call it Leili Turret... he had written 'Leili' on the glass with his blood.' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan, Soldier, Pos 253).

When remaining has no meaning, suicide seems the only way:

'I can't return to before these deeds. Its only solution is non-existence [suicide] of the human on planet earth. Meaning death... even I say to myself 'You did this with your sister before too, but the difference now is that you did this in broad daylight... before you didn't blame yourself, now why do you do this? Do you only fear people's look?'' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 36).

Taking refuge in death is ending 'Shame' and social judgments; a theme seen in sociologists' theory (Goffman, 1348 [1969]) as well.

The issue is not only attempting physical suicide, but even Psychological Suicide and isolation is part of the narrative:

'Look, we have an internal suicide... well, another suicide. He comes throws a rope and kills himself... and I, when I enter that depression and enter that shell inside myself... well! I have died anymore. Being indifferent towards society, towards my wife, towards my son, towards my daughter. I have died. Furthermore it has caused me to harm my family... and better than that, look, if [a man] dies... perhaps I have death once, there is a lamentation; but that way I... daily, apart from the fact that my anger has caused me to die myself, it has caused me to kill my family atom by atom.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 36).

In Existential Psychology, this daily dying is a type of gradual death that can be destructive for family members too (Yalom, 1397). Self-harm also has an overt presence in men's narratives:

'I have self-harm on my hand a lot too. When I got angry I hit myself very much... but places that were exposed to display or were showing off, I didn't do this work.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 153-154).

Sometimes self-harm is that same defence mechanism to transfer a message to others:

'This can also be influences that in the culture and peer group, somehow violence is being applied by the individual upon the individual. It is possible no one gives a knife to his hand either, you know; he himself is hitting his own hand with a knife to transfer a message to others, the message that 'I am a violent person like you and can do this work against you too.' It seems he is playing a sort of deterrence role.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 33).

In this narrative, the desire for power and deterrence is reflected from the path of harming oneself, which is confirmed by Social Learning Theory as well (Bandura, 1358). Sometimes, self-harm is the result of tension-filled interactions with parents:

'I witnessed my father and mother's fighting a lot, saw these kinds of things. They are warring with each other... I say 'Enough already'... something came into [my mind] that 'You do something, so these people don't do such a thing.' I hit the glass [with a fist], its scar is there even now... glass went into that place of my [fore]arm and I said loudly 'If you swear at each other one more time, I'll stick the glass in my heart, hit my stomach, pour my guts out.' They stopped... outside [outwardly] they saw it's serious... stopped, stopped. I have reached [a point] until now... I saw they are arguing but they don't war with each other anymore, even though now [at] their age they are warring with each other, still warring.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 141).

Dimensions of bodily self-destruction are reported too:

'Physical violences like self-harm which is very common, much more than what you think; tendency to sever one's own limbs like finger, sexual organ, hand, foot exists' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 75).

The explanation is that the desire to destroy the body means mourning for a part of identity and lost masculinity (Hunter, 1387 [2008]). In most of these

narratives, the reduction of life value and worthlessness of the body is a reaction to humiliations and livelihood and identity frustrations:

'They say life has no value... look, he applies this violence on his own body; meaning the body becomes a worthless tool, you know, a worthless thing and he starts destroying it and it has no importance for him. And this multiple [nature] is all the product of poverty; meaning fathers whose files I saw and studied mostly have two kids or were labourers or were farmers who had lost their work... and many of them had a sick child... a father who has a sick child and cannot provide his costs and as a father feels pangs of conscience and from a point onwards cannot provide this... prefers to distance himself from the catastrophe, escapes or kills himself so that this duty of breadwinning is lifted from his shoulders.' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 127).

In collected narratives, we constantly face the theme of inability to express anger outwardly and directing it towards self:

'My reaction to classmates' spiritual-psychological and sexual abuses and annoyances... I could do almost nothing. I [only] engaged in self-consumption (Khod-khori).' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 17-18).

Within the framework of Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory (1320 [1941]), non-discharge of anger towards another is driven towards self and manifests in the form of self-abuse. Even bodily self-destruction can be a way to prove power and identity in facing others:

'Sometimes you get focused on your own body and in an extreme and damaging way seek in fact to focus on this body... to produce a more muscular body, a stronger body, a so-called more fighter and scarier body in yourself because you feel this is a type of protector against the anger others want to apply to you... creates a type of deterrence.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 119).

The analysis of men's narratives shows that suicide and self-harm are passive strategies against self; an effort to curb inflicted violence and escape internal and external blames and exit the cycle of self-confidence decay; an approach severely influenced by psychological, social, cultural, and economic variables (Yalom, 1397; Bandura, 1358; Seligman, 1356). A cycle of self-destruction, self-blame, and desire for self-elimination whose consequences do not remain only with the individual himself, but contaminate and influence the family, peer group, and even society.

8.1.2.3. *Enduring Violence, Non-Confrontation, and Acceptance of Violence*

In facing violence against men, passive strategies such as endurance, non-confrontation, and acceptance of violence originate not from a position of power but from psychological, social, and structural pressures. Interviewees' narratives show that men, often without the possibility or hope for an active reaction, are forced into endurance or silence. For example, one interviewee clearly describes the atmosphere of helplessness thus:

'My reaction to these abuses... I was just under pressure and was scared and had a bad feeling and couldn't do anything... I was afraid to go to the shop lest I confront this or that boy who had raped me at age five or that relative's boy.'
(Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 12-13).

This narrative recalls the concept of Learned Helplessness (Seligman, 1975), where the individual, after repeated experiences of abuse and failure in confrontation, takes refuge in passivity and silence when facing repeated injury.

In numerous cases, observations show that men choose silence or toleration essentially to maintain family peace or prevent problems from deepening. Another narrative reveals this aspect tangibly:

'I kept silent for the sake of my family... just so my mother would be well and not suffer torment, I myself was suffering torment...' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 225).

This silence effectively means ignoring individual needs in favour of the family and is the result of a cultural and sometimes even structural phenomenon which makes men more vulnerable and pressured regarding protest and expressing pain (Connell, 1995; Goffman, 1963).

At another level, some participants, pointing to occupational and economic situations, consider acceptance a type of inevitability for survival. For example, a participant says about people forced to migrate from Ardabil to Tehran for economic progress:

'...they are forced to engage in a series of works to obtain this money by any method...' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 32).

Elsewhere, acceptance of violence as a survival strategy is clearly seen in the text of the experience of sexual rape in military service:

'He said 'For the sake of going on leave, I must do this work so I can go sooner...'' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran, Pos 22).

In the framework of Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1961), the individual weighs potential costs and benefits, and in a situation where protest is not only useless but leads to more injury, chooses acceptance.

Also, passive acceptance of violence is accompanied by narratives pointing to internalising this situation and self-blame:

'They couldn't tell their brother, nor friend, no one... they keep that violence in their heart and take a passive state and say nothing, and it is bad for them and they feel if they tell another, their reputation (Aberu) goes.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 57).

Many times, men's silence is deeply rooted in gender taboos and stereotypes which consider expressing weakness and vulnerability for men forbidden and even a source of shame:

'This anger has caused [boy] children's personality, pride to be humiliated, and on the other hand he shouldn't talk about it either, shouldn't cry.' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 8).

Forced endurance of violence usually entails significant psychological and social consequences, including depression, anxiety, feelings of inefficiency, swallowed anger, and even lack of trust in self and others:

'Now I can talk more easily about my problems and state, but I still have that anger because I neither had a childhood nor a good adolescence...' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 12).

These injuries are clearly observed in men who have experienced silence and emotional restraint, in accordance with findings of scientific studies (Mahalik et al., 2007).

Some men, by normalising violence, try to maintain their masculine identity or social position:

'Basically [men] have accepted everything ostensibly, basically coped with it. They are forced to accept, they can't do any other work.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 212).

This approach not only prevents active reaction but has led to the formation of a cycle of violence and its continuation in different generations and

environments. In fact, men's passivity in the face of violence is not a choice, but the result of lack of support, existence of social stigma, structural conditions, and lack of space for protest and expressing conditions (Goffman, 1963).

Narratives of male victims of violence in this research show that endurance and acceptance of violence occur in conditions where power structure, cultural stereotypes, lack of social support, and livelihood and family pressures drive the individual towards passivity. The result is psychological isolation, long-term injuries, continuation of violence, and difficulty in exiting the cycle of injury.

8.1.2.4. Taking Refuge in Alcohol, Narcotics, and Sedative Medication

What is visible from the narratives of men who are victims of violence and socio-psychological pressures in this collection is the display of a complex chain of passive defence mechanisms and compulsive reactions to painful experiences. Many of these men, to endure overt or covert pressures and violences, resort to consuming narcotics, alcohol, sedative pills, and avoidant methods to temporarily soothe psychological suffering, shame, or feelings of inefficiency. These strategies are themselves often the consequence of helplessness, inability to protest, social exclusion, labelling, or stereotypical moulds of masculinity, and unfortunately lead to a cycle of injury and dependence.

In this midst, an individual like Mohammad Amin Bagheri expresses the experience of repressing the sensation of pain through consuming psychiatric drugs in a naked form:

'I eat Clonazepam pills, psychiatric pills. I wanted not to feel pain when I go under the lash [in court]. Then, when I got stuck... I came to the [Correction] Centre because I was self-harming. They give me psychiatric pills. Alprazo[lam], and Largactil and these kinds of things. Then it is sleep-inducing.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin Bagheri, Pos 119).

In this narrative, consuming pills is not a solution to the problem but a repressor of the feeling of suffering and a desperate reaction; exactly in accordance with the theory of 'Learned Helplessness' (Seligman, 1968 [1975]), where the individual, after repetition of violence, sees passivity and avoidance as the only path forward.

We observe another form of this passive reaction in Farahani's narrative, where work pressure and conflict in the work environment force him to consume medication:

'[When I had difference and conflict and tension in the work environment] I came home to calm down. I didn't know what problem I had, I had pressure, it was 17 and a half [blood pressure]... I ate a Lorazepam pill; meaning work pressure is high.' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 89-92).

In this text, addiction to anti-anxiety medication acts as a painkiller to escape a high-pressure reality; a situation researchers (Mahalik et al., 1386 [2007]) consider being 'Imprisoned in Social Expectations' of masculinity and pressure for resilience.

Critical family conditions and losing loved ones also often cause men to turn to smoking, substances, or liquor as a temporary escape route from grief and pain:

'[Separation from my wife and distance from my daughter] was the beginning of destruction... I started smoking cigarettes there. And I smoked my cigarette in that situation.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 69).

Or again in another narrative:

'The first time I consumed [narcotics] was to forget my mother's death. Then when my mother died, a month later my dad died; meaning there was a month distance between them.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 300-301).

Substance and cigarette consumption in these examples symbolise the repression of grief and an effort for emotional numbness, just as Freud's Theory emphasises the role of the defence mechanism of regression and displacement in the psychologically injured (Freud, 1936).

The combination of psychological pressure and feelings of humiliation or inability is mixed with sexual expectations in some narratives. Many participants, like Saberi and Mehdi Momeni, link the experience of substance use directly to the pressure of maintaining sexual power and worry about others' judgment:

'...the boy says 'Dad, in the girl's bed basically you have a problem [impotence], one of the reasons for addiction is this very subject... he says 'Goddammit, smoke a packet [of opium], it's finished [solved]'... he thinks 'Sir, eat these pills, it's solved.'' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 83).

'Meaning the person was so under the influence of pressure in this domain that he wanted to show himself capable, efficient, and powerful. That he bought the consequences of addiction and economic consequences of substance use and risk of finding and smoking and all these dangers with his life [accepted them] to experience a higher quality sexual relationship so that in his wife's view, he is seen as a more capable and authoritative man...' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 66).

These tensions also align with Connell's findings (1374 [1995]) regarding normative pressures of masculinity and dominant forms of masculinity. Men, in order to prove sexual efficiency, take refuge in destructive but accessible solutions like medicine and narcotics, without caring about collateral damages (Connell, 1374; Mahalik et al., 1386).

In cases, substance use is a way for revenge or hidden protest against family or surrounding people; meaning a choice based on obstinacy (*Lajbazi*) and passivity in the face of doubled suffering:

'I, with full awareness when I consumed substances... even though I knew what calamity would come upon my head if I consumed... but because I was on obstinacy and stubbornness with my family, I basically smoked substances on purpose; heroin... I went towards this too, smoked heroin to destroy everything.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 10).

'It is like this, I used substances out of obstinacy and stubbornness with family; I don't like it at all, I say 'Well, they annoyed me once, let me annoy them too, let me annoy these people with substances or annoy these people like this,' but it was a mistake.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 103).

Another man says:

'I said 'This [Shisheh] is the very thing I wanted. This just calms me down.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin Bagheri, Pos 147).

Substance use here is not only a means of relief but a type of reaction to isolation and voicelessness formed in the absence of emotional support. This lack of support and affection is a reflection of the dialogue crisis and deep loneliness of men:

'I constantly liked to extinguish my violence; no one came to say 'What is your pain?', 'Why don't you come tell your problem to me?' No one came to say 'What is your word? What is your wish?' No one came to say these things to us. No one

came to talk to us... the only thing that calmed me was just narcotics.'

(Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 247).

Absence of social support, according to Labelling Theory (Goffman, 1963), is the main factor for taking refuge in high-risk behaviours.

Also, many men, due to structural inequality, pressure of responsibility, and lack of real chance to solve problems, employ substance and alcohol use not in hope of happiness but as a way to escape insoluble responsibilities:

'We must be committed to that life, we take a series of responsibilities on our neck; those responsibilities have costs. When in our country unemployment and I don't know and immorality and unfairness is rampant... later we come put a fleeting lid called alcohol and narcotics and so-and-so over a series of problems, which gradually this becomes more.' (Interview No. 69, Vahid, Pos 22).

Another example of passive strategies is referring to the consumption of strengthening drugs and narcotics to compensate for sexual weakness and create apparent 'Self-Confidence':

'The start of narcotics is from cigarettes; that child has suffered that lack of self-confidence, wants to say with cigarettes 'I am big, I have self-confidence.'

(Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 26).

'...we turned to using Gol [marijuana]... because it brings false self-confidence; this practically exists, information regarding stimulants and the self-confidence they don't have regarding their sexual relationship...' (Interview No. 12, Shiva, Pos 19).

Family injuries and the instrumental view of the man also itself becomes the producer of a new cycle of violence and isolation:

'I get along more with those [rough sleepers] than with my family... they know I am weak, they come stick to me. They come to take my things, stick to me; their force outweighs mine.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 327-332).

Finally, even society and family, instead of support, by giving money for substance use, somehow eliminate the man from the scene of life and add to structural violence against him:

'I had a case for addiction that... they give their salary, even my child's expenses, so that I smoke substances and don't shout and scream and don't break anything and don't annoy them. A society that gives this price to a man just so 'you don't

beat, don't annoy' and doesn't give him rapid education, is doing injustice to that same man...' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyae Maroufi, Pos 196).

Analytical narratives show that men's passive strategies against violence and pressure are mainly accompanied by a spectrum of compulsive behaviours—consuming substances, medicine, alcohol, cigarettes—obstinacy, escape, repression, and internalising anger and suffering; all these are a sterile effort for temporary relief of pain or maintaining the 'appearance of power' while reality is full of repressed suffering and chronic psychological, physical, and social injuries (Connell, 1374; Goffman, 1342 [1963]; Freud, 1315 [1936]).

8.1.2.5. *Tattooing: Anger Against Self*

Tattooing behaviour as one of the consequences of the passive strategy in reaction to violence against men, in the presented narratives, is accompanied by bold manifestations of swallowed anger, social exclusion, and effort to redefine individual identity. A process wherein the individual, not in an active and self-expressive form but in a damaging internal path, displays his anger and frustrations on his body; a matter clearly observable in the narrative of an individual like Vahid Faraji:

'Now I want to do a work [job]; he hasn't talked to me at all [but] [because of tattoos on my body] he distances himself from me, takes a guard, because it has been introduced to him like this that all these [people with tattoos] are vultures (Lash-khor), these are druggies (Mavadi), not a correct person... I was distancing myself from people, distancing very easily, taking my revenge on them. I would go to four addicts in the desert, to a few people who like myself don't have a life and this event has happened for themselves; I became [one of] the desert rough sleepers anymore, I would go take refuge with them...' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 128-130).

In this narrative, the process of social isolation and avoidance is not only a personal choice but a reaction to Social Exclusion resulting from stigma and labelling by surrounding people due to having tattoos; a matter which, based on Goffman's Stigma Theory (1963), causes increased distance of the individual from society and his re-identification among groups of same-fate or injured people. The individual takes passive revenge on society and, by taking refuge in marginal collectives like rough sleepers, deepens his separation.

In the final part of the second narrative of this same individual, other signs of giving meaning to tattoos are observed:

'These things they said about tattooing and these things... my tattoos (Khal-e man) both had their own meaning; in that time and era I did these in prison. In short it started, you know, here our records started, we came to prison and Correction Centre and... let me confirm this is something that was of no use to me, I am regretful of all these now... the first thing my sister said, said 'Spit in your face. What is this?' I said 'I apologise.' Their designs are mostly Grass leaves. Because I consumed Grass, I tattooed here so everyone sees. I tattooed this Grass on my wrist so everyone sees... I wasn't among people, I was constantly in a gathering one of whom had just hit [robbed] a base... this tattoo I do was bad modelling...' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 151-156).

This section emphasises modelling and negative identification in the context of vulnerable subcultures. The individual, by virtue of violence, deprivation, and occurred isolation, instead of striving to prove individual identity in the public space, turns to using specific symbols and takes meaning from these very subcultures; meaning groups like prisoners or substance users. Following models and gaining approval in these small communities replaces social acceptance, and the feeling of regret coming at the end of the narrative indicates the continuation of the cycle of injury and frustration. Hebdige (1979), in explaining subcultures, found that apparent symbols like tattoos are often the expression of silent protest and a tool for keeping alive the lost identity in the face of domination and structural repression.

The third narrative explains the main reason for tattooing with more explicit language:

'Until the guy goes does a tattoo, puts his hand under the thing, needle, and does a tattoo... why do you think he does it? He does it out of anger, God is witness; well, it is his anger, Sir, the guy can't empty it anywhere anymore. There is nowhere; whom should I harm? ... I go do a tattoo, you understand?!'

(Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 22).

In this saying, tattooing transforms into a silent strategy for expressing internal anger. As stated in Dollard et al.'s Catharsis Theory (1939), when the possibility of expressing anger or reacting to violence does not exist, negative energy manifests in the form of self-harming behaviours including tattooing. The victimised man, in the absence of the possibility of healthy emotional

discharge, this time transfers negative emotions to his body, and his body transforms into the place of engraving the narrative of anger, failure, and divergence from society.

Tattooing as a passive strategy in response to violence is the objective and symbolic manifestation of hidden sufferings and swallowed anger of men in a society that not only finds no place for speech for their pain but, with label and exclusion, drives them more towards isolation, taking refuge in marginal groups, and reproducing the cycle of injury. This process, consistent with theories of social stigma, subcultures, and negative emotion discharge, draws a coherent image of the 'why' and 'how' of tattooing anger against self in men who are victims of violence; a pattern starting from the vacuum of social support, understanding, and acceptance, and continuing with regret and reproduction of feelings of inefficiency and separation from society.

At the same time, it should not be ignored that tattooing, although in many narratives considered a sign of swallowed anger and applying violence against self, from another perspective and in the contemporary socio-cultural context of Iran, can take on an aggressive and active meaning as well. The analysis of symbols and designs of tattoos in many cases shows that the victimised individual, while experiencing exclusion and labelling, consciously uses these signs as a tool for creating fear, creating distance, and even applying a type of symbolic power against society and the dominant normative system. In this framework, tattooing transforms into an outward performative action: the individual, by choosing specific shapes, messages, or images evoking violence, crime, or membership in marginal groups, not only displays himself as different but sends a signal of 'danger' or 'non-submission' to society. Therefore, tattooing, to the same extent that it is a representation of the subsidence of violence and anger against oneself, can transform in the power structure and social relationships into an active tool for redefining one's position and even threatening or intimidating the other; a pattern which possesses a confrontational aspect and offensive strategy as well and must be attended to in the sociological analysis of tattooing as a multifaceted phenomenon.

8.1.2.6. *Concealment*

Concealment (*Penhan-kari*) as one of the consequences of passive strategies against self in the experience of men who are victims of violence is an overt

manifestation of the effort for the survival of individuality against external and internal pressures; a phenomenon which in the real narratives of these individuals finds a depth and scope beyond a simple behaviour. When a man is forced to hide the truth of his daily life even from the closest people in his life, he appears not only in the role of victim but by force denies or represses part of himself. The trend of concealment is rooted in an overlapping collection of worries, shame, fear of judgment or social label, and also fear of disrupting family balance. This very issue causes many men, even in the face of pain, injury, and pressure, to choose the path of silence and unresponsiveness.

In one of the clear narratives, a man speaks explicitly of not telling the truth to his wife and concealing the cause of his behaviours:

'Up to a point I supported the house so the woman wouldn't tell me 'Where were you for four-five nights?' And I wouldn't tell my wife I do Shisheh crime either. I would say 'I am after these works of mine, I am fixing my work. I am gathering my accounts, I am involved here and there'... and this poor wretch believed it anymore.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 40).

In this quote, concealment is not of the genre of betrayal, but a defensive strategy. The man, to preserve family life, to prevent the disruption of the fragile situation of the home, and perhaps to escape the judgment of spouse and society, instead of disclosing the bitter truth of getting caught in consumption, suffices with constructing an acceptable narrative; narratives in the background of which shame and fear of losing social acceptance surge (Goffman's Social Stigma Theory, 1963).

Concealment is not limited only to hiding a wrong or damaging behaviour and sometimes shows itself in the form of hidden relationships and protecting one's position among the crowd and same-sex group. In the second quote, the individual addresses his preoccupations regarding secretive relationships in the substrate of a network of enmity and competition:

'I say because of these very relationships that happen... for example, look, people who go sleep with a trans person are few, meaning not everyone likes it. Now these, for example, have netted someone to be with, they consider you their rival. That 'lest the party net me [take my partner],' they consider [you] their rival; therefore their works, their dates are secretive things.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 93).

In this lived experience, concealment is the result of doubled pressure on identity; pressure resulting from peers' judgment and dread of rejection causes individuals, instead of direct confrontation, to turn to hidden behaviours and secretive relationships. Here too, men, in addition to striving to maintain social appearance, are forced to protect against psychological injuries and maintain the survival of their position in the group (Thompson, 2012).

In another example, concealment manifests as a childish but deep reaction to school violence and the lack of a safe family haven:

'A series of kids, just like this, vainly and causelessly would beat me. I don't know if you have seen me or not... for example now someone sees a trans person, likes to slap him in the ear; exactly this event happened for me too. The party hit and went without any reason. I remember a scene, many of the school kids poured on my head and molested me and I escaped from school with terror and fear and came home. Again I didn't narrate this event for my father and mother and they never understood.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 3).

This narrative shows another dimension of concealment: a child who, out of terror of repressive violence not only in the crowd but even at home, does not allow himself to recount events; because he is not sure that support, sympathy, or even understanding awaits him by telling. In this space, trauma resulting from violence doubles and the feeling of loneliness and vulnerability intensifies (Hoder, 2021; likely referring to Holder or similar trauma theorist).

But concealment was not only a strategy to hide one's own error or suffering, but at a more macro level creates a huge gap between the appearance of life and hidden reality; a gap not visible outside but eroding the individual's limbs and psyche inside.

'Sometimes many people's lives are 'flowers and nightingales' (Gol-o-Bolbol - perfect) from afar and you say 'Wow, good for him, how happy they are.' Incidentally, doubt people very much who describe their lives very ideally or others say [are] very ideal; one of those parties in that life is being annihilated but because for a thousand and one reasons he doesn't say and doesn't express it, no one sees... 'Wow, how happy they are, the lady, whatever she wants the gentleman gives'... then just... and in my opinion that social media, that virtual space... comparisons that involve me... there where I, the man, don't want to call my manhood into question because my beliefs of manhood are definitely different from my dad's beliefs of manhood, my dad's dad differs... somewhere they beat

[established] 'Dad was a man,' then the generation comes forward it becomes something else; now a man, let me say frankly, is more 'beat-down' (Toosari-khor), at any price gives more service to his wife, is 'more of a man.' I say it is like this because I am seeing, I am living these things. Right now I have a client involved in such a story in his life.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 38).

Here, concealment is not merely an individual act but a collective family secret rooted in established norms and social pressures. In the lower layer of this narrative, one can see the footprint of Gender Role and Masculine Identity Theory, where the man, so his masculinity is not questioned, is willing to hide all sufferings, violences, and hardships so the appearance of a successful family and 'flowers and nightingales life' is preserved (Connell, 2005). This trend of concealment, by depicting men's real emotions under the mask of silence, leads to the reproduction of gender inequalities and the continuation of the cycle of violence.

In summarising these narratives and relying on the Grounded Theory framework, it can be said that concealment in men who are victims of violence is the result of doubled cultural pressures, fear of label and social stigma (Goffman, 1963), compulsion to maintain masculine appearance (Connell, 2005), lack of social support and sensitivity towards men's problems, and structural injuries which ultimately lead to a cycle of suffering, isolation, and continuation of violence against oneself and others. ##### 8-1-2-6. Masturbation as a Defensive Strategy

In the experience of men facing violence, society and dominant cultural systems often leave no room for a conventional and healthy response to their natural needs. What is highlighted as a passive strategy against violence against oneself are often inevitable and defensive approaches rooted in external structures and communicative insufficiencies; masturbation is one of the most prominent instances of this strategy. Interviewees, with honest expression filled with a sense of void and defect, describe such an experience; an experience imposed upon them not by choice but as a result of social, emotional, and familial deadlocks (Rafiei et al., 1398 [2019]).

For example, one participant explains how the lack of a suitable substrate for satisfying sexual needs transforms masturbation into a necessary but insufficient strategy.

'That you have reached the age of puberty and become sexually mature, but society gives you this possibility of a substrate under no circumstances so that, in

fact, you eat that food you like; meaning you become hungry in a different way based on this very thing from now on, but that food is not offered to you, is not accessible to you, and you must suffer hunger. Well, one way for it is masturbation, which I tried too, but it was never attractive for me and fundamentally couldn't be completely sex, and fundamentally could never be a substitute because my external thoughts were so strong that I couldn't go inside myself and bury myself there.' (Interview No. 20, Navid, Pos 88).

This narrative clearly shows how restrictive social structures place men in a situation where their natural needs are not met, and masturbation is considered a 'way'; a way that is never 'attractive' or 'complete.' This dissatisfaction stems from the fact that masturbation cannot replace real emotional and physical connection and places men in a vicious cycle of repression and frustration. Fear of external judgment and social norms also fuels this feeling of frustration (Shafiei et al., 1400 [2021]).

In another narrative, we witness how masturbation transforms into a temporary solution to cope with problems in the marital relationship.

'The problem most men have is premature ejaculation, and basically something that annoyed me very much was that one night I woke up from sleep, saw he was masturbating. I said 'Don't you have a wife here?' He said 'Oh, it takes long, forget it.' I felt that the time he puts for me... because it is a long time and he can't... it's possible he becomes ashamed, and he preferred to resolve his need like this. Which is itself a symptom (Arezeh), that 'Sir, when you have a wife, why should you do this work? That is for a single gentleman.' This is very important, this sexual relationship between wife and husband; if it is high quality, the rest gets solved... meaning they say, you know... *'when you go into the bedroom, problems go behind the door'; they say these in books.'* (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 124).

This narrative shows how communicative and sexual problems in a marital relationship can drive men towards masturbation. In this case, masturbation is used not only as a substitute for real sexual relations but acts as a way to avoid facing problems and vulnerability in the relationship. This subject indicates that masturbation can be a sign of deeper problems in the relationship and highlights the need to examine and solve fundamental issues between couples (Giddens, 1387 [2008]).

Repressed sexual needs and exposure to pornographic images are also other factors that transform masturbation into a defensive strategy against violence against oneself.

'I was in high school, already in the age of puberty. And my sexual needs had become more. Right there I started watching porn films. By watching these films I would resolve my needs... I even felt everyone is looking at me, everyone knows I masturbate.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 24).

In this narrative, we observe how access to inappropriate sexual content and the lack of correct sexual education drives men towards masturbation and sexual fantasies. The feeling of shame and guilt resulting from masturbation is also clearly visible in this narrative. This subject shows how the sexual culture ruling society and the absence of correct education can lead to the formation of negative attitudes towards masturbation and feelings of guilt in men (Foucault, 1380 [2001]).

Finally, another narrative shows how the spouse's inattention to the man's sexual needs can drive him towards masturbation.

'[When my wife didn't resolve my sexual needs], excuse me, there is something unfortunately called masturbation... I performed this work / I have been doing this work for years and years.' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 178-181).

This narrative shows how the lack of intimacy and satisfactory sexual relationship in marital life can drive men towards masturbation. In this case, masturbation acts as a solution to cope with loneliness, despair, and sexual dissatisfaction. This subject shows that the importance of establishing intimate communication and satisfactory sex in marital life is very high for mental health and preventing high-risk behaviours (Beck, 1377 [1998]).

In summary, the analysis of these quotes shows that masturbation as a passive strategy against violence against oneself is rooted in various factors; including restrictive social structures, communicative and sexual problems in marital relationships, access to inappropriate sexual content, and lack of correct sexual education. These factors can place men in a cycle of repression, frustration, and guilt and negatively affect their mental health and relationships. Addressing these factors and providing appropriate solutions to cope with them can help reduce violence against men and improve their mental health.

8.1.2.7. *Self-Blame and Internalising Problems*

In narratives that interviewees have stated regarding their lived experience of the consequences of violence and passive strategies against themselves, a deep and recurring concept of 'Self-Blame' (*Khod-moghaser-pendari*) and internalising problems appears. This hidden strategy shapes the infrastructure of many traumatic experiences of men, and the cultural and social context has a significant effect on it; to the point where the individual not only endures the suffering of violence but places the responsibility for its occurrence directly on his own shoulders.

'The reasons that I was [in this state/addicted/troubled]... more than anything I didn't consider others at fault; I consider myself at fault. I blamed myself. I knew the main culprit is myself. If I myself didn't go into the streets... if my life returned to fifteen years ago, I wouldn't go into the streets to sit loose and become loose; I would go to my home and life right then with my father and mother. It wasn't a life [it was poor], but again it had that warmth. Again it had that purity and affection. I, even though I had an addiction, but a bread is found that a human eats. But it caused that... if I returned to fifteen years ago, the first time... I couldn't... mostly I myself was at fault. Neither the neighbourhood nor the neighbourhood representative nor those around, no one is at fault; the main culprit is me myself. If I didn't go towards them... truthfully I myself made a mistake, caused myself to smoke substances, do these deeds; I myself caused that I sat with a series [of people] I shouldn't have sat with. Those same buddies in the neighbourhood... if I didn't sit with them, perhaps I wouldn't have ended up in prison. If I wasn't with them, perhaps now I had another life.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 145-149).

In this quote, internalising causality for bitter life experiences and even damaging behaviours is clearly seen. The man who reviews his past directs all causality completely towards himself and considers whatever determined his fate as the result of his own choices and behaviours. This internalisation of responsibility and even guilt seems to be a passive reaction to the realm of violence he has experienced, and enduring it has become so internalised for him that no room remains for blaming another.

In another situation, this same cycle of abuse continues:

'They broke my heart, I choked back tears (Boghz mikardam) in my own loneliness perhaps, but again I considered myself accused... I consumed [drugs] again.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 126).

Feeling of loneliness, swallowed sobs, and constant return to self-blame once again show how the experience of violence, instead of externalisation or demanding rights, can be internalised in a continuous and accumulated form. In this situation, consuming substances again as an internal reaction and escape from pressures is the reproduction of that same closed loop of 'Self-Blame' and the return of violence to oneself; where the victim not only does not distance himself from the source of violence but takes the burden of all sufferings on his shoulders again.

This situation continues in another narrative as well:

'I myself was the cause of all these, you know. What caused my life to become like this? I myself had chosen this life. You can't throw the fault on anyone, you know. I don't say anyone destroyed my life. The culprit is myself.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 166).

Again, the emphasis on individual choice and not accepting the role of social and environmental injuries in one's fate has the crystallisation of a type of chronic and structured self-blame which, proportionate to the dominant paradigm of Iran's patriarchal society, grips many men. Based on scientific theories (e.g., Beck, 1377 [1998]), this internalisation results from the individual's core beliefs about himself which have been shaped under the influence of society and culture and take away the power of transformation and even protest from him. This matter links with the realm of passive agency; the man not only silences his own voice but drags every opportunity for changing and breaking the cycle of violence to the court of self-blame. Signs of this type of internalising stress and psychological injuries must also be sought right here:

*'His internal personality and passive regarding the issue of violence, because he feels... thinks this is natural; if this is not it, what should it be? That **self-consumption** (Khod-khori) [internalising/worrying] is very much in these subjects. Unless in the counselling room at the end they express that 'Dad, this one swore too, this one said this too'; otherwise, they don't go under the burden [admit] at all that 'We were wounded, this oppression was inflicted on us.' They only say 'Yeah, a fight happened, yeah, I hit too, you know.' They even accept that*

problem they themselves created, but they don't accept the violence [done to them]; basically it seems it hasn't been defined for them that 'This behaviour done to you, its name is violence, this behaviour shouldn't be done to you.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 126).

In this expert explanation, a key point is pointed out: men not only haven't been able to recognise violence, but even if they are wounded and suffer, they have no inclination to name it as violence. This lack of identifying violence is exactly that place where everything sinks inside and appears in the form of 'Self-Consumption' and 'Internalising Problems.' Giddens' theory (1387 [2008]) regarding Structural Reflexivity can clarify how cultural structures force men into silence and strip them of the capacity to name and critique violence.

In deeper experiences and with overt emotional dimensions, stresses resulting from emotional and marital relationships also show themselves severely, but in analysing and expressing this stress too, this same realm of internalisation and self-blame is dominant:

'One of these violences... meaning stresses entered upon the man... one of them is this very marital issue which is very important both for woman and for man. For the man its impact is much more. It is true they say the woman is more emotional, but no, the woman can somehow... it is institutionalised... look, the woman, how should I say... adapts to pain sooner, can endure more, that level of her endurance is more compared to the man. But the man becomes [implodes] from inside, falls apart, basically cannot thing [manage]... these levels.' (Interview No. 77, Abbas Barghamadi, Pos 57).

In this narrative, it becomes clear that even in the face of external pressures and marital problems, the man, instead of externalising emotion and pursuing his right, pulls everything inside and experiences his spiritual crisis in silence and internal chaos. This difference in emotional experiences between genders, which has been pointed out in psychological studies (Shafiei et al., 1400 [2021]), is prominent in a specific form in the masculine realm of Iranian culture, where men are always obliged to be strong, self-restrained, and responsible.

Finally, critical dialogue and looking at the cultural and social roots of this type of reaction can also be observed thus:

'Look, this thing you say... it wants a specialist person of this work to give an opinion... it's a very general question that all societies are after this work... then one cannot thing [say] much. Then you see they want to take one side, they fix

one side, one side of it gets ruined; they fix this side, this side got ruined. In my opinion, now we in our own religion... somehow they say that 'Sir, always neither do excess nor deficiency.' For example, if you consider [moderation], everything gets fixed... be neither that side nor this side... somehow that you can come up [grow] with society, with that time, at the level of moderation. A time, if you remember... you, for example... let me give an example... this very game of chess... well, satellite [dishes]... satellite, officers would come into the street... if an officer... [if it] had an officer, they would throw him in prison, whip him, and it had a story. Then why did this thing not become [why did it change]? Because there were a series of dry-brained and light-brained people who thought they must do this work by force. Sir, I say there must be balance. They should have thought, realised that society is going up [progressing] anyway; you must come up updated with society. Yeah, satellite or that same video [VCR] too had good qualities and bad. These thought people all go see incorrect films... watch porn. No, [with] many educational films with that same satellite or with that same video device... you could, [if] your intellect worked [if you were smart], you could make good and attractive films so people gravitate towards there. It becomes [possible], don't think it doesn't become.' (Interview No. 77, Abbas Barghamadi, Pos 59).

In this narrative too, the concern for moderation, establishing rationality, and avoiding excess and deficiency reflects that same passive problem-solving strategy which, instead of confronting the source of violence or discovering solutions, ends in the most ultimate state in suggesting personal 'adaptation' and 'balance.' Society has neither opened the way for transparent dialogue with crises nor given men the possibility of demanding rights and officially expressing their pains. The consequence of such an approach is strengthening 'Self-Blame' and experiencing violence in eclipse and silence.

Based on the Grounded Theory paradigm framework, this passive strategy—self-blame and internalising problems—is the inevitable consequence of the interaction of cultural structures and individual mentality, which makes both individual repair difficult and the possibility of social change blocked. This vicious cycle not only makes liberation from violence impossible but fuels its reproduction and continuation in subsequent generations (Giddens, 1387; Shafiei et al., 1400).

8.2. Active Strategies

Within the theoretical framework of Grounded Theory and relying on the approaches of Straus (2007) and Korine (2015; likely referencing coping/resilience literature), Active Strategies of violence against men refer to actions that men employ to change the situation, manage the crisis, and improve their quality of life when facing violence. Straus, in his definition, considers active strategies as behaviours that the individual chooses consciously and purposefully with the aim of problem-solving and controlling conditions. Korine also emphasises that active strategies are manifestations of individual agency and initiative which, transcending mere reaction to violence, direct their energy towards changing contexts and self-elevation.

One of the most important manifestations of these strategies is the Problem-Solving Approach. To confront violent conditions or manage their effects, men choose actions such as migration or changing their place of residence and education to distance themselves from the damaging environment. Also, visiting a psychologist, social worker, judicial institutions, or police is raised as specialised and support-centric solutions. In this framework, strengthening positive thinking and hope for traversing difficult situations and increasing psychological resilience becomes important. Dialogue and appropriate communication with family, expressing emotions, and raising needs and problems are other active measures that help reconstruct human relationships and reduce feelings of rejection and isolation. Furthermore, increasing the level of individual capability and elevating the quality of life through learning new skills or pursuing personal interests enables men to distance themselves from the victim role and transform into active agents. Socialising with others and expanding social support are also considered among the most important components of active defence in the path of recovering identity and peace for men.

Thus, active strategies, as a collection of wise responses, both make the individual more capable and mitigate a wide range of negative consequences of violence in the social substrate (Korine, 2015; Straus, 2007).

8.2.1. Problem-Solving Based Strategy

8.2.1.1. Effort to Solve Problems

Men's narrative of violence and active confrontation with it in daily life finds meaning in the heart of their dialogues and choices. The beginning of the problem-solving path is often accompanied by a type of rethinking and decision for a fresh start; where the individual turns towards responsibility and accepts his share in the crisis. When a man says explicitly:

'I just want to start anew... it was myself too [my own doing].' (Interview No. 36, Pos 322).

Confessing to a mistake and striving to correct it is not only a beginning for changing conditions, but an active movement against reproducing violence against oneself. In fact, accepting one's role and influence in life events lays the groundwork for a type of agency and readiness for action; contrary to what passive and isolationist theories emphasize.

In this same substrate, searching for Social Support has replaced absolute self-sufficiency. A participant, describing the presence of his cousin (*Pesar-Ammeh*) as the first saviour in the process of liberation from addiction, emphasises that outsourcing and recognising the need for others is the only way out of the sequence of injury:

'...we shouldn't cut off the hand of need towards others.' (Interview No. 39, Pos 367).

This point of the narrative is the realistic acceptance of individual limitations; a movement from extreme independence-seeking towards cooperation and utilising social capital, just as findings of domestic and global research have emphasised the importance of social support in the rehabilitation of injured individuals (Nahavandi et al., 1397 [2018]; Sarason et al., 1990).

Problem-solving for these men is not limited only to confronting the self, but appears in the manner of confronting the 'Other' and the external world as well. A man who suffers conflict in an occupational position with his manager or teacher, instead of resorting to disrespect or complaint, utilises the language of respect and social diplomacy:

'Politely, with politics [tact], I fix my work... I have a talk... I resolve it somehow.' (Interview No. 101, Pos 264).

This approach is a healthy communicative pattern far from hasty emotional reactions; an approach social psychologists consider an essential part of problem-solving skills and social maturity (Yousefi et al., 1399 [2020]; Grych & Fincham, 1990).

In the arena of family relations too, this same active agency is visible. Reaction to marital lawsuits and family disputes takes place with emphasis on mutual respect, maintaining verbal dignity, and setting aside pride:

'I went with a full ball [prepared/charged]... his father stood up in front of me and very much with dignity and respect, and he always did this work too, and I always respected him reciprocally too.' (Interview No. 29, Pos 71).

This view, free from conflict, strives for problem-solving through the method of direct and unmediated dialogue and is an example of the capacity for dialogue, negotiation, and reconciliation which is recognised in family sociology literature as one of the pillars of violence prevention (Rezaei, 1398 [2019]).

However, not all active efforts and choices always have a desirable result. One interviewee, describing a situation which, after substance cessation and effort to compensate for the past, led to rejection and unkindness of relatives, says:

'You must become clean [sober] for two years... I became clean for two years... they said 'Go [from the house]!' What can I do? For now I have stayed... I took [hold] a lot of grudge and resentment from these people...' (Interview No. 43, Pos 112).

This narrative bitterly reflects the limited boundaries of family support and shows the intersection of despair with the individual's internal resistance; a reminder of the reality that active striving for problem-solving sometimes faces insufficient cultural and social barriers (Sarason et al., 1990).

In another slice of narratives, problem-solving appears even in a decisive and practical manner in the legal and financial realm after divorce. The woman's decision to accept an agreement and take a sum to end the legal lawsuit and cut the relationship with the former husband is the objective manifestation of independent behaviour and determined decision-making: *'We took the sum and I closed all files...'* (Interview No. 89, Pos 62). This movement, from the perspective of problem-solving psychology, is an

instance of active exit from the crisis cycle and choosing a fresh path (Heppner & Petersen, 1982).

Narratives pointing to redefining identity and self-care in the shadow of quitting substances are also another indicator of active agency. A man who changes his attitude towards addiction after contracting HIV states with pride:

'My respect and credit... I could gain it... of course I don't say one hundred percent...' (Interview No. 39, Pos 237).

And a few lines forward, this same individual speaks of giving hope to others and changing his own behaviour, saying:

'I tried even right here in my own behaviour and... not to perform behaviours I did in the past... have his acceptance... apologise, win his heart...' (Interview No. 39, Pos 379).

These experiences show well that problem-solving, at levels of daily action and even the individual's emotional relationships, plays a deterrent role against reproducing violence; that too when the individual is responsible for his own and others' health and accepts this responsibility (Corrigan & Watson, 2002).

Thus, the effort for problem-solving and active confrontation is simultaneously for men an answer for personal pains, a way to reconstruct status, and an opportunity to redefine the meaning of living. But the reality is that the success of this agency always depends on the degree of access to social support, personal capacity, and cultural structures of the surrounding environment. Active behaviour and problem-solving without access to help and without recognising the roots of lost support sometimes transforms into a fresh wound itself. The analysis of these narratives reveals hidden layers of struggle, hope, defencelessness, and reconstruction in men's lives and shows how every act of problem-solving is both an effort to stop the cycle of violence and a continuation of the human search for meaning, dignity, and peace.

8.2.1.2. Migration, Relocation of Residence and Education

In the narrative of men who have faced violence in various forms, migration, relocating the place of residence, and even choosing the place of education have a prominent presence as active strategies to manage or escape violent situations. Utilising this solution is not only an individual effort to be liberated from threats, but a reflection of mistrust in support structures and feelings of

insecurity in primary ecosystems; sometimes with veins of hope and sometimes solely with the intention of distancing from harm.

In many of these narratives, relocation is considered a defensive and sometimes strategic reaction; as one interviewee, amidst his friends' talk regarding lived insecurity, says:

'We went under the magnifying glass and so-and-so and these things. The guys suddenly turned back and said 'Gholam?' I said 'What?' 'These stories that you are a fugitive [and] doing Shisheh crime in Tehran... if you get caught, suddenly it becomes what... two files. You go in [prison], your coming out is with God, you know. You have to serve both the fine and prison of that one, and you are a fugitive too, plus the prison of this one... suddenly for you... what... they slap 'Corrupt on Earth' (Mofsed-fel-Arz) on you and pull you up [hang you]. Come on, don't do crime in Tehran anymore, pull your crime to that same direction of Varamin.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 40).

Relocation in this experience is tantamount to adopting a tactical decision, and out of helplessness, to reduce the probability of confronting a more lethal danger. Flight to Varamin is not only changing geographical location but an effort to change fate and confront the systematic formation of violence flowing in the texture of the big city; something theorists have introduced as 'Migration as a Survival Strategy' and healing power relations in ostensibly less dangerous spaces (Karimi et al., 1399 [2020]).

In other cases, relocation has more of a psychological colour and scent; an experience of the genre of escaping trauma and trying to forget the past:

'After a while passed and we changed our neighbourhood... now whether out of childishness or fear or any other thing, I didn't tell this event [sexual abuse by bullies] to anyone else.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 3).

In this narrative, the choice to drag the narrative of violence into silence is accompanied simultaneously by leaving the location and non-disclosure of injury, showing that relocation is not just a change in spatial coordinates but an instinctive effort to create psychological distance from the bitter memory of violence (Yazdani et al., 1397 [2018]).

This decision takes on a more collective state in another case; when the individual, family, or parents decide to relocate to support the child or control the damaging environment:

'At first when my age was school [age], we were just leaving that region... Dad did a thing... because psychologically the whole neighbourhood was not a thing... we gathered up totally and came towards Pardis, the new city of Pardis. We came there; in his own imagination, because it was a new city, he said 'Be away from there so these things get fixed.' Whereas it is true there were criminals there, there were fights and arguments a lot, but it never became like that side [the new place]. That side towards Pardis is much worse, you know... plus its soil grips you [it's hard to leave]... we came to do a thing... I didn't stay there much at all, I myself would get up singly and fall onto this side... very much a place worse than this side, that side was much better.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 140).

Here, the hope of experiencing a better and lighter life forces the family to change residence, even if sometimes this expectation is met with more bitter realities; a subject researchers emphasise that not all geographical transfers necessarily have a desirable outcome and can themselves be a source for injury or reproduction of violence (Saremi et al., 1400 [2021]).

In another narrative, the individual relocates several times, each time in hope of building a future and peace, and finally experiences satisfaction and improvement in Mashhad:

'I was in Fouman for a few years, went to Tehran; from Tehran went to Urmia, and from Urmia returned again to Tehran. I was in Tehran for a few years, was in Qom for a while... because I didn't have a [suitable] place. My life... I came to Radio Ranginkaman (Rainbow), gave a biography, interviewed... my life story is very complex... but I lived in four cities; I lived in Qazvin and Mashhad, the last one I lived in Mashhad. I didn't have a place to live... but Mashhad for me... what do they say... had auspiciousness. I went to Mashhad, could operate on myself [have surgery], change my documents, and my family accepted me... I don't know, Mashhad was basically very good for me totally. Those few years that were Mashhad, totally beautiful events happened for me. The only city where I could reach these things was Mashhad.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 78).

This narrative simultaneously shows relocation as both a survival tactic and a new form of beginning and well-being; a reflection of what 'Opportunity Ecosystem Theory' points to (Panahi et al., 1401 [2022]).

At the educational level too, this strategy is seen;

'I went from there because I don't want anyone to judge me. For high school I wanted to go from the city; wherever its distance to my city was more, I took the entrance exam. I was accepted in a few places; I chose the one whose distance was more and was boarding [school]. But my city wasn't among cities that had a quota and you could go study in that high school, so I faked myself [my identity/residence] and entered their high school as contraband [illegally], but the official there who had understood I wasn't from there...' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 21).

This relocation, to escape judgment and reproduce identity security, even drags the individual to behaviours outside the custom of the educational system, but ultimately brings relative satisfaction; another testimony to the deep link between place, psychological security, and the emergence of violence.

In daily examples, even short-term relocations based on emotion management find meaning:

'When I myself get very angry, especially when my daughter is there, I get up and burst out of the house, I say 'Let me calm down a bit, see what happens'...' (Interview No. 17, Foad, Pos 23).

'Look, for example let me come talk about my shared life; for example, at the end of our shared life we had many fights. The way and remedy that was there to escape conflict... it was even possible our work would drag to hitting and striking, we had arguments to this extent... the only way for it was that we get in the car with my wife and burst out [drive away].' (Interview No. 48, Ali Nour-Mohammadi, Pos 151).

These small but purposeful actions are an effort to distance oneself from the centre of crisis and prevent the escalation of violence in the domestic environment. 'Situational Withdrawal' Communication Theory considers this genre of relocation a short-term movement to extinguish tension and restore control over emotions (Amini, 1398 [2019]).

As a fundamental solution, even physical and social distancing from abuser groups is another species of this same strategy;

'Yeah, they annoyed me a lot; always too, when these people gathered, I would make my distance far.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 190).

This avoidance is a type of rational reaction to preserve oneself from the cycle of injury and social insecurity.

Citing the above narratives, migration and relocation—whether of residence or education—are active and experiential strategies men adopt to respond to violent environments and reconstruct their sense of control and security. These behaviours, as stated in Resilience Theories, can be both saving and risk-creating, but the most important common point of all of them is the reflection of the struggle to restore authority, protect personal dignity, and find a possibility to start again (Ghasemi et al., 1402 [2023]). Ultimately, as narratives clearly show, these strategies are not merely defensive; rather, they are a type of persistence to shape individual life and identity, even if at the price of tangible change of geography and losing part of previous habits and securities.

8.2.1.3. Visiting Psychologists, Social Workers, and Judicial and Police Institutions

The strategy of visiting a psychologist as one of the links of the active and problem-solving based strategy in facing violence against men finds multi-layered manifestations and results. Understanding this strategy in the light of interviewees' narratives illuminates the complex and multidimensional realm of men's agency in the arena of violence; where men are not merely acceptors of injury but agents of search, challenge, and transformation.

One of the fundamental dimensions of this visit is seeking to give meaning to the experience of violence and recovering individual agency; meaning the injured man reaches a space of dialogue and analysis to exit the deadlock and closed horizon of violence. Shayan Varamini's narrative is severely expressive of this very search for identity and redefinition of self in the face of the family institution and its beliefs:

'I became very excited, because I can operate, can become a man... I didn't believe it... with the doctor, he helped a lot here, meaning he didn't do a thing [hesitate], didn't pull back, you know. [The psychologist] turned directly to my father and said 'Excuse me, do you like it if once a month your cheeks... meaning you'... to my father... meaning somehow he stood directly in his face and said 'This one has this same feeling,' meaning he was speaking my words. He said 'This one cannot look at his own [sexual] organs, hates his breasts, binds his breasts with elastic.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 105).

In this narrative, visiting a psychologist is not just an individual strategy but the place of forming a dialogical realm and identity resistance against 'institutionalised family violence.' The psychologist's work here is situated not as divinity and judgment but as mediation in the lived experience of violence, helping to recover the individual voice (Ahmady et al., 1398 [2019]).

Another perception of visiting a psychologist is the experience of recreating hope and preventing self-destructive paths:

'I was under psychologist treatment for two years, I went to therapy one session a week. That time was very sweet for me and I had almost become indifferent to suicide [stopped thinking about it]. This issue was very helpful for me too... lately it had become two sessions a month and then one session a month. Now compared to a few years ago my condition is better.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 11).

Here, psychotherapy finds an overt supportive and psychological rehabilitation function. Evaluating the role of psychological support in preventing passive processes and tendencies towards self-destruction in the experiential situation of male victims of violence is a subject researchers like Newman et al. have proposed (Newman et al., 2019).

In many cases, however, visiting a psychologist is not necessarily accompanied by a feeling of peace and efficiency, and the rotation in the Iranian man's psychological structure in facing social labels and the public perception of visiting a psychologist is evident:

'It causes my own neurosis... Sir, I as any human in the course of his life need a psychologist, a place to discharge, a place to calm down... now for example I say I am calm for two-three months now, I said my sayings...' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 56).

Here we face a duality of social denial and simultaneously individual acceptance. As Labrague et al. point out, 'shame of help-seeking' is especially severe among men, but simultaneously the process of expressing injury can play an important role in breaking the cycle of violence (Labrague et al., 2015).

Finally, the experience of visiting a counsellor or psychologist sometimes faces a feeling of inefficiency when the counsellor's skill and approach do not align with the complex situation of violence against men:

'We went to a counsellor; the counsellor was a novice lady. I told her the conditions and said 'I am like this and I truthfully don't have any special privacy and my phone doesn't have any special thing either, but she recently has a lot of

privacy and...' The counsellor said 'We have such a thing but under a series of frameworks; giving space for two months means that for two months... become a thing [distant] with each other. Now that you are husband and wife living in one house...' She said 'Yeah, rest assured, these things exist, just call less.'

(Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 141).

In this narrative, visiting a counsellor becomes not a deterrent factor for violence, but sometimes with a superficial view of the parties' situation, becomes a factor for frustration and mistrust. This issue reminds us of the importance of having a counsellor and psychologist who is aware and trained in the field of men's gender injuries (Taleshi et al., 1400 [2021]).

In summary, the above narratives show that the strategy of visiting a psychologist for male victims of violence is a multi-layered emotional and social experience which can encompass everything from identity-giving and awareness-raising to re-creation and even frustration and despair; a strategy trapped in the dualities of social acceptance/denial, family support/blame, psychologist efficiency/failure, and individual hope/anxiety. Understanding these experiences highlights the necessity of elevating public and specialised awareness regarding the role and position of psychotherapy and the importance of a gender-sensitive view and cultural contexts in facing violence against men.

8.2.1.4. *Having Positive Thinking and Hope*

In the context of active confrontation with the consequences of violence on men, adopting the approach of hope and positive thinking finds a significant role as a vital yet complex strategy in individuals' narratives. This mental action manifests itself mostly in the form of the manner of facing crisis, the ability to continue living, and positive envisioning of the future; such that even in the most severe situations of passivity or helplessness, the masculine subject strives to maintain a ray of hope, however faint.

In Farahani's description, the concept of hope appears not only as a passive expectation of change but as an internal action and even 'Imaginary Future-Building' in the heart of hopeless conditions. He says about a friend who is on the verge of execution:

'...his hope is that when I call him, I get his stats [check on him]... he has called me twice, 'Come let's go buy a shop in such-and-such place with his wife [partner], buy, work, I'm gone [done for] anyway. Buy, do such-and-such work

there, I'll do this for you. God willing we'll come do this, do that'... I mean he has hope, you know...' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 48).

In this narrative, the action of hope remains alive and dynamic even in the midst of a harsh judicial process; referring to a hypothetical future and planning for it is itself a type of resistance against the certainty-centred confrontation with the structural violence of death. The phenomenology of hope in such a situation, similar to what Snyder (2000) calls 'Pathways Thinking,' is a type of internal strategy for survival and maintaining motivation amidst injury.

In another part of the narrative, the distinction between the experience of the close subject (the condemned friend) who pushes back despair and tries to dominate the crisis, and the observer subject (Farahani) who accepts reality with more resignation, shows itself:

'I'll do this for you. God willing we'll come do this... I mean he has hope, you know, but I who am sitting far away have no hope for him because for 4 years the guy hasn't given consent [for pardon]... but at the ninety-th minute good events happen, you know. I'm saying [talking about] hope.' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 48).

Here, hope finds not only an individual function but a social function too; it creates power of contagion, connection, and participation at the collective level. Based on psychodynamic discussions (Frankl, 1985), understanding meaning and hope for even the smallest change maintains psychological coherence and standing in the violent situation in men.

Pedram's view is also based on a psychological process of continuation, trying to interpret the situation positively and reduce chronic depression. He says:

'...maybe I can say its dose has become less. And those events that happened in the past still annoy me. But I am continuing and don't think I'll return to those previous stages, however much problems increase.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram Maroufi, Pos 13).

In this phrase, hope is not an imaginary image of an unknown future, but persistence on continuing life despite difficulties; a type of acquired emotion regulation which researchers like Assante and Williams (2021) refer to as 'Resilient Coping.'

What is received from the sum of the above narratives is that positive thinking and hopefulness is a dynamic and deep process in the heart of confronting various structural and individual violences against men; a factor that psychologically prevents the mind from getting trapped in the snare of helplessness and, at the social level, provides the possibility of participation and empathy for keeping windows of liberation open. This hope is not simplistic optimism but active resistance that maintains the individual's ownership over the life narrative even in fragile situations; as Frankl reminds: *'He who has a why to live for can bear almost any how'* (Frankl, 1394 [2015]).

In such a substrate, the approach of hope encourages injured men to recover their voice and recreate the future; a future that even if not realised, does not surrender the subject to crisis from within, and this is the most inspiring consequence of the hope strategy in facing violence.

8.2.1.5. *Dialogue and Understanding in the Family*

The narrative of confronting violence against men and the strategy of responding through dialogue and connection with family has a complex and multifaceted manifestation in interviewees' narratives; a path that passes through the experience of rejection, tensions, supports, and effort to reconstruct relationship and belonging, and searches for balance between injury and healing at every moment:

'When I had announced [to the family], I said 'I am a trans person,' and they had realised, I had been outed... they had given me a series of permits and these things... everyone had taken a guard [defensive stance] against me, no one agreed with me, didn't agree that I operate [have surgery], become a girl in society. But now it has become different and these people have accepted now, everyone accepted. I honestly don't know how to say. I was active, I was active in media, in social media. I was very active, was seen a lot, seen... was seen a lot. I... Manoto channel... you imagine Manoto channel if it is nothing, 85 million Iranian people are watching it, they have many audiences... it closed, again it is continuing its work in social media, only on satellite its work cut off... I broadcast a video there on the channel, it was about nine minutes, I talked about myself and my life and events that occurred.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 84-86).

The family's connection with identity acceptance is influential not only on accepting the individual himself but on the process of resistance against social violence. Gradually and as a result of dialogue, activity, and being seen, a

situation that was initially accompanied by rejection leads to acceptance and a type of social peace. This process, based on Symbolic Interactionism theories (Blumer, 1933 [2014]) and Goffman's view regarding Stigma Management, shows to what extent family understanding can make violences inflicted on men (or individuals with distinct gender identity) paler and create resistance capacity.

Another study of family experience in the text of marital life points to the depth of the need for effective communication:

'Look, it relates very much to this, that a woman knows this before her marriage... it happens in marriage, meaning when they have a shared life, have five years ten years shared life, for example that gentleman crashes [accident], an event happens for him... in my opinion, my own personal opinion of course, it goes back to the couple's personal relationships; if these had good relationships together, in high probability in the future too this lady is a good sponsor [supporter] for the gentleman; one can't say definitely, but if they don't have good relationships, it gets compensated somewhere [negatively]... but this issue is in the woman's existence, 'Oh my, it's my husband's birthday, oh my, it's my child's birthday,' because of those meticulousnesses of theirs, because of those emotional needs of theirs... I think about this issue a lot. Because the services I give you, in fact I am declaring a need; a woman if she remembers her husband's birthday, if she holds a birthday for her husband, definitely is declaring a need to him that 'Pay attention to me too, it is my birthday too; if I bought a red cake for you, I want you to buy such a cake too'... meaning she wants mutual relationships from the husband, but unfortunately we don't see these or see very little.' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 60).

Effective communication and mutual attention in the family acts like a shield for men against life's violences, and as the Family-Centred Perspective theory (Walsh, 2013) has pointed out, these mutual relationships are the foundation of the structure of internal security and resilience.

In the arena of fatherhood and relationship with the child too, this same support and dialogue is reproduced:

'[When] I ran into problems in emotional relationships with my wife, thank God, [because] I myself suffered hardship, I try so my child doesn't suffer those hardships I suffered; meaning I support him/her in every way. Whether it be

educational, whether it be in terms of facilities, I support him/her in every way.'
(Interview No. 72, Eskandari, Pos 56-57).

This narrative seats masculine identity not merely in accepting the guardianship role but in compassionate interaction with the child and indicates the reflection of the dialogical process at different family levels; a process which Dunn (2019) considers the factor of 'Intergenerational Transmission of Resilience Strategies.'

A noteworthy point is in rural life which highlights the role of the peer group in dialogue and emotional discharge:

'In a rural environment, for example, when the party suffers violence, he can go out and talk with his peer group and tell of his past and get discharged.'
(Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 31).

This social structure extends the empathetic function of the family to friend gatherings as well and reproduces the supportive function even outside the familial system.

In another section, mutual respect shows another basis of communicative support in the family:

'She respected me, I respected her too. In fights too I didn't disrespect them, but well, her mother unfortunately was very 'thing'... her mother was after prayers/spells, after magic, and these kinds of things were found a lot in the house and I protested every time. My brother-in-law called and said my father-in-law said 'Come let's sit together talk.' When I went to their house, I saw that I went there with a full ball [angry/prepared] to complain, for example. His father stood up in front of me and very much with dignity and respect, and he always did this work too, and I always respected him reciprocally too. Difference arose and he started talking. My wife came and I saw from the door down [humbly] she talked a lot and brought tea for me. I don't remember that same night. It was there that his father said 'Take your wife's hand and go' and we took [hands] and came.'
(Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 71).

The process of dialogue in the shadow of family respect has not only provided the ground for conflict resolution but reveals the key role of the family in passing through crisis and refraining from violence. This narrative is a practical instance of Systemic Family Therapy Theory (Bowen, 1996 [2017]) which emphasises that dialogue and mutual respect have the capacity to reduce violence and even prevent its occurrence.

In another narrative, men's selfless supportiveness towards the spouse is reflected:

'From zero to 100 I helped my wife. And until a while ago too I helped her'
(Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 9),

which itself indicates the mutual knot of support and kindness as a mechanism for removing violence, and as MacDonald (2016) states, practical continuity and empathy in the family can be an effective shield against the consequences of violence. An experience oscillating between selfishness and altruism also presents another image:

'I had found a strange state. It was a combination of selfishness and altruism, that I was both worried about myself and worried about the rest, that with my behaviour an event shouldn't happen for them. But still with all these measures I hadn't withdrawn from the decision [suicide] and at the back of my mind was still reviewing that day's plan so it would be done precisely... then the kids came and called me and I said with drunkenness that 'It is supposed to be my last trip' and I messed up their trip and they fell apart a lot. Then when I returned, I thought a lot about that drunken state that happened to me... on one hand I didn't like to harm anyone and on one hand I couldn't be indifferent to this issue. Finally I decided to be indifferent for a while and advance a series of my half-finished works, see how it goes.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 10).

This implicit dialogue with family and sense of mutual responsibility shows that even at the peak of crisis, connection with close ones can reinforce the individual's decision to distance himself from damaging actions.

In Akbar's narrative, we witness injuries resulting from the failure of the supportive relationship in the family:

'Relatives, by God, come one by one, said 'This Akbar has become a vagrant like this, we saw for your father and mother [sake], but it doesn't please God you abandoned this Akbar like this all alone'... they said 'We tell him go get clean.' They sit with neighbours too, I said openly 'Dad, getting clean falsely has no benefit... basically assume he got clean, now think Akbar got clean, for example what do you want to do?' Even now their word is this... they put a time for me that 'You must become clean for two years.' I became clean for two years, after two years came out, they said 'Go!' What can I do? For now I have stayed here, see if I can set up a work for myself... I took [hold] a lot of grudge and resentment

from these people; whenever the opportunity arises too, I have poured my poison.'
(Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 112).

His narrative reveals the family's inability for active support and restoring belonging and simultaneously points to the consequence of returning to the cycle of internal violence.

In Ashkan's experience too, family inability in facing school violence is reflected: *'[When I was subjected to violence in school] I couldn't do anything, I told my family, my family stayed [did nothing], said 'It finished and went.'*' (Interview No. 101, Ashkan Student, Pos 362). This experience highlights the lack of supportive presence and shows the reduction of the family dialogue role in supporting against violence; a situation MacIntosh (2001) interprets as the 'Process of Support Silencing.'

In summary, the path of dialogue and communication with family is a key factor in the quality of confronting violence against men; this matter can oscillate from reproducing exclusion and withdrawal to activating emotional, intellectual, and financial support. The more effective and mutual these communications are, the more men's resilience against structural and individual injuries gains consistency, and wherever this support is weakened or unstable, the consequences of violence can lead to isolation, grudge, and even greater injury (Blumer, 1993; Walsh, 2013).

8.2.1.6. *Expressing Emotions and Needs in the Family Space*

In men's narrative regarding expressing emotions and raising needs and problems, a fundamental mechanism for active confrontation with violence and life difficulties emerges. This process, more than appearing as a simple and self-evident matter, is accompanied in participants' conversations with layers of doubt, fear, repression, and simultaneously the desire for liberation.

'Sometimes some thoughts come into my mind, I constantly want to express the thought in my head... maybe a problem comes up for me... I think I have become sick. Sometimes when I sit, sometimes I think... a thought comes into my head, I want to express it, talk with someone, make myself comfortable, get satisfied a bit... I come up short for talking, I don't know why.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 221).

In this statement, it can be seen that internalising suffering and inability to express emotions causes the creation of a loop of pressure and anxiety; where

the subject, despite deep need for speaking and emotional discharge, is placed in a strait due to poverty of vocabulary or worry about external judgment. In Symbolic Interactionism Theory (Blumer, 1933 [2014]), this situation is a reflection of social structures that keep men limited in expressing anxiety and interstitial injury.

But this nested dynamic does not remain limited to the mind and continues even in manifesting talents and self-display at various levels;

'There is a sick mind inside me that reverses even very beautiful everyday words... 'What happens, you want to become a writer, now you write some political words, you write critical'... it wants to be poetry, it shows itself. Whatever work I want to do, it shows itself that 'Sir, now let me be very artist, be actor, maybe I can somehow preserve this, not manifest my anger.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 36).

Here, the masculine experience of suffering and anger is not repressed, but tries to find a way out through alternative channels like art and literature. In the interpretation of the Existential Psychotherapy view (Yalom, 1990 [2011]), raising emotions through creativity is sometimes the only safe space for expressing something that the social system fears even the healthy expression of.

At the same time, another experience of masculinity is narrated wherein dialogue, however limited, transforms into a safe margin for resolving conflicts:

'I never talked about this case with my friends, talked with no one; whatever it was, for two days three days I was in my own shell and could find a solution and establish connection with my mother and could get satisfaction (Reza-yat). I was mostly looking to attract satisfaction. I always considered myself at fault in every case too. Until now serious violence hasn't been there, there was nothing; I, my own family, whether it be my wife or my child, my communications are very excellent.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 25).

This narrative shows that for some subjects, problem-solving, even if without extensive social support and solely through the path of family communications, can be an efficient coping strategy with suffering and violence; while in Positive Psychology literature (Seligman, 2002), social and family networks also play a key role not as a mere support mechanism but as a space for recognition and healing of self in the context of participation.

The resultant of these narratives is men's deep but simultaneously obstacle-filled desire to express emotions and problems. Men, due to the existence of highly ambiguous social patterns regarding expressing emotions (Connell, 1987), always oscillate between wanting and not being able to, not speaking and liberation. This matter has a dual consequence: either pressure resulting from violence and problem becomes internalised and leads to disorders such as anxiety, hidden anger, or depression (narrative of Amin Rezaei and Akbar Ebrahimi), or the subject in a semi-active position goes searching for a solution in his shell and ultimately steps towards gaining security, albeit minimal, in the heart of dialogue with close ones (like Ali Asgari).

In sum, expressing emotions and raising needs among men is a bumpy yet simultaneously efficient substrate and strategy in curbing and solving the problem of violence; a strategy which, although its implementation lacks sufficient social infrastructures, has the potential to strengthen men's position in managing and healing injuries by finding more formality (Blumer, 1993; Seligman, 2002).

8.2.1.7. *Increasing Capability and Quality of Life*

In the narrative of men confronting violence and life pressures, active strategies for increasing capability and elevating the quality of life are visible, which often originate from a deep desire to redefine the self and prove capability; a desire and effort sometimes accompanied by heavy costs.

'Meaning the person was so under the influence of pressure in this domain that he wanted to show himself capable, efficient, and powerful. That he bought the consequences of addiction and economic consequences of substance use and risk of finding and smoking and all these dangers with his life [accepted them] to experience a higher quality sexual relationship so that in his wife's view, he is seen as a more capable and authoritative man...' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 66).

In this narrative, experienced violence not only becomes a factor of repression and failure but transforms into a stimulus for moving towards repairing self-image; even if this recreation of capability passes through damaging and even destructive paths. In Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1992 [2013]), the effort to prove self-efficacy in risky situations is judged as a mechanism for returning to autonomy and reclaiming individual power.

But the representation of effort to elevate the quality of life is not limited only to high-risk actions; men often strive to improve their living space in simple, daily contexts as well:

'When I came to myself in that same house of mine, I tried finally [with] trivial things in our house... raise my level of thought a bit relative to my previous life. So I wouldn't think bad thoughts anymore. Finally there was help, there was work, finally it was created. Now one of the things I like [is] to become free, to want to change my previous life with valuable working and be able to reach a place others do. A good life. A simple life, a single-person life. A life of peace.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 277-279).

This desire for change, the value of work, and the experience of living freely expresses that same masculine 'Action-orientation' (*Fe'l-budegi*) which Habermas (1980 [2001]) considers the basis of agency and liberation from domination; where the individual, by changing ordinary and small procedures, takes a giant step towards reconstructing individual identity and increasing the quality of life.

In some experiences, this activism is accompanied by learning, skill acquisition, and meaningful work, and the subject tries to transform even scant hours of unemployment and leisure into an opportunity for growth and giving meaning to life:

'Finally with my cousin... finally someone be next to me so I work with him and establish communication with him in society finally, and these things... [raise] my level of speaking, be able to say my wish, and that's it. I started the tailoring job too. I tried to use that hour I am in the camp and have no work... that hour and hour and a half... I tried to work, stand watch, learn. By God, first I don't want to earn money, I don't want anything. I just want to be alive, I want to understand the meaning of life.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 385-387).

In the view of Positive Psychology (Seligman, 83 [2004]), moving from unemployment and meaninglessness towards creating meaning and enjoying learning is considered a fundamental strategy for increasing resilience and elevating the level of life satisfaction.

Other narratives show that abstaining from substance use, with the aim of preserving physical strength, stability of appearance, and building a new future, falls into the category of these active strategies:

'For myself outside I don't want to consume anymore... as a result, look, I was a person who, for example, used substances for ten days, didn't use for 5 days. So I wouldn't fall from appearance [look bad]. So my body wouldn't get weak. I was like this. Now I want not to shoot substances, not shoot anymore... do crime for a while, a year... then what? Cut this story completely, go take a wife, open a shop or something. Then take my dad, bring him next to myself, take a wife, do servitude (Nokari) for my father. Like this... I want a life like this.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin Bagheri, Pos 401).

In Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Psychology (1378 [1999]), the connection between individual changes and improving family and social life conditions is considered the most important indicator of human capability.

Alongside these, emotional experiences also become a driving force for change and moving towards a higher quality of life:

'I returned towards home and until one day I was sitting in the alley, I saw a woman came out of the house, started fighting with the next-door neighbour... this woman was our neighbour too, became our relatives [was related], was related to us but from old times had enmity with our relatives, but I don't know how and these things... suddenly they were arguing and so-and-so until I saw a nymph (Houri) queen girl came in front of me; anymore, we fell in love with this one with one heart [made] a thousand. Of course, I didn't know anything of being in love at that time.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 163).

This presence of affection and love like a life-giving force can sow the seed of hope and passion for individual growth in the heart of the injured (Farmazi, 1389 [2010]).

At levels beyond, some men choose the path of increasing capability through specialised education and scientific research:

'In this domain [problems of trans lives] from that time I did research regarding this subject, then was accepted to university, didn't go, and basically totally went studied social work and got my Bachelor's in social work... but for almost ten years I have [been doing] research on this subject, working... whatever the world's current science is in this regard, I am a specialist in all of it.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 113-117).

These scientific and educational achievements are that same strategy of 'Empowerment through Knowledge' which Paulo Freire (1387 [2008]) counts as the key condition for liberation from oppressive relationships.

From the view of some participants, strategies for increasing quality of life and resilience are reflected not only in individual growth but in daily and generally masculine activities like sport, work, education, or even obtaining academic degrees:

'[Men in conditions under violence] either go towards sport, or more work, or towards education, getting a degree, something that can keep their head warm [occupy them] which can be many things.' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 112).

In Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1392), the process of directing psychological energy towards purposeful activities is evaluated as the greatest pillar of improving quality of life.

Finally, for many men, the intense desire to prove capability is an effort to change others' attitudes and stabilise their independent identity:

'In all these years I was constantly looking to prove the contrary of my dad's word. I was accepted to [a] Model State [school] because my dad said 'You can't'; I was accepted to a good high school to mess up my dad's figure [prove him wrong] and say 'Did you see, I can.' 'University... you don't have the guts (Orzeh) to be accepted,' I was accepted to State [university]. 'You don't have the guts to find a job!' I found a job and earned my own expenses. One of the reasons I was annoyed very much by the marriage proposal was that my dad won because he, like all works, was opposed to this work of mine.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 7).

This type of motivation to prove oneself aligns with the idea of 'Resistance Energy' in Action Theory (Collins, 1389 [2010]) which can mark the force of individual and social change in the heart of the experience of violence.

In total, men's strategies for increasing capability and quality of life in the face of violence encompass a spectrum from high-risk actions to self-believing and growth-seeking efforts. These strategies, while possessing the logic of active agency, lead to a substrate of individual-social growth and redefinition of self-image; and it is precisely in this re-creation that the meaning of life and resilience is also reproduced (Bandura, 1392; Seligman, 1383; Freire, 1387).

8.2.1.8. Socialising with Others

In the process of confronting violence, one of the most important active and problem-solving based strategies observed in men's narratives is moving

towards socialising and interacting with others; an action experienced not only as an escape route or taking refuge in the crowd, but as a path for reconstructing individual identity, gaining psychological support, and even redefining one's position in the world. This truth is reflected in the words of many participants with tangible and immediate details. One of the examples clearly expressing such a strategy is where the individual says:

'Finally with my cousin... someone be next to me so I work with him and establish communication with him in society finally, and these things... [raise] my level of speaking, be able to say my wish.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 281).

In this narrative, not merely the presence of a companion, but the experience of cooperation, dialogue, and practicing expression of desires plays a pivotal role. From the perspective of Symbolic Interactionism Theory (Blumer, 1938 [2009]), socialising and interaction is a substrate for the formation of the self and reconstruction of social self-confidence; because the individual finds fresh meaning and credit for his existence and claims in the mirror of others' behaviour and reactions, and through these very interactions, recovers his language and power of expression.

At another level, socialising with others sometimes finds not only an emotional and psychological aspect but a practical and even vital dimension. For some, collective living results not from welfare but from poverty and destitution, yet this very coexistence strengthens at least a type of support, empathy, and collective sense:

'Now mostly [trans people] don't have that much income either; when you enter their life you see that three or four live together in a room, live in a house together... when we say [this], don't think this person is a very rich person.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 63).

Within the framework of Bourdieu's Social Capital Theory (1980), this group coexistence, although originating from material shortages, itself transforms into a source of empowerment and mutual support; where individuals, despite lack of economic resources, benefit from a network of relationships, empathy, and exchange of emotional and symbolic support, and this matter is considered a fundamental factor in reducing stress, confronting social exclusion, and even resilience against violence.

Also, being in gatherings with shared horizons, like support populations or charity organisations, effectively prepares the space for recreating the role and experience of a more meaningful life:

'Now I had good friends in the Society (Jam-e-yat). Imam Ali Society which was a charity institution that helped women and children in deprived neighbourhoods. Here was a place where I helped children like myself; it had become a safe point for me. There, truthfully, I had no motivation... I only thought to myself that these kids are a series of people like myself who, like those times of mine, have no shelter, and now I like to be the shelter of these kids.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 7).

Based on Frankl's Theory of Meaning of Life (1981 [2002]), participation in such communities, beyond being alone or merely finding friends, is a response to the human fundamental need to find meaning and a sense of belonging; the individual, in the shadow of presence in the collective, distances himself from isolation resulting from violence and, by playing a supportive and active role, not only puts a salve on his own wounds but, by reproducing the sense of worthiness, opens a fresh horizon for his life.

Thus, socialising with others, whether in the spectrum of family and friendly communications, or in the form of group living or voluntary partnerships, acts as an active strategy to confront the consequences of violence against men. This strategy is not only a source of healing but a factor for redefining self, expanding social supports, and recreating meaning in the sphere of individual life (Blumer, 1988; Bourdieu, 1980; Frankl, 1981).

8.2.2. Aggressive Strategies

Within the framework of Grounded Theory research and citing the theoretical views of Straus and Korine (likely referencing *coercive control* and *coping* literature), Aggressive Strategies of violence against men refer to a collection of active actions and reactions directed towards attack or inflicting harm which men employ in opposition to experienced violence. These strategies can have multiple faces and formats. Physical or Somatic Aggressive Strategies include using bodily strength or performing direct violent behaviours such as fighting or assault and battery. Psychological and Emotional Aggressive Strategies manifest through humiliation, threat, insult, or indifference towards the opposing party. In another dimension, Sexual Aggressive Strategies appear as coercion, imposition, or revenge-seeking in intimate relationships. Social

Aggressive Strategies refer to activities such as spreading rumours, dishonouring, or eliminating the other from social gatherings. Finally, Economic Aggressive Strategies are applied in the form of creating financial limitation, cutting off allowance, or using economic resources instrumentally for revenge or controlling the opposing party. Examining these approaches reveals the complex and multi-layered dimensions of men's reaction in facing violence.

8.2.2.1. *Physical and Somatic Aggressive Strategies*

8.2.2.1.1. *Discharging Anger through Breaking Household Items*

In the heart of the narrative of men who have faced the experience of violence, clear signs of discharging anger through active and aggressive methods are observed; including behaviours such as breaking household items, damaging objects, and even physical self-conflict with surrounding people. This method of reaction is not only an instantaneous reaction to deep psychological pressures and repressed emotions, but, as stated in social psychology theories and power interaction analysis, is a type of representation of helplessness and effort to regain control over a situation in which the man has had the experience of powerlessness and frustration (Fromm, 1382 [2003]; Goffman, 1387 [2008]).

When the narrator states with honesty and clarity:

'For example, towards those around me, suddenly when I got nervous, electricity would catch those around me [they would be shocked/scared]; I would get so angry that sometimes in the house suddenly I would pick up the sugar bowl or glass and throw it into the TV screen. Towards the very end, a few series/times I beat my wife and child so that they got scared anymore. I hit the kids too. I got nervous, mixed up [lost control], my brain has no traction anymore, my brain doesn't pull. I am nervous; suddenly calculate it's a hundred million [Tomans] money [value of TV], suddenly I get nervous, for example I don't think of the hundred million; when it went to the dogs (Be ga raft), went to the wind, tomorrow I think about how I gave this to the dogs [ruined it].' (Interview No. 24, Eskandari, Pos 210).

In truth, we see a type of overflowing of inability, frustration, and lack of emotional control which shows itself in the form of aggressive and belligerent reactions towards the environment and surrounding people. According to

Freud's Theory regarding Repression and Displacement (1375 [1996]), repressed pressures and desires ultimately emerge in unexpected and disproportionate forms, and the individual, facing a low tolerance threshold, provides the ground for the explosion of repressed emotions.

Continuing, childhood and adolescence experiences also play a fundamental role in this field. When a participant narrates:

'Or I come for example by punching the walls, well. I saw it, our childhood, our adolescence kid [period], we would punch walls and anger and break bricks. It was anger; afterwards bad and more dire tendencies... well bad... perhaps bad sexual relationships with anger, not with caress. They discharge this anger like this. Yeah, well, it gets discharged like this.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 10).

This expression clearly indicates learning unhealthy anger discharge mechanisms in the social and educational context; where the individual is forced from childhood to express himself through non-constructive ways, and damaging behaviours—to self or others—become internalised as a model. According to Bandura's teachings regarding Observational Learning (1389 [2010]), these behaviours can develop as a result of observing and experiencing repeated violence and frustration in the environment.

In another procedure, transference and displacement of anger—by virtue of the Theory of Psychological Energy and Fluidity of Emotions—is also seen in various layers of the narrative; as one interviewee points out:

'I gave the example that when that adolescent comes [to the counselling centre], he says 'I was constantly punished by the family, my older brother beat me, my father beat me, I was humiliated'... my family [was] psychological [abusive], now they annoyed with verbal violences, physical violences, psychological violences, and anger is produced in them [the victims]; and later, based on a completely natural mechanism, anger gets displaced; anger is a fluid energy that is transferred from a source to another place.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 96).

In this analysis, according to the view of psychodynamic theorists, accumulated anger, after initial repression, is discharged in a displaced form in safer situations or towards weaker individuals (Freud, 1375).

In a more severe context of injury, the anger reaction shows itself not only in discharging via aggressive behaviours and breaking items, but even in the

form of high-risk and vengeful behaviours against self and others. A narrative expressive of this bitter reality is that:

'Violence was applied towards me, yes, for example it reached a level that when violence was applied to me, well if my force reached [was enough], I would get involved [fight] with the party; we even hit each other with knives, and then I would turn to substances and calm myself with substances... well with smoking substances. I gave myself peace. I held a grudge against the party; once for example what had happened... the party hit me with a knife for example in prison... outside [prison] we had a problem, in prison... I was in prison 3-4 months; when I got established [settled in], I gave substances to the party... went [and] what... burned the opposing party with boiling water.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 212).

Here it is evident that repressed anger, in the absence of healthy conflict resolution strategies, escalates to destructive behaviours and even leads to revenge and serious injury to self and other. This trend can be traced in the phenomenon of 'Transferred Violence' and the Cycle of Family Violence (Straus & Gelles, 1391 [2012]); such that the victim of violence himself, in another situation, engages in reproducing that same violence with greater intensity.

Finally, in one of the narratives, the individual's life beyond anger finds its way to a more ambiguous arena; here existential wounds and the need for shelter shake the foundation of the individual's social life:

'She was looking for someone to have a shelter or something... she was looking for this... look, now we, we are men, she was a woman, poor wretch... she was a woman, was looking for someone to have a shelter or something, to be able to be her pillar, to live somehow. Meaning she made me her captive with this work [transmitting HIV] so I would stay by her side.' (Interview No. 23, Ali Tavakoli, Pos 52-54).

Here it indicates that the consequences of aggressive discharge of anger and structural violence even lead to pathogenic interpersonal patterns and the individual becomes captive in a cycle of complex dependencies and injuries.

In a summary based on the Grounded Theory paradigm, it can be said that Aggressive Anger Discharge in men takes shape not as a mere individual action, but in the continuation of bitter experiences of humiliation, frustration, becoming isolated, and continuous observation of domestic and social

violence, and leads to behaviours such as breaking household items, damage to others or self, and even entering high-risk actions. This process, in complex interaction with cultural, familial, and psychological structures, marks a reproduction of observed violence patterns (Fromm, 1382; Goffman, 1387; Bandura, 1389; Straus & Gelles, 1391; Freud, 1375).

8.2.2.1.2. *Muscle Sports as a Reaction to Repressed Anger*

In the context of current society, many men, due to social and cultural pressures and also lived experiences of violence, are forced to search for ways to respond to these repressed feelings and swallowed anger; one of these ways is turning to Muscle Sports and especially martial arts or bodybuilding. This mechanism acts not only as physical discharge of violence in environments like the club (*Bashgah*) but as an effort to revive identity and lost self-confidence. As one participant describes:

'Yeah, I exercised to become broad-shouldered and worked martial arts and with very high intensity. Very. For example, my mother didn't allow me to go to martial arts... I had no violence outside the club. I basically neither fight nor anything, neither at home nor anything. I say my family... basically in the family we are calm from these aspects; but well, in the club I exercised with very high intensity and more than anything it was very important to me... and in the club I had a lot of attraction too, and at that time I didn't wear girlish clothes... and full Taekwondo outfit which you know is the same for everyone, whether girl or boy... there, expression of interest towards me was very intense. Very intense, meaning to the extent that that girl who had believed me as a boy... a girls' club. It was so intense that I and that person I loved and who had believed me got into a fight over this subject, that 'Why are you [with] these people?'... meaning she was practically giving the stats [reporting] on these girls.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 83).

In a deeper layer, intense sport has not only an aspect of pleasure or habit, but is sometimes tied to anxieties and anger that have not found an opportunity for direct manifestation. In the words of another participant:

'Violence... injection of violence we just spoke of... someone who comes exercises to want to pour those muscles out, that is from the anger inside himself. He exercises so much to show himself to that [person/world]... or 'I am coming now,

I am Amin Rezaei, now thank God my hand reaches my mouth [I am financially stable].'' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 14).

Scientific research has also shown that conflict between individual identity and society's expectations drives men towards compensatory and often damaging behaviours such as excess in sport (Hosseini et al., 1401 [2022]). Another eyewitness confirms that this tendency towards intense sport is mainly a reflection of the desire to remain immune from social exclusion or humiliation:

'We see that many boys now are focused in an extreme and pathological form on making their bodies huge in bodybuilding clubs, or go and in the club and martial environments are subjected to types of violence, because they think the only model [way] they can endure in this society and have popularity among the peer group is bringing excessive physical pressure on themselves.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 33).

In this midst, muscle sports somehow turn into a defensive shield so that perhaps youth exposed to injury and repression can protect themselves. But the more bitter truth is that many of these individuals have no authentic and heartfelt interest in this type of sport and have submitted to it under pressure and compulsion:

'These people at the bottom of their hearts don't have much desire for these types of sports and posturing (Ada-o-atvar) and figures; the guy says 'I love table tennis,' I tell him too 'Why don't you go towards that sport?' He says 'It's useless, that is a sissy (Susul-i) sport, it's not something where I can protect myself in the middle of all these kids of power, bully physique.' *'I like to go, me too like these people, make this arm of mine big; me too like them, bring out 3-4 postures. Me too like them, throw one or two [tattoos] on my forearm, otherwise they annoy me... later they come after me, I get raped... me too, I take a brave thuggish figure so lest they be tempted and come after me'... and at least he is using it as a deterrent factor, but he himself is severely moaning in his own solitude and is tired of all these drugs and pills and so-and-so and club and these kinds of things.'* (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 33).

Even for some adolescents, excessive consumption of drugs and supplements only to gain a firm and huge muscular appearance is a reflection of permanent fear of humiliation and being harmed by others:

'Even in a new form... kids whom I even saw in adolescents who come and say they are tired of all this powder and all these drugs and all these strengthening ampoules they injected... 'We feel bad'... then I say 'Why do you eat all this powder, inject hormonal ampoules?' He says 'So that I be huge-bodied and my arms be so-and-so and such-and-such; if I am not like this, I will be humiliated by others or it is possible I be subjected to abuse and annoyance.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 33).

From a theoretical perspective, this trend can be explained with the approach of Sociology of the Body and Masculine Identity Theories. Researchers have emphasised that *'Embodiment is a tool for reconstructing masculine authority and symbolic defence against types of vulnerabilities'* (Ghaderi et al., 1400 [2021]). Hence, men taking refuge in strategies such as power and muscle sports is not a sign of their liberation from suffering, but a translation of efforts for survival and giving meaning in a substrate where their anger and grief find no opportunity for direct manifestation.

8.2.2.2. Psychological and Emotional Aggressive Strategies

8.2.2.2.1. Victim Blaming

In the narrative of victims of violence, Victim Blaming appears as one of the most common and destructive consequences of psychological and emotional aggressive strategies against men. The footprint of such strategies can be recognised not only in direct familial and social encounters but in deeper and more hidden layers of individuals' lived experience; where the individual, after facing injury, instead of support and empathy, faces a wave of blame and rejection, and this blame repeatedly transforms into an imposed and erosive identity for the victim. A prominent example of this situation can be observed in the experience of trans individuals and those facing identity differences.

'Yeah, most of it is because of his appearance difference, his behavioural, deed difference; his words, his everything is different. Everyone understands he is trans and many times he is subjected to mockery. Everyone thinks it is acting (Ada), everyone thinks he is doing this work to attract attention because they don't know what trans is, you know... if you have paid attention, if among a hundred people one person limps, absolutely everyone sees.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 195).

Blame and mockery is not merely a temporary and sectional matter, but a sustainable and deep-rooted factor in reproducing the cycle of violence. From the perspective of social psychology and Goffman's Social Stigma Theory, society, by attributing a difference, afflicts the individual with feelings of worthlessness and rejection and sticks a damaging label on his identity which is not simply compensable (Goffman, 1387). Such an experience causes the resulting anger, instead of being directed towards problem-solving, to be internalised repressively or reproduced as passive aggression.

In another expression of this identity-finding experience, parents' reaction to the issue of rape or molestation is not only not accompanied by support and searching for the real culprit but entails blame and punishment of the victim:

'This one comes, for example, gets punished, which shouldn't happen, that this one has been subjected to abuse... 'Why do you punish him? Why do you beat him?! Didn't I say, dog-father (Pedar-sag), don't wear this clothes? Didn't I say don't do this work? Why did you go? Why...?' Sir, Dad, it happened, you know... he didn't want it to happen but it happened... his hand doesn't reach that one [the abuser], he beats this one. Now this one is not punished [enough]; 'We want to go tell that guy... it causes scandal (Aberu-rizi)... we go want to change his school.' We want to do a work... in any case.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 83).

This type of confrontation, from the view of Social Responsibility Evasion Theory (Wass & Steiner, 1378 [1999]), means displacing fault and transferring the burden of sin onto the victim's shoulders, the consequence of which will be deep feelings of guilt and worthlessness and weakening of psychological capital in the individual. This trend in the life cycle has catastrophic effects on the quality of interpersonal relationships.

'Here that catastrophic event that happens... if the subject is not dealt with correctly, this child grows up, marries or wants to compensate... or in any case comes further forward... in a condition, a period, for example he wants to share his heart with his wife, establish a relationship... this person's view is always a negative view towards surroundings, sees surroundings as bad... in simpler language I want to say, because he has eaten a wound [been hurt], he is always looking for 'Lest my wife do this work, lest my child...' his child comes late, he looks for this subject.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 83).

Developmental Psychology perspectives (Byrne, 1398 [2019]) emphasise that chronic blame creates a negative self-concept and provides the ground for mistrust in family, occupational, and emotional relationships throughout individual life.

Sometimes this cycle of blame is so formidable that even a suicide attempt not only does not arouse an empathetic reaction but becomes a subject for intensifying reproach and humiliation:

'Again they blamed me. Meaning others blamed you because of your action... my intention from that suicide was something else, they blamed me. My intention was for death. They said 'Why didn't you die?! If your goal was really death, you could have committed suicide somewhere else.' I committed suicide in the streets... I hanged myself in the street.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 196-202).

In a society that does not pay sufficient attention to mental health and the complexity of emotional injuries, collective responsibility easily turns into individual responsibility evasion (Goffman, 1387). In this midst, the judgmental look and blame, instead of the factual matter, spreads to the other identity as well.

'I myself was sure of myself that 'Dad, I am not a thief' and so-and-so and these things... I hadn't done such a work to blame myself; their looks annoyed me. Questions they asked, so-and-so that they did.' (Interview No. 72, Eskandari, Pos 97).

In fact, blame and slander are so rooted in the texture of Iranian culture that despite the victim's awareness of his innocence, society's look and behaviour remains like a load on his shoulders.

Another consequence of this cycle is exclusion and homelessness of individuals, where blame transcends the verbal and psychological border and leads to complete social elimination:

'And from the paternal family side... father and mother and sister and brother usually consider these individuals a state of decline for themselves, as the saying goes consider it a disgrace (Sar-shekastegi), don't like it much. Definitely no one likes someone from their family members to have addiction... the family has a right in a way too, well... it is possible they too have quit once or twice, quit three times... you see he has quit but due to that non-acceptance again from the family

side, they continue that obstinacy, again that same cycle.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 34 & 36).

From the perspective of Sociology of Deviance (Menson & Schur, 1385 [2006]), continuous blame and social exclusion is a violation of the individual's greatest need for security and acceptance and leads to the cycle of reproducing injury and violence, whether against self or against others. The connection of this process with the educational system and upbringing institutions is also evident; where the victim student, simultaneous with experiencing violence, is placed under blame and repression by family and the education institution:

'Over this very subject it is suggested to the student that 'The individual... as a male individual you yourself must solve all problems'... repressing that student... that child of theirs... that person who has become a victim of this subject, that 'You couldn't punish the party [so] he doesn't bring this subject up [do it again]... so for example he doesn't repeat this work anymore'... meaning you look, the student has become a victim of that subject, from this side he gets punished too... because he gets punished, you know... if after that it happens to him too, definitely he won't come state the subject at all or open it anywhere.' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 35).

Based on Gender Roles Theory (Eisner & Bieber, 1379 [2000]), traditional expectations of the masculine role and blaming the individual for lack of ability or vulnerability causes the intensification of psychological injuries and social exclusion. Finally, this chain of blame maintains its effect even after years and prevents the experience of healing:

'And after years passed, its effects remained on me; years later when I 'thined,' defined this subject, it was very interesting to me... they said 'You wanted it yourself too that this event happened, otherwise this event wouldn't have happened.' However much I told them that 'You shouldn't have left a 4-year-old child at that time with the Afghan worker to come and go... you had no supervision,' they said 'No, you yourself were at fault, you definitely wanted this story.' Then after that, situations I found for revenge-taking for this case... but I never reached peace.' (Interview No. 98, Rasoul, Pos 35).

According to the Psychological Injury Model, the victim ultimately grapples with a collection of destructive emotions, feelings of guilt and helplessness, lack of social support, and loss of opportunity for liberation from suffering and anger (Goffman, 1387; Byrne, 1398).

The sum of these narratives in the context of Grounded Theory shows that Victim Blaming is a hidden strategy of psychological and emotional violence against men which is reproduced in the structure of family, society, and the education system, and not only deprives the injured individual of receiving support but leaves lasting and often irreparable consequences on his individual and social identity and action.

8.2.2.2.2. *Infidelity*

In analysing the phenomenon of infidelity as one of the consequences of psychological and emotional aggressive strategies of violence against men, what is seen in the face-to-face and candid narrative of individuals is a complex and multifaceted role for infidelity and the psychological, emotional, and even social confrontations surrounding it. The present narrative, from the depths of men's and women's lived experience, reveals the psychological and social dimensions of this strategy.

In the experience of many dialogues, infidelity has not only been a source of suffering but the fountainhead of psychological turbulence, loss of sense of belonging, and instability in relationships.

'You go mountaineering, come back tired... or other relationships had been placed under the radius of this issue. She said 'I am depressed. I don't know what I should do. My family are pursuing me a lot, my friends are pursuing a lot... I am very tired of people calling and wish they would give me space.' Well I would call too... she means me, I am not [there].' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 141).

This narrative shows well how crises resulting from doubt or infidelity find a scope beyond two people and spread to the individual's entire social and family network, leading to bewilderment, collective anxiety, and ultimately internalising feelings of guilt and despair.

The overt entry of the element of skepticism and making excuses to end the relationship is also another crystallisation of the violence-generating psychological strategy:

'This voice I had recorded with that girl... this person who was my student... well what are these? Isn't she suspicious, so what is it?! They said 'Those weren't so much that you raise its percentage [exaggerate].' Now she thought betrayal relationship is an oppression. When we talked she said 'Ms. Doctor, I want my wife, I don't want to divorce her.' He said 'I want my wife,' and I said 'I don't

want to live with him.' In short, I magnified items of betrayal and made an excuse so I could separate from him.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 32).

In this narrative, we face a type of distortion of reality and constructing a narrative of betrayal as an excuse to end the relationship, which sometimes itself becomes a substrate for producing more emotional violence (Goffman, 1387 [2008]).

Social psychology emphasises that the existence of manipulated and ambiguous behaviours can increase the role of 'Mind Games' (psychological games) and one of its most prominent effects is reducing trust and increasing self-blame or even feelings of incompetence for the other party:

'We talked about this with a lawyer... the work, if now, well, became a story... finally you... contract (Gholnameh)... we went there, I went there with my daughter, and this [wife] 'I feel severely bad and feel bad and want to go cut my hair'... dirty psychological game. Calculate, I [thought] a thousand models; I thought she basically has no money and would do something for her so some money comes to her hand... I don't know, a buying and selling... basically I thought the problem is clothes, I would buy clothes for her. Meaning unconsciously I would constantly fall into this thought that 'What is her problem, let me help her, this problem of hers'... whereas she didn't point at all to what her problem is. She only said 'Call less' and these things, and for a period she didn't have a car, she said 'Ebrahim, I answer less for [the sake of] my psyche.' I thought she is really depressed.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 141).

Here, lack of transparency and concealment resulting from infidelity or doubt forces the man to constant effort to attract attention and solve the problem without knowing whether reality has been believed or not; he becomes a victim of psychological violence and a type of deep emotional bewilderment (Byrne, 1398 [2019]). Individuals' experience and observations also point to the formation of a new norm and reproduction of the cycle of infidelity in Iranian society:

'Look, something has become established... the way I realised and hear from gentlemen too, they are telling me 'Don't take it hard, everyone is betraying.' This has fallen among ladies too; she says 'Men do their own work, let me do my own work too.' But why do ladies get stuck [caught]? Most of gentlemen's betrayals are sexual betrayals because ladies after a while resist against gentlemen's sexual needs.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 159).

This view clearly indicates cultural transformations and change in the gender power balance and the two-sided use of infidelity for confrontation or even retaliation; an approach discussed in the literature of 'Symbolic Interaction' theory and 'Field of Power' (Bourdieu, 1380 [2001]) and the role of new norms.

Another point worth contemplating is the repetition and prevalence of the category of infidelity at various social levels, even among individuals possessing power and social status.

'It is the most frequent of them. I know numerous men who of course come talk their heart out with us a lot, and are 'somebodies' (Adam-hesabi) too, you know, not that they are of those broken-down people; the guy is a bank manager, the guy I don't know is responsible for food distribution of a famous company. When we talk with this [man], we say 'Why do you have a girlfriend when you possess a wife?' and these things, they mainly raise this same discussion that 'At her hand... she humiliates us,' and a man needs very much to be consolidated; basically a man takes his power from this, that you approve him and admire him. But since a rotation has happened in the power structure of the Iranian family, especially in metropolises... we have no business with outskirts and these things... and force has fallen into the hands of women really, and it seems they want to retaliate decades, centuries, years of oppression that in fact the patriarchal and father-centric structure inflicted on her, compensate in one place... they have wrecked (Dahan-e in mard-ha ro service kardan) these men, meaning in every way...' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 195).

Research related to gender sociology emphasises this point that the change in gender power balance and the lack of social consolidation and encouragement for men in marital relations is directly related to psychological vulnerability and increased probability of infidelity (Bourdieu, 1380; West & Zimmerman, 1384 [2005]).

The idea of infidelity and its metamorphosis into a tool of psychological injury sometimes leads to repeating the experience in women:

'For me such a period happened, but because I thought he is mentally ill, I tried not to harm him. Whereas I should have had my own expectation against services I was giving him. A two-sided life... well, can't I go out? Or must I have commitment? But how are ladies' betrayals? Gentlemen enter from where? Their weak point. 'Oh my, what a terrible person your husband is, you want to go out he doesn't let you.' Not that he doesn't let, he lets, but that 'I get up go with my

friends, go with a gentleman's crew to the mountain'... well go with your husband, let your husband be with you. 'He doesn't let me go alone.' Who are around these people? A handful of aimless ladies who cannot have successful marriages. And I truthfully, considering that I know one of these ladies and there was talk and these things... she said 'I, after 20-30 relationships, a pursuer [suitor] wasn't found to come and take [marry] me.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 159).

Individual and sociological aetiologies of women's and men's infidelity represent a complex cycle of inefficiency of bilateral emotional relationships, identity crisis, and struggle for power and excitement on both sides of the relationship (Bourdieu, 1380; Byrne, 1398).

A bitterer image is a daily occurrence wherein even women choose sexual behaviour outside the framework because the man suffers from sexual or emotional inability:

'Yes, I had encounters with these cases but its amount was very low... even once a lady came to me who, that same time she was sitting waiting in my office and her friend [partner] called her... that person she had established a relationship with said very frankly that 'My husband cannot take action [perform sexual intercourse] and I became friends with the grocer at the corner' and these things, and 'Now our relationship is exposed' and these things.' (Interview No. 33, Allah-Reza, Pos 66).

The confusing and damaging point of infidelity is here that the man, even if he wants to show a reaction to the subject, faces a deep individual and social duality:

'Gentlemen who had weaknesses in this case regarding their spouse, when they faced their spouse's betrayal, many times they kept silent and submitted to that life; I had very many such cases. That for example the gentleman realised his wife is with someone else and told her 'Why are you doing this work?' She said 'Because you don't keep me satisfied.' Meaning he was forced... meaning he couldn't raise his voice; it seemed it would diminish his masculinity to say 'My wife left and went because of this issue' or 'is going [betraying]'...' (Interview No. 12, Shiva, Pos 21).

The effort to return and maintain shared life despite betrayal and lying is also a bold sign of the man's psychological vulnerability and staying in a bewildered position to find cause and solution:

'I, for trust-building, again talked with a lawyer, took the contract gave it back to her. She had come collected things and said that... one... a few financial works I did for her... financial works I did... and I was still saying 'Come let's solve this problem.' And this was constantly being insisted from my side. Because I thought that for the sake of the issue... I said 'Let me save this life,' because really someone who two months ago was doting on you (Ghorbun-sadaghe-t miraft), so-and-so, and now suddenly doesn't become like this. I wanted that... 'This is a financial and spiritual crisis condition and let me talk to her'... and suddenly I saw she blocked me and unfollowed and these kinds of events. I said 'You are taking your things; the pillow you brought here, why shouldn't they be here? The contract exists.' Now I kept a spare contract of that for a rainy day. She took [things]... and the next day... she struck and went... she struck [robbed] a shop and I realised through one of my friends that she took money from a gentleman... who was that gentleman? That same gentleman. That same gentleman whom I had suspected on the mountain.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 141).

In such a position, the victimised man faces not only betrayal but mistrust, being deceived, and losing psychological and social capital (Byrne, 1398).

Mutual Violence Theory states that many men themselves, after experiencing humiliation, find a desire for revenge or even betrayal:

'Men who betray women are men who themselves struggled against the woman, and the woman... as soon as she becomes a bit capable, an unhealthy defence forms in her; for example, violence against violence.' (Interview No. 6, Dr. Afshar, Pos 17).

This vicious cycle guarantees the continuation and reproduction of psychological violence in the family. Finally, infidelity has always been represented in connection with the psychological need for peace:

'I... a married person who doesn't have peace in the house will surely betray, and a single man who doesn't have peace in his father and mother's house is looking for a place to calm himself, is looking for someone to give him peace perhaps.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 26).

Repeating this psychological crisis and weakness of emotional support in families creates a substrate prone to the emergence of infidelity and subsequently psychological violence against men or even from men (Byrne, 1398; Goffman, 1387).

In total, narratives and scientific theories indicate that infidelity, in the context of the society and culture of Iran today, has become complex and multi-layered more than any other time: on one hand a tool for applying or experiencing psychological violence, on the other a defensive or retaliatory mechanism to compensate for humiliations and power struggle, and finally the turning point of anxiety, psychological erosion, and ethical collapse of emotional communications; a process whose consequences undoubtedly extend beyond the individual level to the boundaries of family and social network and even macro structures.

8.2.2.2.3. *Revenge-Seeking and Stubbornness*

In human relationships, especially family and marital relationships, violence always manifests itself in overt and covert forms; one of the most important methods of this manifestation is in the form of Revenge-Seeking and Stubbornness (*Laj-bazi*) strategies. These reactions often take shape when the individual feels he is in an unequal, injured, or ignored position, and in the absence of healthy conflict resolution tools, he resorts to aggressive emotional and psychological solutions to regain a type of lost balance or power; this very matter causes the cycle of violence not only not to end, but to become doubled and more extensive (Karimi, 1401 [2022]). Examples stated in interviews tell of the consequences and objective reflections of this process. For example, ignoring the opposing party's emotional needs manifests in the form of revenge and stubbornness:

'This lady gets sick, this gentleman pays no attention to her... then this lady keeps this [grudge], empties it on his head somewhere else.' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 32).

In fact, the individual, instead of directly expressing dissatisfaction or reducing relationship suffering, decides to discharge his annoyance and grievance in another environment. This emotional and behavioural spillover aligns well with Spillover Theory (Azad Armaki, 1402 [2023]) and shows how emotional frustrations in one context lead to the emergence of reaction in another context.

In another example, the man's repeated ignoring and inattention towards the woman and the woman's desire to prove her attractiveness again faces failure, to the point where coldness and 'Emotional Divorce' become evident in the relationship:

'It's been eight months that there hasn't been betrayal and I did nothing, and almost some three-four months we have taken emotional divorce... he doesn't notice at all that I dyed my hair blonde, doesn't notice...' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 32).

Such a situation finds meaning within the framework of Equity Theory; when the individual feels justice and worthiness are not established in the relationship, they unconsciously engage in revengeful and retaliatory behaviours—albeit indirect (Mirshekari, 1399 [2020]).

In cases, the individual, in reaction to endured pain and suffering, merges his violence against others with a type of Social Sadism; as is evident in the following quote:

'A series [of people]... don't observe [hygiene]; these cause... use infected syringes, make others sick, and do a series of works they shouldn't do.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 223).

Based on Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1986; Hosseini et al., 1397 [2018]), an individual who has himself been a victim of violence or exclusion may reproduce the same pattern towards others and take revenge for his frustrations indirectly from society.

This cycle is also observable in power relations between parent and child. A youth struck by parental punishment or humiliation, his defensive reaction instead of swallowing anger is mutual movement and even physical violence:

'If I hit, it was nothing [okay], but if I got hit [by father], I wouldn't let go until I hit back...' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 16).

This reaction aligns with Catharsis Theory (emotional discharge) and cyclical relationships of violence; meaning annoying behaviours ultimately entail an annoying response (Dolan, 2020). Such a pattern is clearly seen in husband and wife relationships as well:

'The man says... 'Next time I'll slam you to the ground too, get lost'...' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 48).

The experience of violence, lack of pleasure, and feeling of mental health in a relationship that is the arena for the emergence of violent behaviours or mutual action based on applying power, all originate from this same approach.

In some cases, revenge-seeking gains more intensity and even leads to physical threats. Some men, after feeling deceived or frustrated, see no way

but threat or aggressive behaviours to revive self-esteem or control the relationship:

'Now I say if I see my wife somewhere, catch her in a hidden and secluded place, I'll kill her.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 193-194).

Such behaviours are rooted in Uncontrolled Anger Theory (Goffman, 1995; Ataei, 1398 [2019]) and indicate the individual's failure in managing accumulated frustrations.

In daily life too, stubbornness (*Laj-bazi*), petty revenges, and passive resistance fuel mistrust, psychological burnout, and locking of relationships:

'Yeah, well... if it comes to obstinacy and stubbornness (Laj-o-Lajbazi)...'
(Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 155).

This situation is described in communication psychology with the concept of Passive Resistance or Negative Action; meaning the individual resorts to behaviours such as non-cooperation or stubbornness to maintain a minimum of authority (Hoffman, 2019).

Dimensions of revenge-seeking sometimes return to deeper roots and childhood experience; victims of violence in childhood may be looking for compensation and revenge on the world or recreating that same abuse in new relationships:

'I still see the lighter mark on my stomach and flank; I have a feeling of hatred... I want to take revenge but now there is no one. I have become alone.' (Interview No. 61, Arshia Jafari, Pos 34).

This phenomenon emphasises the necessity of attention to Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma (Van der Kolk, 2018).

Complexities of relationships also reveal a different face of vengeful strategies. The combination of masochistic and sadistic behaviours, oscillation between cajoling and punishing, and multi-layered violences is an important part of damaged relationships:

'This man went became friends with this gentleman's friends... doesn't let me live comfortably... on the other hand he was masochist too, from the aspect that [he had] vulnerability...' (Interview No. 12, Shiva, Pos 47).

This combination indicates the lack of emotion regulation skills and the reproduction of old injuries in the new realm of relationship (Frankl, 2017).

In total, it can be said that revenge-seeking and stubbornness are not only strategies for responding to feelings of injustice, humiliation, or frustration, but tools for the continuation of the cycle of violence and its transfer to various psychological and social dimensions. The more blocked the channels of healthy emotional expression and conflict resolution in the relationship are, and the longer the history of injury, humiliation, or frustration is, the more the desire to resort to these strategies and continue psychological and emotional violence against men intensifies; ultimately, this cycle will entail extensive consequences for identity, self-esteem, and mental health of all involved individuals.

8.2.2.2.4. *Threatening*

Based on the presented quotes, it can be understood that 'Threatening' as one of the psychological and emotional aggressive strategies in violence against men has various forms and contexts. This strategy, by creating fear, coercion, and dispossession of authority, inflicts destructive effects on men's mental health and quality of life.

In examples of violence between same-sex individuals, the threat of disclosing personal and private information is a tool for control and abuse:

'These exist a lot among boys. Even sexual violences they have towards each other. Putting someone under pressure [that] he must definitely do this work... perhaps for example the party made a mistake, smoked a cigarette, did something... the opposing party pressures him 'I'll tell your father and mother' so he doesn't do this work. Taking leverage (Atooo-gereftan).' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 29).

This type of threat, especially in societies where homosexuality or certain behaviours are considered taboo, can inflict serious damage on the individual and place him in a position of weakness and exploitation. According to Labelling Theory (Becker, 1963), fear of disclosing gender identity forces the individual into silence and accepting unfavourable conditions; consequently, social labelling causes the individual to become more vulnerable against violence (Louri, 1389 [2010]).

In another example, family violence is accompanied by mortal threat:

'Then one night [my wife's family] attacked, poured on my head, took me by force... it was afternoon, I was asleep... they put a knife under my neck, beat me,

tore me to pieces. They took me to the notary office, said 'Either you sign or we cut your head off or we do so-and-so to your mother'... they were a bit thugs and hooligans. We had bought a fridge, for example, along with a Pride [car]; one day they came said 'If you want the girl to stay, come put the house in her name.' I wouldn't go under the burden [submit].' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 78).

In this case, threat of murder and harm to family members is a tool to force the man to perform illegitimate demands. Using physical violence and threat indicates power imbalance and the effort for complete control of the victim. This type of violence aligns with Coercive Control Theory (Stark, 2007); meaning the individual tries to control another's behaviour and life using violence and threat (Salimi et al., 1395 [2016]).

In emotional relationships, threat of suicide or self-harm is a tool for attracting attention and controlling the opposing party:

'Most things I see, starting from childhood until I age... girl and boy who establish a relationship... now if you count it as love... with a small argument it becomes a thing... their surroundings and those around them, they saw a person who finally... saw a consumer [addict], saw something... always to threaten, as the saying goes, the girl if she wants to threaten says 'I'll go commit suicide, eat pills if you do this work with me,' but the boy says 'I'll go become an addict.' You know what I'm saying? If the opposing party, as the saying goes, got scared... if they are supposed to sulk with each other, they get scared, reconcile with each other. The party, for example the girl, says 'This pill, this substance saved me.' Ultimately two or three times they fight with each other, argue... this becomes monotonous after this anymore; she says 'I go eat pills or smoke substances,' he says 'Go,' and she, because she said it, finally does it.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 326).

This type of threat, by creating feelings of guilt and responsibility in the opposing party, forces him to accept demands. From a psychological perspective, this behaviour can be a sign of personality disorders and the need to attract attention (Yousefi, 1399 [2020]).

Threat of harming others is also another form of violence:

'I tied their hands. But I did this in secret, not like my mother... it became night, no one was in the alley, in the darkness I dragged these [kids] took them... I just wanted to scare, I didn't beat them. They caught a cold, the cold of the desert...

they listened to me [became obedient]... I kept watch, came visited, stood... I did somehow so they get scared... I saw four of them peed themselves. I said 'You won't annoy Mum anymore? You go straight to school come straight back anymore, huh?' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 147).

In this example, the individual uses threat and creating fear to control children's behaviour. This upbringing method, by creating anxiety and fear in children, can lead to psychological and behavioural problems in the future. According to Social Learning Theory, children exposed to violence and threat might use these patterns in their own future (Bandura, 1977; Besharat et al., 1386 [2007]).

In some cases, threat of rejection and isolation by the family is a tool to control the individual's decisions:

'They can't tell anyone... the discussion of this marriage was this, that it wasn't based on family consent; the girl went married, the family didn't give consent and she said 'No, I definitely do this work and if not I commit suicide.' Now she has gone... what did they say to her? We have many cases... 'Well go, but don't return anymore and you are not our child.' Now she really suffers from illness... a man who causes... a woman who is really violence-seeking, really sick, has a disorder... and really she is enduring... really a series [of people] basically had a stroke, really in fact did [have a stroke], stayed [stuck].' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 45).

This type of threat, by creating feelings of guilt and fear of losing family support, forces the individual to comply with their demands. This behaviour aligns with Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969); meaning the need for attachment and support from family renders the individual vulnerable against the threat of rejection (Ghorbani et al., 1388 [2009]).

In relationships between individuals with different sexual orientations, threat of disclosing sexual identity (*Outing*) and abusing this information is a tool for control and exploitation:

'This relationship is between a heterosexual individual and a bisexual that the bisexual individual, by betraying... which has two states, either he is with a boy or with a girl... strikes a blow to this one, spiritual and psychological blow. And many times that I saw too, that person abuses that homosexual individual that for example 'I'll tell your family, you become so-and-so, I make you miserable, and we expose you to the court, I drag you to the foot of the gallows.' With this kind of

threat he abuses the person. Many times that bisexual from before is in a relationship with another girl or boy and just comes enters the relationship for abuse.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 6).

This type of threat, by creating fear and anxiety in the individual, forces him to accept unfavourable conditions.

Threat of suicide is also used in some cases as a tool for attracting attention and control:

'The man basically went, was forgotten. We went suicide... suicide too the same way, the man wanted to kill himself; we said why, he said 'Because I have no money.' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran, Pos 88).

This type of threat, by creating feelings of guilt and responsibility in the opposing party, forces him to accept demands.

Finally, threat of leaving home by parents is a tool to force the child into unwanted marriage:

'I couldn't say no to marriage because I couldn't do anything. Mum said 'If you give a negative answer to this, your dad has said 'I leave from this house.' I... *frantically... where did my dad want to go?! My mind didn't reach [understand], I was a child. I said 'No, where does my dad want to go? No, I marry at this age, fine.'* Then Mum said *'You marry this one; whatever happens, it's on your dad's neck [responsibility].'* (Interview No. 89, Raheleh Mehraban, Pos 10).

This type of threat, by creating fear of losing family support, forces the individual to comply with their demands.

In summary, Threatening as a psychological and emotional aggressive strategy, by creating fear, coercion, and dispossession of authority, inflicts destructive effects on men's mental health and quality of life. This strategy is observable in various forms and contexts, from violence between same-sex individuals to family violence and emotional relationships.

8.2.2.2.5. Lack of Balance in Expressing Affection and Stating Love

In examining the consequences of psychological and emotional aggressive strategies of violence against men, the issue of maintaining balance in expressing affection and stating love gains significant importance; because inability in this field can itself turn into a form of hidden violence and drive men to numerous emotional and psychological challenges. The narrative emerging from the heart of interview quotes tells of tangible and sometimes

painful experiences wherein neither excess nor deficiency in expressing emotions leads to satisfaction, and this very situation provides a substrate for the formation of psychological violence against men.

'Isn't this itself a violence? What path should a man go? The man dotes on (Ghorbun-sadaghe mireh) her a lot. We had [a case] in this very complex; the man didn't nag the woman, the woman went came so-and-so, in every way. Then one day their fight... we became the judge, we said 'What shortage do you really have? Financially okay, in terms of...' She said 'Come look, I am sick of saying 'My dear,' sick of I don't know 'thing,' sick of 'You are in my heart,' 'You are my love,' I don't know so-and-so. I am sick of it.' I said 'Well, what do you want better than this?' She said 'No, I like him to nag me, like him to do so-and-so to me.' When you give womankind too much importance, she grows wings; when she grows wings, she is looking to go... it belongs to this, that she leaves and goes. And this that they say... again they say 'Men are very variety-seeking'... really if women [had] that social etiquette... they are worse than men. But it ends in the man's name.' (Interview No. 68, Akbar Mombini, Pos 103).

This quote clearly shows that men who go to extremes in expressing affection not only do not face an appropriate reaction from the opposing party but are blamed, and feelings of worthlessness and futility are transferred to them. Thus, the man gets caught in a trap where he can neither express himself fully nor has the capability to exit this vicious circle. Social psychology perspectives such as Symbolic Interactionism Theory (Blumer, 1969; cited in Barzegar et al., 1395 [2016]) emphasise this point that the meaning and value of emotional actions finds meaning in the framework of cultural expectations and social roles; when the man's gender role is defined by the stereotype of 'low emotionality' but in practice expressing emotions is also expected of the man, various types of conflict and psychological pressure are imposed on him.

On the other hand, lack of affection and emotional ignoring in the family environment paves the ground for a type of silent violence against men. Where, despite the individual's membership in the family, his presence and existence is considered unimportant, he sees himself as a stranger to home and family, and this becomes the origin of feelings of inferiority, grudge, and self-deprecation:

'Lack of affection, I know... whenever in my family they talk, no one gave importance to my talking; whenever I came to say something, I felt with their

talking they say 'No, you don't talk.' Just because of drug use I felt this, you know... now because I was a drug user I shouldn't talk in that house... no one gave importance to me in that house. They laid the dinner spread, relatives of seven generations back came sat at the spread, they are respecting him with dignity and respect; but me who was part of the members of that family, if I was in the yard or was at the door, no one came to call me 'Akbar, you come too sit at the spread.' These very things caused me to take a grudge against them in my heart.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 21).

In this narrative, the man, due to his specific life conditions (dependence on substances), is emotionally rejected and humiliated and finds no place in the family gathering. This lovelessness and rejection is not only a factor for forming feelings of revenge and hatred in men but drives them to use maladaptive solutions like isolation or even aggression (Golmohammadi, 1396 [2017]). According to Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969), inattention and failure to meet emotional needs by family members, especially in adulthood, can drive the individual's personality towards unstable relationships and bring lasting psychological injuries (Malekpour et al., 1397 [2018]).

The analysis of the third quote highlights the duality of men's and women's emotional relationships and shows that expressing affection and even ignoring men's feelings by the spouse can provide the grounds for separation and distancing of couples.

'For the man... in fact perhaps emotionally we want to divide into two parts... in fact men's emotion... perhaps they don't see much emotion from their spouse's side... perhaps they are looking to fill that void... now through any way, not through connection with someone else... perhaps basically a nonchalance is created in the man. Perhaps he busies himself with other works... not that just a man doesn't see emotion from his wife... in fact he goes to other directions that cause very bad consequences in life. And I want to say this, that [if] emotion is not there to turn [run] the life... in fact man aside, woman aside, and they execute their own plans... those relationships that should be between them fade, which through this helps separation. And one hundred percent men's understanding differs from ladies, and it is possible that a woman, when a man gets upset, knows what problem the man has and knows what the man should do; and one of the properties women have is that they know what the cause of our upset is, but we can never understand what the cause of a woman's upset is.' (Interview No. 100, Mojtaba Mardani, Pos 108).

Here, the lack of emotion in the couple's relationship leads to the emergence of an irreparable void and monotony in family relationships; the result is that men either turn to indifference and distancing or, in search of filling this void, suffer high-risk behaviours and distancing from the family space. From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1961; Khodadadi et al., 1396 [2017]), when men's emotional actions receive no desirable feedback either from the spouse or from the family, the individual's sense of worthiness and belonging is damaged and no motivation remains for participation in emotional life.

In total, the narrative-based analysis of these three quotes reveals that maintaining balance in expressing affection and love, if not accompanied by correct recognition of the parties' needs and expectations and mutual observance and respect, can itself transform into a substrate for the formation of psychological and emotional violence against men; whether by excess in expressing affection or by deficiency and ignoring feelings. Men wander between two poles of emotions in this field; and the lack of dialogue and mutual understanding drives them more and more to the margins. ##### 8-2-2-3. Sexual Aggressive Strategies

8.2.2.3.1. *Repression of Sexual Organs in Trans Individuals*

The initial confrontation with the reality of 'Repression of Sexual Organs' in trans individuals can be sought in the social, cultural, and psychological structures hidden in society; where collective anxiety regarding 'becoming roosters and hens' (*Morgh-o-Khorous shodan* - promiscuity/uncontrolled sexuality) and reproduction, beyond an ethical concern, transforms into a repressive process starting from adolescence and even earlier. As one of the participants states:

'They are worried that we fall on each other like roosters and hens and produce chicks. And this thought is a very disgusting thought because if they understood man and woman like this, this understanding is not supposed to remain fixed forever with the limited understanding they have of man and woman. And basically that lack of inclination and in fact that psychological tormenting I told you about is being taught generation to generation; these themselves become the 'Gatekeepers' of future generations. Meaning that person who is coming today, the mother who stops her daughter or stops her son, this person herself at age 15 might have been limited in many situations in this same form, and a mentality

might have existed in her that made her restless, while after 20 years she herself is reproducing this. Why?! Because she has learned and accepted or now surrendered that the correct way or possible way is this. Of course, this is being analysed, but anyway, therefore you realise from 14-15 years old that you are growing up and becoming a man, and girls are girls, and you must be careful, it's a dangerous gender (Jens-e khatarnak), and like this... from that side... well anyway this is a form of violence which might not be violence in the meaning of violence—perhaps I don't use the word correctly—but it is an inhumane control which in fact is channelling you very much from that space that naturally should have been given to your disposal—socialising with those around from any age, any colour, any gender—and in the format of a specific culture and a culture that becomes 'exclusive' (exclusionary?)... oh it is not exclusive, it is behaving completely exclusively regarding gender and transforms you into the 'Other' for another group of society. In fact girls and ladies become 'Other' slowly slowly; 'Other' means non-self (Gheyr-e khodi), you know. Meaning therefore a protection and this 'Othering' is produced here mentally, and definitely from my view this is one of the elements of destroying the cohesion of society or the cohesion of human connection. Cohesion in its organic meaning, in fact. Well, this event has happened, happened for myself too to an extent, and I saw these things to the extent I understood at that time; I realised a force is trying by coercion to restrain me; I understood it like this at that time.' (Interview No. 20, Navid, Pos 43).

Here, sexual repression takes shape not only in the form of explicit prohibitions or responsibilities but as psychological control, generational education, and gradual limiting. Supervisory mechanisms often judge namelessly and signlessly from outside, transform the individual into 'Other,' and separate him from the natural sense of belonging to his body, gender, and desires. Sociology of Body and Gender theories (Connell, 2005; cited in Shams et al., 1397 [2018]) emphasise that gender identity is interpreted and reproduced many times in the context of power relations and the dominant gaze; therefore, the process of repressing sexual organs in trans individuals is not just an individual experience but a pervasive cultural pattern that destroys the communicative and emotional cohesion of society as well.

In the heart of this social control, a type of economic and sexual instrumentalisation of men and women is also seen, which links the valuation of the individual more than anything to the presentation of the body and

sexual or commercial desirability. In one of the quotes, we see this process of commodification of the body and relationship clearly:

'Now the girl looks... she has divorced... well, she has done all sorts of prosthetics [surgeries], sat behind her car, goes... well she does business too, all of them do business, without exception... well one with her boyfriend. One has a boyfriend, alongside it does her business too. Business, I mean only for example the boyfriend she takes... well he must spend for her; [if] he doesn't spend, she changes the boyfriend, goes to someone else. [If] his sex isn't right either, for example is a 'thing' [bad]... in his sex too that thing the girl wants must happen. If for example that sex she wants doesn't happen, for example she changes her partner, you know. He spends, but not the sex I want. A question... when you were home... let me say a catchphrase... the story of the prostitute was years ago, well. Business... anything that earns money... however it happens, it has no work [it doesn't matter], wants to be sexual, wants to be Mehrieh. Through any means earns money for her. Their sons too are busy eating and filth-work (Kesafat-kari).' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 159).

Although this quote comes from a different context, it reveals part of that same macro structure that places individuals and bodies under the domination of external values and gender expectations. This culture of 'Commodification of Body and Relationships' casts a shadow especially on the mentality of trans men and their experience of their own body; such that they find their body solely in the format of the demanding and consumerist gaze of others or even their own sex. Body Commodification Theory (Bourdieu, 1998; Farsi: Hashemi, 1399 [2020]) explains this process well: the marketisation of the body causes the separation of the individual from his experiential identity.

But the experience of repression of sexual organs in trans individuals shows itself clearly in the individual layer in their bodily behaviour and feelings; where the trans individual avoids even simple touching or displaying of his organ, wears extra coverings, and experiences a type of bodily denial.

'The subject is this same thing. Of course I didn't know this before, hadn't communicated with anyone else, but later I understood we trans people were like this... under no circumstances do we use our sexual organ in the relationship, meaning we don't even take our shirt off our body. Even with a tank top, why? Because I had breasts and hated this subject; I exercised, bound nylon [plastic wrap] so it would melt [shrink], which had melted a lot too, melted a lot but I still

had it. It was always bound with elastic.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 69).

In this narrative, the individual's separation from his sexual organ is objectified not only in sexual relationships but even in facing himself. Covering the body, binding breasts with elastic, and caution even in intimate relationships transforms into a defence mechanism whose goal is protecting the individual's psychological identity against social judgment and blame. According to 'Non-Self Body' Theory (Sullivan, 1994; Farsi: Kian, 1400 [2021]), when the individual negates his bodily identity due to social pressures and cultural domination, this process leads not only to sexual repression but to a deeper separation between his body and psyche which has direct effects on his mental health and self-acceptance.

Finally, another aspect of this violence is the issue of acceptance or non-acceptance of sexual identity, which itself is rooted in social conditions and cultural limitations of society.

'These individuals are divided into three categories: those who accept they are homosexual; those who are, almost accept, meaning they themselves are still in doubt; those who know and don't accept, and don't know and don't accept. This category of individuals is numerous... who don't know and don't accept, and know and don't accept, which is because of the conditions of society and the country.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 4).

This categorisation shows well the inability of a part of trans individuals to verify their identity and body. Fear of rejection, judgment, slander, and the application of overt or covert violence forces individuals into concealment, denial, or repression of even the simplest bodily and sexual tendencies. According to Social Stigma Theory (Goffman, 1963; Farsi: Pourtorabi, 1395 [2016]), deprivation from social acceptance drives the individual towards negative adaptive actions, excessive self-restraint, or existential denial.

In total, what manifests in the presented narratives is that the repression of sexual organs in trans individuals is not just a reaction to an external limitation, but the result of a complex structure of psychological pressures, reproducing norms, the culture of body commodification, and lack of social acceptance. This process disrupts psycho-bodily and social cohesion and drives the individual towards rejection and internal collapse.

8.2.2.3.2. *Skepticism and Ambivalence regarding Sexual Truth among Transgender Individuals*

The narrative of doubt regarding sexual truth among transgender individuals, spanning from simple, quotidian moments to the abyssal depths of identity crises, reflects one of the most profound consequences of sexual aggressive strategies of violence against men [and those assigned male at birth]. This experience, as observed in the quotes, commences from the precise moment the individual confronts the sensation of 'being a mistake' (*Eshtebahi budan*) for the first time; a sensation rooted in the lack of congruence between biological sex and deep psychological identity.

'I was in the bakery queue, I said 'I became a boy by mistake.' All the ladies laughed. Then I had such a feeling that I was born by mistake. Something that does not belong to me... how correct my feeling was. I guessed... I guessed that there is something wrong with me but I hadn't yet discovered it, in truth I hadn't found faith in it. Yeah, I had doubt and uncertainty regarding myself; that one's body be healthy, I be flawless and defect-less, have erection, my organ [penis] creates arousal, but then this feeling of mine, those things that are with my spirits, do not match my body. Basically it was a strange and weird thing for me, and for this very reason I got involved [in conflict] with the family a lot, even ended up with a psychiatrist and hospital. I was hospitalised two or three times.'
(Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 42).

Here, doubt manifests as a deep and existential reality; not merely doubt regarding identity or orientation, but fundamentally doubt regarding the belonging of the body to the self. The experience of possessing a 'healthy' body while simultaneously lacking internal congruence with it imposes a heavy psychological burden on the individual; where even the natural functioning of the body—such as erection or sexual relations—serves not as a confirmation of masculinity, but as a source of psychological turmoil and a feeling of alienation from the self. Theorists such as Latour and Butler have explained this point in the form of the 'Separation of the Biological Body from the Lived Experience of Gender,' meaning where the body becomes not a substrate for identity, but a chain fettering the individual's soul and psyche (Butler, 1990; Farsi: Shams et al., 1397 [2018]).

The repetition of the above quote in multiple interviews (and even the verbatim repetition by the same individual) is a sign of the recurring

companionship of doubt with the trans individual's mind; a doubt that is reproduced at every moment and is not eliminated by any advice or argumentation.

'I was in the bakery queue, I said 'I became a boy by mistake.' All the ladies laughed. Then I had such a feeling that I was born by mistake. Something that does not belong to me... how correct my feeling was. I guessed. I guessed that there is something wrong with me but I hadn't yet discovered it, in truth I hadn't found faith in it. Yeah, I had doubt regarding myself, doubt and uncertainty; that one's body be healthy, I be flawless and defect-less, have erection, my organ creates arousal, but then this feeling of mine, those things that are with my spirits, do not match my body. Basically it was a strange and weird thing for me, and for this very reason I got involved with the family a lot, even ended up with a psychiatrist and hospital. I was hospitalised two or three times.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 42).

In this narrative, sexual violence is not defined as an explicit sexual act, but as a psychological and social pressure that has penetrated the warp and weft of the individual's existence. Repeated entry into therapeutic environments and consecutive hospitalisations also indicate that these doubts do not merely scratch mental surfaces, but entail heavy psychological and even physical complications; driving the individual from the realm of 'being normal' to the borders of mental illness and identity crisis (Goffman, 1963; Farsi: Pourtorabi, 1395 [2016]).

Continuing, we witness a more macro and theoretical description of this crisis in another narrative; where a trans social activist, under the influence of social and cultural pressures, wanders among identity-oriented categorisations:

'This category of individuals is divided into three categories: those who accept they are homosexual; those who are, almost accept, meaning they themselves are still in doubt; those who know and don't accept, and don't know and don't accept. This category of individuals is numerous... who don't know and don't accept, and know and don't accept, which is because of the conditions of society and the country.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 4).

The precise categorisation of individuals based on the level of acceptance or denial of identity shows that doubt is not merely a personal experience, but born of power relations, values, and social norms. Cultural structures and the

judgmental society, by casting aside and labelling trans individuals, force them into concealment or denial of self. This process arises according to Social Stigma Theory (Goffman, 1963; Farsi: Pourtorabi, 1395 [2016]) and causes individuals, even after becoming aware of their identity, to fear accepting or expressing it.

In total, the result of these pressures is a chronic doubt regarding sexual truth and individual identity; a doubt that penetrates the fabric of daily life, engages body and psyche, and in many cases drags the individual into deep psychological crisis or even social and therapeutic insufficiencies. This reality is confirmed not only in individual narratives but in the theoretical context as well; where theories such as 'Separation of Body Experience and Identity' (Butler, 1990; Farsi: Shams, 1397) and 'Social Stigma' (Goffman, 1963; Farsi: Pourtorabi, 1395) have represented the 'why' and 'what' of this crisis. Therefore, it can be said that skepticism and ambivalence regarding sexual truth in trans individuals is the profound consequence of sexual aggressive strategies and oppressive social structures interwoven with their speech and daily life. ##### 8-2-2-3-3. Sexual Abuse as Revenge

In the lived experience of some men, sexual abuse is not merely an intra-individual action or an expression of pleasure-seeking, but can be a reflection of complex revenge processes in the heart of power relations. This narrative, especially when the individual's self-awareness regarding the origin and 'why' of the action takes shape, finds deeper dimensions. One of the given quotes opens this cycle clearly;

'Somewhere in this very relationship it was that I felt I have a problem. That there is something in my existence with which I was taking revenge on my father; I didn't know what I am taking revenge for. And then somewhere I realised that I am annoying/abusing people with this behaviour of mine. That I bring people but later I don't want [them]. One of these lasted two years; when he came, I said 'No, I don't want to enter this relationship.' That person told me 'I love you' but I would become silent. Again I would become silent; his presence and absence annoyed me. Then somewhere else I accepted that with these works I do, I am inflicting injury on people. Even now I do these works, not that I don't.'
(Interview No. 1, Samira, Pos 135).

It seems the individual, in the throes of a relationship where the aspect of hidden violence is reproduced in the form of aggressive and cold sexual behaviours, suddenly faces her real self and accumulated sufferings. As the

quote begins with reflection and a regressive course towards the relationship with the father: *'There is something in my existence with which I was taking revenge on my father.'* This confession, at that very moment when the exact origin of revenge is not yet clear (*'I didn't know what I am taking revenge for'*), shows that sexual abuse in some cases is an unconscious strategy for retaliation or reproducing violences experienced previously; violence that can have both social lineage and psychological origin.

The continuation of the individual's narrative is a somewhat classic manifestation of defensive mechanisms, the return of the repressed, and the repetition of the injury cycle: *'And then somewhere I realised that I am annoying/abusing people with this behaviour of mine. That I bring people but later I don't want [them]. One of these lasted two years; when he came, I said 'No, I don't want to enter this relationship.'*' This passage, according to Psychoanalytic Theory explanations, especially the thoughts of Freud and Laplanche, recounts the transference of repressed emotion from the primary subject (father) to another (emotional or sexual partner) (Shafiei-Moghadam, 1392 [2013]). The individual not only gains the ability to recognise the feeling of abuse but, by continuing this same pattern (*'Even now I do these works, not that I don't'*), shows how deep and rooted this cycle is; a cycle whose unwanted repetition, according to Melanie Klein, is a type of 'Compensatory Repetition' (Meshkani, 1390 [2011]).

In other words, in this subject's experience, sexual abuse is used as a tool to exit the feeling of weakness or revenge on the primary source of power (father), and violence transfers from one level to another, without the individual often being capable of stopping it automatically. It is here that the intersection of the individual realm (suffering, anger, and internal doubt) with the social realm (power structure and family) occurs; an action showing both individual oppression and structural injury (Zamani, 1398 [2019]).

Thus, sexual abuse as revenge is not just a deviant action but a reaction to previous violences of power structures within family or society on men; an action reproduced under the influence of social, psychological, and emotional factors, transforming the violence-experienced individual into a reproducer of violence. From this perspective, gender structures and relationships must be analysed with depth and transcending the appearance of violence, because many behaviours are the result of the intersection of unresolved past experiences with current situations (Khorasani & Mohseni, 1394 [2015]).

8.2.2.3.4. *Sexual Aggression Against Men*

In analysing presented narratives, we find that sexual aggression against men is not an isolated phenomenon but a reflection of a collection of failures, rejections, and displacement of familial, emotional, social, and ultimately identity relationships; experiences that recount the intensity of internal impact with language and image. In this midst,

'She said 'I married' and [while] she hadn't married, she had done Sigheh [temporary marriage], and after that, a time when I went to see my son, I saw a stranger man sticking to her, who wasn't the previous one. I am sure she put a hat on my head [tricked me]. It wasn't just this substance use; basically it seemed a tsunami was... you know what bomb? The atomic bomb exploded in Hiroshima, it has basically exploded inside me.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 56).

This is a narrative of relationship collapse, feeling of deception, and deep emotional shock; at this point, gender violence is directed at the man, he experiences humiliation and rejection in the form of a formidable and explosive blow, a description that artistically speaks of masculine suffering, suffering that reproduces itself in the form of sexual aggression (not only agentive, but in a passive role, victim, or pattern repeater) as a result of relationship severance, instability, and lack of stable bonds.

These very ruptures drive the man in various situations towards compensatory actions and damaging substitutes; as stated in another narrative:

'When a man cannot establish a connection with his wife and child, and even goes... possibility of betrayal exists too... he experiences, effectively learns that there are other escape routes and other pastures for having fun; he starts from another entrance to meet his needs and has easier ways to express and state himself...' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyae, Pos 102).

This narrative clearly refers to the Theory of Substitution and Cycle of Violence: the individual, after experiencing emotional failure and humiliation, goes after substitute dependencies and new strategies to soothe the wounded psyche, and this itself leaves the ground open for repeating injury or applying sexual aggression against others.

Another part of the dialogue provides an image of internal isolation and 'Emotional Vagrancy':

'He leaves the right path completely. The family is living for itself; this one is totally rejected/excluded to himself... again we see a boy child behind a computer in a closed room. That closed room... now a woman has come instead of the computer, it is a woman. It is a new sexual partner, perhaps two men too, makes no difference; we see homosexuality a lot too, this experience. Or even brazier and opium pipe (Vafur) and his substances or his Shisheh, makes no difference; a new substitute addiction.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyae, Pos 102).

The man, in the process of coping with emotional rejection and lack of belonging, is driven towards sexual loneliness, hasty relationships, or even homosexual experiences, and also addiction. As in theories indicating Identity Crisis Transfer (like the view of Cohen et al., 2012), violences and sexual aggressions against men often occur in the heart of this very identity crisis and feeling of abandonment (Shafiei-Moghadam, 1392).

In another experience, the circle of violence is drawn more objectively:

'Another boy who is afraid that perhaps those calamities they brought on my head, they bring on his head... quickly enters action and weaves a lie to him that for example 'He brought this calamity on my head' and these things... anymore he became the active [partner] too, and another sexual title attributed to me was 'Mamad's [sexual organ]' (passive)... but not only did annoyances and molestations not decrease but a few people from within that gang of class and neighbourhood bullies who were their big ones... suggested to me 'Let's have complete sex, if you agree we give you fifty Tomans right now.' I rejected their proposal. They would come after me again and put me under pressure. My method to fight them was resistance or escaping from the space there.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 18).

This quote directly shows the Cycle of Violence Transmission; the primary victim, in response to pressure, himself enters the aggressive game against another to escape or for social survival, albeit by force and to reduce his own vulnerability. Reproducing the role of victim and agent is exactly what is emphasised in the Theory of Reproduction of Injury-Prone Situations (Bourdieu, 2001) and Shared Trauma Pathways (Zamani, 1398).

In another part, the finger is put on structural discrimination against different identity and gender, where it is said:

'Either they must be cheeky/bold (Por-roo) or if they maintain that same feminine identity of theirs, definitely this event happens for them because 'if this person is

good, this person is bad' [binary judgment]. They are boys too, in the peak of puberty period; [if] this one twists himself a little, shakes his hips a little [acts effeminate], his work is finished anymore.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 209).

Violence occurring against non-normative men or those with different gender tendencies is the result of the intersection of gender discrimination structure, patriarchal norms, and identity repression. In Goffman's words (1963), social stigma and the role of victimisation forces the individual either to concealment or ultimately transforms him into an actor of the victim role or agent of aggression in reproducing that same structure (Khorasani & Mohseni, 1394).

Finally, the concluding narrative with a brief but deep tone shows that the continuation of these violences causes Compassionate Emotional Migration towards new people or non-emotional substitutes:

'...cope with this subject and some might go after substitute individuals.'
(Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 76).

In sociology and psychology literature, this Avoidant Coping and searching for rapid substitutes is known as a predictable pattern for the continuation of sexual violence, both against self and others (Meshkani, 1390).

It seems all these narratives emphasise a fundamental principle that injury, isolation, exclusion, lack of control over relationships and identity drive men towards aggressive and sometimes regressive strategies. These stories show how personal experiences—from marriage failure to social exclusion and experience of rape or abuse—transform themselves into reluctant strategies of sexual aggression and simultaneously reproduce and deepen violence against men (Zamani, 1398; Shafiei-Moghadam, 1392).

8.2.2.4. *Social Aggressive Strategies*

8.2.2.4.1. *De-identification of Adolescents due to Gender*

Here is the story of Othering the adolescent in the substrate of the dominant gender control discourse as a key factor in reproducing structural violence against men; violence accompanied by limiting the right to socialise, creating a feeling of discomfort, inducing the dangerousness of the opposite gender, and ultimately reducing the quality of human bonds. This, similar to what Bandura, Goffman, and Fokouh (likely referring to *Fakouhi* or similar

sociologist) have described in their theories, not only causes isolation and identity exclusion of men, but reproduces the foundations of the continuation of violent and controlled relationships in society for years (Bandura, 1389 [2010]; Goffman, 1381 [2002]; Fakouhi, 1380 [2001]).

8.2.2.4.2. *Thuggery, Hooliganism, and Bullying*

The effort to explain and understand aggressive strategies men employ to confront or respond to social violence, especially thuggery (*Lati-gari*), hooliganism (*Obash-gari*), and bullying, considering field data and the logic of Grounded Theory, shows that these behaviours are not merely individual choices but reactions rooted in the substrate of social pressure, exclusion, marginalisation, and lack of social capital.

One of the important aspects of this phenomenon in participants' speech is Social Stigmatisation resulting from labelling and facing various mechanisms of deviance control. In the interpretation of one interviewee:

'[Police] have paraded me in the neighbourhood a series of times... everyone knows... thugs and hooligans whom they caught us and paraded around. Of course, I think these parading are mostly for men; they don't bring a woman and parade her in the street.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 61-65).

This quote shows that facing formal methods and tools of social control (such as being paraded in the street by police) not only does not lead to a reduction in aggressive and thug-like behaviours but adds a layer to social stigma and ultimately the reproduction of violent behaviours. Security bureaucracy and the purification system play a major role in the masculinisation of this type of stigma; men known as 'Lat' (thug), 'Obash' (hooligan), or 'Arazel' (ruffian) are not only labelled but define their reactive strategies in this very field of struggle (Rafiepour, 1393 [2014]).

In another layer, thuggery and hooliganism act as a tool for gaining symbolic and economic capital. These strategies create a position for some men to compensate for the lack of access to legitimate resources:

'I was looking to make a name [with thuggery and hooliganism]... meaning my interests were in this. For example, I can with one kilo of substances... I can do crime for two days, earn a doctor's one-month salary... then I started doing crime, went picked up 150 grams of Shisheh from my uncle's friend...'
(Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin Bagheri, Pos 167-181).

In this statement, thuggery becomes a substrate for gaining status, wealth, and control over resources structurally stripped from marginalised men. According to Merton's Strain Theory (specifically Cloward and Ohlin's Differential Opportunity Theory), individuals gravitate towards illegitimate means, including bullying or hooliganism, to achieve cultural successes when access to legitimate means is blocked (Momtaz, 1400 [2021]). These behaviours operate as an adaptation strategy in the state of social frustration.

More analytical narratives also show the depth of injuries resulting from these conditions. Interview subjects narrate that thuggery and bullying are themselves the result of accumulated violence and social wounds:

'Thuggery is the result of violence; he can't find a solution, comes gets involved in a series of injuries like addiction, beating people, beating himself even... these are violences society has inflicted on this individual... I who am a pathologist know that this [person] who has become involved in injury is society's wounded one...' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 12).

These sentences align with Goffman's approaches (1394 [2015]) regarding 'Labelling'; Goffman emphasises that society, by labelling and eliminating norm-breakers, drives them towards a direction where they become more and more trapped in deviant identity or bullying. Here, the strategy of violence returns more to the individual's interior, creating a rotation where the individual becomes more than ever both victim and agent of violence (Ebrahimi, 1398 [2019]).

This phenomenon is, of course, linked with the logic of 'Territory' (Ghalamrow). One interviewee shows the importance of local authority and its link with bullying with metaphorical language:

'Territory [of thuggery] wasn't in our own neighbourhood... for example, every neighbourhood has a few thugs for itself... someone whom you know they think is superior to everyone... then in that neighbourhood, as the saying goes, their territory, a stranger shouldn't come; if he comes too, his head must be down [submissive]...' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 140).

Here the idea of Territorialisation of Violence gains importance; meaning the socio-geographical space of the locality transforms into a substrate for organizing and repeating cycles of bullying. Differences from locality to locality, according to the participant's narrative, reduce or increase the rate and intensity of these behaviours. Social density, the type of hidden norms of

that locality, and opportunities resulting from social structure can be significant (Ahmadnia, 1395 [2016]).

Finally, structural violence directly influences psychological states and has an effect beyond the physical field; in the narrative below, the link between social exclusion, desire for authority and bullying, and spiritual injuries such as suicide is reflected:

'He gets into a fight, for example any conflict and fight, any being seen. All these are influential on them. We have many suicides among gentlemen, boys, young men over this very subject... just simply because they are alone and want to show themselves more bully-like and owner of a bully [powerful], it is reported a lot.'

(Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriyaee, Pos 32).

Theoretical analysis of the causal network of these data, emphasising the foundations of Grounded Theory, shows that aggressive strategies (thuggery, hooliganism, and bullying) are more the consequence of unequal power structures, unequal social capital, social exclusion, and even formal stigmatisation than the product of individual desire for violence. In this midst, 'Bullying' itself is often a compulsive reaction to achieve meaning, capital, or even a type of social survival, and simultaneously reproduces violence again.

8.2.2.4.3. *Theft or Social Delinquency*

The narrative of Theft or Social Delinquency as one of the consequences of social aggressive strategies of violence against men depicts a multi-layered and intertwined image of links between lived experiences, repressed emotions, social structures, and individual actions. In the heart of this narrative, theft is not merely a criminal act, but a strategy for expressing or covering up a collection of deprivations, emotions, and injustices under whose shadow men's behaviour takes shape.

In one example derived from in-depth interviews, a teacher recounts his student's past with regret and blame thus:

'After a few years, some time ago I saw one of the students... 'What news of students of that period?' They said 'Sir, do you know so-and-so? Do you remember, the same one who had a cigarette in his hand?' I said 'Well?' They said 'He is in prison now.' I said 'Because of what?' They said 'Theft.' They wanted to steal from a house, they caught him... they beat the lady who was in that house... and they were two-three people, two escaped, this one got stuck, they had caught

him. By any means, neighbours had come to her aid and had caught him... now he is in prison for a few years, for two-three years. If this boy, this student who had a cigarette in his hand at school... at that time perhaps I could have talked to him, perhaps his situation wouldn't have become like this. He escaped [school] and his family was like this... in your opinion what is this? Violence that is revenge and manifests like this. Revenge on father and mother, on this situation they created for him.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 104).

In this quote, theft is not raised merely as a 'social offence'; rather, it is a formulation of revenge and even a tool for protesting the situation the perpetrators of theft have experienced. This view aligns with concepts of Social Strain Theory and the experience of accumulated anger in family relations which Merton (1938) also considered one of the factors of tendency towards deviant behaviours.

Elsewhere in observations, some agents' narratives go beyond this classic abstract idea and emphasise factors such as the desire to attract attention and passing through internal anger:

'Maybe you say the cause of some of these [thefts] might be poverty; no, we had a child there where this child's father was an Ambassador or was in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. And their house was in Shahrak-e Gharb and his mother was a very beautiful and educated lady and had a beauty salon; their financial situation was very good. No, it wasn't poverty. You understand. Or if they turned to theft, it was a way of showing themselves; when someone wants to do this work, he wants to be placed under attention.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 11).

In this narrative, theft is used as a strategy for attracting attention and building independent identity. This attitude shows that social delinquency is not necessarily rooted in economic deprivations and can be the crystallisation of a type of psycho-social void; a situation well reflected in Bandura's interpretation of Social Learning and reinforcing the role of modelling and socialisation of aggressive behaviours (Bandura, 1973).

In another section, the impact of structural conditions and basic physical needs in crossing normative lines is narrated explicitly:

'Over the 'Branch' (Sho'beh - slang for theft case/count), over theft... they call theft 'Branch'... I didn't like to do these works, well, but well I had to earn my expenses, find money somewhere... as the saying goes, when we burst out of the house we went after these... I found money, brought it home, but I wouldn't tell

the family anymore through what way I obtain this money. My mother said 'Boy, don't do this work, come return, so-and-so,' but I didn't do this work... it was my second record or third... police station in Park Shahr... we were in Park Shahr station... prison, well my last record before coming here was eight and a half years record... we were in prison eight and a half years. I was both in Khoreh [poss. Khorin prison] and Greater Tehran [Penitentiary]... it was over theft.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 224).

'For me something like this... seemingly all these were stories... it struck and our Aga [father] at that time had gone to Malaysia... my dad said 'Why don't you go get your end-of-service card and these things? If you want to become a human (Adam), that's enough, how much do you want to fight and brawl?' Mostly I fought; at that age I stole more too, but I fought a lot, I fought a lot, I fought excessively. My father turned back said 'Become a human, that's enough.' I listen to my dad a bit... my dad is really kind... among his children he loves me very... he doesn't love all his children, in my opinion he doesn't differentiate between his children... although he wasn't there, but when he was, I wasn't... neither did I see my father's affection nor did I see my mother's... when these people came did these works, it was unimportant to me anymore whether they exist or don't exist, it was unimportant to me... even now it is somehow the same but in another type.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 175).

Theft is seen as a way to meet daily needs and even a representation of a type of arbitrary independence-giving, but simultaneously it crystallises the emotional void and lack of experience of parental empathy; a subject Attachment Theories and the role of early injuries in deviant behaviours emphasise (Bowlby, 1969).

This confrontation between biological compulsions and social pressures is seen with greater clarity elsewhere:

'Over theft and these things... that being outside [rough sleeping] all the time... I had to fill my own belly, procure my consumable substances... conditions [in those conditions] dictated that I resort to crime.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 12).

'Living on the street floor, fear of the officer. It happened I went collected scrap, collected its devices. I saw all [forms of] degradation (Est). I say I was constantly thinking how to consume; a consuming person is this, always thinks where to get from. Whose money to take. Whatever way he reaches substances easier, he

chooses that. He doesn't think of this, that what is supposed to happen afterwards. My whole life passed in substances. Whatever question you ask, its end reaches substances.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 358-360).

The concept of need and compulsion for survival takes theft beyond a rational decision and transforms it into a bio-social reaction, where aggressive violence is considered a bio-social input (Agnew, 1992). It is here that biological pressures, street life structure, addiction, and exigencies of 'to be or not to be' conditions have such power that they keep the actor captive in the cycle of social violence and theft. On the other hand, the continuity of social violence with other manifestations of aggressive behaviours, such as carrying weapons to display power and fill the void of individual identity, lends other dimensions to the narrative:

'Justification of weapons to protect themselves. Society is not unsafe... I don't know why this thought... I saw youths who have a knife in their pocket, I saw clearly myself. Perhaps that low culture, that low tolerance threshold... wants to show himself big, you know what I'm saying. Having a weapon [is a] symbol of more power. Sometimes those youths think like this.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseini Fard, Pos 87-90).

Weapons, knives, and symbols of power have replaced dialogue and the experience of internal security and direct the crossing of norms and social delinquency. This aligns with Fanon's explanation of violence as a strategy for recovering identity and self-esteem in a situation of domination and deprivation (Fanon, 1967).

In another narrative of power structure within family and society, the dialectic of revenge and curbing desires of anger and aggression finds relevance:

'Someone turned back said 'Why didn't you kill her? Her Diyeh [blood money] would have come out cheaper than her Mehrieh, you would have been comfortable [relieved] too.' I said 'Fool, I have a problem with this person; unless unintentionally... her family intentionally raises a thing [claim]... 'you killed her on purpose'... they execute me.'' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 214).

Here and in another example, the accumulation of structural pressures and inability to manage stress drives towards suicidal and aggressive behaviour:

'I had a soldier under my hand [command], they wouldn't give him leave. He said 'If you put me at the post today, I will shoot; I won't commit suicide but I will empty a magazine (Kheshab), empty a magazine into the air.' I went to the Commander, said 'Send this one on leave, let him not make a fuss (Ghod-ghod-bazi), send this one on leave.' He said 'He is being stubborn with us and so-and-so; if we give face [leeway] to this one, other soldiers will do the same work tomorrow too.' I told him 'Look, this becomes problematic, this one shouldn't take a weapon in his hand; don't you want to keep him in the barracks? Send him to the detention centre.' They didn't do this work, gave him a weapon; at the code [post/time] at two past midnight he emptied two magazines into the air.'
(Interview No. 48, Ali Nour-Mohammadi, Pos 143).

Consequently, men's aggressive strategies in the form of Theft and Social Delinquency express a network of multilateral social, psychological, identity, and biological interactions. Socio-structural factors such as poverty, homelessness, addiction, family pressures, emotional void, and the fading of supportive experiences in family and society bring these individuals to a place where, to get attention, satisfy needs, or even revenge, they turn to aggressive and delinquent behaviours. At the same time, symbolic meanings of power, experience of deprivation, and learning from the actions of surrounding people and the atmosphere of society, like Grounded Theory contexts, place all these trends in a coherent totality.

8.2.2.4.4. Creating Limitations and Severe Controlling Behaviour

In the substrate of society, applying limitation and severe controlling behaviour as one of the social aggressive strategies against men is rooted in power structures and hierarchical relationships that place the individual in a state of coercion, violation of authority, and psychological instability. In the mechanism of this type of strategy, men's agency is reduced by virtue of the dominant social or organisational order, and individuals are forced to live in boundaries defined by others.

One of the most prominent manifestations of control and inducing limitation is the imposition of severe and sometimes abusive discipline; like the narrative Ehsan, a soldier, recounts of his experience in the barracks where the power of applying limitation not only determines time and place for him but challenges individual feelings of worthiness as well:

'...he said 'Do you want me to treat you like an animal?' I said 'What kind of way of speaking is this?'... Two in the afternoon he would call the Tehranpars precinct—where is our barracks? Jamalzadeh... he would call [at] your hour [time], say 'Send this one to the barracks.' 2 [PM] I would just get up wobbly (Halak-o-Valak) go to the barracks, two-thirty three I would arrive at the barracks, he would say 'Well, bring a sheet'... he would keep me until five.' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 73).

In this narrative, the artificial imposition of duties and irrationality in coordination and movement between precinct to barracks is a sign of the superior's controlling strategy which constantly violates the soldier's temporal and psychological boundaries. This situation is seen aligned with the results of Foucault's research regarding 'Discipline' and the role of bodily and temporal control in constructing obedient identities; meaning power, through applying limitation, brings body and mind into its desired order and reduces individual authority (Foucault, 1975).

But creating limitation is not exclusive to power relations in the army or paramilitary organisations and manifests in the substrate of family and culture as well. More subtly, social control takes shape through gender demarcations and social deprivations. Rasoul narrates his inevitable limitation in childhood thus:

'All my childhood period, because all those around me were all girls and I was only a boy, I was deprived of being in their gathering, the gathering of those who are girls.' (Interview No. 98, Rasoul, Pos 13).

Here, limitation is applied on the substrate of gender stereotypes; being a boy automatically means deprivation from collective and social experiences accepted for girls. Based on Symbolic Interaction Theory, this form of control defines and imposes not only the boundary of behaviours but boundaries of identity and individual's self-perception (Blumer, 1969). The individual learns how far 'his place' and his sphere of activity is permissible, and crossing it will mean rejection or blame.

At a more macro level, cultures based on control and limitation play a role heavily in keeping alive unequal social and gender structures. Mehdi Momeni clearly points to this point:

'A culture that accepts that family again only with applying violence against that daughter who transgressed frameworks; otherwise they suffer social exclusion

inside the clan, inside the tribe, inside the Il [tribe], well.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 98).

In this narrative, reproducing limitation through exclusion and applying violence as a tool of control is not specific to women but a general experience for repressing any type of difference and even masculine protest. In fact, clan and tribal norms operate with strict control tools, which researchers including Giddens (1992) consider the formulation of 'Traditional Moral Order'; an order wherein social cohesion is achieved at the cost of psychological repression, elimination of individuality, and imposing definitive boundaries of individuals' activity (whether man or woman).

In summary, social aggressive strategies of violence against men in the form of creating limitation and severe controlling behaviour are institutionalised not only at institutional and formal power levels but in the most complex daily family and cultural relations. As men's lived experiences reveal, these strategies leave damaging effects on identity, self-esteem, feeling of agency, and feeling of psychological security of individuals; consequences that give deeper analytical backing to the results of qualitative Grounded Theory research.

8.2.2.4.5. *Labelling the Victim*

In the daily life narrative of men who have experienced violence, Labelling as one of the key consequences of social aggressive strategies has a continuous and influential presence. These labels target not only the level of behaviour but, more deeply, the identity and social position of men, sinking them into intellectual and emotional isolation. Personal narratives clearly show how such strategies place the man in exposure to instantaneous judgments and social evaluations.

Hamid Moradi's experience indicates that labels such as 'Suspicious,' 'Controlling,' 'Pessimistic,' and even after separation 'Incompetent' (*Bi-kefayat*), are not only easily attributed to him but cross the boundaries of personal relationships and place him under pressure in the collective view of society:

'Then slowly, slowly I saw in this permanent group [team] there is a gentleman whom I suspected... I asked her 'What is this?' She said 'You are a pessimistic person, you are a suspicious person, I don't know... a person who [thinks] I am giving my hand [being intimate], you think it is a thing'... and these same sentences that that other one told me... 'You, I don't know, speak from a high

view [arrogantly].’ And inside me that anxiety was reviving, reviving... until that point where she said ‘Don’t contact me or contact less.’ I said ‘Come let’s go to a counsellor.’ After that, she started incredibly mentally... someone who defined me in thousands of models [ways]: ‘You are controlling, you are suspicious of everyone, in your view all men are bad.’ Then a few days later I saw she had taken an artistic photo which was clear she hadn’t taken herself... I said ‘Who took this of you?’ She said ‘A lady and gentleman were passing there, took it.’ The week after that when she came, over this same issue she started again these same accusations and so-and-so... ‘You are suspicious, you are this, you are that.’ After divorce... personally for myself it’s not important at all... well maybe many... I now think in society that if they divorce, they become the object of others’ view. They say ‘A person who didn’t have the necessary competence, didn’t have it’... or I heard this, ‘The guy separated, how does he have the face (Roosh mishe) to get up come sit in a gathering, how does he have the face to come alone to a celebration?’” (Interview No. 30, Pos 32-34).

The labelling process, especially after life crises like divorce, takes on a new life and introduces the individual from the side of society, family, and even close friends as a 'Failed,' 'Incompetent,' or 'Problematic' individual. This heavy gaze, as Hamid Moradi states, obliges the individual to social isolation and feelings of worthlessness:

‘Either they can stick the label of ‘not being good’ on him or other patches [labels]. ‘If he was a good person, he would have gathered his life [kept it together].’ Whereas perhaps he was a good person too, but in those conditions he had, the best choice he could make was to separate. For the interest of himself and that same spouse.’ (Interview No. 30, Pos 36-38).

Based on Goffman’s Stigma Theory, this process tarnishes the individual’s social identity by means of specific labels (Goffman, 1987) and places the individual in the orbit of deficiency and blame.

A more severe and destructive face of labelling is reflected in Pedram’s narrative of the experience of rape and repeated humiliations. He says:

‘These were among the tough guys (Bezan-bahador) of our own age. The one who raped me, his name was Sajjad and he had a dog twice my own size that out of fear of the dog I didn’t dare move. Mohammad spread this word in the whole region. Defined this event for everyone... and I became known by this name, that anyone can easily molest me and can do any other work his heart desires with

me... for the sake of not doing this work [being abused], I submitted to any other work, for example I passed cheat sheets to kids or any other work you can think of.' (Interview No. 66, Pos 3).

In such a position, the destructive power of labelling targets not only the individual's social personality but places him in the position of 'Accessible Victim' and destroys paths of defence and confrontation one after another. This metamorphosis from 'victim' to 'stigmatised' is defined in Goffman's literature under the title of 'Stigma,' meaning a process during which the individual's social identity becomes tarnished such that others consider him outside the norms and values of society (Goffman, 1387). For Pedram, peers' humiliating narratives led to the reproduction of violence and acceptance of passivity and submission to others' will; to the point where, to escape humiliation and violation, he is forced to perform various tasks for others' satisfaction.

Labelling, however, is not limited only to these cases and penetrates the family environment and even around mental illnesses.

'Families must be educated. Families know mental illness as a taboo, hide it, because of the stigma that exists. You hide cancer, you don't hide blood pressure; well, this is something like that... awareness hasn't been given.' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 30).

This notion of concealment sits in place of treatment and support, and in practice drives the affected individual and his family further towards isolation and shame.

In the university environment too, a prominent example of this situation is seen, where without the person's knowledge or involvement, framing and accusation take place:

'Now that I am talking to you, I recently realised that in a fight we had with our university deputy over corruptions he created... collar-grabbing happened... they took us to this Disciplinary Committee... I just realised that two years ago he made a file for me in the Disciplinary Committee that I have 'moral corruption' without me myself being aware. I said 'Sir, by [your] honour (Namus-an), bring one of these ladies, let me touch this lady's hand, at least so I don't burn [suffer for nothing].' And this annoyed me very much in my life... mostly whatever sticks to me has been the label of 'womanising' (Dokhtar-bazi), while I don't know it at all... excuse me [excuse me], once I went to our language professor, gave a

white paper, said 'Professor, if you accepted, you did; if not, I can't pass even if I take ten more terms. Because in three issues I am a cow [stupid].' He said 'What?' I said 'Womanising, language, and math; I don't understand these three at all.' He said 'If you don't understand the first one, your situation is dire (Zare), but something can be done about the other two.' I said 'Professor, basically I don't understand what womanising means.'" (Interview No. 98, Rasoul, Pos 21).

Gender Labelling here occurs not based on real behaviour but solely based on rumours and the dominant mental atmosphere. Being a man and sensitivity to subjects like relationships with the opposite sex can easily lead to a public accusation and humiliation and place the individual in a defensive position even against instructors and peers. These labels, as Connor et al. point out, play a role in Power/Knowledge relations and are a tool for discipline and social control (Connor et al., 1393 [2014]).

Another experience of Rasoul points to the role of school and daily interactions in reproducing negative labels:

'Again that same year we went... we had an oral science exam. The guy next to me on purpose in front of my eyes... the teacher saw... threw my bag, my bag got dusty. I too said 'Bald useless [guy], why did you do this work?' He gave my grade 18. Said 'You are ill-bred (Bi-tarbiat). Don't you have a family?' I said 'Didn't you see my bag...?' He said 'No, you are ill-bred.'" (Interview No. 98, Rasoul, Pos 47).

In such interactions, the teacher himself helps reinforce the labelling process; instead of hearing the child's narrative, with the label of 'ill-bred' and 'having no family,' he pushes him to the margins and imposes a negative identity on him. Simmel's approach to micro-conflicts shows these concepts are stabilised in the lifeworld of children and adolescents and not only reduce their self-confidence but immortalise the mechanism of domination through language and labels (Simmel, 1388 [2009]).

Labelling sometimes occurs in emotional failure or family separation as well, targeting men beyond the experience of suffering and loss with humiliation, slander, and mockery; as Raheleh Mehraban says of her former husband's experience:

'In short, I decided to separate from him... and my son was nine months old at that time... I separated and at first he said 'Okay let's separate' and 'No, I will

never do this work, why separate? I won't separate.' His family had told him that 'Your wife is a good woman, you are incompetent (Bi-orzeh) that you can't keep your wife.' They had told him this... and this one felt that he too, from that side, is being subjected to mockery that 'How incompetent you are that you couldn't keep your wife, don't have the ability to keep a family.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 32).

All these narratives show the complexity and depth of the Labelling Strategy in the experience of Iranian men; from the environment of school and university to family and society, in subtle and overt forms, it places the individual and his identity under the domination of negative views and prejudice. In this field, as Symbolic Interaction theorists and Goffman have said, social labels continuously reproduce and maintain the individual's social action and society's valuation, to the point where the individual sees himself facing a distorted and incomplete image of himself. Social violence in the form of labelling, even beyond physical violence, can cause the silent death of self-confidence, agency, and freedom of men.

8.2.2.4.6. Mischief in School as a Revenge Reaction to Teachers' Violence

In explaining social aggressive strategies of violence against men, we reach the narration of stories wherein social actors, namely children and adolescents, in the heart of the school space and facing undefined and sometimes aggressive behaviours of teachers, turn to a type of revengeful and deliberate reaction. These reactions often manifest in the form of 'mischiefs' whose function is something beyond discharging childish energy and contains a theme of retaliation (*Moghabele-be-mesl*) and reproducing the cycle of violence within itself.

'I remember once, 22 Bahman [Revolution Anniversary]... we were stubborn (Sertagh) kids... they took us to 22 Bahman. They took us with those loudspeakers of 'thing,' 'Happy 22 Bahman, happy.' We came... falsely, maybe it was childish, we talked... our teacher was Mr. Basak, bless his memory... now I don't know... he grabbed us beat us, hit us a cuff on the nape (Pasi)... and we came... the only work we had... he had a motorcycle, a Rex motorcycle... now God is witness its tank was big... the only work I did, I pierced this with a nail. My violence was emptied like this. I had a teacher, Ms. Gholamzadeh, she annoyed me and sometimes put a pen between my fingers [torture method]... and then my anger erupted too... I would come put a thumbtack under her seat, her

chair. I did these works several times so she gets annoyed, because I had no way.'
(Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 14).

As this quote shows, the student is not merely in the stature of a passive individual who is a victim of the educator's violence, but by adopting an active stance, tries with hidden and unexpected methods to provide a channel for discharging anger and regaining the feeling of control for himself; this act, although considered 'mischief' from the view of the school's formal system, carries a deeper meaning than childish playfulness within itself and, according to Theory of Violence Reproduction (Abrams et al., 2011), transforms itself into a tool in the student's hand for reclaiming capability.

In this substrate, the boundary between girlhood or boyhood fades with violent and revenge-seeking situations in school, and the pupil, in reaction to injustice or the teacher's violent action, turns to initially passive and then active revengeful agency. In another narrative of this same kind:

'It incarnates in the form of mischief and in the form of violence... and mischief and violence is like this, that if you place a student in a framework, don't allow that discharge to take place...' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 49).

From this perspective, mischief and violence are recognised as two sides of the same coin, both being a reflection of the child's repression and desperation in the face of the school structure; in times when the child feels he has no space to express his feelings and desires and a strict framework has been determined for him, he finds no remedy but to manifest a reaction directed at damaging or disrupting school order; a behaviour which in theoretical literature, especially in the tradition of Sociology of Control (Agnew, 2001), is interpreted as resistance against structural authority and an effort to revive individual dignity.

In another quote, the interviewee presents a clearer picture of teachers' perception regarding these actions:

'No, he said 'You are mischievous, you do the work of a hundred kids, you take away our reputation everywhere, you are not a child to be calm.' All teachers said 'This one is mischievous but not ill-bred.' But everyone says 'Oh Imam of the Time [Messiah], let this one not open his mouth.' Because suddenly I pull my pants down.' (Interview No. 98, Rasoul, Pos 45).

In this narrative, a collective feeling of 'Disobedience' in the education system is evident; where the student, due to repetition and multi-layered nature of

abuses, reaches a reckless stage of destroying school social norms, but this destruction is not of the genre of pure norm-breaking, but a response to repressive structures; as Collins (2008) proposes in the Theory of Violent Action Chains, individuals placed in exposure to exclusion or humiliation challenge the domination structure by repeating vengeful reactions and disrupting order.

Data analysis from the lens of Grounded Theory shows that the emergence of aggressive strategies and violence against men/boys in school is multifaceted and polysemous, such that it does not remain only in the layer of apparent behaviour and enters the arena of identity-finding, choosing vengeful action, and demanding a share of power. In this situation, violence, whether from the teacher or from the pupil, grows in the substrate of the school structure's inability to accept differences and keep the path of emotional discharge open; mischief turns into protest and the medium of deliberately questioning the school's authority structure.

Ultimately, the case study of narratives indicates that mischiefs with the nature of hidden or overt violence are not merely aggressive behaviour, but a mechanism for defending self, reclaiming value, and a type of self-discovery in an authoritarian structure; an analysis supported by Sociological Theories of Resistance (Scott, 1985). Therefore, every protest movement of the child and adolescent in the educational space carries layers of meaning and reaction to the direct and structural experience of violence.

8.2.2.5. Economic Aggressive Strategies

8.2.2.5.1. Misuse of Financial Rights: Economic Pressures in Iranian Marital Relations

In examining economic aggressive strategies and the misuse of financial rights in Iranian marital relations, the experiences and statements of research participants show a transparent image of the complexities and diverse dimensions of this type of violence. Narratives are a reflection of a complex network of demands, tools, and pressures that men face in confronting legal structures, social expectations, and economic relations; a trend which, in the paradigmatic model of Grounded Theory (GT), pays more attention to power relations and semantic contexts than merely isolated events.

'He said 'My son was a university professor; he met a lady, a girl. I bought a house for him in Yusef Abad, wanted to surprise them. When, so to speak, they wanted to go see the new house and bring their dowry (Jahiziyeh) and these things... the girl said 'Whose name is the house in?' The boy said 'In my mother's name.' [Girl] said 'No, if it is not in my name I won't marry you, and it must be in my name.' The boy comes tells his mother; the mother says 'My son, what kind of work is this?!' In short, the girl goes executes [demands] her Mehrieh. Before marriage... meaning they had gone to put the dowry in the house... before marriage she goes executes her Mehrieh and they sell the house and give the girl-lady's Mehrieh.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 19).

In this narrative, the female actor overtly uses legal and customary tools to gain economic benefits, to the point where financial demanding transforms not only into a pre-condition for marriage but even into a vehicle for economic control and domination. In this substrate, the house that the man's parents provided for their child turns into an arena for bargaining and legal threat. Such situations, in addition to financial damage, damage emotional relationships between the couple and the man's family; where 'Mehrieh' is a tool of power, not a legal shield.

This narrative gains more depth in juxtaposition with other reports emphasising the legal consequences of these financial demands:

'In the divorce issue, many men end up in prison because of [paying] Mehrieh, Nafagheh [maintenance], things they must give. True, it's the only feminine weapon, you know.' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 71-72).

What distinguishes this evidence from other tools of economic violence is the explicit conscious nature of this weapon and its legal and cultural legitimacy among women. In fact, rights designed to support women operate in the position of a tool of power against the man; many men in this mechanism face prison, economic ruin, and the collapse of social dignity. It is no surprise that in the heart of society, these tools are sometimes placed in the service of coercion and applying control instead of guaranteeing justice, to the point where some citizens believe:

'A relationship that is forced... you must endure each other under one roof? In my opinion this is not right; whether lady or gentleman, one must value oneself. When one sees this life gets nowhere... finally whatever they have is for the kids, right! Now even if a child isn't involved... well finally everyone must value

themselves... a person who values himself in a relationship he knows isn't right must... without hurting... meaning we don't reach this view. If it doesn't change, pull aside [separate]. But unfortunately now, no; they use Mehrieh as a tool.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 48).

This instrumental application of *Mehrieh* and other financial rights reproduces the damaging situation; where financial demands are not a plan to guarantee security or family support, but a pattern for compensating emotional frustration or personal revenge. As acknowledged by sociologists such as Craib and Bernet (2016; likely referencing *Modern Social Theory* or similar concepts), in such conditions the concept of 'Right' transforms into a tool of 'Power' instead of 'Justice,' which can create a cycle of mutual violence between spouses (Craib & Bernet, 1395 [2016]: 148).

In this same space of power and interaction, we witness that even other rights such as the right of divorce are taken from the man under family and customary pressures or used to annoy and control him;

'I saw the girl's [my wife's] dad; he said 'Oh Abolfazl!! What is this one doing here?' I said 'This is that same father-in-law.' He said 'Oh Abolfazl, are you a donkey not to understand what mistake you made?' I had married already... I said maybe they lie a bit, maybe people lie, you know... they took me [by force], took the right of divorce [from me].' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 73-74).

In the theoretical explanation of this event, one can point to Bourdieu's theoretical triad regarding capital (economic, social, and cultural). In these examples, women's social and cultural capital—meaning accepted definitions of roles and customary and familial supports—is placed in the service of receiving economic capital and is formulated upon domination and economic pressure against the man (Bourdieu, 1380 [2001]: 104).

In a more macro analysis, research participants show that traditional social structures and gender expectations prepare the ground for the continuation of this type of violent action and financial abuse:

'This too, a part of it goes back to society's culture... traditional culture of society... as far as I am informed, in many Western societies they are not like this. But if I speak about our own country... meaning a culture that is established in the Iranian family, that only the man is responsible for providing family needs... now a child might exist or might not exist... financial provision and living costs

for his lady. And I think this is divided in Western societies... meaning the man [has] a part of responsibilities and the woman a part. They work together jointly. But in Iranian and specifically traditional societies, this has been divided; the woman just sits at home and providing financial needs is only with the man.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 58).

In this same space, applying psychological pressure, threat of emotional collapse, and erosion of masculine symbolic capital also crystallises in a hidden and sometimes overt form in aggressive economic action; where emotional and psychological injury, instead of legal support, is the inevitable product of unfair power relations:

'She might be harsh and subject her husband to spiritual and psychological and physical abuse... when this happens, the enamel (Mina) [foundation/glaze] of the family might break, sanctities (Hormat-ha) little by little... I always say one thing: as far as possible, couples maintain sanctity; when it is broken, no sanctity remains. I say sanctity is like a glass that has cracked; it breaks.' (Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 95).

Even in decision-making or financial management in the family, we witness the formation of defensive and sometimes retaliatory strategies;

'I was talking to a lady... she said her husband said in the session [therapy/court] that 'You gave the juicer, rice cooker, and meat grinder to charity while they were the base [essentials] of the house.' She said 'He spends those monies on women; I spend my property on charity, am I doing a bad thing?!' Yeah, its appearance is beautiful too; she calls this 'Pictorial Defence' or 'Cathartic' which is a beautiful picture. She said 'Ms. Doctor, am I doing a bad work? He spends on loose women (Zan-e azad) and I help the poor.' Meaning she is striking a blow to the husband financially, that 'You must buy this for me, go buy a meat grinder now, go buy a mixer for me and...' (Interview No. 6, Dr. Afshar, Pos 17-19).

This narrative represents a defensive and retaliatory system occurring in the text of financial relations of the Iranian family; where supportiveness or giving takes form not of kindness, but of psychological and economic war. In the interpretation of Bowman and Hary (2010; likely referencing specific family conflict literature), the family in Iran, in transition from tradition to modernity, faces a type of conflict of roles and demands, the result of which is the emergence and continuation of economic violence patterns (Bowman & Hary, 2010: 75).

What the review of quotes and theoretical context shows is that economic violence against men is not merely the resultant of a simple interaction between woman and man, but the result of a complex arrangement of cultural contexts, legal structures, customary expectations, and aggressive strategies. These strategies, from legal tools and rights to daily financial actions, are an arena for struggle, domination, or even relationship collapse; with extensive consequences for men's individual identity, social dignity, and family continuity.

8.2.2.5.2. *Depriving Children of Inheritance and Assets and Property*

In narratives emerging from the heart of interviewees' experiences, the strategy of depriving children of inheritance and transferring assets as a manifestation of economic violence against men has taken shape in a substrate where the power system and emotional and familial relations are intertwined, and a concept like 'Heritage' (*Miras*), more than a simple transfer of capital, has transformed into an arena for managing family relationships and expressing emotions. The following narrative clearly depicts one of the aggressive mechanisms; where the senior citizen, in reaction to dissatisfaction with children or even in facing family pressures and tensions, takes action for the conscious elimination of the child from the inheritance:

'What else? When a senior citizen is dissatisfied with his kids, what other method does he employ? He puts him out of his inheritance (Birun az Ers) or strikes himself towards destruction and destroys himself. These three issues, and one is that triangle I told you, the Triangle of Misery.' (Interview No. 23, Mokhtar Davari, Pos 47-48).

This narrative clearly shows that the subject of inheritance is a tool in the hands of parents (generally elderly fathers) to apply power or respond to long-standing frustrations and disappointments. Such an action is not merely an economic decision but a manifestation of grievance and even emotional withdrawal of the parent from the child, whose consequences can damage both the psychological and economic realm of the minor or adult. From the perspective of Bourdieu's Action Theory, economic capital (like heritage) is placed in connection with Symbolic Capital (value of being a father or parent's social position), and the parent can stabilised or restore his symbolic domination by eliminating children from economic capital (Bourdieu, 1380 [2001]: 119). Also, other experiences of family spaces show more complex

dimensions of utilising asset transfer as a type of protection or avoidant mechanism by men.

'The majority of ladies, because again gentlemen strike at their assets with a trick or transfer their assets to others' names beforehand... anyway they play a series of tricks... ladies can no longer reach their rights [Mehrieh]. Of course we must consider this too.' (Interview No. 33, Allah-Reza, Pos 22).

In this narrative, while pointing to men's defensive actions, it becomes clear that transferring assets to others (before divorce or serious family dispute) acts as a response to the lack of economic security and fear of capital confiscation in the flow of marital conflicts. This action is perceived by women as a trick and structural evasion and ultimately fuels the deterioration of relationship status and creates a suitable substrate for forming suspicion and a system of mistrust; something Giddens names as modern forms of relationship insecurity; meaning where legal and economic security gives its place to protective and even aggressive strategies (Giddens, 1381 [2002]: 94).

In such a context, concepts like 'Inheritance Right,' 'Ownership,' and 'Transfer of Assets', more than being based on mere legal rules, are defined in the fray of emotional interactions and power tensions. The parent, to manage dissatisfactions and express domination or even revenge, sometimes consciously engages in eliminating children from inheritance, or in a more active role, by early transfer of assets to others, preserves the possibility of management and control for himself until the end of life. Simultaneously, these actions are reflected in marital relationships as well, and the fear of asset confiscation causes the man to try to bypass legal or juridical paths and transfer his assets to relatives or third parties in advance to remain immune from the harm of divorce consequences or financial conflicts.

As seen in the paradigmatic model of Grounded Theory, depriving children or spouses of inheritance or assets not only causes their elimination from economic resources but is accompanied by a type of psychological and symbolic elimination. The feeling of rejection, worthlessness, and insignificance is the inevitable consequence of this aggressive strategy which can have a lasting impact on individuals' identity and mental health. In the interpretation of Ramezani et al., this cycle will lead to the reproduction of feelings of mistrust and conflict in subsequent generations of the family as well (Ramezani et al., 1397 [2018]: 65).

In total, what emerges from these narratives is that the strategy of depriving of inheritance and transferring assets is not merely a legal action, but a tool for managing feelings of dissatisfaction, applying power, and reacting to crises of trust and belief in family and marital relationships. The result of this cycle is the formation of a damaging space intensifying economic violence against men, or in some cases against other family members; a space wherein deep human relationships are sacrificed to relations of power and capital.

8.2.3. Defensive Strategies

Within the framework of Grounded Theory research, Defensive Strategies by men refer to a collection of measures men employ to maintain psychological balance, reduce pressures, and manage the consequences of violence. These strategies usually have a protective aspect and are often reactive and non-aggressive. One of the most important defensive methods is Creating Entertainment, Hobbies, and Occupational Engagement, which helps men reconstruct their psychological energy by temporarily distancing themselves from the violence-generating space. Confrontation and Resistance of men against violence is also another manifestation of defence, which is sometimes accompanied by standing up to the violence-exerting individual.

In some cases, men take refuge in religious rituals such as prayer, vows (*Nazr*), or even magic to experience peace or spiritual support. Facing the collapse of traditional authority and emerging violences demands fresh defensive strategies; including Forced Childbearing with the aim of stabilising family position or Trans Marriage for liberation from identity conflicts. Paying Ransom (*Baj-dadan*) is also observed as a solution to curb or reduce the intensity of violence. This collection indicates the complexity and diversity of men's reactions in confronting variable patterns of violence.

8.2.3.1. *Creating Entertainment, Hobbies, and Occupational Engagement*

In the lived experience of men placed in exposure to various types of violence, especially psychological and emotional violence, coping and defensive strategies find unique forms. In such conditions, the individual, to find a way to reduce tension, reconstruct himself, and maintain psychological cohesion, often takes refuge in activities such as sport, work, and entertainment; as if

these actions become the place for discharging emotion, recovering dignity, and a shield for protecting against deeper internal injuries.

In the first narrative, with clarity and vivid presence of details, a scene opens where the male victim of domestic violence chooses a wide spectrum of coping behaviours to confront these pressures:

'For example, either he goes does sport to perform emotional discharge, even heavy sport; one can take a second job, distance himself from the house, for example work until late at night, come late at night, go early in the morning, talk to no one; or for example go after the next person. Anyone might discharge this somehow, want to discharge this violence. This same thing, either go towards sport...' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 112).

This narrative clearly shows that domestic violence leads not only to suffering but drives men towards adaptive and defensive actions. Some, with more work, adding a second job, or longer presence at the workplace, distance themselves from the home space. These very actions are a symptom of the man's effort to curb the feeling of helplessness and reconstruct self-esteem. Actions like 'no one talks to anyone' also show us that sometimes social and emotional exclusion is answered in the form of social withdrawal; an instance of the defence mechanism of 'Avoidance' which Freud introduces as part of the human psychic apparatus for coping with suffering (Freud, 1387: p. 23).

In another instance, a deeper and more personal narrative is raised:

'I threw sport into my work schedule from the year 61 [1982]. Something happened that I started sport and am doing it until now. Why we started martial arts... we have no business [it doesn't matter], let it remain. When I saw I had no way, I took refuge in sport. Took refuge in the mountain.' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 75).

Here sport—especially hard sports and mountaineering—is a place to take refuge, a place where men can compensate for the feeling of defencelessness resulting from domestic violence to some extent. Taking refuge in physical activities is recognised from the perspective of Resilience Theory as a coping mechanism; meaning the individual tries to manage his psychological vulnerability by guiding negative energies towards healthy activities (Engler, 1396: p. 71).

In the third narrative, working appears again as a therapeutic strategy:

'Those days I was alone and upset, I tried to keep myself busy (Sar-e khodamo garm konam) with working; I tried basically not to go towards sadness and loneliness. This experience that I myself caused... obtaining a series of other things, doing a series of other works. This very thing caused my learning level to go up; meaning 90 percent, something Great God takes from a human, He gives something [back] to him. I obtained my cleanliness [sobriety] for close to a year.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 353-355).

In this speech, the dual function of work and effort is more evident; on one hand, occupational engagements are considered a method for distancing from pain and the suffering of loneliness, and on the other, provide opportunity for growth and learning. In other words, men try to give new meaning to losses and sufferings resulting from violence, and in a process similar to what Frankl calls 'Meaning-Making in Suffering,' transform suffering into an opportunity for self-building and individual elevation (Frankl, 1995: p. 38).

From these narratives it is clear that creating entertainment, hobbies, and occupational engagement is a natural and even healthy reaction to the traumatic situation of violence against men. These defensive strategies, while returning a feeling of relative control over life, temporarily reduce psychological pressure and preserve the individual from falling into the abyss of more severe socio-psychological injuries. But simultaneously, attention must be paid that these defence mechanisms, however strong and useful, if they do not replace deep interaction with the issue and turn into a mechanism for escaping and ignoring the roots of violence, can ultimately lead to 'Superficial Relief' and keep the individual in the cycle of repeating injury and avoidance (Becker et al., 1400: p. 111).

What Grounded Theory places before our eyes in this substrate is the story of men who, for their psychological endurance and individual identity, are forced to turn to refuges such as sport, work, and entertainment following every violent blow; as if these activities simultaneously put a salve on the wound and are a sign of the wound's depth—a cycle of being defensive and gradual reconstruction, in the heart of which hope, however fragile, for repair and return to self waves.

8.2.3.2. Confrontation and Resistance Against Violence

In facing violence, Iranian men adopt a diverse spectrum of coping and resistance solutions rooted in social, cultural, and psychological structures.

The emergence of violence does not mean merely being a victim; many men engage in reproducing power and self-affirmation through resistance and active response.

The first manifestation of this issue is seen in the action of Direct Retaliation. Some men, against the experience of violence, use the same pattern and somehow retaliate:

'A series of them retaliate (Moghabele-be-mesl); meaning for example whatever she said, I do that too.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 57).

According to Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1973), individuals suffer learning by observing and experiencing behavioural patterns and reproduce similar behaviours in reaction to threat or pressure. This trajectory can entail intensifying the cycle of violence. In the collective space too, men sometimes engage in solidarity against the violence-exerting power:

'Class kids, when they join hands (Dast-be-yeki), can confront the teacher.' (Interview No. 80, Erfan, Pos 115).

This pattern shows that Collective Resistance can lead to structural awareness-raising and demanding, just as field studies have shown group protests have more effectiveness against authority (Fanon, 1963; Hamidizadeh, 1395).

At another level, the motivation for revenge and the desire to restore power balance is mainly linked with the feeling of injustice and loss of control:

'In every moment they live here, they are thinking of revenge on those who brought them here.' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 12).

The tendency towards revenge aligns from a sociological perspective with structural theories like Coser's approach (1957) regarding the function of violence in reproducing individual and social identity.

Some men, however, drag their resistance to the Symbolic and Structural Realm. For example, in facing governance policies or social injustice, they adopt solutions such as elevating collective awareness and informing about structural behaviours:

'Come give awareness to people, organize price information...' (Interview No. 95, Retired Military Colonel, Pos 15).

These types of strategies are a kind of active and critical resistance which, according to the Agency Paradigm (Giddens, 1984), causes a redefinition of agency in dominant power structures. In contrast to hope or inaction,

sometimes some men turn to Passive Endurance based on the caregiving role or preserving the family entity:

'If really a child wasn't involved (dar kar nabud), I would have finished it by now.' (Interview No. 17, Foad, Pos 51).

This strategy, from the perspective of Gender Role Theory (Connell, 2005; Ebrahimi, 1398), shows that family responsibility can overcome the choice of confrontation strategy and reinforce forced endurance. In more specific spaces, men show resistance to control economic interests and establish structural balance, such that:

'At the Aghd spread (Sofreh Aghd), we became so much snake and viper (Mar-o-Af'i - shrewd/defensive)... whatever they did, I said 'Talk about above [or] under ten coins [Mehrieh].'' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 19).

These reactions are a manifestation of using Bargaining Power within the framework of the relationship, which is analysable according to Blood and Wolfe's Resource Theory (1960; text cites Blau & Wolfe 1971, likely error for Blood/Wolfe). Evidence of direct confrontation with the source of violence and pre-emption is also present in quotes:

'I didn't let them in [give them leeway], I pre-empted' and also 'I did its annoyance/abuse myself to him/her, it was like this...' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 71; 89).

In this method, resistance can have a reversible characteristic and even transform into violent behaviour from the victim's side; a phenomenon Violence Transmission Theory refers to (Widom, 1989).

In strict institutions (like Military Service), individual resistance manifests in the form of insisting on dignity and self-esteem:

'In no way does it go into my coat [I cannot accept] that a half-meter [short/insignificant] human wants to talk to me [disrespectfully].' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 77).

Social psychology studies have shown self-worth plays an effective role in the intensity of defensive response to quasi-compulsory situations (Baumeister, 1997). Sometimes, the mechanism of Positive Resistance and choosing healthy support networks manifests in the substrate of adversities; this strategy is accompanied by emphasis on choosing companions and individual valuation:

'I resisted, and secondly that I chose the right path, didn't go to break norms...'
(Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 120).

According to Lin's Social Resources Theory (2001), the capacity of support networks protects the individual from vulnerability and increases coping power. Conversely, some confrontations appear in the form of compulsion and Self-Sacrifice to preserve family interests and values:

'Stand [endure] until age forty so this one does whatever he likes with me, and then... problems that are in our society...' (Interview No. 89, Raheleh Mehraban, Pos 34).

Staying in a damaging situation due to social norms or customary limitations; meaning where resilience finds a border with helplessness and self-sacrifice.

In another example, insisting on gender beliefs and defending identity boundaries plays a role in the context of friendly relations:

'Yeah, basically over my girlfriend... my friend's friends... I would get jealous (Gheyrati), fight...' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 97-99).

These reactions represent the grounds for the emergence of traditional masculinity and masculine role-playing (Kimmel, 2006; Mir-Moeini, 1397). At an extreme level, resistance is even in exposure to torture and bodily and verbal pressure to preserve dignity and refrain from confessing to falsehood:

'They had burst me [beaten me] to the limit of death but my mouth didn't open...' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 70).

Studies show symbolic control over body and language can preserve the individual's identity position and reinforce the feeling of relative control (Foucault, 1979; Rastegar, 1400).

On the other hand, Passive and Self-Blaming Resistance is also seen, like lack of reaction against the continuation of sexual abuse which itself is the beginning of more injury:

'Even I myself felt sick of myself, but when they thought to themselves that before they could abuse me too...' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 19).

In total, strategies of confrontation and resistance against violence against men oscillate between a spectrum of Active Responses (retaliation, revenge...), Passive (endurance, self-sacrifice...), Collective (group solidarity,

informing...), and Individual (insisting on self-esteem, choosing healthy network), and their consequences vary depending on the situation and structural supports from increasing the cycle of violence to individual and group empowerment.

8.2.3.3. *Resorting to Religious Rituals: Prayer, Vows, Magic*

In the path of life and confronting violence, sometimes the only way remaining for men is taking refuge in Spiritual Rituals and Rites; as if when individual or social power is incapable of solving the situation, connection with the transcendental provides the possibility of another type of resilience or hope.

'Another one is praying (Namaz). I increased my connection with God, I pray my prayers. In my opinion, as soon as I understood, came to terms with this illness [HIV/Addiction], I fell into this thought that I must think of that world [afterlife] too, must think of my hereafter too. Both my praying... do good deeds (Savab), help others. Be constantly in the state of helping others. Not be upset much, not be angry, try to laugh, be happy... finally I can do this very help to them, others notice too, understand that my condition gets better more. I say do good deeds for my hereafter too, that if the day after tomorrow, God forbid, this event happens for everyone... died... I have something in my hand, not be ashamed in that world that they say 'He did no good deed.' This helped me a lot. To forget... I decided to forget. One was this, and another that I get closer to God. This experience caused me to obtain a series of other things... do a series of other works. This very thing caused my learning level to go up... meaning 90 percent [if] something Great God takes from a human, He gives something [else] to him... I obtained my cleanliness [sobriety] close to a year.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 353-355).

In this narrative, the man's strategy returns not only to seeking help from God but to reconnecting with the value and spiritual system. Feeling of guilt, worry about the end, desire to return to 'purity,' and even helping others are rituals for restoring the sense of worthiness, giving meaning to suffering, and regaining control over a situation violence has distorted. Giddens believes that social action does not occur only in structures outside the individual, but the individual's consciousness and intentionality also play a key role in restructuring shattered identity (Giddens, 1984). Religious and spiritual rituals become a tool for Remediation and a mechanism for reflection and

reconstructing self against violent experiences; resources whereby the individual compensates for lacks beyond his control at the spiritual level.

Sometimes spiritual resistance takes on the colour and scent of prayer and pleading for the impossible:

'If I mix God and the Prophet with my love... it has been this, that I always made vows (Nazr), begged God and the Prophet that Neda returns... perhaps right now I call Neda and she answers and I talk to her and it becomes okay... but she is not my Neda [anymore].' (Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 236).

Here, vow and prayer is a tool for solace; the individual not only expresses his feeling of powerlessness but tries, by performing symbolic action or sacrificing part of assets, to regain lost control, albeit mentally. According to Bandura (1973), such symbolic actions are not only for gaining power beyond the social realm but have a regulatory function on emotions and behaviours. Spiritual action and the centrality of pleading returns abandoned power to the self and allows the individual, even in the absence of real hope, to create a space for 'survival' in the heart of loss.

Prayer sometimes has a more 'Passive' function; not in the sense of demanding the return of the lost situation, but as a tool to endure a situation for which no solution is envisaged:

'I only prayed my place of living changes. And an event happens so I get rid of this deplorable situation [repeated sexual abuses].' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 18).

Here prayer is like the last bastion of hope; where the individual does not even have the possibility of active confrontation and has only hope for the intervention of the 'Occult Matter' (*Amr-e Gheibi*) or destiny. Spiritual hope, according to Giddens (1984), is a mental defence mechanism that makes intolerable suffering more bearable and prevents psychological collapse.

In another example, spiritual traditions merge with a Magical Aspect and transform into an action not just religious but superstitious or ritualistic:

'But they say I saw the discussion of that betrayal or anything else as the factor... another issue that I get very upset about too... I, because of a work with several fortune tellers, fortune tellers who read coffee grounds, and a lady and gentleman who have these Jinn and men and these things, have Jinns, have clients (Movakkel)... so to speak I am familiar with these... once or twice I went sat in their gatherings... and see these who are women, what they want... want to get a

prayer/spell (Doa)... I get very upset... meaning I, with these ladies who call and ask 'When does this husband of theirs die?' because these have a boyfriend and have the wish for the husband's death so they can reach this boyfriend... because if their relationship is revealed and she has this relationship simultaneously... and even have the wish for the husband's death... why? Because they didn't love this person, married this person because of economic issue, and then became interested in another man and now because they can't marry...' (Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 177).

In this example, rituals go beyond the traditional and accepted state and even take on the colour and scent of revenge and violence. Magic and fortune-telling and utilising superstitious elements appear as a way to control fate or return lost power, and at the same time are a sign of identity crisis and the collapse of traditional valuation systems; as if norms no longer have sufficiency to support men against violence, and the individual resorts to various spiritual and magical rituals to compensate for this lack (Fanon, 1963; Foucault, 1979).

In summary, it can be said that resorting to religious rituals, prayer, and even magic is part of men's defensive sub-strategies against violence which has intertwined individual, psychological, social, and cultural aspects within itself; both spiritual action to maintain hope and individual worthiness, magical behaviour to regain control, and effort to pass through the crisis of masculine identity which has faded under the blow of violence. In this midst, reconstructing identity, reforming the bond with spirituality and ritual, or even superstitious reading of religion and magic, all can mark a fresh realm of resilience and self-reconstruction for men facing violence.

8.2.3.4. Internalising Anger or Reviving Masculine Identity through Denying Violence

In a society where Masculine Authority was considered the pillar of family and social identity for centuries, today we witness the shaking and displacement of this structure.

'Now the structure of this authority has collapsed because a part of it is these very economic issues, a part of it women's level of awareness. Authority doesn't collapse just that easily... thing... changes position. A culture that has a root history of more than 14 centuries is not such that it wants to collapse in a decade or two; it changes position, constantly changes place, is very die-hard. Many say 'collapse of family,' 'patriarchal system,' those were one [the same]. No, we have

yet to reach collapse, but this patriarchal system is constantly escaping, constantly escaping from the hand of the woman, goes to another corner reproduces itself. Yes, in our society this case is severe.' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 80-83).

In this process of slipping and shaking of masculine authority, men face a wave of new expectations, increased women's awareness, and economic crises that tighten the arena of power for them. The feeling of helplessness and instability of position causes the formation of deep and often silent reactions in them. One of the first consequences is depression and the emergence of anger; emotions rooted in the inability to directly confront the violent and repressed situation.

'They are more aggrieved (Maghmoum-tar) and its form becomes different. Sometimes perhaps somewhere his anger manifests and he shouts and screams; my husband, early on when he fought, would hit his head a lot and I was afraid, but later I told him 'I am afraid, this is a threat to me. How do I know you won't suddenly hit me? I don't want to see these scenes.' Well, people fight... we even went and titled [raised] counselling and counselling sessions. He would hit his head hard, hit very hard. No, he wouldn't get wounded but his hand would get inflamed. Well, this was my husband's tool to silence his party [opponent], that I see this [and] become silent. Surely he had experienced this in various situations.'

(Interview No. 2, Masoumeh, Pos 138-142).

Evidence shows that men often consider violence towards themselves as a type of inefficiency or inability to perform the masculine role and, instead of recounting their experiences, internalise them. This trend in Grounded Theory analysis indicates one of the common defence mechanisms, namely 'Internalisation of Anger' and gravitating towards depression, lack of motivation, and even suicide.

'Now what are men's reactions against these violences of women?! It is very interesting, mostly men... we look, they become violent, smoked cigarettes... meaning he doesn't think he is being subjected to violence, feels he is a good man, doesn't think the human is being humiliated. Meaning the reaction they show is completely depression... the second work they do, they become depressed and find depression and commit suicide. Because they don't want to stay in this life. But despite all these, they support everyone, then go [die/leave].' (Interview No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 23).

This self-consumption (*Khod-khori*) and repressing emotions, except in rare cases, leads to sudden explosion of anger or passive-aggressive protests. As one expert explains:

'Usually they keep silent. Unless pressure comes on them very much... an explosive anger state comes to them which we call passive-aggressive... it gathers, gathers, then he protests in an explosive state and appears again... why? Because he sees defects in himself and he believes in these defects himself, cannot defend... perhaps occasionally he shouts and screams too and a protest too... usually they didn't protest...' (Interview No. 14, Dr. Vahabi, Pos 72).

Although some men inevitably turn to high-risk behaviours, separation, and even divorce, the core of many reactions is silence and endurance:

'I had [a case], he has a 27-28-year-old daughter and a 33-year-old son, then these separated from each other... meaning the knife reached the bone [it became unbearable] that these separated... meaning Sir endured so much, endured, couldn't anymore. Previously they said 'My Mehr lawful, my life free,' now it has become the reverse; gentlemen say 'I make whatever I have in your name, just go.' We had many.' (Interview No. 14, Dr. Vahabi, Pos 72).

But a significant part of violent pressures is reflected not inside the family but at the society level. Distancing from the desirable occupational position, feeling of economic inability, and social deprivations cause men to discharge their anger and frustration on the social environment.



Figure 11 *Psychological Self Destruction*

'I go to work here and come... when a person has a wife... for example I have... have friends who come to the mountain with me, are girls and so-and-so, but I who have a wife... this is very important to me and this damages that ideal you have, is that in any case I accepted that a person falls in prison and falls... I have this deprivation.' (Interview No. 16, Ahmad, Pos 73).

And also:

'Anger in defence mechanisms... we said that 'I have this anger, I empty it somewhere else, on the head of my wife and child, and I go into society empty it on the driver and office; if I am the office manager I empty it on the subordinate working with me... We are involved with violence during the day... the cause of violence can be inflation and low salary I get and dissatisfaction with the job...' (Interview No. 25, Soroush Ghobadi, Pos 12).

Women's linguistic violences and men's mutual indifference and aggression are layers of this emerging conflict which drives women towards verbal reaction and men towards silence or implicit aggression:

'Now that solidarity is incidentally reactive, is reactive to violence against the husband usually, and then one of the things is that men have less verbal violence, women's verbal violence is higher, to say profanities, say biting words.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 4).

And:

'One is that he doesn't see this woman's needs; reciprocally this woman who has a reaction to this man, well definitely becomes indifferent, definitely becomes aggressive, many events happen between them...' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 25-28).

In such an arena, the feeling of failure and misery resulting from being trapped in a life without a clear horizon sits like a heavy shadow on men's psyche:

'Spiritually, for me... he just tore a paper from me, but he annoyed me a lot. [To yourself] you say 'How miserable I am, why must I stay here, over whom, over what? Over the fact that I had a small argument I must stay here.' It gives you both a feeling of regret and a feeling of misery; you say 'How miserable you are that you came to service.' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 312-314).

And sometimes the intensity of imposed violence is such that exiting the arena of service and work is imagined as the only solution:

'The reason I came out of the psychiatric centre was exactly this, because I really couldn't endure... but well, a series of annoying scenes I saw that I couldn't endure.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 94).

This narrative shows how in the new social structure, men, instead of being able to express their emotions and sufferings, utilise various defensive strategies such as silence, internal anger, passive aggression, accepting deprivation, or even escape and relationship collapse. Grounded Theory analysis in this field highlights the mechanism of 'Reviving Masculine Identity through Soft Denial of Violence' and 'Psychological Discharge of Emotion through Side Channels' as key consequences of men's defensive processes in facing this collapse of authority and emerging violences (Behravan, 1394 [2015]; Rafiei, 1397 [2018]; Kazemi, 1400 [2021]).

8.2.3.5. *Forced Childbearing*

In re-reading the narrative of a woman describing the experience of Forced Childbearing, a deeper understanding of the manifestations of violence against men in the light of defensive strategies is achieved; strategies formed in the heart of family relations and instances of power inequality. When Raheleh Mehraban says thus:

'Anymore I gradually decided to separate. My child was almost three years old when I decided to separate... that I saw... for the second time I called him that 'You knew, you did this work on purpose and told me 'I don't want a child.' He said 'Anyway, do you want to be stuck (Gir bashi) to your life or not? Because I feel you [might] leave and go at any moment.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 24).

Complex layers of power and compulsion in marital relationships appear. In this quote, using the child as a bond and obstacle to exiting the family has manifested; a hidden but powerful strategy that drives violence from the realm of body and speech to the vital and fateful decision-making domains of life (Behravan, 1394).

Raheleh narrates this experience in another quote with more details:

'For the second child, came into the world unwanted. From the day I became pregnant with the child I started writing in my notebook that 'What are the stages of separating? If I separate what happens? I have two kids and how?' I

started analysing. When the child was born, I had taken that decision.'
(Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 32).

The key concept hidden in this narrative is unwanted childbearing as a tool for preserving marital life from the man's spouse's view and balancing power; while the opposite individual, meaning the father, feels himself in conditions of compulsion, limited choice, and reduced bargaining power. Based on structural theories regarding gender relations, control of reproduction and decision-making regarding the child has always been and is one of the main dimensions of power or, conversely, deprivation in family relationships (Kazemi, 1400).

The peak of this violent strategy can be perceived in this sentence:

'When I got pregnant, think, the second child is on the way; one side wanted, the second side didn't want. I tried a lot to abort it, didn't happen. And he did this work on purpose so I have two kids and with two kids I can't do anything anymore and become stuck to the life and he keeps me... Anymore when I became pregnant I prepared in my mind. That when the child is born, I separate from him.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 32).

The expression 'he did this work on purpose' clearly points to the use of unwanted childbearing as a mechanism placing the [partner] in a severe psychological and social strait; [here the narrative perspective shifts between husband/wife strategies, illustrating the complexity].

Within the theoretical framework of Grounded Theory, these factors appear as interactions between structural and agentive factors; where in the absence of healthy interaction and power equality, the child transforms into a commodity to guarantee survival and continuation of the relationship or create permanent limitations on men's power and choice (Kazemi, 1400; Rafiei, 1397). This method of applying violence (i.e., childbearing as a tool for control and limiting men/partners), not only shifts the legal and emotional boundaries of the relationship, but brings consequences such as feelings of insecurity, constant worry, and inability to make independent decisions (Behravan, 1394).

In such a space, men suffer a type of 'Decline of Agency Power' and deprivation of the right to choose regarding their position. The feeling of entrapment, helplessness, and unwanted staying in the relationship are forms of psychological and social consequences of this violent strategy reflected in these narratives; narratives each simultaneously carrying the voice of men's

voicelessness and the emergence of desperation behind the apparent mask of family-orientation.

8.2.3.6. *Trans Marriage to Redefine Identity*

In Mahsa's narrative, the tension-filled experience of living a personality in conflict with her real gender and identity puts forward fresh layers of consequences of violence against men and also types of defensive strategies. Facing social pressures, family expectations, and the obligation to perform predetermined roles links the internal realities of trans individuals with denial, repression, or escape from the status quo. Mahsa expresses this situation thus:

'I thought more 'I marry, I get better,' and we got engaged to a person... someone... nothing anymore, didn't last a month we separated. I didn't love her. I say my stepmother had arranged [a girl]... I didn't love her at all... she herself had understood too, said 'Look in my eyes, say you love me?' I said 'I love you.' That very first week she had regretted. What work was I doing... it doesn't fit at all really. I can't have the role of a boy... I am in love with... anymore I was looking for an excuse to separate. Well, the excuse was arranged too, that I didn't have a proper job... but well, we had a lot of war and fighting together. Then a series [time] she cajoled me (Naz-e mano keshid), came to the house... I had the role of a girl for a while, also the role of a boy. That time I told her mom... that time my dad said 'Why are you sulking with Maryam?' I said 'I am sulking with her, I haven't talked to her.' She had come was cajoling me... I wouldn't go to their house. My engagement period she said 'Your morals don't fit boys at all, you know. I tell you something, you cry; you don't come [walk]... you are not comfortable in men's gathering, so-and-so.' These caused that... I don't know... I said I don't know really. Anymore nothing, our dispute over this very dispute... one side over economic issues, unemployment and these things all caused us to separate, you know. Really I was looking for something that was an excuse to separate; really I didn't love her, by God. I didn't love her. I went with this view that this mood and atmosphere flies out of my head, my thought changes.'

(Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 60).

In this narrative, marriage is defined not as a path to achieve emotional security and psychological satisfaction, but itself as a defensive reaction and tool to escape internal conflicts and social pressures; an effort to 'get better' or forced adaptation to collective expectations. This importance is exactly that same eclecticism of identity and role that a large part of the trans community

grapples with; those who, to escape society's symbolic, verbal, and even structural violences, choose marriage as a cover for concealing their real identity (Behravan, 1394).

But the experience of 'Having Two Roles' and inability in 'Being the Boy Role' places the actor on the path of identity instability and severely limits her agency. A chain of sentences in this quote (*'I can't have the role of a boy... I had the role of a girl also the role of a boy... you are not comfortable in men's gathering...'*) shows this defensive strategy has had no result but adding to anxiety, internal tensions, and intensifying identity confusion.

Grounded Theory, in explaining social events from the lens of interaction between structure and actors, explains this reality well: how dominant structures, by reproducing stereotypical expectations and imposing gender roles, force individuals to search for apparent adaptation solutions, even if these solutions are rooted in injury and even self-harm (Kazemi, 1400). Family pressures and the heavy gaze of society, in Mahsa's narrative, are reflected in the form of effort for apparent display of attachment (*'Look in my eyes say you love me?'*) and formal accompaniment in the form of engagement, while the depth of emotional separation is evident from the very beginning.

Consequently, marriage for many trans individuals is not the manifestation of free choice, but a type of desperation and defensive reaction against structural violence and environmental normative pressure; an effort to go out of identity contradiction which adds to their problems and pains and extends the cycle of bewilderment (Rafiei, 1397). Reproducing this cycle in different forms like war and fighting, taking refuge in conflicting roles, and experiencing emotional failure not only deepens violence against men but makes their spiritual and social injuries more prominent.

8.2.3.7. *Paying Ransom*

In lived experiences like what Vahid Faraji narrates, 'Paying Ransom' (*Baj-dadan*) appears not merely as an economic or peripheral behaviour, but as a strategy to gain security, survival, and symbolic power in an unsafe space:

'I went to the vegetable market, was a fruit seller, and at nights I was out. I had to pay ransom. So these [my friends] wouldn't go from me. So these would always be with me and through these I could repress many others; I had to spend money. Now a few years have passed, I didn't have a thousand [Tomans], but these people

bought a motorcycle with that same money of mine.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 27-29).

In the field of competitions and social insecurities, boys/men placed in exposure to the threat of rejection or loneliness are forced to apply techniques and behaviours to remain safe from rejection, failure, or psychological injury. This strategy, contrary to what is seen on the surface, is a type of secondary violence; meaning applying behaviours that, under the pressure of power and domination relations, reproduce structural and psychological violence against the individual himself (Eftekhari, 1400 [2021]). Pedram, recalling childhood wounds, depicts the act of giving his bicycle to peers without revealing the real reason to his father thus:

'I never played to saturation [enough]... unlike the rest of the kids, I never had a good time in my childhood. When I went cycling, I was forced to give the bicycle to kids to play with it for hours and I would hide in a corner so my dad wouldn't see sometime that the bicycle isn't in my hand, it's in someone else's hand. I couldn't tell him why I am giving my bicycle to them [paying ransom]. One reason for this work of mine was to find a supporter for myself.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 3).

In the analysis based on Grounded Theory, it is evident that paying ransom is not a single individual injury but an organised reaction to the socio-cultural structure that defines a person's worthiness not dependent on his individual identity, but based on power relations, assets, or ability to provide security and support for self and others (Eftekhari, 1400; Soltani, 1398 [2019]). This defensive mechanism expands in all levels of life; from simple socialising with friends or peers to family and marital relationships and even bargaining against unrealistic expectations. Another part of the data makes paying ransom in the context of marriage and marital relationships, that too under sexual inability, easily explainable:

'These pills [sexual potency enhancement]... their function is like this, that that blood normally pumped in the heart to other parts of the body, it makes this 50 times... gives so much energy to be able to keep that for hours, and it is very dangerous for the heart. Our client who had consumed was high age and had a stroke... In the North too a 55-year-old gentleman had consumed this pill and this event happened to him... a series of these pills are there that when they start acting in the body and give this power to you, you suffer severe leg pain. I... my

cousin's [maternal aunt's daughter's] husband has this same issue because my cousin has a strange expectation of her husband and he can't, and the poor wretch constantly pays ransom, basically. This very thing... meaning my cousin's husband buys gold fast fast, buys gold... I know why this man buys gold. Its reason is this very thing; meaning a man who feels weak sexually is a man who pays ransom and is forced to keep this woman satisfied in other ways.'
(Interview No. 58, Marziyeh Hosseini, Pos 163).

In this narrative, men under the pressure of unbalanced expectations in sexual power and spouse's demands, through repeatedly providing gifts and privileges (gold, shopping, etc.), make a doubled effort for relationship stability and avoiding blame, humiliation, or comparison. The result is doubled psychological and physical weakness and deepening of the feeling of incompetence. According to masculinity scholars, a social structure that limits men's power and legitimacy solely to their sexual or economic performance itself sows the seed of instability and frustration in human relationships (Aghazadeh et al., 1401 [2022]; West & Zimmerman, 1987). The expansion of these behaviours can be found not only at the individual and interpersonal level but even in informal definitions of justice and social status. In the invisible footprint of paying ransom, sometimes the goal is only reducing the rhythm of violence or family pressure:

'We who were in a traditional family, my father didn't do this work... because I am under pressure... maybe it has an external reason, maybe it is basically internal... because I couldn't implement that zero to hundred I have in my mind in the house, I do this work so they don't hit my head like a sledgehammer that for example 'take us to a restaurant twice a month' or 'take us on a trip twice a year.' For this reason when I go home, as if I don't work outside either, I go home do a series of other works.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 9).

Defensive measures in this form occur to curb increasing expectations or prevent direct conflict with the family, to gain a temporary shelter against the wave of accusation, pressure, or inattention. This method, although appearing passive and ineffective from an external perspective, based on narratives, paying ransom provides a substrate of relative peace for the victim; albeit temporary and damaging (Mirzaei, 1399 [2020]). In psychological realms too, paying ransom can be seen as a mechanism to avoid intensifying violence or humiliation from others:

'Perhaps if I came to my senses... until now it hasn't happened that I do something that the opposing party resorts to force; either I would make him understand with words or if I saw the opposing party is insistent on his word, I accepted that I am wrong so the opposing party doesn't resort to force. I know... I had read somewhere that even police don't have access to psychologist's information/ the psychologist doesn't share his patient's information with anyone, otherwise I wouldn't be willing to say these words to anyone.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 40).

Ultimately, based on the Grounded Theory mechanism, paying ransom is not merely an individual's tool but the product of the function of norms, power relations, and structural inequality of society. Men who are forced to pay ransom financially, psychologically, or sexually often adopt such strategies in response to objective or symbolic threats; defensive strategies whose consequence can be the continuation or intensification of the cycle of violence (Soltani, 1398).

8.3. Chapter Summary and Theoretical Conclusion: The Strategic Ecology of Masculine Survival

8.3.1. Introduction: The Dialectic of Agency and Constraint

The detailed examination of action and interaction strategies presented in this chapter provides a panoramic view of the 'Strategic Repertoire' utilised by Iranian men when confronted with the multi-layered phenomenon of violence. Having transitioned from the analysis of causal conditions (the 'why') to the analysis of strategies (the 'how'), we observe that the male response to violence is not a monolithic or static reaction; rather, it is a dynamic, fluid, and often contradictory process of negotiation between Individual Agency and Structural Constraint.

The strategies identified—ranging from the profound passivity of isolation and substance abuse to the aggressive hyper-masculinity of thuggery (*Lati-gari*) and the constructive attempts at problem-solving—reveal that men are not merely passive recipients of violence. Even in their silence, withdrawal, or self-destruction, they are engaging in a desperate form of agency designed to preserve a fragmented sense of self in a socio-cultural environment that increasingly denies them traditional sources of legitimacy.

This concluding section seeks to synthesise these disparate strategies into a coherent theoretical framework. It posits that the strategies adopted by men are not random individual choices but are structurally conditioned responses to a 'Crisis of Masculinity,' wherein the traditional tools of patriarchal authority have been eroded by economic instability and changing gender norms, leaving men to navigate a landscape of violence with an depleted arsenal of emotional and social resources.

8.3.2. The Logic of Passive Strategies: The Internalisation of Structural Violence

The prevalence of Passive Strategies—such as silence, concealment, and self-harm—constitutes one of the most critical findings of this study. This analysis suggests that for a significant portion of the male population, the primary response to external violence (whether economic, legal, or familial) is the internalisation of aggression.

1. The Culture of Silence as a Gendered Duty

- The data indicates that the strategy of 'Concealment' (*Penhan-kari*) and silence is not merely a fear of social stigma but is perceived as a gendered duty
- The cultural archetype of the 'Strong Man'—the stoic provider who must endure hardship without complaint—transforms the expression of pain into a performance of failure
- Consequently, when men experience violence (e.g., emotional abuse by a spouse or humiliation in the workplace), they view the disclosure of this violence as a 'secondary violence' against their own dignity
- They choose silence not because they are unaware of their suffering, but because the symbolic cost of revealing their victimhood is deemed higher than the cost of enduring the pain
- This creates a 'conspiracy of silence' where the victim actively participates in hiding the perpetrator's actions to preserve the façade of masculine control

2. Somatisation and Self-Destruction

- When the path to external expression is blocked by cultural taboos, the energy of the violence turns inward

-
- The strategies of 'Substance Abuse' and 'Self-Harm' (including suicide and tattooing anger) represent the somatisation of social suffering
 - The body of the man, which is socially constructed as a vessel of labour and strength, becomes the site of punishment
 - **Substance Abuse**
 - Functions as a chemical 'exit strategy'
 - A way to temporarily suspend the crushing weight of social expectations
 - A form of 'slow suicide' that allows the man to opt out of the competition for status that he feels he has already lost
 - **Self-Harm and Suicide**
 - Represent the ultimate reclamation of agency through destruction
 - In a legal and familial system where men often feel they have no voice (e.g., in custody battles or Mehrieh disputes), harming oneself becomes a paradoxical assertion of control
 - 'I may not control my life, but I control my death'
3. **The Strategy of 'Paying Ransom' (Baj-dehi)**
- The phenomenon of 'Paying Ransom'—whether financial, emotional, or behavioural—illustrates the transactional nature of modern relationships under the pressure of transition
 - Men who feel insecure in their authority (due to sexual dysfunction, economic failure, or emotional inadequacy) resort to purchasing peace
 - This strategy reveals a shift from 'Authority based on Right' to 'Authority based on Transaction'
 - The man no longer commands respect by virtue of his position; he must constantly 'bribe' the system (or the spouse) to avoid conflict
 - This leads to a state of chronic 'Appeasement', where the man exists in a perpetual state of debt, trying to pay off emotional or financial demands that can never be fully satisfied

8.3.3. The Logic of Aggressive Strategies: The Reclamation of Lost Power

While passive strategies represent the internalisation of violence, Aggressive Strategies represent its externalisation. These strategies—ranging from physical abuse to social thuggery—are interpreted here not as expressions of inherent male power, but as symptoms of powerlessness.

1. *Compensatory Hyper-Masculinity*: The resort to 'Thuggery' (*Lati-gari*) and 'Bullying' is fundamentally a compensatory mechanism. For men marginalised by the economic system or humiliated in the domestic sphere, the performance of exaggerated violence becomes a resource for generating 'Negative Social Capital.' If society will not grant them respect based on economic success or education, they will extract fear based on physical dominance. This aligns with Merton's Strain Theory, where the blocking of legitimate means to success leads to the innovation of deviant means. The 'Lat' (thug) or the 'Bully' constructs an alternative hierarchy where violence is the currency of value. For a man stripped of his traditional role as 'provider,' becoming a 'protector' or 'enforcer' through violence is a desperate attempt to salvage a recognizable masculine identity.

2. *Sexual Aggression as a Restoration of Hierarchy*: The strategies of sexual aggression and infidelity (*Tanavvo-talabi*) must be read through the lens of power dynamics. In relationships where men feel economically or emotionally emasculated (e.g., by a wealthier or more authoritative wife), sexual aggression or the pursuit of multiple partners can function as a way to reassert dominance in the biological sphere, the one area they feel remains under their control. The narrative of 'revenge through sex' or 'asserting variety' is often a reaction to a perceived 'symbolic castration' in other areas of life. It is a dysfunctional attempt to restore the gender hierarchy that the man feels has been overturned.

3. *The Weaponisation of Stigma*: Social aggressive strategies, such as 'Labelling' and 'Rumour Spreading,' reveal how men also utilise the patriarchal structure to harm others. By labelling women or other men (especially those from LGBTQ communities) as 'immoral' or 'deviant,' the aggressor aligns himself with the dominant moral order. This is a strategic use of 'Normative Power' to isolate the target. However, as the data shows, this weapon often backfires, as the environment of mistrust it creates eventually

engulfs the aggressor himself, leaving him in a world devoid of genuine connection.

8.3.4. The Logic of Problem-Solving: The Struggle for Constructive Agency

Amidst the landscape of destruction, the emergence of **Problem-Solving Strategies**—such as dialogue, seeking therapy, and legal recourse—offers a glimpse of resilience. However, the analysis reveals that these strategies are the most fragile and least supported.

1. The Institutional Void

- Men who attempt to solve problems constructively often find themselves in an 'Institutional Vacuum'
- **Legal recourse**
 - Often leads to further entanglement in a bureaucracy that views men primarily as financial debtors (Mehrieh) rather than victims of circumstance
- **Therapeutic recourse**
 - Hindered by the lack of gender-sensitive psychological services
 - Men seeking help often face professionals who either pathologise their masculinity or fail to understand the specific structural pressures they face
- Consequently, 'Problem-Solving' often devolves into 'Problem-Endurance'
 - The man tries to talk, tries to negotiate, but finding no structural echo for his voice, he retreats back into passivity or aggression

2. Migration as Escape

- The strategy of 'Migration' (whether geographical relocation or moving neighbourhoods) signifies a belief that the current environment is unredeemable
- It is a strategy of 'Rupture'—breaking with the past to survive
- While this can be constructive, it also represents a failure of the local community to integrate and support its members

- The man who must leave his city to escape the stigma of a failed marriage or a past addiction is a testament to the unforgiving nature of the social context

8.3.5. Theoretical Synthesis: The Trap of Transitional Masculinity

Synthesising the findings of this chapter, we can propose a substantive theory regarding the strategic action of men in Iran: '**The Strategy of Survival in the Trap of Transitional Masculinity.**'

- Iranian men are currently situated in a '**Historical Dislocation.**' They are caught between two conflicting normative orders:
 1. **The Traditional Order**
 - Demands they be stoic, solitary providers, and absolute authority figures
 2. **The Modern/Transitional Order**
 - Erodes the economic basis of that authority (through inflation and unemployment)
 - Challenges their legal standing (through changing family laws)
 - Demands emotional intelligence they were never taught
- Violence against men, therefore, is not just the acts committed against them; it is the **structural condition** of being held responsible for a role they can no longer fulfill, and being denied the tools to adapt to a new one
- Their strategies are attempts to resolve this tension:
 - **Passive strategies:** Attempt to deny the tension by numbing the self
 - **Aggressive strategies:** Attempt to forcefully reinstate the old order
 - **Defensive strategies:** Attempt to negotiate a survival within the chaos

8.3.6. Conclusion and Implications

The analysis of Chapter Eight leads to a sobering conclusion: The current strategic repertoire available to Iranian men is predominantly maladaptive. This is not necessarily due to individual moral failings, but because the Social

Opportunity Structure for constructive masculine adaptation is severely limited.

1. *The Cycle of Reproduction*: Without intervention, these strategies reproduce the very violence they seek to escape. The man who uses drugs to cope with economic violence becomes a source of economic and emotional violence to his family. The man who uses aggression to regain respect creates a hostile environment that further isolates him.
2. *The Necessity of Structural Intervention*: The data suggests that individual resilience (Active Problem Solving) is insufficient without structural support. Men cannot 'talk' their way out of violence if the culture shames male vulnerability. They cannot 'work' their way out of violence if the economy is predatory.
3. *The Invisible Victim*: Perhaps the most profound finding is the invisibility of the male victim. Whether he is 'paying ransom' in a marriage or 'self-harming' in a prison, his suffering is often reframed as 'failure' rather than 'victimisation.'

This chapter has mapped the actions men take. These actions, however, do not occur in a vacuum; they generate outcomes. These outcomes—the long-term impacts on the man's psyche, his family's stability, and the broader social fabric—constitute the 'Consequences' of the phenomenon. Therefore, having understood the *Conditions* (Chapters 5, 6, 7) and the *Strategies* (Chapter 8), we must now turn our attention to the final component of the Grounded Theory model: the Consequences of violence against the male gender, which will be the focus of the subsequent chapter. The strategies analysed here are the seeds; the next chapter will examine the harvest.

9. Consequences of Violence

Introduction

Having navigated a rigorous analytical trajectory—one that commenced with the identification of the core phenomenon and proceeded through a deep exploration of causal, contextual, and intervening conditions, finally culminating in the strategies of action and interaction—we now arrive at the final station of the paradigmatic model of this research. Chapter Nine is dedicated to the examination of 'Consequences'; that is, the results, effects, and outputs derived from the actions and reactions of individuals towards the phenomenon of violence against the male gender. This chapter constitutes the final link in our analytical chain and responds to this fundamental inquiry: *What indelible marks do the experience of violence, and the strategies adopted to combat it, ultimately leave upon the individual, familial, and social existence of men?*

Within the theoretical framework of Grounded Theory, consequences are not merely the terminal point of a linear process; rather, they are considered integral components of a dynamic and intertwined cycle. The consequences resulting from a violent situation can themselves metamorphose into causal, contextual, or intervening conditions for the emergence of new phenomena, thereby perpetuating a cycle of violence and injury or, in rarer instances, facilitating its cessation. For example, 'Social Isolation,' which is identified as a consequence, can transform into a 'Contextual Condition' for the intensification of depression. Similarly, 'Family Collapse,' as a consequence, will itself serve as a 'Causal Condition' for the emergence of new traumas and injuries in the next generation. Therefore, a precise understanding of these consequences is necessary not only for comprehending the depth and breadth of the injuries resulting from violence, but it is of vital importance for identifying these vicious cycles and designing effective preventive interventions.

The objective of this chapter is to delineate a comprehensive and multidimensional topography of the effects that violence imprints upon all biological, psychological, and social aspects of men's existence. The rich and often harrowing data derived from in-depth interviews with participants has demonstrated that the consequences of violence are far broader than visible physical injuries; indeed, they severely influence the hidden layers of the individual's psyche, identity, interpersonal relationships, and social position. To achieve a coherent analysis, these consequences have been categorised based on systematic data coding into five main categories: 1. Individual Consequences 2. Familial Consequences 3. Social Consequences 4. Economic Consequences 5. Ethical Consequences

In the first and pivotal section of this chapter, we will address Individual Consequences, a category which is itself divided into three fundamental sub-categories. First, we dissect Psychological-Emotional Consequences, where we will demonstrate how the experience of violence leads to feelings of ruin and helplessness, deep spiritual and psychic injuries, depression, and chronic anxiety. Subsequently, we examine Physical-Somatic Consequences, including chronic diseases and bodily injuries. Finally, we address Sexual Consequences, which encompass injuries to identity and the disruption of intimate relationships.

Following this, we engage in analysing Familial Consequences, showing how violence against a man can lead to the weakening of parental roles, an increase in domestic tensions, and ultimately the collapse of the family institution. Then, we explore Social Consequences, addressing concepts such as social exclusion, the reduction of public support, and the reinforcement of destructive gender stereotypes. Economic Consequences, including job loss, reduced productivity, and the imposition of heavy medical costs, will form another critical part of our analysis. Finally, by examining Ethical Consequences, we will demonstrate how silence in the face of this phenomenon leads to the weakening of human values and the reinforcement of injustice at the societal level.

This chapter, by dissecting these consequences with precision, not only reveals the tragic dimensions of the phenomenon of violence against the male gender but also articulates a silent scream regarding the urgent necessity of attention from policymakers, mental health specialists, and social institutions toward this hidden dilemma. Understanding these results is the final step for

completing the Grounded Theory of this research and a necessary prerequisite for offering practical suggestions in the concluding chapter.

9.1. Individual Consequences

Violence against men is one of the most challenging and least attended subjects in social and psychological studies, a phenomenon which leaves extensive individual consequences on the lives of victims. Contrary to common beliefs which portray men as symbols of power and resistance, they too may be placed in positions of exposure to violence, and the consequences resulting from this violence can entail serious injuries in psychological, physical, and sexual dimensions. The present research, utilising the Grounded Theory approach to examine the individual consequences of violence against men, has placed its focus on three main axes—including Psychological-Emotional, Physical, and Sexual consequences—to analyse the different dimensions of this issue.

From the perspective of Psychological-Emotional Consequences, violence against men directly threatens their mental health and may leave damaging effects in the form of anxiety, depression, reduced self-confidence, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and even destructive behaviours such as self-harm. Victimised men often experience feelings of shame, weakness, and inability. These feelings take shape under the influence of social stereotypes which prevent men from expressing their violent experiences and drive them towards silence or the denial of this issue. The psychological consequences of violence may lead to social isolation, disruption in cognitive thinking and decision-making, reduced life expectancy, and a turn towards high-risk behaviours such as drug use. This negative psychological cycle can propel the victim of violence to a higher level of social and individual injury.

The Physical Consequences of violence against men, especially in cases of physical violence, include visible injuries and sometimes chronic pathologies. Men subjected to violence may suffer bruising, bone fractures, superficial and deep wounds, damage to internal organs, and, in more severe cases, permanent disabilities. These physical injuries can entail long-term consequences such as disruption in organ function, chronic diseases like muscular pains, heart or digestive problems, and a reduced ability for work and daily activity. In addition to physical injuries, the psychological pressures resulting from physical violence can weaken the body's immune system and

provide the ground for contracting various diseases. Furthermore, the repeated experience of violence creates a feeling of insecurity and a permanent fear of the recurrence of the incident in individuals, thereby reducing their quality of life.

In the dimension of Sexual Consequences, violence against men remains even more hidden due to cultural and social taboos. This type of violence, which can appear in the form of rape, sexual humiliation, threat, and sexual abuse, leaves very heavy consequences on men's psyche and sexual identity. The consequences of such experiences include a reduction or loss of sexual desire, sexual dysfunction, feelings of shame and guilt, reduced self-confidence, and in some cases, a turning away from emotional and sexual relationships entirely. These individuals may suffer isolation, depression, severe anxiety, and an inability to create or maintain intimate relationships. Sometimes, these consequences cast a shadow over the individual's life for years and prevent their complete recovery from past injuries.

In total, the individual consequences of violence against men not only threaten their physical and mental health but cause the intensification of social and individual injuries. Identifying these consequences and attending to the special needs of male victims of violence is considered a fundamental step for reducing the injuries resulting from violence and elevating the level of society's mental and physical health.

9.1.1. Psychological.Emotional Consequences

Violence against men is one of the social phenomena receiving less attention, yet it has extensive consequences on the victims' mental health and emotions. Gender and cultural stereotypes, which often consider men to be strong and invulnerable, have caused this issue to be ignored in many societies. As a result, the psychological and emotional consequences resulting from violence against men not only damage their individual health but influence social aspects and the victims' daily life. This research, using the Grounded Theory approach, attempts to analyse and examine the various dimensions of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men.

In the psychological dimension, male victims of violence may experience feelings such as shame, anger, loneliness, defencelessness, and helplessness. These feelings often result from cultural pressures that prevent them from expressing violent experiences, leading them to prefer silence or to deny the

issue entirely. Such a situation can lead to mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), concentration disorders, and even suicidal thoughts. Furthermore, reduced self-confidence, a feeling of worthlessness, and despair regarding the future are among the common psychological consequences of this type of violence.

From an emotional perspective, male victims of violence may suffer social isolation, a reduced ability to establish healthy emotional relationships, and an inability to express emotions. Emotional injuries can influence their family and social communications and lead to reduced social support. As a result, these individuals may turn to destructive behaviours like addiction and aggression when coping with difficult life conditions.

9.1.1.1. Spiritual and Psychological Injury to Men

Violence against men, although often placed in the shadow of attention to violence against women, leaves deep and multi-layered consequences on their lives. One of the most prominent of these consequences is spiritual and psychological injuries (*Asib-haye Rouhi va Ravani*), which can show themselves in various forms; from depression and anxiety to feelings of isolation, humiliation, and even the collapse of individual identity. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, these consequences are not only the result of direct experiences of violence but originate from the complex interaction of social, cultural, and personality factors. In this narrative, relying on the lived experiences of men who have experienced violence and citing scientific theories, an attempt is made to present a comprehensive image of these injuries.

Psychological violence against men, unlike physical violence whose effects are often visible, takes root in the depth of the individual's existence and sometimes remains hidden for years. One interviewee speaks explicitly of these effects:

'[The experience of violence] has more of a psychological aspect on men, meaning it affects their morale and psyche more than having sexual or physical [effects]. Their psyche too... let's take it from childhood, as far as possible it might have happened from the family side, willingly or unwillingly; for example, conditioning [kids]... doing a work to buy an item. This itself is considered a torment [violence]. Without exception, we all remember our dad had promised that if we did such-and-such work, they would buy this for us, a bicycle... for all

of us it was this. This is one example of it; another example is that in adulthood we separate from home and go into married life... spiritual injuries you receive from your spouse.' (Interview No. 30, Hamid Moradi, Pos 22).

This quote demonstrates that psychological violence begins in childhood and, through conditionings and family pressures, sows the seed of insecurity and injury in the individual's mind. These experiences, as social psychology theorists like Bandura (1977) emphasise, can internalise unhealthy behavioural patterns in the individual and make him more vulnerable against subsequent life pressures.

In adulthood, these injuries are often intensified in family and social relationships. For example, one interviewee speaks of the impact of his wife's violence on his mental health:

'I take medication now. Meaning these conditions [my wife's violence] caused me to see spiritual and psychological injury. For years and years I have been taking medication, Alprazolam and Flurazepam I take. These are sedatives. Because I suffered depression.' (Interview No. 28, Jamali, Pos 198-205).

This experience reveals the depth of the impact of violence on men's psyche; a situation where the individual takes refuge in medication to soothe his internal pains. From a scientific perspective, this situation aligns with theories related to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which show that continuous experiences of violence can lead to lasting mental disorders (Herman, 1992).

Psychological violence can also lead to social isolation and feelings of alienation. One interviewee speaks of his experience with painful language:

'[Because of much unemployment and loneliness in the house] Jinns took my volition. These... one as a man, one person in society... now like me perhaps there are many in this country but they are not seen, remained in the house. Even a few times they wanted to kill me, it was choking me in the house. Meaning somehow they go into a person's body... you are fine, suddenly you see TV, see internet, this pulls up [mood shifts/possession feeling], nothing can be done.' (Interview No. 91, Davood, Pos 130).

This narrative, although expressed in metaphorical language regarding 'Jinns,' shows the depth of isolation and psychological pressure bringing the individual to the verge of mental collapse. This situation aligns with the concept of 'Social Alienation' (*Anomie*) raised by Durkheim (1897); where the

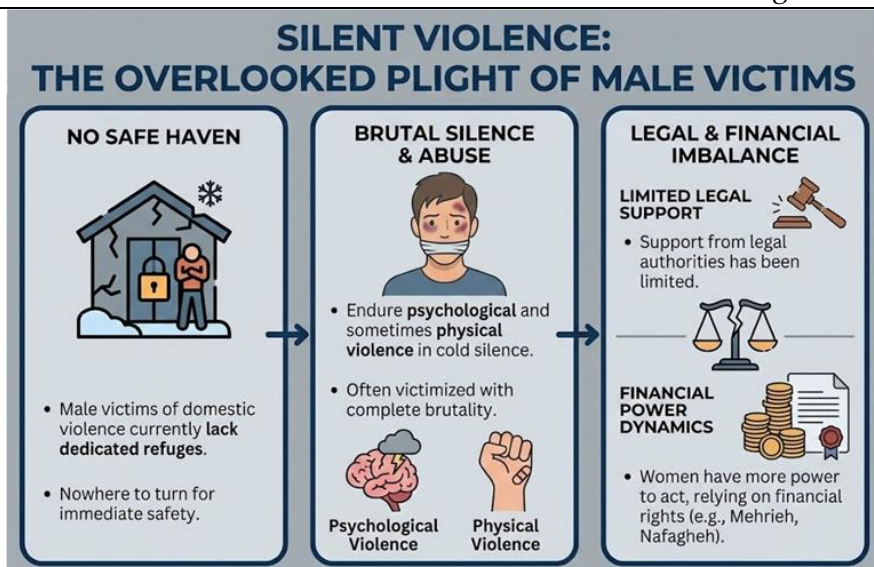


Figure 12 Silent Violence

individual becomes separated from society and even himself, and his identity gets lost amidst social pressures.

Violence in specific environments like Military Service also has destructive effects on men's psyche. One soldier speaks of the experience of humiliation and pressure in the barracks:

'A soldier, when you breed all this insult and aggression, sees... becomes like you; like in the [military] garrison, the cadre [officer] who disrespects... [the soldier] grows up complex-ridden like yourself, grows up ill-bred, makes swearing normal for you.' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 339-340).

He also complains of unnecessary and meaningless pressures in this environment:

'[In the military garrison] warehouses are protected themselves, have locks, have cameras, have thermal scanners; why should I [soldier] guard these things?' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 49).

And he moans about the length of the service period leading to psychological fatigue:

'[Military service completion card] is only useful for exiting the country, you get your license, they put it in your name, they put business license in your Aga's [father's] name... 24 months military service is a lot, now it has become 21

months... I am being annoyed/hurt, I am dying, why doesn't it end?' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 174).

These experiences show how strict and inhumane structures in some institutions can lead to creating psychological complexes and swallowed anger. From a psychological perspective, this situation is interpretable with the concept of 'Chronic Stress' raised by Selye (1956); where continuous pressures without solution endanger the individual's mental health.

Social violence and public humiliation are also other factors influencing men's psyche. One interviewee speaks of the experience of humiliation by police and media:

'This violent behaviour of the police [parading thugs and hooligans by police in city space] and broadcasting it on TV where our face becomes revealed to all people, becomes media-ised... what impact... when I experienced all this violence towards myself, I was humiliated a lot and feel I have no place in that society anymore, everyone looks at me differently.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 121-122).

This public humiliation, as Goffman (1963) explains in 'Labelling Theory,' can distort the individual's social identity and exclude him from society.

Psychological violence in family relationships can also lead to emotional collapse. One interviewee speaks of the experience of infidelity and its impact on his psyche:

'After this story [my partner's betrayal] I saw this gentleman came immediately into her page [social media], both of the pair of them blocked me together and it was basically maddening.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 141).

He also adds about the intensity of the psychological pressure of this experience:

'I knew everything. I had truthfully prepared a phone in the house for eavesdropping and recording voice. Several voice recordings and... well calculate, I went to work and sat, was on the phone for 7 hours to see when the party... 7 hours 7 hours I looked at the phone to reach that point where the home phone rings. I see one side of the line... cooing (Bah-bah and Chah-chah)... and then through her email I understood she sends photos, takes video calls, and chatted with that gentleman and that gentleman said words behind my back. A two-month period I was in severe torment and truthfully went to my father and

mother's house and had told everything to them. Father and mother's house, for example, so I calm down a bit and don't take action, God forbid... my child was in the house. Then I went to the lawyer... went home... I couldn't eat food and my weight started decreasing rapidly; at that time I was 98 kilos and in our own house unconsciously I would choke back tears and couldn't get food down my throat. Conditions were hard conditions.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 83).

This narrative shows the depth of emotional pain resulting from betrayal and mistrust which can lead to physical and psychological collapse.

Violence can also lead to the feeling of loss of identity and personal value. One interviewee says with deep regret:

'I don't know, there was no one, by Quran, to tell me 'Don't forget yourself.' A human, if he wants to love someone, must love himself first, but I forgot myself... anymore I said I am sure everything is finished. My world has become very small... I have regret for this, to hit a water to body [wash/swim - refresh]. I made my world very small.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 182).

This feeling of losing self aligns with Rogers' 'Self-Concept' (1951) which emphasises that lack of self-acceptance and continuous negative experiences can lead to the collapse of self-esteem.

Psychological violence in some cases even drags to destructive behaviours and harming others. One interviewee points to this subject:

'All men who kill their own daughters, kill their own wives, or a brother who kills his own sister... enjoys it? No, he suffers a deeply psychological suffering; later they attempt suicide themselves over this work. But a greater psychological pressure is inside the tribe and clan and society that tells him 'The only way to protect and care for the family to return lost reputation is [committing honour killing].'' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 119).

This narrative shows how social and cultural pressures can transform psychological violence into a cycle of greater violences.

Finally, these narratives show that violence against men, especially in the psychological-emotional dimension, is a multifaceted phenomenon that from childhood to adulthood, from family to society, and from personal relationships to institutional structures, leaves destructive effects on men's psyche. These injuries, as seen in numerous quotes, can lead to depression, isolation, swallowed anger, and even family collapse. For example, one interviewee points to the impact of distance from family and emotional void:

'In my opinion, one of the things that maybe relates... if a man doesn't have a job in a place where he lives, this distance of this individual from family and commuting and his migration... that they go to Tehran labouring, working, and their families are in the county (Shahrestan)... and fathers' distance from their families creates a type of emotional void and in fact torments them... which now we had cases and instances that even led to divorce... meaning led to... meaning lack of presence of these men in the family caused them not to be able to have sufficient supervision over children, over family, and this caused... a few cases, a few instances... meaning caused inequality in the family, one of whose consequences is divorce, and this type now in my opinion must be paid attention to.' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 47).

These experiences show that psychological violence against men influences not only the individual but the entire family structure and society. Therefore, addressing this subject requires a comprehensive approach that attends to both root causes and deep consequences.

9.1.1.2. *Feeling of Ruin, Misery, and Helplessness*

Violence against men is a deep and multifaceted phenomenon that entails extensive psychological-emotional consequences. Among these consequences, the feeling of ruin, misery, and helplessness (*Ehsas-e Tabahi, Badbakhti, va Bicharegi*) manifests as one of the most painful lived experiences for men. This feeling originates not merely from direct physical or psychological violence but from the complex interaction of social, cultural, and personal factors. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, these consequences are extracted from the very heart of individuals' real experiences and linked with scientific theories and expert perspectives to present a unified narrative of this hidden pain. This narrative is the story of men who, under the crushing burden of life pressures, have lost their identity and value and are trapped in a vortex of despair and ruin.

One of the most bitter experiences that men express when facing violence is the feeling of the loss of status and identity within the family and society. This feeling is often accompanied by isolation and exclusion, dragging the individual toward the abyss of helplessness. One interviewee speaks of this experience with deep regret:

'[Entrusting] the elderly to nursing homes... I submitted [said]... why has he fallen into this age [where] his own family [whether by his son or his wife] don't

receive [accept] him? He has taken a second wife... stayed [stuck] from there... and doesn't have house and life either, or had money and it was spent or they took it from him and went, and he has remained desperate (Mosta'sal) anymore.'

(Interview No. 23, Mokhtar Davari, Pos 44).

This narrative demonstrates how being rejected by the family, especially in old age, can lead to profound feelings of helplessness and desperation. From a sociological perspective, this situation aligns with the concept of 'Social Isolation' raised by Durkheim; wherein the individual is separated from his social support networks and feels worthless (Durkheim, 1897).

This feeling of ruin manifests severely in family relationships and following experiences such as divorce. One interviewee speaks of the collapse of his position within the family structure:

'[One of the consequences of divorce] the man is placed under domination; with that masculine [personality] structure he has, it can be said he is under domination. This being under domination of the man, one [result] is family destruction; meaning upbringing of children is dissolved, the human [man] doesn't dare speak about raising children. It must be however, for example, the woman speaks, the man speaks [agrees]. If the mother is happy, the child must be happy too, the man must be happy too.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 309-316).

This experience illustrates how losing power and the traditional role of the patriarch in the family can lead to feelings of worthlessness and ruin. From a psychological perspective, this situation relates to Rogers' 'Self-Concept' Theory, which emphasises that incongruence between the ideal self-image and the individual's lived reality leads to the collapse of self-esteem (Rogers, 1951).

Violence and bitter life experiences are sometimes so deep that the individual feels he has lost his entire existence. One interviewee says with overt pain:

'I burst them all [my family] with my works... well, my age was very low.'

(Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 82).

This sense of guilt and the feeling of having destroyed family relationships sinks the individual into a vortex of misery. Continuing, another individual speaks of a moment when he sees his whole world lost:

'Before that... that time, early on I didn't know... even here they hadn't said... I didn't know, didn't have news... when I understood too, the world collapsed on my head. At first the world had collapsed on my head.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 205).

These narratives reveal the depth of despair and the feeling of ruin, as if no path remains to return to a normal life.

The feeling of helplessness is sometimes intensified through comparison with others and as a result of hard life experiences. One interviewee who has passed through the experience of drug use and rough sleeping (*Karton-khabi*) says:

'Everything passed hard. The worst suffering I pulled [endured] was [the feeling of] helplessness; more than anything, not financial... generally I am worse than everyone, lower than everyone, more miserable than everyone.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 209-212).

This self-deprecation and feeling of inferiority is among the psychological consequences of violence which brings the individual to the belief that he is lower than all other humans. This situation aligns with the concept of 'Social Humiliation' raised by Bourdieu; where the individual loses his position in society as a result of social and economic pressures (Bourdieu, 1984).

This feeling of ruin sometimes reaches a point where the individual has no hope for life anymore and becomes disgusted (*Delzadeh*) with it. One interviewee says with complete despair:

'I wanted to release myself from this life. I could neither live correctly nor could I consume substances. I was bored/disgusted with life. [Life] had no attraction. That I live... and I tried a lot. I myself didn't believe in myself anymore.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 260-262).

He also speaks of distance from his family and habituation to this separation:

'Whatever I say, its end becomes substances and street and camp and these things... family and my conflict... all my years my experience was this, meaning living without family... not seeing my mother, not seeing my father, and not seeing my sister. I got used to this life. They got used to my distance too... is it possible? They got used to my distance anymore. Is it possible a son doesn't see his mother?' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 370).

This narrative shows the depth of isolation and the feeling of helplessness which brings the individual to the belief that he has no place in family and social life anymore. From a psychological perspective, this situation relates to the concept of 'Chronic Depression,' wherein the individual is deprived of the meaning and purpose of life (Seligman, 1975).

Losing love and emotional relationships can also lead to feelings of ruin. One interviewee speaks with deep pain of the loss of his life partner:

'For the sake of Neda's love I [lost] my everything, I gave my everything. If Neda [my partner] returns, I will put my attention more on her... by my mother's soul I am not living, I am not doing youth [enjoying youth], I am being annoyed very much since I lost Neda, I am not living, Mum and them are very worried.'

(Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 247).

He also adds about the impact of this loss on his body and psyche:

'You are looking for violence against men... let them come knife you... when it has clawed my soul... my mouth has been serviced [I am wrecked]... from 130 kilos weight I reached 90 kilos weight.' (Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 83).

This experience shows how losing an emotional relationship can lead to physical and psychological collapse and sink the individual into a vortex of misery.

The feeling of deprivation from normal life and unattainable wishes also fuels this sense of ruin. One interviewee speaks of his childhood and adolescence experience in the State Welfare Organization (*Behzisti*):

'I feel all humans are bad. I didn't reach many of my wishes. Neither did I study lessons nor went to a club. Neither did I have childhood and adolescence. The best era of my life, meaning adolescence, passed in Welfare where I couldn't go out... I was deprived of everything. Physically too we became weak because in childhood I didn't have appropriate nutrition.' (Interview No. 61, Arshia Jafari, Pos 34).

This narrative depicts the pain of deprivation and the feeling of helplessness resulting from not having a normal life. He also speaks of the impact of being rejected from his family:

'The consequence is that same result that happened for me. I told its story [being rejected from family]. My whole existence was pain and problem.' (Interview No. 62 with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 37).

These experiences show how initial violence and deprivations can lead to feelings of ruin and misery throughout life.

Physical and social diseases can also intensify this feeling. An interviewee suffering from HIV speaks of his despair:

'The most important consequence of HIV disease... mostly not having hope for tomorrow... that you are alone forever anymore. I myself think I am at the end of the road anymore.' (Interview No. 23, Ali Tavakoli, Pos 100-104).

He also adds about the blow he received from his life partner:

'The lady [having AIDS] struck me a bad blow... struck a blow that we can neither go somewhere nor can [go] to work nor can [live].' (Interview No. 23, Ali Tavakoli, Pos 61-62).

This narrative shows how disease and the social stigma related to it can lead to feelings of ruin and isolation. From a sociological perspective, this situation relates to Goffman's 'Labelling Theory,' which emphasises how social stigmas can distort individual identity (Goffman, 1963).

Social violence and humiliation in various environments also fuel this feeling. One interviewee speaks of the experience of humiliation in the military environment:

'This [military cadre force] put a lot of pressure on me that [if] I see him outside I won't spit in his face... he deals with me somehow as if he is my mum and dad, he raised me... most of them don't disrespect, you know... but now one has come, everyone is thirsty for his blood... meaning the unit has statistics above two hundred people, everyone hates him... everyone went to Protection [Security] said 'This one has burst [crossed the line].'' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 54).

This experience shows that humiliation and psychological pressures in formal environments can lead to feelings of worthlessness. Also, another interviewee speaks of the experience of violence in the addiction withdrawal camp and its impact on his psyche:

'I experience violence... these annoyances I am suffering, these very abuses I am seeing. I was in hospital for close to 26 days... was discharged from here [addiction withdrawal camp]. From hospital one night I came to my father's house. I told my father 'What... basically it's like this, I don't like to go to the

street, I don't like to see anyone anymore'; I called my brother said 'Come take me to camp, I go to camp.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 81-82).

This narrative shows the depth of isolation and feeling of misery resulting from violent experiences.

More severe violences like sexual abuse can also leave destructive effects on the individual's psyche. One interviewee speaks of the impact of this experience on students' lives:

'Another type is sexual abuse which happens by bullies to students... well, that same thing is very much for humans. Think, a student gets raped; he becomes miserable (Bichareh) for the rest of his life, cannot change fate.' (Interview No. 80, Erfan, Pos 197-200).

This experience shows how initial violences can change the individual's life path forever and drown him in feelings of ruin and helplessness.

The feeling of losing traditional roles also fuels this sense. One interviewee says:

'The man, the way they always say, is the pillar of the house, you know... it is nothing other than this... but that pillar anyway... when he cannot have the role of pillar, what? That life falls apart completely.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 28-30).

This narrative shows that the inability to perform social and familial roles can lead to feelings of worthlessness. Also, another interviewee speaks of the impact of addiction on his life:

'Secretly. We went behind the PlayStation [game console/shop] together... basically at a time I came to myself... basically saw it's late... because of substances everything... I lost everything and became contaminated with many other things I shouldn't have become.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 35).

This experience depicts the feeling of ruin resulting from addiction and losing control over life.

Finally, one interviewee speaks of family indifference and the feeling of absolute worthlessness:

'A person gets injured... life makes no difference to him anymore... when nothing has beauty for him, nothing has interest for him anymore... life, his existence and non-existence makes no difference to him. For a while my existence

and non-existence made no difference to my family. I went, 4-5-6 months didn't come home; they didn't call me even once. I... one of my brothers was in Tehran... I got stuck in the street over the workshop... which proceeded through legal procedure, I went to prison... my brother saw me in prison, called home that 'Rasoul is in prison.' Meaning no one understood. I didn't call them. Neither I called them nor did I like to see them.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 342-344).

This narrative shows the depth of the feeling of ruin and helplessness where the individual is not noticed even by the closest people in his life. One expert also points to this vicious cycle:

'This man falls into a defective loop cycle... a circle... what do they say... defective cycle. A defective cycle where constantly, I submitted [said], humiliation, threat, and goes beyond this too and in the words of Iranians this individual starts 'Self-Harm' (Khod-zani); meaning he himself humiliates himself, he himself abuses himself and suffers monitoring [sic: likely mentoring/internalising], self-deprecation. All complications in my opinion are a fountainhead in micro and macro violences a man experiences at least when he is in a relationship.' (Interview No. 9, Dr. Marghati 2, Pos 11).

This analysis shows how continuous violences trap the individual in a cycle of self-humiliation and misery.

These narratives in total show that the feeling of ruin, misery, and helplessness is among the deep consequences of violence against men which influences the individual's life from childhood to adulthood, from family relationships to social interactions. This feeling is the direct result of psychological, emotional, and social violences which take identity, self-esteem, and hope for life from the individual. Therefore, addressing this subject requires a comprehensive approach attending not only to the roots of violence but to its deep consequences as well.

9.1.1.3. *Death of Pleasure and Joy in Life*

In examining the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men, one of the most prominent themes extracted from interviewees' narratives is the loss of the sense of joy and pleasure in life, expressed with emotional depth and repetition. Faraz Mahboubi (No. 36) says in this regard:

'You know, I have gotten used to it anymore. I don't remember the last time I was really happy, laughed from the bottom of my heart—not just laughing, was happy from the bottom of my heart... I don't know when it was, I don't remember at all when it was. Those friends who are very close to me, on that day at that time when I was saying, laughing, their hearts—some of them—grumbled, said 'What's wrong with you today?' Because they knew my laughter is fake; my pride doesn't let me express my bad state, no one has seen my bad state. Only dying calms me down, because I am tired of this life anymore. No, I say really, neither is it a state and thing [mood], nor am I wearing a mask; I have hope in nothing, I don't know why nothing makes me feel good, nothing makes me happy.'
(Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi).

This narrative well demonstrates the depth of despair and emotional emptiness resulting from violence and psychological pressures. Faraz speaks not only of the lack of joy in his life but points to using a 'Mask' to hide his bad state, which itself indicates social pressures and gender norms preventing men from expressing real emotions. This issue aligns with Bem's Gender Schema Theory (1974), which emphasises social pressures to conform to norms of masculinity, norms that make expressing negative emotions a taboo for men (Bem, 1974). This concealment of emotions traps the individual in a cycle of isolation and emotional suffering, where even his laughter is recognised as unreal by close ones.

Continuing this narrative, a similar experience is raised by Rasoul (No. 46):

'[Life] has nothing new for me. Basically life has another meaning for me. Pleasure from life and joy is instantaneous, it is not permanent; if I want to be happy, it is momentary. I like to live like the rest.'

This statement indicates the loss of meaning of life and the transformation of joy into a fleeting and unstable matter. Rasoul's wish for a life 'like the rest' itself indicates a feeling of isolation and separation from society, a feeling well explained by the concept of 'Social Alienation' (*Anomie*) raised by Durkheim (1897). Durkheim believes that when individuals feel disconnected from society and its norms, the sense of meaninglessness and emptiness in their lives is reinforced (Durkheim, 1897). This alienation in Rasoul's case appears as the loss of lasting pleasures and the transformation of life into a collection of passing moments, which itself shows the deep impact of violence on the individual's understanding of life and his place in the world.

Violence against men also leaves destructive effects on social roles and identities which were previously sources of joy and satisfaction. Ali Asgari (No. 54) says in this regard:

'Everyone says... [I in the family] was somehow that I did a lot of clowning (Dalghak-bazi), now for a while everyone says 'Ali, what's wrong with you?' I myself don't understand either. Before I would say what they say... I would laugh, tell stories, try to be happy in the gathering I am in, [so] they be happy next to me; but now perhaps I speak two lines. I don't know, now either because of age or because of pressures that exist, you have seen a flower wither.'

This narrative shows Ali's identity change from a happy and lively individual to an isolated and bored one. He who once played the role of 'clown' and source of joy in the gathering has now lost this role under the influence of life pressures and likely experienced violences. This identity change is analysable with Tajfel's Social Identity Theory (1978). Tajfel emphasises that individuals' identity is formed from social roles and their interactions in groups, and when these roles are destroyed due to external pressures or psychological injuries, the individual suffers identity crisis and feelings of emptiness (Tajfel, 1978). In Ali's case, this loss of joyful identity has influenced not only himself but those around him, causing them surprise and worry, which itself shows the importance of social roles in maintaining emotional balance.

Psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men extend beyond personal life to social and occupational performance as well. Davood (No. 91) says thus in this regard:

'He eats [suffers] spiritual blows... blows, as the saying goes, become that same spiritual [injury]. Spiritual blows that you eat [suffer], you can no longer, for example, like the rest have a position in society, have vitality; this causes a person to become lethargic in the workplace. Then this, when he goes into work, becomes very visible among the collection's members; as the saying goes, weak points are seen. This is very important, Mr. Doctor. I have experienced being [there]; when weak points are seen, the party is broken anymore, then they understand that this one can't do much in his job.'

This narrative shows that spiritual blows resulting from violence destroy the individual's vitality and motivation in the work environment and place him in exposure to judgment and social exclusion. This matter is explicable with Bourdieu's Social Capital Theory (1986). Bourdieu believes that social

relationships and the individual's position in social networks act as capital guaranteeing his success and satisfaction, but when this capital is destroyed due to psychological injuries and loss of vitality, the individual is placed in exposure to isolation and failure (Bourdieu, 1986). In Davood's experience, weak points being seen and loss of social position in the workplace intensifies the feeling of brokenness and inability and creates a cycle of psychological and social injuries.

By placing these narratives together, 'Death of Pleasure and Joy' can be identified as a core category in the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. This category relates on one hand to deep feelings of emptiness and despair, as seen in Faraz and Rasoul's experience, and on the other hand to the loss of social roles and identities, as evident in Ali's case, and also relates to negative impacts on occupational and social performance, as Davood has experienced. These findings align with the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) model presented by Herman (1992). Herman believes that traumatic experiences like violence can lead to the loss of the sense of security, trust, and pleasure in life and drive the individual towards isolation and depression (Herman, 1992). Furthermore, social pressures and norms of masculinity preventing the expression of negative emotions intensify these injuries and prevent the individual's emotional recovery. The death of pleasure and joy in men's lives, therefore, is not just an individual consequence but a social phenomenon resulting from complex interactions between violence, gender norms, and social structures. This analysis shows that violence against men can act as a reproducing cycle: initial violence leads to psychological injuries, these injuries destroy the sense of joy and satisfaction, and ultimately the individual is placed in exposure to isolation and more violences. To exit this cycle, it is necessary to attend both to structural factors like changing gender norms and individual factors like providing counselling services.

This analysis, relying on interviewees' narratives and scientific theories, offers a comprehensive picture of the destructive effects of violence on men's emotional and social life. The death of pleasure and joy as a core category indicates the urgent need for social and psychological interventions to support men placed in exposure to violence.

9.1.1.4. Self-Harm

Within the paradigmatic framework of Grounded Theory, an examination of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men, with a specific focus on Self-Harm, takes us into the depths of the lived experiences of individuals who, in confronting violence, have discovered destructive avenues for soothing their emotional and psychological pains. Self-harm, as one of the prominent consequences of violence, indicates not only deep psychological injuries but is also a reflection of social pressures, emotional frustrations, and the absence of the necessary support systems to process these traumas. In this narrative analysis, relying on the full quotations of interviewees and integrating them with scientific perspectives, we attempt to present a comprehensive image of this phenomenon and demonstrate how violence drives men towards self-harming behaviours.

One of the prominent aspects in the interviewees' experiences is the connection between experienced acts of violence, especially in the realm of sexual abuse, and the tendency towards self-harming behaviours such as masturbation or addiction, which appear as methods to escape emotional pains or sexual frustrations. Saberi speaks in this regard:

'I give an example; when a person... look, now it has become very interesting... the party has come interviewing, says 'Yeah, do you masturbate?' He says 'If it's not broadcast, yes.' This one doesn't know that in the long term, 5-10 years when he marries, he suffers problems in his relationship with his wife... you know what I want to say? Meaning it hasn't started yet, it finished early... this woman gets annoyed, his spouse gets annoyed... and because he is not satisfied, he becomes mentally sick, goes somewhere else [does] a work... these are things that if we tell kids and boy children and our kids are taught well... because the subject of your consideration is sexual abuses... in the long term the boy has married the girl, they loved each other very much; after six months, a year, the girl comes says 'I can't.' I say 'Why?' She says 'This one cannot satisfy me, because he is not a man.' 'Why is he not a man?' 'Dad, this man, young, sorted out several of their friends [had sex with them]; this one cannot satisfy himself, cannot have sleeping-together with this woman.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 83).

This narrative reveals the complex layers of the impact of sexual violence on self-harming behaviours and human relationships. Saberi points to an experience where sexual violence in youth disrupted the individual's ability

to establish a healthy relationship with a spouse, and masturbation, as a self-harming behaviour, replaced healthy emotional and sexual connection. This behaviour, which initially seems to be a method for soothing psychological pressures, leads in the long term to deeper frustration and feelings of inadequacy. This subject aligns with the 'Compensatory Behaviours' Theory raised by Adler (1927). Adler believes that individuals, in facing feelings of inferiority or frustration, turn to behaviours that create a temporary feeling of control or relief, but ultimately these behaviours lead to a cycle of psychological injuries (Adler, 1927). In Saberi's case, masturbation as a compensatory behaviour not only fails to solve the problem but fuels the feeling of inability in social and emotional roles and even negatively affects the spouse and family relationships.

This cycle of self-harm and emotional frustration appears in another narrative in a different but related form. One interviewee speaks frankly of the feeling of mental illness and the impact of violence on his instrumental view of women:

'I don't want to show myself innocent; I am a sexual patient. But perhaps these very pains of mine that I couldn't tell anyone caused me to become such a sick human, that with the passage of time [in] this subject, again I see women as tools and only see their bodies and sexual needs exist in my mind.' (Interview No. 62, with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 34).

This narrative shows that experienced violence and the inability to express pains and psychological injuries drove the individual towards a type of emotional and mental self-harm. The instrumental view of women and the sole focus on sexual needs, as a type of defence mechanism, is a way to escape deeper pains, but at the same time, this behaviour keeps the individual trapped in a cycle of guilt and isolation. This experience is explainable with Freud's concept of 'Defence Mechanisms' (1936). Freud believes that individuals, in facing psychological pressures they are incapable of managing, turn to mechanisms such as repression or displacement which may lead to destructive behaviours (Freud, 1936). In this case, the inability to express pains and the lack of social support has driven the individual towards a distorted view of human relationships and mental self-harm, where he labels himself 'sick' and suffers from this condition.

Self-harm in the interviewees' experiences sometimes manifests in the form of addiction and physical injury as well. Vahid Faraji shares a bitter experience in this regard:

'With Methadone pills. More than these, it is at the hand of my own life; my own life is annoying/abusing me.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 50).

This short but deep statement indicates physical self-harm as a way to escape life's annoyances. Using narcotics, especially Methadone which is often used to soothe physical or psychological pains, is employed here as a tool to numb the emotional pains resulting from violence and life pressures. This behaviour aligns with 'Self-Harm as Emotional Regulation' Theory raised by Nock (2007). Nock emphasises that individuals, in facing severe psychological pressures and a lack of healthy coping skills, turn to self-harming behaviours like substance use to temporarily regain their emotional balance (Nock, 2007). In Vahid's experience, life itself has turned into a source of annoyance, and Methadone consumption, however destructive, is seen as the only way to soothe this pain. This behaviour not only shows the depth of psychological injuries resulting from violence but highlights the lack of social support and the absence of a safe space to express these pains.

By placing these narratives together, Self-Harm is revealed as a core category in the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. This category relates on one hand to sexual and emotional frustrations, as seen in Saberi's experience where masturbation as a way to escape pressures led to inability in healthy relationships. On the other hand, mental and emotional self-harm, as evident in interviewee No. 62's narrative, traps the individual in a cycle of guilt and isolation. Also, physical self-harm, as Vahid Faraji experienced, in the form of addiction and injury to the body, becomes a way to numb life's pains. These findings align with Herman's 'Post-Traumatic Stress' Model (1992). Herman believes that traumatic experiences like violence can lead to self-harming behaviours because the individual looks for ways to control or soothe his emotional pains (Herman, 1992). Furthermore, social norms and gender pressures preventing men from expressing emotions and asking for help intensify this cycle. Self-harm in these narratives is not only an individual response to violence but a reflection of social structures that do not provide space for recovery and support.

This analysis shows that violence against men, by creating deep psychological injuries, drives the individual towards self-harming behaviours;

behaviours that initially might be seen as a way for relief, but ultimately lead to isolation, frustration, and further injuries. Self-harm, whether in physical, emotional, or mental form, creates a reproducing cycle of suffering that keeps the individual in a trap of pain and despair. To exit this cycle, there is a need for interventions that attend both to individual factors like providing counselling services and social factors like changing gender norms and creating safe spaces for expressing emotions. These narratives are a silent scream from men who soothe their pains in silence with injury to themselves, and this itself shows the depth of the catastrophe violence has imposed on their emotional and psychological life.

9.1.1.5. *Isolation and Mental Disorders*

Violence against men, like a deep wound in the hidden layers of society, leaves devastating psychological-emotional effects that sometimes involve the individual's soul and psyche until the end of life. These violences, whether in the form of physical abuses or in the form of continuous humiliation and blame, often lead to isolation and mental disorders and sink the individual's life into a cycle of pain and silence. In this narrative, relying on lived experiences of individuals who have passed through these violences, we examine these consequences and attempt to reveal the roots and ramifications of these injuries within the framework of Grounded Theory with a deep look. This story is the story of men who, under the burden of psychological pressures, sometimes lose themselves and sometimes, in search of finding a way for liberation, take refuge in withdrawal and isolation.

One of the most prominent consequences of violence against men is the collapse of self-esteem and self-confidence which makes the individual vulnerable before the crowd and society. In this field, one interviewee has addressed this subject with precision and depth and says:

'Usually spiritually and psychologically they are damaged very much, and this spiritual and psychological [damage] can proceed towards addiction, but I see it rare that they go towards addiction... perhaps frustration that they feel blamed everywhere... in the gathering he has lost his self-esteem, has lost his self-confidence, even in the gathering of friends he is not capable of speaking, so much pressure has come on him. And spiritually and psychologically he is very damaged; it is possible he goes after addiction too, but he is drawn towards spiritual and mental illnesses, becomes depressed, they get severe anxieties,

phobia basically comes to them. Perhaps when they see a lady who speaks very well, is very authoritative, he feels bad; he is placed in a gathering, has fear of this that he will be evaluated, will be judged, 'Lest I speak, this lady my wife says 'You don't know how to speak, what business do you have speaking in the gathering?'. We see these a lot. And finally isolation. They become isolated. Of course personality types are very influential too; that if he is introverted and the lady has an extroverted personality type, two opposite personality types... automatically he [she?] progresses and he [husband] regresses. He goes towards isolation. Of course here the lady is damaged more if she is extroverted, because of all those things she wanted to receive from the husband... the gentleman wants his solitude to be alone, watch a film, read a book, and enjoys his own loneliness. But the lady is the reverse, wants to socialise, be in the gathering, go with her husband; for example she goes a few times, they say 'Where is your husband?', she can't take him with herself. In my opinion that damage and abuse she sees returns more to the lady. Again it returns to ladies. Oh, you see, one cannot separate these; violence is a coin that has two sides, one side is men and one side is women. We don't have a one-sided coin in reality. Therefore we, in the position of analyst and researcher, work on violence against men which in fact one end of it is women. Incidentally feminists [should have] done this work we started and understood violence against men better because we will ultimately help violence against women to be seen better too. When you say 'Well, its foundations have violence,' he has seen a violence that he commits violence; I myself have done this work.' (Interview No. 14, Dr. Vahabi, Pos 84).

This narrative presents a clear picture of the psychological collapse of men who, under the burden of violence—whether from spouse or from society—have lost their self-confidence. This individual speaks of fear of being judged and feeling insufficient; a feeling that drags him to isolation and prevents him from presence in social gatherings. From a scientific perspective, this isolation can be considered one of the individual's defence mechanisms against psychological pressures, but in the long term, leads to intensifying depression and anxiety (Kakabra et al., 1398 [2019]). This narrative also points to the complexity of inter-gender relationships and shows that violence against men sometimes indirectly affects women too and creates a cycle of injury in the family and society.

But these injuries are not limited only to adults; children too, who are often witnesses or victims of violence in the family environment, suffer its

psychological consequences. One interviewee speaks with deep affection of the impact of family violence on his child:

'Yeah, yes completely, completely because of those conditions... because that time he was here too, because of those unfavourable conditions this child plucked his eyelashes... suddenly they started plucking eyelashes. Well, this tense family... well the child doesn't become a thing [healthy]... gets injured a lot, you know. Because we had dispute and had fights and so-and-so... now unfortunately we didn't have understanding and comprehension of these stories either... this child found a problem and that same time we took him to, so to speak, those who are psychologists and psychiatrists and these words.' (Interview No. 16, Ahmad, Pos 70-71).

This quote is an alarm about the destructive effects of family violence on children's psyche, especially boys who might themselves transform into victims or agents of violence in the future. Behaviours like Trichotillomania (plucking eyelashes), mentioned in this narrative, can be a sign of anxiety disorder or severe stress which the child, due to inability to express his emotions, manifests physically (Felitti et al., 1377 [1998]). These injuries, if not attended to in time, can lead to stable mental disorders in adulthood and trap the individual in a cycle of isolation and psychological inability. From the perspective of Grounded Theory, this narrative shows that violence against men, whether directly or in the form of family violence, as a contextual factor, leaves deep psychological consequences on the individual and subsequent generations.

In this midst, isolation as one of the most prominent psychological consequences of violence against men not only separates the individual from society but makes him alien to himself as well. Men who experience feelings of insufficiency and continuous blame under the burden of violence often turn to withdrawal to remain safe from further judgments. This isolation, as mentioned in the first quote, can be the result of personality differences between couples as well, but its main root is often in violences that have deprived the man of his social and emotional position. From a psychological view, isolation can act as a defensive shield, but simultaneously deprives the individual of social supports necessary for recovery (Silver, 1385 [2006]). This isolation, along with mental disorders like depression and anxiety, creates a cycle of injury that swallows the individual and closes the path of liberation to him.

Violence against men can also act as a stimulus leading to the emergence of phobias and social fears. As we saw in the first quote, some men after experiencing violence fear presence in gatherings and interaction with others, especially women. This fear is rooted in the feeling of insufficiency and being judged; a feeling society reinforces with its gender stereotypes. In cultures where masculinity is defined by authority and control, a man who has experienced violence often sees himself failed and powerless, and this feeling drives him to further isolation (Connell, 1379 [2000]). This cycle not only destroys the individual's psyche but endangers his emotional and family relationships and sometimes, as seen in the quotes, harms women and children around him too.

Within the framework of Grounded Theory, isolation and mental disorders as central consequences of violence against men are connected on one hand with contextual factors like gender stereotypes and family violence, and on the other lead to broader social consequences like the collapse of family relationships. These consequences indicate the depth of injury violence inflicts on men's psyche; injury that sometimes remains hidden because society pays less attention to men's emotional sufferings. But these sufferings, like a subcutaneous wave, influence not only the individual but the entire structure of family and society. The story of these men is the story of silence; a silence that must be broken so the way for healing and reconstruction is opened. Violence against men is not just one side of the coin, but part of a larger cycle inviting us all to rethink social and cultural structures. Only by hearing these silent voices and attending to hidden wounds can we step towards a fairer society; a society wherein no one's suffering, whether man or woman, is ignored.

9.1.1.6. Addiction and Self-Destruction

In the heart of a society where violence against men manifests in various forms, addiction and self-destruction as one of the most bitter physical-somatic consequences of this phenomenon have dragged many individuals' lives to ruin. This narrative, relying on the lived experiences of men trapped in the vortex of violence and using the Grounded Theory framework, attempts to present a clear picture of this devastating consequence. Addiction, which sometimes appears as an inefficient coping mechanism against psychological and social pressures resulting from violence, not only destroys the individual's

body but annihilates his soul and social position as well. This destructive cycle begins with family and social violences and leads to self-destruction and gradual or sudden death.

One of the interviewees speaks with pain and deep regret of the physical effects of addiction on his life:

'Because I was a substance user... now for my teeth, 300 million [Tomans] money is in their [family's] hands... I have... for my teeth... I tell that eldest brother's son who has my money, 'Dad, I have been clean for six months, by God I am ashamed when talking to anyone, by God I want to laugh I am ashamed, eating a single fruit has become my wish because of my tooth. Fix my teeth with my own money.' Anymore they say 'No, when the time comes; don't think of your tooth, don't think of your health'... well, teeth are health, you know. They don't do it, Mr. Doctor, they don't. They took my money from me as if nothing happened. For now I don't shoot substances... let it stay here... they give them [money] for a wife... for example from my own money 200-300 Tomans money... 'Okay, next week around this time call again'... 'Okay, we will transfer for you now'... 'You said two weeks ago I'll transfer'... I don't know what to do with this family of mine; my family caused [this] a lot, my sisters and brothers caused a lot that I fell into this day [state].' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 94).

This quote is the tragic story of a man whose body addiction has destroyed, taking even the ability to perform the simplest daily tasks like eating a fruit from him. But what deepens this pain is the family's inattention and lack of support, which itself is considered a type of psychological violence and keeps the individual in a cycle of isolation and self-destruction.

Violence, whether in physical or psychological form, can drive men towards high-risk behaviours like drug use. This subject has been attended to in scientific literature as well; Lazarus and Folkman's Stress and Coping Theory (1984) explains that individuals, in facing severe pressures, may turn to unhealthy solutions to escape psychological pain. One interviewee expresses this connection between violence and addiction well:

'[Violence] becomes a stroke or, as the saying goes, bursts out somewhere or goes towards substances, or the man becomes rebellious, as the saying goes.' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran, Pos 58).

This comment shows that violence can act as a stimulus guiding the individual towards addiction, which itself leads to physical diseases like stroke or rebellious behaviours and increases the risk of death.

Addiction, in many cases, is considered a type of violence against self wherein the individual consciously or unconsciously harms his own body and soul. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2002) also considers addiction one of the forms of self-directed violence which entails lethal consequences. One interviewee describes this aspect of self-destruction thus:

'This, anyway, is conflict, this is anyway murder; now in the dimension of violence against self that we discussed, it transforms into suicide, becomes self-laceration (Jigh-zani - possibly meant Tigh-zani [razor-cutting]), so-and-so... even forms of drug use and addiction are specific to individuals who have much anger towards themselves, and to soothe this anger take refuge again in a wrong resultant called drug use; and then drug use itself is a type of violence against self, meaning you are destroying your body intentionally; the addicted person, his body is being destroyed as a result of drug use.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 109).

This quote introduces addiction not only as a consequence but as a form of violence wherein the individual transfers internal anger resulting from bitter experiences to his own body and destroys it.

Young men, who are often placed in exposure to social pressures and various violences, are at risk of falling into the trap of addiction more than others. One interviewee points to this subject:

'[From the consequences of violence against young men] it is possible they turn to addiction, narcotics, stimulants, alcoholic beverages.' (Interview No. 81, Ms. Hamta, Pos 38).

This comment is an alarm showing how violence can drive the young generation towards behaviours that endanger their body and future. These behaviours, especially consuming stimulants and alcoholic beverages, have irreparable effects on physical health. One interviewee speaks in detail of these destructive effects:

'I had several clients introduced to me from high school; these had drunk handmade liquor. First of my talks I said 'Where did God put our brain?' Then I said 'Our God told us 'Watch out for this brain''; what ruins it? The first thing that ruins this, God said in the Quran too, said 'Intoxicants.' Every shot (Peyk) of

liquor [alcohol] destroys 12 thousand cells of our brain. Second, what ruins it? Smoke: cigarettes, hashish, Shisheh [crystal meth] and hashish. I saw individuals who had smoked Shisheh, well-built youths but they would go kiss the electricity pole and make pilgrimage to it. Because their brain cells are destroyed. Shisheh and hashish destroy the brain. Three, negative thoughts; we have two energies, positive energy, negative energy; positive energy its source is God and negative energy whose source is Satan.' (Interview No. 95, Retired Military Colonel, Pos 59).

This quote presents a horrific image of brain and psyche destruction via substance use, which can lead to permanent disability or death. Scientific studies also confirm that stimulants like *Shisheh* increase the risk of heart diseases and poisoning (Darke et al., 2008).

Psychological effects of narcotics should not be ignored either; these substances can create unstable psychological states leading to dangerous behaviours. One interviewee describes his experience thus:

'[Consuming Gol/Marijuana] depends on your phase; I experienced it myself, depends on your phase. Now maybe Hossein [my friend] gets a fear phase; when he gets fear, he sees everyone as officers, is afraid of everything. If he gets a happiness phase, his smile doesn't go away. Now he has got a sobbing phase or Karim [generous/weeping?]. . . look at him.' (Interview No. 101, Ashkan and Hossein, Students, Pos 355).

This quote shows that narcotics can disrupt the individual's psychological balance and place him in situations increasing the risk of physical injury or death.

Addiction also leads to the loss of social credit and individual character, and this is itself a type of social violence intensifying the cycle of injury. One interviewee speaks of these losses with regret:

'When I went towards these I was 18 years old; then I consumed opium sap (Shireh), methadone, Tramadol pills and... but in return, these consumptions brought about much damage. Life and financial damage. My credit and character, my everything went.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 64-68).

This comment shows the depth of the catastrophe addiction, as a consequence of violence, inflicts on the individual's life; from body destruction to losing social position, everything is destroyed in this path.

Family violences also play an important role in driving men towards addiction. One interviewee points to this impact:

'That same violence he applied on his kids, on his children, caused even the son to go astray and suffer addiction.' (Interview No. 18, Mr. Taghadosi, Pos 52).

This quote shows that violence in the family can act as a main root driving the individual towards self-destructive behaviours. Furthermore, society's humiliating look at addicted men is itself a type of doubled violence sinking them further into isolation. One interviewee expresses this subject thus:

'[Men consuming narcotics and stimulants] apart from their spouse, society's [look] towards this... an addicted person... that thing that is in custom [support] is not supported; usually they are treated with eyes of humiliation and insult very much. These [consuming men] are not supported much, and this itself can be violence against men, specifically in the discussion of addiction.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 22).

This comment shows another layer of violence addicted men face; a look that not only doesn't help their recovery but increases the risk of high-risk behaviours and death.

Finally, this narrative shows that addiction and self-destruction, as physical-somatic consequences of violence against men, are the result of a complex cycle of social, familial, and psychological pressures. This cycle destroys the individual from inside and out and often leads to gradual or sudden death. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, these consequences are highlighted as a central phenomenon in the experience of violence against men, requiring comprehensive interventions to support these individuals and break this destructive cycle.

9.1.1.7. *Pessimism and Mistrust*

The consequence of Pessimism and Mistrust (*Bad-bini va Bi-etemadi*) emerges as one of the most salient outcomes of violence against men, casting a long shadow over the various strata of men's lived experiences. It marks a form of chronic, subconscious social injury—a trauma that transforms not only the individual's relationship with others but also his fundamental connection to himself and the surrounding world. This pervasive cynicism effectively barricades the growth and continuity of trust, which is essential as a form of human and Social Capital (Putnam, 2000).

In Rasoul's narrative regarding his encounters with other substance users, a complex morphology of mistrust is revealed; a lived experience born from the repetition of betrayal, injury, and the transgression of collective and individual ethical boundaries:

'We all know each other; the heroin addict crowd (Jama'at), however much good you do to them, they do their own work again. The nature of a heroin person is this. Take him to your house, give him the best food, give him the best reception, keep him in your house a month, a year... one day don't do good to him, [if] you don't have force [over him], this person is useless. The nature of a heroin person is this. Not all of them are like this, you know, there are people and people; I am a person, I buy heroin with my own expense, with doing crime, with theft... if I knew you, you were my buddy, I wouldn't come take your property. I went ten neighbourhoods further over.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 334).

This speech reflects the collapse of the most self-evident presuppositions of trust between individuals. A man who has himself experienced the suffering of substance use, along with the environmental experiences of acceptance and rejection, now speaks regarding others with a default presumption of threat, betrayal, and deception. Although he emphasises that *'not all of them are like this,'* he depicts the relations governing the group as inherently dangerous and untrustworthy. This chasm of mistrust lays the groundwork for the formation of a society of 'Intimate Strangers,' wherein every relationship is potentially considered a vehicle for betrayal, and the cycle of mistrust and pessimism is continuously reproduced (Coleman, 1990).

At a deeper level, working children like Arshia Jafari speak in the text of their lived experience of a pessimism and lack of trust that is not merely individual but structural:

'My life has no security. I had bad conditions, I had no sin. This is the result of my being without guardian and without backing and shelter. The life of us children is not important for anyone at all; fear and stress are always with us. We cannot have a successful life.' (Interview No. 61, Arshia Jafari, Working Child, Pos 32).

This profound feeling of insecurity and the absence of social support creates a fertile substrate for the growth of pessimism towards the adult world and the formal structures of society. It initiates the cycle of mistrust from childhood; in

this experience, the very state of being a child becomes an accusation and a definitive label for rejection, suspicion, and the dispossession of trust.

In the interview with the sexual abuse case, that same fluidity of boundaries between child abuse, mistrust, and social violence is vividly observed:

'No one from relatives and kin lets their kids be alone with me. But time passed; one day I went with my grandmother to one of her brothers' house... these people... my brother [sic: likely 'her brother/cousin'] had a grandchild, was small. I was outside busy playing with a scrap car; I saw he came towards me and sat next to me. I slowly molested him too and sat him on my leg, but that same moment I pulled my hand, pulled him aside... but he himself in my opinion didn't know at all what he was doing, sat on my leg. I asked him not to do this work. It seems the scrap car was parked somewhere where that house's cameras were installed; maybe they saw me. But one day a... my grandfather or his grandchild and bride and child come to our house, their behaviour has totally changed. This becomes true for them there, that when his grandchild appears seeing me and jumps into my arms, I tell him too 'Okay, you must separate now,' but he shows dependence. When I separate him, he tries to sit on my leg but I forbid him from this action. Everyone was mistrustful of me and their look had blame.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 26).

Here, the consequence of mistrust is twofold: it is imposed upon the individual by others, and the individual simultaneously becomes suspicious of himself and his own impulses. This blaming gaze and the lack of opportunity for re-socialisation sows the seeds of a deep and chronic withdrawal. Goffman's Labelling Theory (1963) illuminates an aspect of this reality, showing how the experience of an injury can transform into a permanent brand of mistrust and social stigma.

Pessimism and the feeling of insecurity gradually reach a point where, in the expression of Amin Rezaei:

'Its consequence is this very thing, that you are pessimistic towards everyone; its consequence is this very thing, you don't trust anyone, you don't; its consequence is that basically you consider everyone your enemy totally. Its consequence is that you think injustice has been done to you (Dar haghset ejhaf shode)... in your right... it can be that same anger that causes murder, causes the person's

depression; that is another suicide too.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 36).

Here, pessimism becomes a basis for justifying mutual violence and the birth of a vicious circle of wound and counter-wound; an individual damaged by another finds the entire social connection threatening. The result is a lack of trust, a deep rupture of communications, and the consecutive collapse of hope in others, which can ultimately manifest in the form of aggression, murder, depression, or suicide (Durkheim, 1897).

Once again, we observe this pessimism and mistrust within the group of working children and the marginalised, in a structural and general form; as Haghighi's narrative demonstrates:

'[Working children] in the city, urban space, have been beaten and seen spiritual and psychological injury. [These violences] leave an effect on their own life and health... these kids don't have a positive view towards government officials, those who are assistants in this work, anymore, and will not have, and always look at individuals with the view of, as the saying goes, anger and grudge and hatred. Definitely in their future life, whatever work they do, marry, choose a suitable job for themselves... always due to the trust they no longer have in the government institution...' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 62-63).

And also:

'From parents, then surrounding people... meaning for example from employer, from society... for example men who see these kids wandering in the street, definitely not all of their hearts burn [with pity] that 'these kids are injury-prone'... definitely they are subjected to violence from the side of individuals who are outside. These individuals don't have a correct view of these kids, don't trust them, basically they face insult... these kids, from the side of individuals who are outside... in my opinion the biggest violence these face is the lack of trust others have in them, others' incorrect encounter with them; they look at them with ill-nature, deal with them with swearing and foul language.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 111).

Here, a society is depicted whose relationship with victims of violence is based on suspicion and a lack of credit-building, while victims of these relations are deprived of social capital for their part. The continuation of this cycle of mistrust causes the formation of a 'Disjointed Society' wherein no assurance remains of the Other.

In military and barracks environments too, the same situation is observed:

'Finding a friend there has a lot of effect on the guy's future, really destroys the guy; there is rape there too... everything happens in barracks... jokingly jokingly they do every work and it causes the party's ruin and causes that individual's destruction. Now they say 'Either you must do a work that cannot be said, or you must become a smoker.'' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 52).

In such environments, the lack of trust in the Other is effective even on lifestyle choices and individuals' future relationships, paving the way for greater isolation and deeper crises over time.

Finally, mistrust cannot be limited only to the sphere of informal relationships. Rather, it has encompassed larger social structures and even the market, employment, and municipal services, as Mohsen Hagh points out:

'Look, one of the most prominent ones that perhaps we are all involved with is that unfortunately, unfortunately... political issues I don't want to enter, I have no business with its governmental structure... an event has happened that something called trust does not exist. Mr. Doctor, you as employer and I contractor... honestly if you don't watch your work, somehow they cut your ear [cheat you]; this is the law. Now you as a citizen go to a supermarket... cut your ear... now you as a citizen go to the butchery, if you are not careful... somehow violence... this is a kind of violence too... violence doesn't necessarily mean they must hit us, but it exists whether I like it and whether we like it not, in the society we live in.' (Interview No. 90, Mohsen Hagh, Pos 25).

Here, a type of general atmosphere rules where everyone considers themselves potentially a victim of each other, and consequently, the extension of mistrust is generalised to the level of society and formal structures. It is here that mistrust acts as a collective procedure and a result of structural violence in the whole society, and the reproduction of pessimism is stabilised even in the minds of children and subsequent generations.

'Violence against that same man and his children... and the child who is now second grade. This child learns tomorrow... there is something at the back of his mind. That 'Woman is useless, woman causes betrayal, woman caused violence against my dad, destroyed my dad's life'... or another one, that same lady had embezzled all her husband's assets... now her son is sixth grade, twelve years old; we could barely convince him that 'Not all ladies are bad, not all ladies do violence, do oppression, do betrayal, eat someone's property.' Because he really

had this conception, 'All women bring this calamity on men's heads. They betray, ignore their child.'" (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 18).

This sentence exactly shows that the lack of trust in others and even the opposite sex can be transmitted generation to generation and transform into a sustainable social attitude (Bourdieu, 1986).

Thus, mistrust and pessimism are not only the result of direct violence against men, but born of and perpetuating structures of inequality, social exclusion, psycho-social injuries, bio-classes, and power hierarchies in society. In this midst, individual and subcultural experiences intersect with theories of Social Capital and Cultural Capital (Coleman, Bourdieu, Putnam), emphasising that violence and mistrust have a two-way relationship; the more social violence there is, the deeper mistrust will be, and a cycle forms whose liberation requires security, awareness, and changing social and cultural structures.

9.1.1.8. Feeling of Confusion and Helplessness

Within the paradigmatic framework of Grounded Theory, an examination of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men, with a specific focus on the feeling of confusion and helplessness (*Ehsas-e Sardargomi va Darmandegi*), takes us into the depth of the lived experiences of individuals who, in confronting violence and life pressures, are trapped in a vortex of ambiguity, inability, and suffering. The feeling of confusion and helplessness, as one of the prominent consequences of violence, is a reflection of deep emotional and psychological injuries that not only destabilise individual identity but also challenge the individual's social position and human relationships. In this unified and compelling narrative, relying on the full quotations of interviewees and integrating them with scientific perspectives, we attempt to reveal the hidden layers of this phenomenon and demonstrate how violence places men on a path of lostness and inability.

One of the prominent aspects in the interviewees' experiences is a deep feeling of confusion regarding their roles and position in life, a feeling that sometimes reaches the border of losing identity entirely. Reza Rashidi speaks of this with pain and ambiguity:

'I have an ambiguity and confusion. Basically I don't know where I fell short, did I fall short in my loving, this itself is a torment, it is a state... what do they say... confusion, it's as if I am lost. I have work, it exists, thank God something comes

in [money], from my father there is something, Doctor I am telling you by God I don't know I am working, don't know I am living, what am I doing, I don't know, basically a person's state is ruined/bad. Violence is not just hitting, if she comes hits me it is much easier than coming and leaving, for me one of the other problems is that I still don't know why we reached here that we should separate?' (Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 47).

This narrative presents a vivid image of deep confusion and a feeling of lostness. Reza speaks of the inability to understand the reason for the collapse of his life and defines violence, beyond physical injury, as a mental and emotional torment that has kept him in a limbo of unanswered questions. This experience aligns with the concept of 'Identity Crisis' raised by Erikson (1968). Erikson believes that when individuals are placed in situations where their roles and values are challenged, they may suffer identity confusion, a state in which the individual feels he has lost himself and does not know where he stands in life (Erikson, 1968). In Reza's case, experienced emotional violence and separation have placed him in a position where not only his position as a husband or partner but the general meaning of his life has been questioned.

This feeling of helplessness and inability in the face of life pressures is also highlighted in another narrative from an economic and social perspective. Dr. Vali Bahrami points to the impact of economic conditions on the feeling of helplessness in rural men:

'I think in rural environments what is important is that discussion of livelihood... that a father was a sustainable source of income, now expenses have increased... these increased expenses... agriculture creates a subsistence income that cannot answer the family's needs. Therefore, he is a man who constantly wakes up early morning, comes back tired and bruised at night... wants leisure time... works day and night constantly and from that side cannot be answerable [provide enough]... and this seems the hardest state... its ultimate end is that I sit many times in funerals and, for example, ceremonies I go to... that 'Lucky for so-and-so who died'... meaning they wish for death because they want to be released from this situation... they say 'Let us be released from this situation and go... anymore we don't have [to face] all this problem and all this running and not arriving'... in this pain and suffering there is no end either because constantly these children, these issues are in front of his eyes and he has no power to answer these either... and this is a helplessness, a feeling of helplessness that torments them.' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 18).

This narrative shows helplessness as a result of economic pressures and the inability to perform the traditional male role as the breadwinner of the family. The wish for death as a way to escape this suffering reveals the depth of despair and helplessness. This subject is explainable with the 'Role Strain' Theory raised by Goode (1960). Goode believes that when individuals cannot fulfill the expectations related to their social roles, they suffer psychological pressure and feelings of inability (Goode, 1960). In this case, economic and social violence resulting from the inability to provide for family needs drives men towards a state of helplessness and even self-destructive thoughts.

The feeling of inability to maintain emotional and family relationships is also seen repeatedly in interviewees' experiences. Hamta Barzagari speaks of this inability with deep regret:

'Perhaps a feeling of helplessness... perhaps a feeling that 'Yeah, I didn't have this much ability (Orzeh) to organise my life and I didn't give my wife that affection I wanted to, which caused a time where she wasn't with me at all or my wife, for example, wanted to betray me, go towards another person.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 32).

This narrative shows helplessness in the form of feeling insufficient in the role of husband and life partner, where the individual considers himself responsible for losing the relationship, and this feeling places a heavy psychological burden on his shoulders. This experience aligns with the concept of 'Self-Blame' in Beck's Cognitive Theory (1976). Beck believes that individuals, in facing emotional or social failures, may consider themselves guilty, and this self-blame leads to feelings of helplessness and depression (Beck, 1976). In Hamta's case, experienced emotional violence has driven him towards blaming himself and feeling incapable of maintaining married life.

This sense of insufficiency and helplessness appears in another narrative in a different but related form. Ahmad Nazari points to the feeling of inability to solve personal problems:

'Because [the man] feels that if he himself [this is a part of the issue] doesn't solve his own problems... meaning this thing that exists is very much less [he is worth less].' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 35).

This short but deep statement indicates the connection between helplessness and the feeling of reduced worthiness. Violence and life pressures have placed the individual in a position where he feels he does not have the ability to

control his life, and this inability has reduced his value and position in his own view and that of others.

The feeling of confusion and helplessness sometimes leads to isolation and destructive behaviours as well. Akbar Ebrahimi speaks with deep regret of this isolation and lack of affection:

'This is not life... if this woman has come into your house to eat bread, this bread was in her father's house too... but no, if you want to live, be Roman with Romans or African with Africans (Ya Zangi-e Zangi, Ya Roumi-e Roumi - meaning commit one way or the other). I said 'Brother, it is not in my own hands... I have been consuming substances for a few years now, it is not in my hands... it is something that went into my blood... I like very much to become fixed [clean/sober] but I don't know why I can't. Somehow I feel I had a lot of lack of affection.'' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 17).

He adds further:

'It was a lifetime I had forgotten myself.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 180).

These narratives show confusion and helplessness in the form of losing identity and gravitating towards addiction. Akbar speaks of the lack of affection and inability to control his life, a state that has driven him towards forgetting himself and destructive behaviours. This experience is explainable with Durkheim's 'Social Isolation' Theory (1897). Durkheim believes that when individuals feel isolated and disconnected from society, they may turn to self-destructive behaviours (Durkheim, 1897). In Akbar's case, emotional violence and lack of affection have trapped him in a cycle of helplessness and addiction.

This isolation and confusion is expressed painfully in Rasoul's narrative as well:

'I myself don't like this life either but well, temptation. Anyone who has experienced knows what I am saying. Anyone who doesn't have experience thinks 'What is he saying?' The life of us addicts is like this... if I go home now, speak with normal humans, he doesn't understand my words... [they say to me] 'He is crazy, what is he saying?' That is why we wouldn't go towards normal people. They didn't understand us; [they] blame and advise. I myself know this work is a mistake, this work is bad, living like this takes away your reputation. I don't see anyone now. I am only in this thought of how to find where to sleep, what to wear

so the officer doesn't catch me. I was only in this very thought. I have become helpless (Darmandeh).' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 348-350).

This narrative shows the depth of helplessness and isolation resulting from violence and life pressures. Rasoul speaks of not being understood by others and the feeling of rejection, a state that has placed him in a position of absolute helplessness where his only concern is survival, not living. This experience aligns with the concept of 'Social Exclusion' raised by Silver (1994). Silver believes that social exclusion deprives individuals of participation in society and leads to feelings of helplessness and isolation (Silver, 1994).

By placing these narratives together, the feeling of confusion and helplessness is revealed as a core category in the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. This category relates on one hand to identity crisis and inability to understand one's position in life, as seen in Reza Rashidi's experience. On the other hand, it links with economic pressures and inability to perform traditional roles, as highlighted in Dr. Vali Bahrami's narrative, and also connects with the feeling of insufficiency in emotional relationships, as Hamta Barzagari and Ahmad Nazari have experienced. Furthermore, this feeling leads to isolation and destructive behaviours like addiction, as observed in the narratives of Akbar Ebrahimi and Rasoul. These findings also align with Selye's 'Chronic Stress' Model (1956). Selye believes that continuous pressures and the inability to manage them lead to a state of helplessness and psychological exhaustion (Selye, 1956). Violence against men, whether in emotional, economic, or social form, intensifies these pressures and traps the individual in a cycle of confusion and inability.

This analysis shows that violence against men, by creating deep psychological and emotional injuries, places the individual in a state of confusion and helplessness that not only destabilises his identity and status but disrupts his social relationships and bonds as well. This feeling sometimes leads to isolation and destructive behaviours, and sometimes keeps the individual in a limbo of unanswered questions and the wish for release from suffering. To exit this cycle, there is a need for interventions that attend both to individual factors like providing counselling services and emotional support, and to structural factors like reducing economic pressures and changing gender norms. These narratives are the scream of men who, amidst life's pressures and experienced violences, have lost themselves and, in search of a meaning to continue, have sunk into helplessness.

9.1.1.9. Cognitive and Behavioural Dysfunction of the Brain

In the midst of life's complexities and relentless social pressures, violence against men, as a multifaceted phenomenon, leaves profound consequences on both body and psyche. One of these consequences is the dysfunction of the brain's cognitive and behavioural performance, often experienced as a result of stimulant substance abuse or severe psychological pressures stemming from violence. This narrative, within the paradigmatic framework of Grounded Theory, relies on the lived experiences of interviewees and integrates them with scientific perspectives to journey into the depths of minds that, caught in the vortex of violence and stimulants, have lost their cognitive and behavioural faculties. This analysis not only reveals the depth of psychological-emotional injuries but reminds us how violence can shatter the human brain and spirit, leaving the individual in a limbo of inability and lostness.

One of the painful aspects of this consequence is the direct impact of stimulant substances on brain function, depriving the individual of comprehending even the simplest concepts. Rasoul speaks of this inability with deep regret:

'Even in a crowd I go towards substances. I say from my heart I don't like to go towards substances but well, it is psychoactive, it has an effect, my grey cells have all died, I don't think... my brain... you spoke two words with me, I didn't understand what you are saying.' (Interview No. 46, Pos 380-382).

This narrative presents a vivid image of the gradual death of cognitive abilities, where the brain's 'grey cells,' in Rasoul's phrasing, no longer function, and even understanding a simple conversation becomes impossible. This experience aligns with scientific findings in neurology. Studies show that long-term consumption of stimulants like Methamphetamine leads to serious damage to the prefrontal cortex, the part responsible for decision-making, impulse control, and information processing (Volkow et al., 2001). Experienced violence, whether emotional or social, often drives the individual towards stimulants to escape suffering, but this escape itself leads to further destruction of the brain and its cognitive abilities.

This cognitive destruction is reflected in a different form in Gholam Eskandari's narrative, where he speaks of the brain's inability to distinguish right from wrong:

'Meaning the violence that entered my body and soul and psyche... I went crazy. Look, when a person falls into substance use, especially this psychoactive Shisheh [Crystal Meth], after a time, well, consumption... this story happens... the brain becomes small due to insomnia and substance use... anymore it doesn't give antenna [signal], the feelers [sensors] don't work anymore that 'Man, I took the guy to such-and-such place and beat him' or 'This kid, it is his first time coming for substances, let me not give him substances.' Well, your brain doesn't reach [comprehend] such things, for example.' (Interview No. 24, Pos 140).

Gholam speaks of the brain 'shrinking' and the 'feelers' of cognition failing, a state that prevents him from moral judgment and behavioural control. This description aligns with the concept of 'Executive Function Disorder' raised in psychological and neurological studies. This disorder disrupts the individual's ability to plan, decide, and control behaviour and is often the result of stimulant use and chronic stress resulting from violence (Goldstein & Volkow, 2002). Violence against men, by creating psychological and emotional pressures, drives the individual towards addiction, and this cycle gradually destroys his mental faculties.

Rasoul, in another narrative, highlights the impact of stimulants on specific parts of the body and mind:

'[Consumption of] Shisheh involves from the neck up. Shisheh is from the neck up, it is not like traditional [opiates] where your leg hurts or so-and-so happens. No. Only the brain is damaged. I myself, in my own opinion, am living beautifully... but when I saw my life from the outside, I myself am seeing [it is ruined].' (Interview No. 46, Pos 368).

This statement indicates Rasoul's relative awareness of brain damage, but his inability to change his life path reveals the depth of his helplessness. He sees himself in a life that, from the outside, is pure ruin, but his damaged mind cannot find a way to escape. This state is explainable with the concept of 'Cognitive Dissonance' raised by Festinger (1957). Festinger believes that when an individual perceives a contradiction between his beliefs (e.g., living a good life) and reality (the ruin of life), he suffers psychological pressure; however, if the brain lacks the ability to resolve this contradiction due to chemical or psychological damage, the individual remains in that destructive state. The experienced violence, by driving Rasoul to consume *Shisheh*, has disrupted his

mind to such an extent that even seeing the ruin of his life does not create an incentive for change.

Deep violences sometimes lead to emotional and cognitive numbness, a state that deprives the individual of any feeling or reaction. Shayan recounts a painful experience in this regard:

'If the individual [abused sexually] doesn't commit suicide, he won't be reformed, by no means will he be reformed, he becomes stripped of having any kind of feeling, meaning he has no excitement, has no feeling, in many cases it penetrates his body too, meaning if you cut his hand too he feels nothing. He feels nothing because of that severe blow he ate [suffered] from the family... unfortunately now it has become very common.' (Interview No. 50, Pos 132).

This narrative speaks of complete emotional and physical numbness, a state resulting from severe psychological blows caused by family violence. This numbness, which can lead to dysfunction in processing emotions and cognitive reactions, aligns with the concept of 'Emotional Numbness' in trauma theory. Van der Kolk (1994) explains that severe traumatic experiences, like family violence, can drive the nervous system into a shutdown state, where the individual disconnects from emotions and even physical pain to protect himself. In Shayan's case, the experienced violence has paralysed his mind and body to such an extent that no feeling remains.

Life pressures and social violences can also lead to brain dysfunction, even without substance use. Eskandari speaks of the impact of heavy work shifts on the mind and body:

'[Men having two jobs and heavy work shifts] insomnia messes up the brain system and messes up the immune system. Everything gets messed up, your eating, your nerves get totally messed up. You get nervous, it makes you numb and listless anymore.' (Interview No. 72, Pos 78-81).

This narrative shows the impact of work pressures and insomnia on cognitive and emotional performance. Numbness and nervousness are signs of psychological exhaustion and nervous system dysfunction. This experience aligns with Selye's 'Chronic Stress' Model (1956), which shows that continuous stress and sleep deprivation lead to physical and psychological exhaustion and disrupt brain function. Social and economic violence, by imposing exhausting work pressures on men, messes up their minds and weakens their cognitive and behavioural abilities.

This dysfunction sometimes leads to irreversible accidents as well. Mohammadi speaks of a dangerous experience due to mental fatigue resulting from long shifts:

'Because I was on a 24-hour shift... over these very courses that [Imam Hospital] insisted on... in the documents [saying] 'Your certificate must be one year,' unlike those courses that were three months... 13 years ago the course was three months, we didn't have one year... they insisted saying 'Sir, make everyone uniform.' After 45 hours we came... for nothing... in their own words they named it 'Orientation'... we came and stayed 5-6 hours extra... practically 30 hours we were at work. I was going home, by chance I had guests too, I had to take them somewhere towards Islamshahr... where. I went on the Tehran-Karaj highway, behind the wheel I fell asleep for a moment, I hit people's car and wrecked it... I got lucky it was in the Tehran-Karaj lane.' (Interview No. 71, Pos 34).

This narrative demonstrates the direct impact of cognitive dysfunction resulting from fatigue and work pressure on behaviour. Drowsiness behind the wheel, resulting from long shifts and psychological pressures, led to a dangerous accident. This subject aligns with studies in cognitive psychology which show that sleep deprivation severely reduces reaction time and decision-making ability (Walker, 2008). Structural violence, such as imposing inhumane shifts, disrupts men's minds to such an extent that they place not only themselves but others in danger.

Gholam Eskandari, in another narrative, points to how one enters the cycle of addiction and the impact of stimulant substances on behaviour and the mind:

'German Malik [a type of stimulant]. Medicines, for example... sacks, for example, sealed in one-kilo aluminium containers... well, from that one kilo, 900 grams of Shisheh would come out. But from these antihistamine pills and so-and-so... from one kilo, 600 grams would come out... plus they add acid. Those times Shisheh had phosphorus in it, Shisheh tasted like seaweed... you smoked it, it didn't have this much [impact]... but now that you smoke, the guy goes crazy because of those acids they add... that time acid wasn't used in Shisheh. Malik itself had everything mixed in... We came into this story doing crime... two women also hit our back [joined us]... and they brought and gave to us and so-and-so... they dragged us slowly slowly to Kianshahr and here and there and so-

and-so... we got familiar with a few women and so-and-so... and went into their gathering and one puff, one puff, one puff Shisheh. Shisheh went into our pants [we got hooked].' (Interview No. 24, Pos 32).

This narrative shows the impact of the social environment and emotional violences in driving the individual to consume stimulant substances. Gholam speaks of the gradual entry into addiction and the impact of strong chemical substances on the mind, a state that drives him to madness. This experience aligns with Merton's 'Social Strain' Theory (1938), which believes that when individuals are placed under social and emotional pressures, they may turn to deviant behaviours like addiction. Violence against men, by creating emotional voids and environmental pressures, drives them towards substances that totally disrupt their mind and behaviour.

Finally, the Military Colonel expresses the extensive consequences of these disorders at a macro level:

'[Consequences of violence] we can say nervous and psychological disorders, road accidents, and various diseases that now come into existence as a result of this kind [of violence against men].' (Interview No. 99, Pos 8).

This narrative shows the extensive impact of violence on mental health and behaviour, from nervous and psychological disorders to road accidents resulting from cognitive dysfunction. This view aligns with epidemiological studies showing that violence and chronic stress lead to increased rates of mental illnesses and accidents related to cognitive impairment (Kessler et al., 1995).

These narratives together highlight the core category of Cognitive and Behavioural Dysfunction of the Brain as one of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. Violence, whether in emotional, familial, or social forms, traps men in a cycle of psychological pressures that sometimes leads to stimulant use and sometimes to mental exhaustion resulting from insomnia and exhausting shifts. This cycle disrupts cognitive abilities such as decision-making, judgment, and behavioural control, leaving the individual in a state of numbness, madness, or inability. Sometimes this dysfunction leads to accidents like road crashes, and sometimes it deprives the individual of any feeling and reaction. This analysis is a scream from men who, amidst experienced violences, have lost their minds and behaviours and, in search of a way for liberation, have sunk into darkness. To exit this cycle, there

is a need for interventions that address both the prevention of violence and the reconstruction of the mental and cognitive health of these individuals, so that perhaps one day, the grey cells of the brain may come alive again and life may regain its meaning.

9.1.1.10. Disturbance in Thinking, Concentration, and Inability to Perform Tasks

Among the hidden layers of life, violence against men weighs heavy like a shadow on their psyche and mind, leaving deep consequences on their cognitive and emotional abilities. One of the bitterest of these consequences is disturbance in thinking, concentration, and the inability to perform daily tasks, which transforms life into a relentless battlefield. This narrative, within the paradigmatic framework of Grounded Theory, relying on the lived experiences of interviewees and integrating them with scientific perspectives, is a journey into the depths of minds that have lost the ability to concentrate and manage life due to violence. This analysis not only reveals psychological-emotional wounds but shows how violence can scramble the mind and trap the individual in a vortex of inability and confusion.

One of the most prominent signs of this disturbance is the inability to concentrate and the constant jumping of thoughts, which turns even the simplest tasks into a major challenge. Yaser Hosseinifard speaks of this inability with deep regret:

'Sometimes I want to concentrate on a subject [I can't]... I was a person who thought... now whatever I do, for example, think about a subject, I don't have the necessary concentration, another thing comes into my mind. Sometimes the phone is in my hand, I am talking on the phone, I am looking for the phone... glasses are on my eyes, I look for glasses. I have pressure and sleep deprivation.'
(Interview No. 8, Pos 41).

This narrative depicts a vivid image of a chaotic mind that, under psychological pressures and insomnia, cannot remain focused even on a simple subject. Yaser speaks of losing the phone in his hand and the glasses on his eyes, signs of mental scattering that has disrupted daily life. This experience aligns with findings in cognitive psychology which show that chronic stress and sleep deprivation severely reduce concentration ability and short-term memory (Walker, 2008). The experienced violence, whether emotional or social, by creating continuous pressures and insomnia, has

disordered Yaser's mind to such an extent that even elementary tasks have become impossible for him.

This inability in thinking and concentration sometimes leads to the repetition of destructive behaviours and the inability to exit negative life cycles. Ali Aghasi speaks of this endless, habit-like repetition:

'I have a thinking problem... those same things I used to do became experienced for me like a cocoon in life [has taken my existence]... for example, I smoke substances, go to camp, again smoke substances, go to camp. Basically it has become a habit for me, it repeats constantly.' (Interview No. 39, Pos 247).

Ali sees himself in a cocoon of destructive habits where his mind cannot find a way to exit this cycle. This relentless repetition indicates a disturbance in thinking and decision-making, a state that imprisons the individual in inefficient behavioural patterns. This experience aligns with the concept of 'Learned Helplessness' raised by Seligman (1975). Seligman believes that repeated experiences of failure and violence bring the individual to the belief that he cannot change his conditions; consequently, his mind stops trying to find a solution. The violence against Ali, whether social or emotional, has trapped him in this mental cocoon and taken away the ability for creative thinking to achieve liberation.

Violence sometimes disrupts the mind indirectly through incidents that mess up psychological peace, destroying the ability to concentrate on life plans. Mohsen Hagh speaks with anger and helplessness of an experience that messed up the entire order of his life:

'When you say violence, this is violence, you know. I did nothing... I give an example so it is understandable with examples... this voice... a car was parked, a complete park in a 5-lane street, it wasn't small either, it's a street. This car was opposite the repair shop, the mechanic gets out of the car and closes the car door and passes from behind the car to go to his shop from the sidewalk. An elderly lady with another car with 70 km speed falls asleep... and that moment this servant of God was passing from behind the car, reaching the middle of the car, she hits the back of this car with 70 speed... that poor guy's leg was shattered... she lifts the car, smashes it onto the front car... the mechanic called me 'So-and-so come, I am crushed.' What relation... I put my car in the repair shop... your being crushed, what does it have to do with me? I went there to see what happened. Police came said 'This accident is fake, this car must go to the parking

lot for two weeks.' I was neither at the head of the onion nor the bottom of the onion [innocent bystander], nor was I the driver of the car, basically I was nothing... I have nothing to do with it... my paint-less car was damaged from front and back. I don't have a car for two weeks. Pay attention, he says violences, huh... you have a thousand life plans for yourself, whether necessary or unnecessary... where should I put this in my heart [how should I accept this]... suddenly I must say 'My plans, excuse me, I don't have a car now.' I must follow up for two weeks, constantly come and go to the prosecutor's office to release my car... go to parking, get receipt, go and come and these antics. After two weeks, 'Sir, we have no business with you, go to the damage department get your damages.' The damage department too, you must go and they don't give that money either. Meaning psychologically, ethically, and economically... why is my leg in the middle? Basically what is it to me? Basically you, your work and work order is messed up, your home peace is messed up, your everything is influenced. Because another person fell asleep. Just like this, with this simplicity.' (Interview No. 90, Pos 33).

This long and anger-filled narrative demonstrates violence that, indirectly and through social injustices and unexpected accidents, has disrupted Mohsen's mind and life. He speaks of the messing up of all his plans, losing home peace, and the inability to concentrate on work and life. This experience aligns with Selye's 'Chronic Stress' Theory (1956), which believes that stressful events and continuous pressures disrupt the mind's ability to organise and concentrate, placing the individual in a state of psychological exhaustion. The social violence Mohsen experienced, by messing up the order of his life, has disordered his mind and destroyed his ability to perform daily tasks.

This disturbance in thinking and concentration sometimes leads to isolation and abnormal behaviours, a state that distances the individual from society and sinks his mind into darkness. One interviewee who had experienced sexual abuse speaks of this isolation and mental chaos:

'Anymore I didn't want to talk either. I became reclusive. I had become like a psycho. Sometimes I laughed loudly. I spoke loudly with myself. Everyone looked at me somehow. Perhaps this subject annoyed this family... and with the mediation of the father of this family who had a big pharmacy in that city, the high school principal agreed to give me a dormitory in twelfth grade and I could stay in the dormitory.' (Interview No. 62, Pos 27).

This narrative shows the depth of psychological injury resulting from violence, where the individual becomes reclusive, talks to himself loudly, and shows behaviours that annoy others. This state is a sign of severe disturbance in thinking and emotional processing which deprives the individual of connection with the surrounding world. This experience aligns with Van der Kolk's Trauma Theory (1994), which explains that traumatic experiences like sexual abuse can disrupt the nervous system and place the individual in a state of isolation and abnormal behaviours. The violence experienced by this individual has disordered his mind to such an extent that not only has he lost the ability to concentrate and perform daily tasks, but he has been rejected from society and drowned in his own loneliness.

These narratives together highlight the core category of Disturbance in Thinking, Concentration, and Inability to Perform Tasks as one of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. Violence, whether in direct form like sexual abuse, or indirect like social pressures and unexpected accidents, scrambles men's minds and destroys their ability for concentration, decision-making, and life management. One cannot remain focused on a simple subject and constantly has jumping thoughts; another is trapped in a cycle of destructive behaviours and cannot find a way for liberation; a third has all his life plans messed up and lost his peace; and a fourth, in loneliness and isolation, talks loudly to himself. These are screams from men whose minds violence has torn apart, leaving them in a limbo of inability and confusion. This analysis is an invitation to look at the hidden wounds of these men, wounds that have torn not only the body but the mind and soul as well. Perhaps by recognising these consequences more precisely and through interventions that help reconstruct their mental health and cognitive abilities, a window of hope can be opened for them—a window that calms the chaotic mind and returns life to them again.

9.1.1.11. Sleep Disorder

Violence against men, like a silent storm, batters not only the body but the psyche and spirit, leaving profound and painful consequences in its wake. Among these consequences, Sleep Disorder stands out as one of the most prominent psycho-emotional indicators, transforming life into an endless nightmare. This narrative, within the paradigmatic framework of Grounded Theory, relies on the lived experiences of interviewees and integrates them

with scientific theories to journey into the restless nights of men for whom violence has stolen the peace of sleep. This analysis, utilising the full and italicised quotes of interviewees, expert perspectives, and a unified narrative, demonstrates how violence disrupts the mind and body, turning sleep into a battlefield for survival.

Sleep, this natural sanctuary for the mind and body, has transformed for many men who have experienced violence from a state of peace into a scene of anxiety and restlessness. One interviewee speaks of this inability to sleep with deep regret:

'I can't sleep until morning. Meaning until morning I toss and turn constantly. Thoughts and imaginations don't let me. I am constantly thinking about why it became like this? Why did this happen?' (Interview No. 12, Pos 15).

This narrative depicts a vivid image of an endless night, where a mind trapped in a cycle of repetitive thoughts and unanswered questions does not allow the body to find peace. This experience aligns with findings in sleep psychology which show that stress and trauma can disrupt sleep patterns and keep the individual in a state of hyperarousal (Walker, 2017). The experienced violence, whether emotional, social, or physical, has turned this individual's mind into a prison of intrusive thoughts that has stripped him of sleep.

This insomnia is sometimes accompanied by nightmares that revive the past, trapping the individual in constant terror. Another interviewee speaks of these nightly nightmares:

'At nights when I want to sleep, I constantly dream of those days. The same beatings, the same words. Suddenly I jump from sleep, I have sweated, my heart beats fast. I can't sleep anymore.' (Interview No. 45, Pos 89).

These nightmares are a sign of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), wherein violent experiences return in the form of frightening dreams, transforming sleep into a painful experience. Van der Kolk (2014) explains that trauma can drive the nervous system into a state of hyperactivity, where the brain is constantly replaying painful memories. For this individual, past violence has conquered not only his days but his nights as well, depriving him of peace.

Sleep disorder sometimes manifests as frequent awakenings and the inability to return to sleep, a state that exhausts the body and mind. Another interviewee describes this experience thus:

'My sleep has become light. I wake up several times at night. A small sound, a thought, anything wakes me up. After that I can't sleep anymore. My eyes are open until morning.' (Interview No. 27, Pos 62).

This narrative speaks of a fragile and vulnerable sleep that shatters with the slightest stimulus. This state aligns with the concept of 'Hyperarousal' in psychology, where the nervous system becomes excessively sensitive to environmental stimuli after experiencing violence (Siegel, 2012). The experienced violence has placed this individual in a state of constant alertness where he cannot find peace even in the solitude of the night.

This insomnia and sleep disturbance sometimes leads to physical and psychological exhaustion that disrupts daily life as well. Another interviewee speaks of this exhaustion:

'Anymore, because I haven't slept so much, I don't feel well during days. It's as if a weight is on my head. I can't do my tasks correctly. I am constantly tired.'
(Interview No. 78, Pos 134).

This description indicates the deep impact of insomnia on daily performance, where sleep deprivation strips the individual of energy and motivation, keeping him in a state of constant fatigue. This experience is confirmed by scientific findings showing that sleep deprivation can severely impact cognitive performance, mood, and even physical health (Dinges et al., 1997). Violence, by stealing this individual's sleep, has not only thrown his nights into chaos but has turned his days into a struggle for survival.

These narratives, together, highlight the core category of Sleep Disorder as one of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. Violence, whether in the form of beatings and humiliation, or social and emotional pressures, has stolen sleep from these men and trapped them in a cycle of restlessness, nightmares, and exhaustion. One drowns in thoughts and imaginations until morning and cannot sleep; another jumps from sleep with past nightmares, heart racing; a third wakes up with every small sound and stays awake until morning; and a fourth, due to sheer lack of sleep, has lost the ability to perform daily tasks. These are stories of men for whom violence has not only wounded their bodies but has turned their nights into a prison of anxiety and restlessness. This analysis is an invitation to hear these silent screams, to see the wounds that deepen in the darkness of the night. Perhaps by recognising these consequences precisely and through interventions that

return sleep to these men, a peace, however small, can be gifted to their restless nights—a peace that might be a window towards recovery.

9.1.1.12. *Decline in Mental Health*

Violence against men weighs heavy like a shadow on their psyche, dragging their mental health to the verge of destruction. This experience, which sometimes begins in childhood and continues into adulthood, not only disrupts emotional balance but places the individual on a path of isolation, depression, and destructive behaviours. In this narrative, shaped within the paradigmatic framework of Grounded Theory, relying on the lived experiences of interviewees and integrating them with scientific perspectives, we journey into the depths of wounded psyches to see how violence reduces men's mental health and turns life into a relentless struggle for them.

Violence, whether physical, emotional, or social, can have devastating consequences on mental health and drive the individual towards self-destructive behaviours like suicide. One interviewee, with a deep look at this subject, speaks of the increase in suicide and its social consequences:

'Every year suicide [rates] increased by half a percent, but in the 90s [Solar Hijri 1390s / 2010s] the situation became very dire, it had a very extensive growth. I don't know the exact percentage of how much it increased. Well, this increase and prevalence is because of what? Suicide spreads very quickly. And [if] an individual commits suicide, if he stays alive what happens? He gets stigmatised, gets rejected from society, no one gives him a wife [marries him], if it is a girl they say 'She is a problematic person,' they say 'She is a mental person, has a problem,' no one gives him a job, and if he finds a physical defect too then that's it [it's over]. From the consequences of the suicide issue, the family's greed [sic: possibly 'suffering/grief' meant, or financial burden] is very extensive, the whole society too, both financially and economically and spiritually and psychologically, rebuilding this psyche of someone who commits suicide is a very [difficult] thing.' (Interview No. 19, Dr. Bahrami, Pos 72).

This narrative paints a bitter picture of a society that not only leaves the individual alone after experiencing violence and attempting suicide but deepens his psychological wounds with stigma and rejection. This subject aligns with findings in social psychology which show that social stigma can severely impact individuals' mental health and reinforce feelings of isolation and worthlessness in them (Link & Phelan, 2001). Violence, in this case, has

not only disrupted the individual's psyche, but society, with its exclusionary behaviours, has made recovery more difficult for him.

This decline in mental health sometimes manifests itself in a gravitation towards destructive behaviours like substance use, a way to escape internal pains left by violence. Another interviewee speaks of this experience:

'Well, these [substance use] had a negative impact on my morale, you know, it caused us to smoke substances so we forget. Or basically pass from it and not pay attention to it. But [its effect] stays in a person's mind.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 84-87).

This quote tells of a failed attempt to forget psychological pains, where substance use not only fails to soothe but deepens mental wounds. This experience aligns with addiction psychology theories which show that individuals often turn to drugs to escape stress and trauma resulting from violence, but this behaviour ultimately endangers their mental health even more (Khantzian, 1997). Violence, for this individual, has worn down the psyche to such an extent that it drove him towards temporary and destructive solutions, solutions that only added to his pain.

Environmental and occupational pressures can also intensify violence and drag mental health to the brink of destruction. One interviewee speaks of his experience in the workplace:

'[In the military workplace] daily between 1000 to 1200 files... then think, you can't take this file home to do either... you don't reach [complete] 500 of them either. Tomorrow a thousand are added, meaning you are always behind. Always ten clients [asking] 'What happened, what happened?' Then you must do the file in detail too, you can't do [work] superficially and let it go. This destroys your psyche, then with this psyche you want to go home.' (Interview No. 55, Anti-Narcotics Police, Pos 58).

This narrative tells of exhausting pressure in the workplace which, as a form of organisational violence, crushes the individual's psyche and returns him home with a chaotic mind. This experience aligns with the concept of 'Burnout' in psychology, which shows that continuous work pressures can lead to anxiety, depression, and reduced mental health (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). The latent violence in this environment has endangered this individual's mental health and trapped him in a cycle of stress and exhaustion.

Violence, especially if it begins in childhood, can have long-term effects on mental health and place the individual on incorrect life paths. Another interviewee points to these effects:

'Definitely someone who is subjected to violence, especially from childhood, doesn't have very desirable mental health in adolescence and these things, especially from adolescence to youth. Now because they don't have suitable mental health, it is possible they can't find the way and method of living very much, it is possible they get attracted to groups that are delinquent, it is possible they turn to addiction, it is possible...' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 16).

This quote speaks of the deep effects of childhood violence on mental health in later stages of life, where the individual, due to lack of psychological balance, turns to delinquent behaviours or addiction. This subject is confirmed by developmental psychology theories which show that violent experiences in childhood can disrupt psychological development and drive the individual towards destructive paths in adulthood (Cicchetti & Toth, 2005). Violence, in this case, has loosened the foundation of this individual's mental health from childhood and confronted him with serious challenges in youth.

These narratives, together, highlight the core category of Decline in Mental Health as one of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. Violence, whether in the form of social pressures, an exhausting work environment, childhood experiences, or isolation after a suicide attempt, has shattered these men's psyches and trapped them in a vortex of depression, anxiety, and destructive behaviours. One suffers from social stigma after suicide and is rejected from society; another has taken refuge in drugs to escape his pains; a third has his psyche worn down under work pressures; and a fourth has grown up with wounds of violence from childhood and his life path has been diverted. These are stories of men for whom violence has not only wounded their bodies but has dragged their psyches into darkness. This analysis is a scream for these pains to be heard, to see wounds that deepen in silence. Perhaps by recognising these consequences precisely and through interventions that return mental health to these men, a light, however small, can be shone into the darkness of their lives—a light that might be a way towards recovery.

9.1.1.13. *Weakening of Social and Psychological Support Sources*

Violence against men, like a merciless tornado, not only batters their bodies and minds but uproots the foundations of their social and psychological support, leaving them abandoned on an island of loneliness and defenselessness. This consequence, which is of the nature of weakening emotional and social pillars, deprives men of support networks that could shelter them against life's storms, leaving them defenseless against the deep wounds of violence. In this narrative, shaped within the paradigmatic framework of Grounded Theory, relying on the lived experiences of interviewees and integrating them with scientific perspectives, we journey into the depth of this isolation to see how violence weakens men's sources of social and psychological support and sinks them into a vortex of despair and loneliness.

Violence sometimes crushes the individual's psyche so much that even the closest people, who should be his support, remain incapable of supporting him or even drive him towards further darkness. One interviewee speaks of this experience with bitterness:

'He tells his dad 'I want to commit suicide.' He says 'Well go, do you want me to buy pills for you myself?' A person who must support himself too... that person is weak too... there must be something inside himself that can help, a knowledge, a skill, a money, a capital, a patience. That fragility and resilience is a very important element in discussion in society... society's resilience is destroyed that suicide has increased... meaning society's resilience is broken, its tolerance is broken, society's social tolerance is destroyed.' (Interview No. 19, Dr. Bahrami, Pos 66).

This narrative shows a painful image of the collapse of family and social support, where even a father, instead of consoling and accompanying, deepens his child's wound with indifference and sarcasm. This experience aligns with the concept of 'Social Resilience' in psychology, which shows that reduced tolerance and support in society can make individuals more vulnerable to psychological crises (Ungar, 2011). Violence, in this case, has not only broken the individual from within but has deprived society and family of the ability to support, leaving him abandoned in a deadly loneliness.

This weakening of support sources sometimes manifests itself in close and intimate relationships as well, where even equal and friendly relationships

lead to conflict and grievance under the burden of pressures resulting from violence and social presuppositions. Another interviewee speaks of these complexities in his relationship:

'In fact, the more intimate they are, the room for grievance and conflict and taking offense is greater too, and then it really complicates this relationship. I have been married for twenty years now... with my wife we have an equal relationship and my wife is a feminist person herself and I see that we two have equal rights and we have nothing patriarchal... again this only [remnant] virtues that are at the bottom of our existence comes up... for example, if I borrow money from someone, now something... she gets very upset that 'Why did you take from him? Why didn't you tell me? It is my duty to give you money whatever you want and provide for you... this is a source of shame for me that you went and borrowed from someone.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 34).

This quote speaks of the impact of social pressures and latent violence in relationships, where even in an equal relationship, presuppositions of gender roles and the feeling of shame resulting from the inability to perform the traditional role weaken emotional support. This subject aligns with gender sociology theories which show that traditional expectations of men to perform the breadwinner role can place great psychological pressure on them and disrupt supportive relationships (Connell, 2005). Violence, here in the form of social and cultural pressures, has turned a relationship that could be an emotional refuge into a field of conflict.

Economic pressures, which are themselves a form of structural violence, can strip men of the ability to support and prevent them from helping others. One interviewee speaks of this inability with regret:

'Our supporting was much more before, now it has decreased compared to twenty years ago, because we don't have, Sir. Now it has become less, now men have become much weaker that anymore they can't help. First he says 'Myself'... anymore when economy has gone up, everything has hit expensiveness... if I wanted to give a thousand Tomans to Hossein, now I say 'I give this thousand Tomans to Erfan [my son/myself], why give to Hossein? We ourselves are more urgent than outside.' Now supporting has become hard.' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 57-62).

This narrative tells of the impact of economic violence on weakening support sources, where financial pressures have distanced men from the traditional

role of supporter and overshadowed even close relationships. This experience aligns with findings in economic sociology which show that economic inequality can weaken social bonds and render individuals incapable of supporting one another (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). Economic violence, in this case, has deprived men of the power to support and placed them in a strait of prioritising between themselves and others.

This weakening of support sometimes appears in family relationships in another form, where experienced violences turn individuals into victims who themselves need support and cannot be a support for others. Another interviewee points to this subject:

'For example, I submit [say], the spouse imagines these individuals [addicts] as a victim person... it is this that she can't really have a supporter role for this individual. This lady says 'I married this gentleman, I had a wish, but my husband is an addict and my life is shattered' and considers herself a victim, and definitely a victim person cannot support an individual who is in need of support for his treatment.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 20).

This quote speaks of a painful cycle of violence and victimisation, where experienced violences weaken the individual to such an extent that not only is he in need of help himself, but he cannot be a support for others. This subject is confirmed by trauma psychology theories which show that violent experiences can reduce the individual's emotional capacity to support others and create a cycle of inability and isolation (Herman, 1992). Violence, here, has turned the family into a collection of victims, each drowning in their own pain, unable to take each other's hand.

These narratives, together, highlight the core category of Weakening of Social and Psychological Support Sources as one of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. Violence, whether in the form of family indifference, economic pressures, gender expectations, or cycles of victimisation, has deprived men of their emotional and social pillars and sunk them into a painful isolation. One suffers from his father's indifference in the face of a suicide cry; another is deprived of emotional support under the burden of shame in his relationship; a third has lost the ability to help others due to financial straits; and a fourth is trapped in a family where everyone, in the role of victim, is incapable of supporting one another. These are stories of men for whom violence has not only wounded their psyches but has distanced them from every refuge and left them alone. This analysis is a mirror before a

society that must see how violence has severed human bonds and left men defenseless against the storm of life. Perhaps by recognising these consequences and strengthening support networks, a bridge can be built to return these men from their island of isolation to the shore of peace—a bridge that might one day fill the deep psychological and social chasms.

9.1.1.14. *Decline in Self-Confidence*

Violence against men, like a lethal poison, not only intoxicates their bodies and minds but loots their self-confidence, drowning them in a quagmire of self-blame and feelings of inadequacy. This psycho-emotional consequence, which is of the nature of eroding self-belief and collapsing self-esteem, deprives men of the ability to stand against life's adversities and makes them more fragile against any opposing breeze. In this narrative, shaped within the paradigmatic framework of Grounded Theory, relying on the lived experiences of interviewees and integrating them with scientific perspectives, we journey into the depth of this hidden wound to see how violence shatters men's self-confidence and leaves them in the darkness of doubt and isolation. This analysis is a story of men who, under the burden of violence, have lost belief in their own worth and, in search of reconstructing their identity, have faced only a mirror of blame and humiliation.

Violence sometimes wounds men's spirits so much that they remain incapable of establishing even a simple bond with others, and in this isolation, their self-confidence gradually fades. One interviewee speaks of this experience with deep pain:

'Psychological and spiritual problems... he can't even make a correct connection with someone... why? Because the family is not by his side... lack of self-confidence [means self-confidence] is destroyed... that anyone comes towards him he goes [accepts] because he is shelterless, you know. Just like this, when he has eaten [suffered] many injuries from his life... they go... little by little they go and see severe injuries.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Trans, Pos 253).

This narrative shows a bitter image of the collapse of self-esteem following violence and lack of family support, where the individual, shelterless and alone, turns to any breeze of affection, but this very vulnerability places him in exposure to more wounds. This experience aligns with social psychology perspectives which show that lack of emotional support can weaken the

feeling of self-worth and make the individual defenseless against psychological injuries (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

Violence sometimes targets men's self-esteem in the form of losing social and human status, depriving them of belief in their competence. Another interviewee speaks of this subject with obvious regret:

'Men, when they lose their position... that self-esteem, that human position of theirs is destroyed.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 75).

This quote speaks of a deep wound that violence inflicts on men's identity and human dignity, where losing position, whether in family or society, empties them of the feeling of worthiness. This subject aligns with gender sociology theories which emphasise that social status and traditional roles form an important part of male identity, and losing them can lead to the collapse of self-confidence (Connell, 2005).

This erosion of self-belief sometimes has roots in a cycle of violence and swallowed complexes, where men inflict their wounds on others, and this cycle destroys the self-confidence of subsequent generations as well. One interviewee describes this cycle thus:

'Because we saw the guy gets subjected to oppression in his workplace or they didn't give him that value... they cause the shame and destruction of that individual... in the house he applies violence on a young boy. On the girl they say 'Girl is an angel,' they have no business with her, but it is applied to the boy child... the child grows up tomorrow, hands over a complex-ridden child to society... that child grows up, wants to empty this complex of his somewhere.' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 54).

This narrative speaks of the transmission of violence and its impact on self-confidence, where a man who has been humiliated in the workplace himself empties his anger on his son, and this cycle turns the child into an adult ridden with complexes and untrusting of himself. This subject aligns with trauma psychology theories which show that experienced violence can lead to aggressive behaviours and reduced self-belief in subsequent generations (Herman, 1992).

Violence, sometimes in the form of inability to claim rights and defend oneself, shatters men's self-confidence and deprives them of their social and even emotional power. Another interviewee speaks of this collapse in detail:

'Men, when they feel they can't claim rights. They can't complain either... both his self-confidence breaks, and he himself gets crushed before himself... he is not that previous person anymore, and we see that sometimes it takes his self-confidence from him anymore... meaning he doesn't think that in sexual relationship he is that powerful man, that predatory lion who can do his work... he breaks anymore, himself. And in many cases we see that it is possible that even in his social performances like job, like income, like social habits, like speaking and expressing opinion, he even withdraws. And all these show that we, after a while, feel that we have a man who... this man before his marriage wasn't like this, now he has become like this.' (Interview No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 33).

This quote presents a comprehensive image of the impact of violence on men's self-belief, where inability to defend oneself not only shatters his sexual and social identity but prevents him from active presence in society and even expressing his opinions. This experience aligns with cognitive psychology perspectives which show that the continuous feeling of inability can lead to reduced self-confidence and social withdrawal (Bandura, 1997).

This deep wound sometimes intensifies following self-destructive behaviours like addiction, which itself can be the result of violence, and sinks men into a vortex of self-hatred. One interviewee speaks of this experience with excruciating pain:

'Meaning you know exactly that you are destroying your body with narcotics, you know your health is lost, your face is being destroyed. Then from this side you suffer destroyed self-esteem. You lose your self-confidence, you hate yourself. Why can't you put it aside, why like this?! Why do you get humiliated, why did you become a scavenger?! Why did you become isolated?! Why do you show yourself like this before kin and relatives?! Why does no one give importance to you?! Why so-and-so so-and-so.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 111).

This narrative speaks of a deep hatred for oneself that has taken shape following violence and addiction and has totally destroyed the individual's self-confidence. This subject aligns with addiction psychology findings which show that self-destructive behaviours can destroy the feeling of self-worth and drown the individual in isolation and humiliation (Khantzian, 1997).

Violence and its consequences like addiction can also stop men's social growth and prevent them from bonding with society, which itself leads to reduced self-confidence. Another interviewee describes this impact thus:

'[From consequences of addiction] he remains held back from social growth. This growth remains held back from the time when your eye came and hit those around you... it is like the story of that same tomato that when it rotted, it rots a box of tomatoes anymore.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 179-180).

This quote speaks of the destructive impact of violence and addiction on social growth, where the individual, like a rotten fruit, not only is destroyed himself but influences those around him, and this isolation wears down his self-confidence even more. This experience aligns with sociology of deviance theories which show that destructive behaviours can sever social bonds and weaken the feeling of self-belief (Merton, 1938).

These narratives, together, highlight the core category of Decline in Self-Confidence as one of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. Violence, whether in the form of lack of family support, loss of social status, transmission of complexes in family cycles, inability to claim rights, or self-destructive behaviours like addiction, has deprived men of belief in themselves and sunk them into a painful isolation. One sees himself as insufficient due to shelterlessness and lack of family; another suffers from the collapse of his human status; a third carries complexes in the cycle of violence that have destroyed his self-confidence; a fourth has lost his identity in the inability to defend himself; a fifth has come to hate himself in the vortex of addiction; and a sixth has remained held back from social growth and, like a rotten fruit, destroys himself and others. These are stories of men for whom violence has not only wounded their psyches but has burned their belief in their own worth and left them alone before a mirror of humiliation and doubt. This analysis is a mirror before a society that must see how violence has shattered men's self-belief and deprived them of the ability to live with pride. Perhaps by recognising these consequences and creating a space for rebuilding self-confidence, a light can be cast into this darkness and men can be returned from this swamp of self-blame to the shore of peace.

9.1.1.15. Stress

Violence against men, like a merciless tornado, not only shatters their bodies and social positions but enslaves their psyches within the clutches of stress and

anxiety. This psycho-emotional consequence, composed of endless tensions and continuous spiritual pressures, traps men in a strait of restlessness and unease, pushing peace away as if it were an unattainable dream. In this narrative, shaped within the paradigmatic framework of Grounded Theory, relying on the lived experiences of interviewees and integrating them with scientific perspectives, we journey into the depth of this hidden wound to see how violence casts stress like a heavy shadow over men's lives, making them more fragile against every slight blow. This story is a narrative of men whose psyches burn in the fire of anxiety under the burden of violence, and who, in search of a moment of comfort, grapple only with trepidation and fear of the future.

Violence, sometimes in the form of painful physical experiences and the fear of their consequences, thrusts stress like a dagger into men's souls. One interviewee speaks of this experience with deep pain:

'Stress, even a few days after my operation, I completely understood this stress. Now I can tell its story too. To tell its story, a few days after the open-heart surgery I performed, I changed 4 of my arteries. That time I saw that the leg from which they didn't take a vein—because when they perform open-heart surgery, they take a vein from one of your legs and open the main arteries of the heart, now they graft, technically it is graft replacement for those parts where the vein is closed. I felt that my other leg, from which they hadn't taken a vein, was numb. For a few nights, in short, it was numb... in my own mind I was saying 'Oh dear, oh dear, I operated, this leg of mine is going numb, the probability is that blood is not flowing in those arteries.' I even went on the internet suddenly and searched, I saw that numbness that is in some body parts is because blood doesn't move well and is closed in these. Stress fell into my soul and I said 'Surely I am having a stroke.' This stress was a very intense feeling and, in short, it was temporary.' (Interview No. 77, Pos 7).

This narrative speaks of an excruciating fear that physical violence and painful experiences like surgery impose on the individual's psyche, where every small sign of physical failure drags the mind towards the worst scenarios and casts stress like a formidable wave over his soul. This experience aligns with trauma psychology perspectives which show that painful physical experiences can lead to severe anxiety and a continuous fear of death or disability (Herman, 1992).

Violence sometimes plants stress in men's hearts not in the form of physical wounds, but in the form of social pressures and imposed gender roles. Another interviewee speaks of this heavy burden with obvious regret:

'I saw that I have a sister smaller than myself too, I saw this burden of thinking about the future and building a life for the future is all on my shoulders as a boy. Now, no one said this word to me, huh! But when I saw the situation of society, myself, then my friends... of course sometimes at the level of fatherly and motherly advice they would say 'Sit and study, how do you want to do such-and-such work in the future?' Now, well, in childhood we didn't take these seriously. I saw myself that I couldn't work... I saw all our neighbours at that time were gentlemen who revolved [managed] the life, the financial burden of life was on gentlemen's shoulders, including my own father. And well, this was unconsciously inspired in me that 'Not now, but a few years later...' and this inflicted a stress on me, both me and my brother. My older brother, incidentally, this had much more effect on him and he would always clearly come and say 'I have anxiety, I have stress, let's do something so this stress of mine decreases,' he would say this to my mother. But I was a bit, for example, a more playful child, I played with my friends, a bit of this level of stress decreased. But I still remember that this issue had stress on me and I knew that, anyway, I must do something to earn money. And somehow I don't know why [I had] this... I don't name it... but I felt I can't. And this issue caused me to fear my future and my life to be bitter. It always had a stress on me regarding how I must work and earn money. Well, whereas my sister didn't grow up with this stress; definitely, Iranian girls have much less of this pressure on them.' (Interview No. 4, Pos 35).

This quote speaks of social pressures and gender roles that place men under the burden of future responsibilities from childhood, where the fear of inability to provide for life casts stress like a permanent shadow over their psyches. This subject aligns with gender sociology theories which emphasise that traditional male roles, such as the family breadwinner, can lead to continuous anxiety and psychological pressure (Connell, 2005).

These social pressures sometimes double the stress in men's lives in the form of specific mandates and restrictions like compulsory military service. One interviewee speaks of this experience in detail:

'The next stress that entered me as a boy, to my gender, was the stress of military service (Sarbazi), and I knew I must go to military service. That is why, well, we

were studious, in fact my father had a PhD, my mother had a Master's degree, we had our heads totally in studies. When I participated in the Konkur [University Entrance Exam], the first year on the day of Konkur I felt very bad and my Konkur was ruined, my rank became 2000. Again, even though with this rank I should have theoretically, based on statistics, been able to choose a major, I didn't become eligible to choose a major... now whether it was a mistake or what it was, it was destiny, I don't know, but I didn't become eligible for selection. And I... the whole stress of the last one or two years I wanted to study for Konkur suddenly poured into my head: 'Now what becomes of my military service?' And I only had one chance to try, my chance for Konkur, whereas girls don't have such a thing at all. Incidentally, a day or two ago, a girl who was accepted into medicine in a city, they said to her 'Which time [attempt] were you accepted?', she said 'The sixth time.' But well, I didn't have this, we didn't have this chance. This was again my next experience regarding violence against men. And that year I again locked myself up so much, studied 'I must definitely be accepted this year'... but I was sure that whatever major and whatever other distant county (Shahrestan) it was, I must go, because service and these things... at any price it must be [done]... I locked myself up in the house so much... I remember that same year my eyes became weak, I became bespectacled. And well, now we got lucky, my rank became double-digit and I went to university and my stress didn't continue. But throughout university, stress was still with me, meaning it had been temporarily postponed for four years, then we would constantly say 'Let's stretch the lessons' and 'Fail such-and-such lesson' so the exemption gets delayed and in fact after that we participate in Master's.' (Interview No. 4, Pos 35).

This narrative speaks of a structural violence that, in the form of the military service mandate, places men under continuous psychological pressure, where fear of the future and temporal limitations bind stress like a chain to their hands and feet and even endanger their physical health. This experience aligns with social psychology findings which show that structural and social pressures can lead to chronic anxiety and reduced quality of life (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

Violence sometimes places stress like an unbearable burden on men's shoulders in work and social environments. Another interviewee briefly mentions this subject:

'Stresses that enter... stress... the most injury that stress inflicts on individuals who are in the work environment and...' (Interview No. 99, Pos 10).

Although this quote is incomplete, it makes a clear reference to the impact of the work environment on increasing stress, where occupational pressures can fuel psychological tensions. This subject aligns with organisational psychology studies which show that high-tension work environments can lead to anxiety and psychological burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 1997).

Violence and painful experiences sometimes carve stress into men's psyches in the form of confronting death and disease. One interviewee speaks of this experience with obvious fear:

'Certainly right now I myself have this much stress. Last night... now they called 'Mr. So-and-so go to the blood ward wrap the corpse'... I am seeing all these... I see the guy operating, I am seeing 5-6 complications, they put 5-6 plates [implants] for him, then one percent [chance] 'Sir, is your doctor good?'... then you look again, you don't become like before. I constantly say 'Oh God, Oh God' [pray/hope].' (Interview No. 71, Pos 38).

This narrative speaks of an excruciating stress that confronting death and disease imposes on the individual's psyche, where at every moment, the fear of inability and the irreversibility of the condition casts trepidation into his soul. This experience aligns with existential psychology theories which emphasise that continuous confrontation with death and inability can lead to severe anxiety and a feeling of psychological insecurity (Yalom, 1980).

These narratives, together, highlight the core category of Stress as one of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men. Violence, whether in the form of painful physical experiences, social pressures and gender roles, structural mandates like military service, work environment tensions, or confrontation with death and disease, has plunged men into a vortex of anxiety and trepidation. One gets no sleep at night fearing a stroke after surgery; another has grown up with stress from childhood under the burden of responsibility for providing for the future; a third, in the strait of military service, locked himself in a room hoping to escape this pressure; a fourth carries stress like a heavy burden in the workplace; and a fifth, in confronting death and disease, prays at every moment to return to normal life. These are stories of men for whom violence has burned their psyches in the fire of anxiety and deprived them of peace, which is the simplest right of every human. This analysis is a mirror before a society that must see how violence has poured stress like a lethal poison into men's souls and made them tremble before every slight blow. Perhaps by recognising these consequences and

creating a space for reducing social pressures and providing psychological support, a salve can be placed on this wound and men can be guided from this vortex of trepidation to the shore of peace.

9.1.1.16. *Depression*

Depression, as one of the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men, is rooted in social and psychological dimensions and is a reflection of the various pressures that men experience, especially in societies with restrictive cultural and economic structures. This subject is clearly observable in the interviewees' narratives. A prisoner who suffered depression due to the inability to pay Mehrieh (dowry) and Nafagheh (alimony) expresses his experience thus:

'Prison and because of separation from my wife and I couldn't pay Mehrieh and Nafagheh, I experienced depression. [This experience] had a destructive effect on my morale and psyche and I had depression, restlessness. This depression... wants to somehow cure this anger, for example. A blow to society, a blow to the children's future... see the depressed society.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 349).

This narrative shows that social and economic pressures, as part of structural violence, not only cause psychological isolation in men but, on a larger scale, guide society towards general depression. Based on 'Social Strain Theory' (Anselman, 2004 - sic: likely referring to Aneshensel or general Strain Theory), when an individual is held back from performing expected social roles, such as providing for the family financially or maintaining social authority, the psychological pressure resulting from this failure manifests itself in the form of depression and frustration.

Alongside social pressures, physical and psychological pressures resulting from violence are also examinable as key factors in creating depression. One interviewee, who had the experience of gender reassignment, revealed the spiritual and physical consequences of this decision. She says:

'After the operation [Trans gender reassignment] you know what... this operation is very heavy. My stitches opened again and then got infected and they took me to the operating room nearly 10 times... apart from performing the main operation, I went to the operating room ten times, got anesthetised. Anesthesia is very bad, it brings hair loss, brings a bit of amnesia... well, anesthesia has its own

specific complications. I had gotten acute depression, I had become regretful of the work, 'Why did I operate?' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 159).

This narrative aligns with the theory of 'Collective Psychological Trauma' (Erikson, 1963 - *likely referring to Kai Erikson regarding trauma*); this theory states that when an individual suffers acute physical injuries and also experiences the psychological consequences resulting from them, the psychological recovery process will be very difficult. This event, especially in major life changes, leads to acute depression and even regret over past decisions.

Sexual violence has also been noted as one of the causes of male depression. A victim of sexual violence in adolescence says regarding the long-term effects of this experience:

'After all these [sexual abuses at school by the bully group] naturally they all have depression... depression that comes, afterwards unfeelingness [numbness] comes, afterwards mistrust of others comes and anymore he can't trust others.' (Interview No. 80, Erfan, Pos 204).

This experience corresponds with the 'Trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress' Theory (Horowitz, 1986), which explains that sexual violence can leave severe psychological effects on the victim and cause him not only to be damaged psychologically but also to lose the ability to create healthy social connections and trust in others.

One of the most important factors of depression is economic inequality and the lack of job opportunities, the effects of which are seen extensively in specific regions like Ilam province. One interviewee says regarding men facing unemployment:

'In Ilam province, due to economic problems being greater in Ilam and the lack of industrial centres and factories, and men who have cut from agriculture and the village and come inside the city and have no kind of work in the city and have no fixed and salaried job... depression, sorrow, incompetence, inefficiency, and worthlessness are created in them very, very, very much.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 23).

This situation can be interpreted with Marx's theory of Alienation (Marx, 1844). Marx believed that the lack of economic opportunities and the inability to participate actively in society alienates men from themselves and the society of which they are members. This alienation quickly leads to depression and

feelings of worthlessness, and economic pressure transforms into the main tool of structural violence.

Also, some men show the response to these pressures through severe psychological reactions, such as self-harm or suicide. One interviewee says regarding the trend of these injuries:

'Violence... I want nothing, I want to become an addict, Sir, I want nothing... I start self-harming and hurting myself and suicide. Those despairs and depressions and all these are things [consequences], you know.' (Interview No. 42, Dr. Moradi, Pos 162).

These behaviours can be explained with the 'Hopelessness Theory of Depression' (Abramson et al., 1989). This theory states that when an individual reaches a stage where he sees no way to escape violence or change the situation, he may turn to self-destructive behaviours like self-harm or addiction.

In summary, depression as a complex consequence of violence against men occurs in various social, psychological, and economic layers. The combination of empirical narratives and scientific theories like social strain, psychological trauma, social alienation, and self-destructive behaviours shows that violence affects not only the individual but the social networks surrounding him extensively.

9.1.1.17. *Fear and Anxiety*

Fear and Anxiety, as one of the psychological consequences resulting from violence against men, indicates the fragility of individuals' psychological state in facing critical situations. This consequence manifests not only at the individual level but in social structures and is often accompanied by a sense of insecurity and permanent fear of danger. As an example, one interviewee who has grappled with severe psychological pressure resulting from separation and court-related issues expresses his bitter experience thus:

'Now it is true, for 10-12 years that issue of my own life [separation from my wife] was accompanied by psychological pressure... for example, the night I wanted to go to court and wanted to face [it] the next day. I didn't know what to say to the judge and I wanted to speak but couldn't... that stress... that night I constantly said to myself 'I will have a stroke now' and anymore it piled up, piled up... then suddenly at two past midnight anymore my stress went up so much that water... basically I couldn't... I drank water one after another but my mouth

was constantly dry and I couldn't move my lips... midnight, two o'clock, until I came to put my head down... just as, for example, I put my head on the pillow, until I came to sleep, suddenly like a shock that enters a person, 3-phase electricity [high voltage] grabs you. I saw my heart suddenly displaced, they shook me, I went 7-8 centimetres this way and that way. I got scared, I said 'It's finished, I will surely die tonight by morning.' (Interview No. 77, Abbas, Pos 7).

This narrative expresses the direct impact of psychological violence on the individual's health which, in stressful conditions like facing court, reaches its peak. 'Social Strain Theory' (Anselman, 2004 - *sic*) explains that individuals exposed to psycho-social pressures, especially in interaction with formal power structures, suffer psychological effects such as severe fear and trepidation.

Another example of fear is observable in facing the disclosure of personal identity, especially in the context of issues related to homosexuality. Another individual who has experienced the fear of his identity being revealed states:

'Fear of the identity of homosexual individuals [like myself] being revealed challenges us hard and I have a feeling of death in life.' (Interview No. 56, Omid, Pos 3).



Figure 13 Domestic Violence Against Men

This experience not only indicates psychological pressure resulting from social violence against sexual minorities but suggests the long-term effects of fear on quality of life and the individual's feeling of worthiness. Based on 'Social Identity Theory' (Tajfel, 1982), individuals in marginalised groups, when faced with the probability of identity disclosure or social exclusion, suffer continuous anxiety and reduced self-confidence which has a negative impact on the quality of their interpersonal and social relationships.

One of the other significant consequences of violence is permanent fear due to economic and psychological impacts on individuals' lives. One elderly person points out:

'[Because of economic problems] I say if you have trepidation and stress it destroys you, it has an influence, a lot.' (Interview No. 70, Rashidi, Elderly, Pos 46).

Economic pressure which paves the ground for permanent fear of financial failure, especially for men who bear the duty of financial provision for the family, causes these individuals to constantly face the feeling of imminent failure and trepidation resulting from the inability to fulfill the social role. 'Sociological Imagination' regarding personal troubles and public issues (Mills, 1959) explains that economic and social inequalities exert severe psychological pressure on individuals and drive them towards a permanent fear of the future.

Fear of physical violences and social tensions is also another part of these consequences. For example, an individual who faced the 'Plan to Collect Thugs and Hooligans' and experienced its trepidation states:

'[When the plan to collect thugs and hooligans in Tehran was being executed] once every 7-8 days I wouldn't sleep fearing they would come take me, or I wouldn't sleep... suddenly you saw I was awake for 9-10 days... meaning I was awake for up to ten days, I feared they would come take me. Everywhere my dad had entrusted me to them [told them to watch out? or entrusted me to God? Context implies hiding]. Wherever I went they said 'Officers are looking for you,' you know, I had fear and this stuff.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 261-262).

These situations are a clear example of fear resulting from formal confrontations and structural violence which leads to a feeling of chronic insecurity and the impossibility of psychological rest in individuals.

On the other hand, fear resulting from psychological and social pressures due to sexual injuries is also a prominent manifestation of the dimensions of violence. One interviewer who has worked with child victims of sexual violence explains thus:

'For example, almost the peddler boys we have and [whom] we accepted [in the social work centre]... all of them had been sexually raped, the boys, all of them... this issue that we say is a consequence leaves very, very destructive effects on the soul and psyche of these children... the intensity of spiritual and psychological injury is so great that it doesn't heal anytime soon. Meaning they become aggressive, become severely nervous, then regularly all years they have nightmares and fear severely.' (Interview No. 58, Marzieh Hosseini, Pos 40).

This permanent fear, which is reproduced even in sleep, based on 'Trauma Theory' (Horowitz, 1986), can create long-term psychological injuries and prevent the improvement of the individual and social life of victims.

Fears resulting from psychological, social, and physical violence against men mark a complex form of psychological and emotional injuries which often have a deep impact on individuals' social ability, quality of life, and psychological functioning. These fears are not only momentary but remain throughout the individual's life and are constantly reproduced. For example, fear of identity disclosure in societies where homosexuality is a taboo can create anxiety on a daily basis and place the individual in a cycle of psychological worry that is unending. Another interviewee says in this same context:

'Fear that someone understands what you are [homosexual]... your partner is a bad person and tells [your secret] to someone.' (Interview No. 56, Omid, Pos 3).

This situation aligns with the theory of 'Stigma' (Goffman, 1963) which emphasises that individuals in conditions where their identity is recognised as a source of social pressure constantly face feelings of fear and insecurity, and this feeling severely depletes their psychological ability.

Elsewhere, the fear of rejection in social relationships and consequences resulting from it is seen clearly. One interviewee, who has had the difficult experience of being rejected in a relationship, expresses it thus:

'I don't know, [I am] afraid [very much], I don't know, I am afraid to return to her [my partner] say 'Come let's start [friendship relationship again],' she says

'No'... fear of rejection is terrible... basically you saw 'Dad' [referring to self or partner?] nothing remained of him... one [fear] is also this that my fear is that [by committing suicide] there is no world [afterlife/future].' (Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 202).

This narrative indicates the intensity of psychological effects related to violences which indirectly lead to fear of rejection or non-acceptance and brings the individual to a point where the feeling of worthlessness casts a shadow over his life. Based on the theory of the 'Need to Belong' (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), fear of rejection, especially in interpersonal relationships, can entail results such as suicide, severe depression, and reduced ability to create new connections.

Fear of physical changes and consequences resulting from them is also seen in some men as a result of violence or social pressure. One interviewee expresses the intensity of his fear of these effects thus:

'That time I consumed Crack [heroin derivative], they showed in the media that those who consume Crack, [a part of their body] falls off, they get wounds, they get worms. I got scared. We said 'By God we will give birth to a sick child and we must sit and hit ourselves on the head.'' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 156).

This fear of physical injuries which is advertised very extensively in society, aligning with the 'Parallel Response Model' regarding fear appeals (Leventhal, 1970), can lead to behavioural changes that influence both individual life and social relationships.

Finally, the impact of trepidation and fear resulting from physical diseases on individuals' psyche also comprises an important part of the consequences of violence against men. One interviewee grappling with HIV says thus:

'Trepidation, fear is great, you know, finally in the condition where I [have HIV] am. A person must come to terms with it.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 342-343).

This fear of disease, especially in societies that still attach negative labels to such patients, places the individual in an acute psychological situation and strips him of permission for healthy confrontation with the disease. 'Labelling Theory' (Becker, 1963) explains that this situation causes individuals to be constantly placed in exposure to social trepidation and psychological insecurity.

In total, fear and anxiety as a psycho-social consequence resulting from violence against men encompass a wide spectrum of stressful and anxiety-inducing factors. This fear feeds on social structure, interpersonal relationships, economic conditions, and even physical and sexual issues, and ultimately brings the individual to a point of insecurity where all dimensions of his life are influenced. The cycle that violence creates causes not only momentary fear but leads to long-term psychological injuries which require serious interventions for improvement.

9.1.1.18. *Anger and Aggression*

Violence, akin to a deep wound on the male psyche, can serve as a spark for the eruption of Anger and Aggression—a fire whose flames sometimes engulf the individual himself and sometimes extend to others. The analysis of interviewees' narratives reveals that anger and aggression are not merely passive reactions but are often the result of an intertwined nexus of factors such as childhood experiences, socio-economic pressures, traumatic relationships, and the feeling of inability to express and manage emotions.

One interviewee, describing his bitter experience, says:

'The hardest thing regarding violence I did was when... at home when I hit my daughter... between her eyebrows broke... I beat her... I lost control. Because, [due to] substance use, for us wireless cells [sic: likely neural connections]... we didn't have a brain. I went to think of my daughter. To come out of this story. I was smoking substances when I saw... what... suddenly she came to me, I said 'What is it, Dad? Why are you crying?' I hit... I stabbed her with a knife... I said 'What does it have to do [with anything]?'... so-and-so... she didn't complain about me. Then an old man came to her said 'Dad, why do you do this work with yourself? Why do you smoke this substance to sit and cry over your own state?' and so-and-so. Then I said nothing. He said 'What are you crying for? Do you have money problems, financial, so-and-so?' I said 'No, can you go away from me?' The man said 'No, I understand your pain; the one who cries in the alley and street, his pain is greater than the one who cries in the house.' He said 'Do you know what these stories are?' I said 'Unfortunately what is it?' He said 'You sit in the house, what...' Suddenly I woke up from sleep. I saw that girl had vacuumed the consumable substances, they went into the vacuum cleaner. He said 'I didn't see' and so-and-so and these things... it went out of my hand [I lost control], I beat my child, it became like this... he said 'Dad, the guy spends the

world to bring a healthy child into the world." (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 226).

This narrative is a painful example of how psychological pressures, addiction, and lack of anger control transform into domestic violence. 'Social Learning Theory' (Bandura, 1977) explains in this context that individuals, especially in stressful conditions, may learn violent behaviours from their surrounding environment (e.g., family or media) and apply them in similar situations.

In another narrative, one interviewee links aggression to the inability to establish a healthy sexual and emotional connection:

'Look, when there is talk of sexual harassment... believe me, when a man... morning... I have said this many times, I say it now too... look, I see in the middle of the street a gentleman has abnormal behaviour, for example he is an employee of an office, you go talk to him, you see he acts aggressively with you. With you... this one didn't have a good time last night, didn't live well, meaning didn't have good sex with his wife, or the woman was on her period, or the woman fought with him, or the woman turned her back on him or sulked... the man is crazy, is nervous... now he wants to empty this somewhere. Or conversely, the lady didn't have a good connection with her husband last night... then because we are modest people, we are Muslims, we are very bound [by religion/custom], we don't want to do illicit work outside the home environment, we bring the aggression of the issue outside. Look, these are these injuries.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 83).

In this view, aggression acts as a 'discharge valve' for repressed sexual and emotional pressures. The 'Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis' (Dollard et al., 1939) states that frustration in achieving goals (such as a satisfying sexual relationship) can lead to anger and aggression.

One interviewee, pointing to the role of childhood experiences in forming violent behavioural patterns, says:

'But when in childhood we were criticised a lot... automatically this part shuts down, it comes into our Limbic part of our brain, the part we have in common with animals... only and only our experiences, experiences that were from our past... criticisms that existed... aggressions that were done to us and we performed... only those come and become active. Calmness activates the Cortex layer, doesn't allow us to get angry. But when it came down [to the lower brain]... automatically we become animals, the animal part becomes active and

decides based on experiences. This is what our Master, Hazrat Ali, says: 'During anger, neither decision nor order.' Why? Because the Cortex layer is shut down, the human calmness part, the deciding part is shut down. You decide animally.' (Interview No. 95, Retired Military Colonel, Pos 3).

This view points to the importance of 'Secure Attachment' (Bowlby, 1969) in childhood and the impact of negative experiences like repeated criticism and violence on the formation of neural circuits related to emotional control.

This issue is repeated in another case as well:

'You calculate, at that same young age he suffers a paradox... if the guy was humiliated and annoyed and abused by someone who should be his support, be his safe point... on one hand he can't share this with anyone, can't do anything... the only thing he can... unconsciously it's as if he does a modelling from that behaviour and again he himself starts doing those violent behaviours. And I even remember kids defined... for example in our theatre class there were both girls and boys, sometimes boys hit girls or annoyed them... then when we went further forward they said 'No, because we like this one we hit this one.' He did a kind of expressing affection combined with anger.' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 8).

In fact, this modelling of violence present in the family is internalised by the child as a model and strategy.

Socio-economic pressures are also raised as another predisposing factor for anger and aggression in men. One interviewee says in this regard:

'Meaning in your work environment... I said 'Hey jerk, you are beating that small kid, you are 17 years old. You beat a nine-year-old kid. What complex... what are you saying... do you like me to grab you beat you here so you vomit blood?' Just like this I told him. 'Do you like me to beat you vomit blood, speak.' Well, one [consequence] is this very depression and aggression. Well, this paralyses the family economy again... twice you want... right now my family are in conflict with him because the shop is ration/quota [subsidised?], you know. We have conflict with family. Anger. Anger even stops my own work... a wrecked system that whatever work you want to do, it doesn't let [you]... when it happens everyone pulls the rug from under you.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 290).

This narrative shows how economic pressures, family problems, and the feeling of inability to control conditions can lead to anger and aggression.

'General Strain Theory' (Agnew, 1992) proposes that individuals, especially those facing multiple pressures, may turn to deviant behaviours like violence to cope with these pressures.

We see this same subject in the words of another individual: *'A man who doesn't have [money] is ashamed, you know. Well, this feeling of shame causes him to suffer neurosis. I myself fall apart when my hand becomes empty [broke], I become aggressive... why... because my hand is empty.'* (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 32-34).

Furthermore, one interviewee considers anger as resulting from the inefficiency of social systems and says:

'Why does society have an inclination towards Israelis? It is anger, anger. Systematic anger from some senseless people, bastards who only think of their own interests and crush you underfoot.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 294-296).

On the other hand, structural violences existing in society can also result from the non-realisation of individuals' goals and needs, where as a result of this non-realisation they turn to anger and aggression:

'Parents are references of authority and correct command in children's minds... based on these they say 'Well, just as he broke the window, just as our dad beat our mum, so I have the right to use this violence against others for my goals and needs.' Another theory in this relation is that violence is the production of frustration... wherever our needs and wherever our goals are not fulfilled, anger is produced in us and this anger transforms into violence and methods of aggression against others.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 31).

This vicious cycle can be transmitted from one generation to another:

'For example, you saw suddenly a child has violent behaviour, then you saw this violent behaviour itself is the product of another violent behaviour that was done to this child... meaning from one side this child suffered violence from the father's side, from friends' side, mostly from the side of those other families.' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 8).

Suppression of emotions and inability to express feelings can also fuel anger and aggression in men. One interviewee points to this subject, how social pressures and repressed sexual pressures manifest as violence:

'Mostly we look eye to eye at each other... when two ladies see each other, they both laugh and say hello... now the guy has injected all this gel, done so-and-so to her eyelid, cheek, lip, nose... they look at each other, laugh. But men, if one of them has grown a beard, one of them now has tattooed, and one has lines on his face... they jump at each other. They draw horns and jaws [posture/threaten] at each other but for women they can't. The pressure that enters them in the house, they empty it like this... sexual pressure that enters them, they come outside empty it. They fill it with substances... he can't satisfy his wife, goes towards substances... when he looks at the end of it he sees it was like this from childhood... he couldn't be satisfied well... married. Married, couldn't satisfy his wife or this one couldn't... returns consumes substances... some time passes, he liked it... sees he has become an addict and the wife says 'Go goodbye, go quit'... he quits too, sees she has flown and gone. It cannot be mentioned anywhere either.' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran, Pos 104).

Anger and aggression not only influence individuals' social and family relationships but can be an obstacle to their personal growth and economic success as well. One interviewee says:

'Well, the moment anger enters me... the moment I want to live with anger and tow it along... that causes me to close my own path of growth myself. Well, out of my anger I never come to buy a good property that has feedback [profit] the day after tomorrow... never come to do a work that has profit in it. Anger means my own self. I could now... like... I am saying, huh... I, for example, my anger was this that perhaps I could have the best institute for the elderly... perhaps have... I myself have anger... I myself. I am angry at myself... it is not at anyone, huh... I am angry at myself... this very thing caused me to stagnate, meaning not progress and still be low in the economic field... that we have a house, we have a car, let this remain... but we could go higher... why?! My anger doesn't allow me to come consult with Mr. Mahmoudi... want to buy a good house, want to start a good job, want to buy a good item... that entry of mine... that anger of mine doesn't allow me to come consult with two people.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 54).

On the other hand, anger can be an emotional response in reaction to a separation and divorce: *'My husband after separation has become an incredibly aggressive person, has become very nervous. This is your separation experience. In separation, my Mehrieh... he had paid installments correctly but all his account... he*

couldn't keep money. Yes, I had made it installments. Because I had separated... your Mehrieh [was] 313 coins.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 43-51).

Also, anger as an individual response against inefficient educational systems manifests in interviewees' narratives:

'Just now I had gone towards Ferdowsi, Sepahbod Gharani [streets]... teachers, these... were protesting, I don't know over what... he said 'I wished... if only I was in the police force and just beat these people.' I... from anyone who... a few days in class, a few weeks ago I said to the professor, to our professor I said, I said 'Ms. Zarei, I love you but that person who sits behind that desk... I feel sick of him.' I hate anyone who is in the stature of teacher and professor.' (Interview No. 98, Rasul Nagozir, Pos 39).

In more acute cases, anger and regret can end in the thought of harming another: *'Many works. I have regret for having money... at any price it becomes, go earn money... now it wants [requires] that I kill a human, now it wants that I commit crime and felony, now it wants that I do many other works... I go do it. Because everything has become regret for me... I too like to taste the taste of pleasures... but this much that my family has taken my volition in their hands... anymore we too do every work... by God anymore it is the last time. By God we have reached a place... if they don't act on it I will do many works.'* (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 243).

Hatred as an emotion related to anger can also occur as a result of violence:

'[As a result of teacher's insults in class] I have a feeling of hatred towards the teacher.' (Interview No. 80, Erfan, Pos 32). Even the phenomenon of violences like honour killing can have roots in anger: *'[The man who commits honour killing] himself doesn't accept those... it is impossible a brother who cuts his sister's head feels a sense of satisfaction in himself at that moment... he is full of hatred and anger towards himself.'* (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 119).

In summary, anger and aggression as psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men are rooted in childhood experiences, socio-economic pressures, traumatic relationships, and inability to manage emotions. This anger can manifest in various forms, from domestic violence and verbal aggression to self-destructive behaviours and thoughts of harming others. To combat this phenomenon, it is necessary to attend to its predisposing factors

and, through teaching anger management skills, psycho-social supports, and changing cultural attitudes, help men to face their emotions in healthier ways.

9.1.1.19. *Feeling of Shame and Regret in Men*

In examining the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men, the feeling of shame and regret stands out as one of the deepest and most painful emotional experiences of this group of individuals. This feeling, which is often rooted in bitter life experiences, social and family failures, and the inability to perform traditional male roles, is like a wound situated in the hidden layers of men's souls and psyches, sometimes accompanying them until the end of their lives. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, this consequence is understood not only as an emotional reaction but as part of the process of identity reconstruction and confrontation with social and cultural pressures. In these conditions, men often see themselves in a mirror of others' judgments and personal failures, and this reflection evokes a feeling of shame and regret in them that sometimes leads to isolation, depression, and even self-destructive behaviours.

One of the interviewees, Vahid Faraji, expressing his painful experiences, depicts this sense of shame and regret well. He says:

'Because a time Vahid returned, huh... in short, it passed from this process, Vahid returned and became clean and went entered society... went into the dimension of life... made a life for himself. Became a father of a son... Vahid whom no one thought... it passed and after a few months he went after his substances. Well, think, your wife has addiction and you are the founder of that addiction of your wife... and in my own house I heard these too and said 'Enough, we are tired'... but now this reality is felt that 'If only she returned to her life'... and even though I know she has remarried and fallen into addiction... but I am willing for the sake of my son she comes to her life. Well, Dad... he wants this... Vahid go to work return... his child says 'Dad come, come let's play perfumery (Attari) together.' Sleep on back on the pillow... perfumery... then Dad let's wrestle WWE... I didn't see this growing up... he grew tall and studied... I have [see] on TV they broadcast he has memorised three parts (Juz) of Quran... goes to such-and-such club... so-and-so is enjoyable for me... where am I... I am not. And now what is passing in his mind... from this process onwards life is tormenting me... do you believe past works [deeds]... not at all to memory... I say 'No, it happened'... because I, Vahid, when I sit I say 'This is not

theft, I steal for addiction; a thief is the one who has billions in his account and goes does this work'... I didn't have, I went stole, I did such works.' (Interview No. 44, Pos 86).

In this narrative, it can be seen how regret and remorse over the past, especially the inability to be present in the child's life and perform the fatherly role, has turned into a deep emotional pain. Vahid considers himself responsible for his wife's addiction, and this feeling of guilt, along with distance from his child, has sunk him into a vortex of shame. He wishes to return to past life, not for himself, but to compensate for what his child has gone through.

This experience aligns with social psychology theories, especially Goffman's view on 'Stigma'. Goffman believes that individuals who distance themselves from social norms often face a label of failure and inadequacy which leads to a feeling of internal shame (Goffman, 1963). In the case of men like Vahid, this social stigma is internalised not only from society but from the individual himself and manifests as a sense of regret and self-blame. He sees himself in a position where not only has he failed to act as a successful father or husband, but he has become a factor for the destruction of his close ones' lives.

Continuing, another narrative from Vahid Faraji shows this feeling of shame from another angle. He says:

'I have a bad feeling regarding tattoos [on my own body]. I dislike it. If someone is supposed to do this, I won't let him. This society doesn't accept... perhaps the American government, such-and-such government accepts... well they accept very quickly, they come to terms with everything... our society doesn't come to terms. The final word is that if everyone does their own work correctly everyone becomes human... a series [of people] do wrong work, are not regretful of their work... I am paying the price now for all the works I did in the past... sometimes I say 'Every human does every work... beats a kitten... if everyone is human...'' (Interview No. 44, Pos 285).

Here, Vahid clearly expresses regret over his past choices and sees the tattoo as a symbol of a past identity that society does not accept. This social non-acceptance, along with internal guilt, reminds him that he must pay the price for his mistakes. This sense of paying the price is somehow an attempt to

reconstruct identity and compensate for the past, but simultaneously indicates the depth of his shame of self.

On the other hand, Hamid Haghi also shares a similar experience which shows the deep impact of shame on family relationships. He says:

'Well, I myself feel... I say 'Since I became like this, then let the same thought exist... like my brothers' kids, my sisters' kids, so-and-so and these... let them see me and it becomes a lesson for them.' Now I don't know true and false... when my sister marries... when she separates from her husband... it seems her husband had turned back told her 'Your brother Hamid is a criminal and these things'... I was in prison at that time. My sister turns back says 'If Hamid was out you wouldn't dare say this word... now that you understood Hamid's sentence is heavy and such things you are saying this word... I don't give my brother to you... I separate but I don't give my brother to you.' That same sister who abandoned her life for my sake... one day I called her, she said to me... told me 'Don't call me anymore.' (Interview No. 44, Pos 264).

In this narrative, Hamid sees himself as a negative model, someone who should be a lesson for others. This negative self-image, along with losing the support of his sister who once sacrificed her life for him, reinforces the feeling of shame and isolation in him. This experience shows that violence against men, whether direct or indirect, can destroy emotional and family relationships and trap the individual in a cycle of regret and self-blame.

Experts' views also confirm these personal experiences. Dr. Vali Bahrami says in this regard:

'Meaning he can't... these issues increased, multiplied... and the man, father of the family, can't... therefore not only does no work come from his hand [he can't do anything], but in the eyes of others this is a man, a defeated father... is a father who couldn't do anything for his children... and this torments them very much spiritually and psychologically... for example now the discussion of children's marriage... a father who has 4-5 daughters... permanent celibacy for two of them... then from that side he has an addicted child... we don't have few of these cases.' (Interview No. 74, Pos 16).

These statements show how the inability to perform traditional fatherly and family roles, especially in a society where these roles are strongly tied to male identity, leads to a feeling of failure and shame. This feeling, like a

psychological burden, places men under pressure and makes them emotionally vulnerable.

Dr. Bahrami continues to point to men's inefficient strategies to escape these pressures:

'Meaning various issues exist together in fact in the family space... and this has caused them... in fact, a kind of... in fact the comorbidity of these issues has caused men to have no way... now [in] acute psychological state... to escape these issues they attempt suicide... sometimes attempt to escape... for example for a few days they say they sulked... look, for example, various strategies these men employ.' (Interview No. 74, Pos 16).

This analysis shows that the feeling of shame and regret, alongside other psychological pressures, can lead to destructive behaviours like running away from home or even attempting suicide. These behaviours are in fact an attempt to flee the heavy emotional burden resulting from violence and life's failures.

From a theoretical perspective, these consequences can be explained with the concept of 'Identity Crisis' raised by Erikson. Erikson believes that when individuals fail in performing their social roles, they face a crisis in their identity which can lead to feelings of shame and guilt (Erikson, 1968). In the case of men who have experienced violence, this identity crisis intensifies especially when they see themselves failed against cultural and social expectations. This failure, along with violent experiences, creates a feeling of shame in them which sometimes manifests as regret for the past and an attempt to compensate, but often due to lack of social and emotional supports, leads to isolation and depression.

In conclusion, it can be said that the feeling of shame and regret in men who have experienced violence is not just a simple emotional reaction, but part of a complex psycho-social process that influences their identity, family relationships, and social status. This feeling, like a dark shadow, weighs on the lives of these individuals and places them in search of a way to reconstruct themselves and compensate for the past. But in a society often incapable of understanding these pains, this search usually does not reach a result and only adds to the depth of their emotional wounds.

9.1.1.20. *Revenge-Seeking*

Violence against men, as a complex social phenomenon, brings extensive consequences in victims' lives, one of the most prominent of which is the

tendency towards Revenge-Seeking. This consequence, rooted in physical and psychological injuries resulting from violence, often operates as a destructive cycle and drives the victim towards behaviours that place not only himself but others in exposure to injury. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, this analysis, based on data obtained from in-depth interviews and relying on direct narratives of victims and witnesses, addresses this consequence and attempts to offer a deep understanding of this cycle by integrating scientific views and lived experiences.

One of the significant aspects in the consequences of violence against men is the transformation of grievance and pain into grudge and hatred, which ultimately leads to revenge. This process, as evident in interviewees' narratives, is often time-consuming and it may take years for the victim to find an opportunity to compensate for inflicted injuries. For example, one interviewee, describing a bitter experience of violence applied in an environment like rehabilitation camps, shows this cycle well:

'In all these years that we were in the service of these friends, it only caused grievance to be created for them. Even this grievance reaching grudge and hatred and revenge... and this violence that is applied to them created grievance and grudge and hatred against this servant of God... in many places it reached revenge. There were cases where he had waited for years over an officer who had hit him somewhere... had beaten the guy a lot in the camp period... the guy had gone, improved, his condition became good... after 4-5 years he had found this officer and had applied the same works that he had done, onto him. Or in my own opinion he had engaged [in conflict]... and or had taken the party somewhere and kept that officer for a week. Or with their own family many settled accounts over this issue, for the sake of compensating that violence and taking revenge they settled accounts. Over the fact that somehow the brother, sister, or father who a few years ago had done such-and-such work with him or had inflicted such injury on him in the form of violence... after a few years he had figured [caused] this event for him... if I submitted [said], there were a series of individuals who had basically improved and were healthy and had lived for years with this thought to go take revenge on that person who a time had applied violence to them. I saw several cases of this form too.' (Interview No. 18, Mr. Taghadosi, Pos 48).

This narrative shows how physical violence and humiliation in controlled environments can transform into a deep psychological wound that even after the individual's apparent recovery, still remains in his mind and drives him

towards revenge. This cycle, wherein initial violence transforms into mutual violence, aligns with social theories like Lenore Walker's 'Cycle of Violence' which emphasises the continuity and reproduction of violence in human relationships (Walker, 1979).

This tendency towards revenge sometimes manifests not only against direct perpetrators of violence but even against close family members. The feeling of injustice and losing control over life drives the individual to vent his swallowed anger on those who have somehow played a role in this experience or are even innocent. One interviewee, expressing his personal experience, describes this deep sense of anger and revenge thus:

'I was looking for revenge on my father. On my father who kept me nine months in the camp. Basically I had become psycho. After this suicide story. I came out saw my money is not there, my motorcycle is not there, my sneakers are not there... I remained [with] a pair of trousers and a pair of slippers. By God a sense of revenge was created in me, I wanted to kill my brother. I wanted to take him to prison. A thousand other thoughts. That why they spent my money... why basically with my money did you go buy a car, then he himself doesn't let me sit in that car. Because I consume substances. I got annoyance [rage] from this. I hated this life. I hated everyone. From that moment I consumed, only my sister understood me, no one understood me.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 231-234).

This narrative shows the depth of psychological injury resulting from violence and deprivation, how it drives the individual to a direction where even the closest people to him become targets of anger and revenge-seeking. From a psychological perspective, this behaviour can be explained with the 'Displacement of Aggression' Theory (Freud, 1920 - also Dollard *et al.*), which states that individuals in conditions where they cannot directly confront the main source of their anger, redirect these feelings towards more accessible targets.

It is interesting that this sense of revenge-seeking sometimes manifests in the form of a long-term and even professional goal-setting. Some victims of violence, especially at younger ages, nurture the wish to gain power and social status as a tool to compensate for past humiliations. One interviewee says in this regard:

'Previously when I spoke with one of the students, he said 'My wish is to become military.' That goal this student had for becoming military, do you know what it was? Those goals from this job he wanted to obtain is that he can punish those who in the school environment really looked at him with a bullying view and appointed him to a series of tasks. And compensate... meaning somehow, as the saying goes, see himself higher than him [the bully] and with that military power he has.' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 49).

This narrative shows how the experience of violence and humiliation in environments like school can transform into an internal motivation for gaining power and revenge. This phenomenon aligns with the concept of 'Overcompensation' in sociological theories (*and Adlerian psychology*) which states that individuals may try to compensate for their past feeling of inferiority through gaining positions of power (Adler, 1927).

In the final analysis, it can be said that revenge-seeking as one of the physical and psychological consequences of violence against men is not only an individual reaction but a social cycle that can lead to the reproduction of violence in society. This cycle, which begins with grievance and grudge and ends in revenge-seeking behaviours, indicates the deep need for social and psychological interventions to break this vicious circle. As social theorists like Bourdieu have emphasised, structural violence and experiences of humiliation often lead to the reproduction of violence in various forms (Bourdieu, 1998). Therefore, to reduce these consequences, attention must be paid to the roots of violence against men and simultaneously a space provided for healing psychological wounds and rebuilding social trust. Interviewees' narratives, each recounting the story of pain and effort for compensation in a way, are a warning for society to end this destructive cycle and find a way for repair and reconstruction.

9.1.1.21. Loneliness, Isolation, Insecurity, Despair

In examining the psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men, Loneliness, Isolation, Insecurity, and Despair stand out as deep wounds in the soul and psyche of these individuals. These consequences, which often originate from violent experiences, social exclusion, and failure in performing traditional male roles, sink men into a vortex of emotional and social isolation. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, these consequences are not only individual emotional reactions but part of a complex socio-psychological

process that influences identity, human relationships, and the individual's position in society. These narratives show that violence against men, whether physical, psychological, or social, can separate them from social support networks and drive them towards the darkness of loneliness and despair.

One interviewee, Mehdi Momeni, describes this isolation and rejection well:

'A boy who is aggressive in the family... slowly, slowly family members choose avoidance from him, because they don't want to face him, don't want to come face-to-face with him, because they know he applies violence... and slowly, slowly they leave him alone. No one comes to sit for half an hour at the foot of these violent people's words, well, because everyone is afraid lest they get injured. From its consequences is that these [men] severely suffer a feeling of loneliness, become isolated. They get rejected, get fired from the office due to their violence... A bad event that happened last year in Iran, an employee of this Property Acquisition Organization, I don't know, Mostazafan Foundation?... You suffer rejection and isolation, your tendency in that solitude and loneliness of yours towards substance use goes up, suicide increases, sometimes it shows itself in homicide (Degar-koshi).' (Interview No. 38, Pos 119).

This narrative shows how violent behaviours, which themselves can be the result of experienced violences, drive the individual towards isolation. Being rejected from family and society, along with losing social position, leads to self-destructive behaviours like substance use or even suicide. This cycle indicates the depth of the impact of violence on the psyche and human relationships.

This experience aligns with sociological perspectives, especially the concept of 'Social Capital' raised by Bourdieu and Putnam. Social capital refers to networks of relationships and social supports that protect individuals against life pressures (Putnam, 2000). When these networks are destroyed as a result of violence and social exclusion, the individual remains defenseless against psychological injuries. This subject is clearly seen in other narratives as well. For example, Ali Aghasi says:

'And after a month my Aga [father] died, I was sixteen, seventeen. Anymore I was alone, had no one. This very problem that I have been suffering for 15 years now, am smoking substances and enjoying it... and what mostly caused my substance smoking is loneliness. Its major reason is loneliness. Now again, the

talk I had with psychologists, with doctors, with so-and-so... loneliness is the main factor.' (Interview No. 39, Pos 61).

Here, loneliness is introduced as a key factor in gravitating towards drugs. Losing family and lack of emotional support drove this individual towards destructive solutions.

The feeling of despair and emptiness also stands out among men who have experienced violence as a deep psychological consequence. Faraz Mahboubi describes this feeling with painful expression:

'[Result of violences I saw] I have no hope. Basically nothing... a tiny bit of hope that I might have... basically I don't like living at all.' (Interview No. 36, Pos 42).

This despair, which sometimes leads to hatred of life, indicates the loss of motivation and meaning of life. This experience aligns with psychological theories, especially Frankl's view on 'Meaning of Life'. Frankl believes that lack of meaning in life can lead to feelings of emptiness and despair (Frankl, 1946). In the case of men who have experienced violence, this lack of meaning is often the result of losing relationships, social position, and hope for the future.

Vahid Faraji also shares a similar experience showing the depth of this isolation and despair:

'Five years I lived on the floor of the street. Theft and pick this one's pocket, pick that one's pocket, drug dealing... Yalda Night [Shab-e Chelleh] my heart was heavy... I went to Tehran Garden... misery... wherever we go too, four people like us are there... whether it be in the direction of recovery... all these... until 12 midnight I went home too and anymore I remained, no one is there... I consumed and looked at them... the light that is there... sitting next to family... sitting, sister, brother, yeah they laugh... in that family a young husband and wife are sitting... in that family a brother and sister are sitting. I constantly thought of these and tears flow from my eyes... that same night for the first time I attempted suicide... still my word is this: a human who sleeps at night, [if] he has no reason to wake up in the morning, has no difference with dying.' (Interview No. 44, Pos 142).

This narrative displays a painful image of loneliness and regret. Seeing others' happiness next to family, while he himself resides in isolation and darkness, drove him towards attempting suicide. This feeling that life has become

meaningless and there is no reason to continue is one of the severest psychological consequences of violence.

On the other hand, isolation and withdrawal as a defense mechanism is also seen in narratives. Reza Rashidi says:

'It's like you let go... neither house nor life... for example my dad says 'Why do you stay at the factory, come home,' 'No I have work,' fake excuses... whereas I am comfortable [in] loneliness. Loneliness... I tell you this, Doctor... in this loneliness beautiful thoughts don't come into a person's head... I experienced it, right now I am passing its period... Doctor, by God it is not a film that you think I am mimicking lovers... look Doctor, there is a person mimicking lovers, but I can't... really I can't make connection with anyone, can't go into a relationship with anyone [else].' (Interview No. 49, Pos 135).

This preference for loneliness, although seemingly a choice, is in fact the result of inability to establish emotional connection and fear of being rejected again. Experienced violences have taken trust in others from this individual and imprisoned him in a self-imposed isolation.

This isolation is also seen in individuals who have been rejected for cultural or social reasons. Shayan says in this regard:

'Let me give you an explanation... an individual who is homosexual... perhaps you ask why he gets subjected to violence more than the rest... what difference does he have compared to that individual with normal tendencies... well the first returns to that person being more emotional and [having] more tendency towards silence because, as I said, [due to] conditions of society and country that person has no tendency to speak.' (Interview No. 84, Pos 4).

This silence and isolation is the result of social pressures and fear of judgment. In a society that does not accept different identities, the individual has no choice but hiding and loneliness, which itself leads to a feeling of insecurity and psychological vulnerability.

Experts' views also confirm these experiences. Dr. Bahrami says:

'Look, isolation and loneliness of humans. Tendency towards loneliness and destruction of social forces in the role of social supports... being revolutionized... and this very being revolutionized shows that social support has decreased, social capitals in society have decreased... supporting forces have a very, very important role which has depleted a lot. And individuals, when they get involved in life issues and problems, cannot solve issues, consequently they are forced to suicide.'

Meaning forces of society... this society was poverty [poor], had a strong support system... poor society has a tendency for more help... meaning there are more people for support. But in this society which is apparently developed, those support sources are fewer... meaning social supports are less. In Tehran, individuals who commit suicide... in society with loneliness and despair... perhaps we cannot define [with] words.' (Interview No. 19, Pos 48).

This analysis shows that the reduction of social supports in modern societies leaves individuals defenseless against psychological pressures resulting from violence. Loneliness and despair, especially in big cities, is raised as a key factor in self-destructive behaviours like suicide.

Marzieh Hosseini also points to the long-term consequences of violence in childhood:

'And delinquency... you, there is a book... Ms. Camila Batmanghelidjh... she was a lady [from] Iran who was a social worker in England... has a unique book 'Shattered Lives'... there she speaks... says these children... these damage[-suffering] children, what events happen to them in adulthood... if they are not treated and don't fall onto a correct path, which probably they won't fall [onto] either... these either go towards delinquency or transform themselves into aggressive people or transform into people who engage in murder and killing and crime... meaning these are not healthy people... meaning one side of it is this, one side of it is severe depression... meaning the way they say themselves, they suffer isolation.' (Interview No. 58, Pos 209).

These statements show that violences experienced in childhood can lead to isolation and severe depression in adulthood, especially if the individual does not enjoy necessary supports.

The feeling of insecurity is also seen in many narratives as a key consequence of violence. One interviewee with experience of sexual abuse at school says:

'[As a result of sexual abuse experience at school] in high school I had difficult conditions [in] my connections with classmates. Eleventh grade again I am in that house [dormitory?], I go out only for school for a few hours, return again. That same time of school too I am reclusive and don't speak with anyone lest they understand my accent and discuss this subject with the assistant principal or themselves with themselves... and drag the discussion of connections/nepotism (Parti) and these things into the middle... and perhaps expel me from that

school... that if this event happens I have no choice except to return to my city's high school and face the heads [presence] of those kids [bullies]. This subject annoyed me a lot.' (Interview No. 62, Pos 26-27).

This fear of being rejected and facing violence again has driven the individual to isolation and withdrawal and reinforced the feeling of insecurity in him.

In conclusion, it can be said that loneliness, isolation, insecurity, and despair as psychological-emotional consequences of violence against men separate these individuals from society and even themselves like an invisible chain. These consequences, rooted in bitter experiences of violence and lack of social supports, imprison men in the darkness of isolation and sometimes lead to destructive behaviours like substance use or suicide. In a society often incapable of understanding these pains, these wounds become deeper and take the hope of recovery from individuals. These narratives show that to break this cycle, there is a need to rebuild social support networks and create a safe space for expressing pains and receiving help.

9.1.1.22. Loss of Will, Choice, and Authority in Men

It appears that one of the deepest individual consequences of violence against men is the gradual erosion and loss of their will, right to choose, and authority. This phenomenon manifests itself in various layers of men's lives and influences their lived experience. As is evident in the interviews, this consequence means not only losing position and power in interpersonal relationships but leads to a kind of destruction of the 'soul and psyche' and the 'transmutation' (*Estehaleh*) of men's internal power.

Dr. Bahrami says in this regard:

'The films we see... that film 'Heshmat Ferdowsi'... Iranian men like these... this is a spiritual and psychological reconstruction of a power that has gone into transmutation. Well, why men? Look, in our modern world today, in the process of becoming civilised and modernity, in a process of change... that, especially urban life, has destroyed those forces, hopes, wishes, and aspirations of a man. They have destroyed you. Let me say this, despair is the main core of suicide, both from the perspective of philosophy and from the perspective of sociology and from the perspective of psychology... meaning a human who feels the world has come to an end.' (Interview No. 19, Pos 36).

This view shows well how pressures resulting from modern life and social processes can pave the ground for weakening will and hope in men, and this weakening ultimately leads to deep feelings of despair and even suicidal ideation. In this narrative, men's authority and will have undergone a kind of 'transmutation,' meaning it has transformed into a different and perhaps weaker form, and this psychological reconstruction mentioned in films is perhaps an unconscious attempt to return that lost power. This phenomenon can be linked to the concept of 'Anomie' in Émile Durkheim's theory, which refers to conditions of normlessness and a feeling of irregularity in society and can lead to feelings of alienation and despair (Durkheim, 1897/1951). In these conditions, men may experience confusion and loss of control over their lives by losing their traditional status and role in society, which itself is considered a form of structural violence against them.

Losing authority and the right to choose can also manifest in marital relationships. Ms. Entezami points to an example:

'Or for example, a man who married compulsorily, is continuing his life compulsorily... somewhere this power stops... he is a company president, company manager, has physical ability... finally he loses these. Well, considering old age he loses these, and when he loses them, whose hand is the power in? It is in the woman's hand. When power is in the woman's hand, all these years are compensated.' (Interview No. 47, Pos 94).

In this scenario, the man initially possessed authority and status (company president, manager, physical ability), but with the passage of time and old age, these sources of power are stripped from him. This loss of physical and social power provides the space for establishing a kind of mutual 'power' by the spouse, which is considered a kind of 'compensation' for past years. This power dynamic can lead to limiting the man's right to choose and will in joint life decisions, even if he possessed more authority in the past. This situation can be analysed from the perspective of 'Bases of Social Power' in interpersonal relationships (French & Raven, 1959), where sources of power can be variable and shift over time. Losing these power sources in the man can pave the ground for experiencing forms of psychological or controlling violence in the relationship.

Limitation in the right to choose and will can occur even in apparently supportive environments like medical centres. Mehdi Javadi points to his experience in centres for psychiatric and elderly patients:

'[In centres for psychiatric patients and the elderly] they don't have the right to choose food. A fixed food menu that you don't have the power of option over... they put that at your disposal. Strict laws where you don't have power of choice is officially violence.' (Interview No. 82, Pos 40).

This quote shows how being stripped of the simplest right to choose, like choosing the type of food, can be considered a violent act. This experience reinforces the feeling of inability and loss of control over life and can lead to weakening the individual's will. This situation overlaps with the concept of 'Coercive Control' in domestic violence theory, where the abuser exerts control over the victim by limiting resources and options (Stark, 2007). In this case, this control is applied by the structures and laws of the centres and systematically strips the right to choose from men.

The feeling of losing independence and freedom is also another deep consequence of violence against men which is directly related to losing will and the right to choose. Akbar Ebrahimi says with regret:

'With all events that happened to me... if I was a consumer [addict]... I felt at least I was on my own feet and I myself decided for myself. Now after 43 years I felt at least my state and day wasn't this. Meaning they took independence from me. They took freedom from me.' (Interview No. 43, Pos 248-253).

This quote clearly shows that the individual feels he has lost the ability to decide for himself and his independence and freedom have been stripped. It is interesting that the individual even prefers being a consumer (addict) to the situation he is currently in, because in that state he at least felt he was 'on his own feet' and decided for himself. This comparison vividly displays the depth of the feeling of losing autonomy and will, showing how violence can lead to the total stripping of the individual's 'Agency.' In sociology, agency refers to individuals' ability to act independently and choose freely, and losing it means losing the individual's ability to shape his own life (Giddens, 1984).

Finally, the consequences of violence can be such that the man avoids presence in the home and family environment—which should be a place for peace and security—and loses his position there. Amir Mokhtari points to this form of subcutaneous violence:

'For example, they say how much he spends on the woman... but the emotional connection is mechanical... that this man is only working, working... comes into the house for two hours, can't be calm... he gets insulted, gets humiliated. I mean

this spouse has done a work [so that] this man doesn't get beaten but is not in the house, has lost his position. This is subcutaneous violence too. A man who is constantly at work... thinks it is better for him to go out... does no work [outside] either... is a very healthy man in terms of social behaviours but cannot come home.' (Interview No. 51, Pos 34).

In this narrative, the man is the provider financially, but the emotional connection has become 'mechanical' and the home, instead of peace, is a place for insult and humiliation. This situation, although lacking overt physical violence, is considered a kind of 'subcutaneous violence' which weakens the man's position in the house and drives him to distance himself from it. This loss of position and lack of feeling of belonging in the home can lead to a feeling of lack of authority and reduced will for presence and participation in family life. This phenomenon can be linked to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'Symbolic Violence,' which refers to forms of domination that are applied unconsciously through social structures and symbols and seem natural (Bourdieu, 1990). In this state, insults and humiliations systematically weaken the man's position in the family and drive him towards isolation.

Losing will, the right to choose, and authority as individual consequences of violence against men is a complex and multifaceted process occurring as a result of various individual, interpersonal, and structural factors. This phenomenon leads not only to stripping men's practical and decision-making abilities but results in their spiritual and psychological destruction as well, creating a deep sense of despair, lack of authority, and loss of control over life in them. Analysing these consequences within the framework of Grounded Theory and relying on interview quotes helps in a deeper understanding of men's lived experience in facing violence and reveals the hidden layers of this phenomenon.

9.1.2. Physical Consequences

Consequences of violence against men have various dimensions, one of the most obvious and sometimes most devastating of which is Physical Consequences. These consequences cover a wide spectrum, from immediate and visible physical injuries to chronic physical exhaustion and serious diseases that threaten men's health and survival. Violence can lead not only to direct physical injuries, but psychological and social pressures resulting from it also leave destructive effects on the body over time. Male mortality, whether

due directly to violence or due to its indirect consequences like suicide, is one of the most serious dimensions of this issue requiring special attention. Physical injuries resulting from violence can include wounds, fractures, and other physical traumas that bring not only immediate pain and suffering but lead to physical exhaustion and disability in the long term. Although discussed less, men can also be victims of sexual violence which leaves deep physical and psychological consequences. Furthermore, chronic stress resulting from being placed in exposure to violence can weaken the body's immune system and pave the ground for the emergence of various physical diseases, including digestive and muscular diseases, as well as chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and infections. Finally, in the most severe cases, physical and psychological consequences of violence can drive the individual towards suicide, which itself is a catastrophic end to the process of physical and psychological erosion resulting from violence. In this section, we will address the detailed examination of these physical consequences based on the findings of the present research.

9.1.2.1. *Male Mortality*

In the heart of a society where violence casts a shadow over men's lives in various forms, mortality stands out as one of the bitterest physical consequences of these violences. This consequence, which sometimes has roots in sudden strokes, cardiovascular diseases, and even deaths resulting from psychological pressures, deprives men of life at ages when they should be at the peak of dynamism. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, male mortality is not only a biological phenomenon but the result of a complex socio-psychological process wherein economic pressures, family stresses, and institutionalised violences in society wear down men's bodies and souls. These narratives, emerging from in-depth interviews with various individuals, show how violence, whether direct or indirect, leads to shortening men's lives and makes them more vulnerable to death.

One interviewee speaks frankly of this bitter reality:

'Mortality in men is twice that of women, young men. Basically it is terrible in suicide, in strokes, cardiovascular disease... afterwards these pressures and stresses the man endures in life, you know, in family and outside... but we can't understand this, where is the root of this pressure? A part is economic... you basically don't know who to take refuge in, whose collar to grab, to whom to tell

problems... inflation and expensiveness... yes we know it is the government's work and everyone knows and nothing can be done either and we are only enduring the pressure... right now mortalities in men are very high in jobs like, for example, police force, labouring jobs, service jobs. That is pressure and accident... it is nervous pressure, you know. It is financial pressure.' (Interview No. 52, Farahani, Pos 79-80).

This narrative presents a clear image of the multilateral pressures exerted on men. Economic pressures like inflation and expensiveness, which make the individual defenseless against them, along with occupational stresses in professions like the police force or service works, analyse [wear down] men's bodies and psyches. These pressures, for which there is often no solution, lead to heart diseases and premature death. This experience aligns with 'Chronic Stress Theory' which shows that long-term stress can lead to physical disorders like heart disease and stroke (Cohen et al., 2007).

This difference in lifespan between men and women is highlighted in another narrative as well:

'If you research, many of the deceased in high age... between ladies and gentlemen, ladies live longer than gentlemen. Gentlemen pass away sooner, have strokes sooner because of this very stress, because of these violences that are applied to them in life. If you do a survey you see that most men and women who reach old age, most of them... the man dies first then the woman, because the stress of that violence was more on the man.' (Interview No. 77, Abbas Barghamadi, Pos 41).

These statements show that experienced violences, whether in the form of psychological or social pressures, shorten men's lives. The stress resulting from these violences, which is often intensified due to traditional male roles and expectations such as providing family livelihood, makes their bodies vulnerable to fatal diseases. This subject aligns with sociology of health findings which show that gender roles and social pressures associated with them can have a negative impact on physical health (Courtenay, 2000).

Family violences and emotional pressures also play a role in this lethal cycle. One interviewee recounts a personal experience with deep emotion:

'My mother broke the window... [if] you were in [her] place... my father died of grief (Degh kard) from anger/annoyance (Hers).' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 62).

This short but painful narrative indicates the direct impact of family violence on death. Anger and psychological pressure resulting from family conflicts can wear down the body in such a way that the individual loses his life from the intensity of sorrow and stress. This experience recalls the concept of death resulting from grief or 'Broken Heart,' known in psychology as Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy, a condition where severe emotional stress leads to heart failure (Wittstein et al., 2005).

Family pressures and the feeling of guilt resulting from them also play a role in male mortality, as seen in this narrative:

'Let me say with an example... two years ago one of those people I knew around me whose husband was 38 years old... very suddenly had a heart attack, had angio[plasty], was hospitalised. One day his wife was talking to me then turned back said 'I have a very guilty conscience.' I said 'Why do you feel guilt like this?' She turned back said that 'A few days ago I put him under pressure a lot regarding the Qeshm trip.' She herself is an employee, her husband is an employee too, their life is like ours... he was forced to turn to many people [borrow/ask favours] very much. In my opinion, 1- a physical injury that an individual suffers in a process, from heart diseases, being placed in exposure to stroke and these... why has the age of stroke come down?! So-and-so slept at night and didn't wake up in the morning anymore... yes its statistics have gone up. 2- an injury that is between two sides in that relationship.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 42).

This story shows how family pressures, such as insistence on financial or social demands, can lead to severe stress and ultimately heart attack. The reduction in the age of stroke, mentioned in this narrative, is a warning of the increase in life pressures on men, especially at young ages when they should be at the peak of physical ability. This subject aligns with epidemiological studies which show that social and family stresses are key factors in reducing the age of heart disease onset (Steptoe & Kivimäki, 2012).

Psychological and social violences can also lead to destructive behaviours that entail death. One interviewee describes this connection thus:

'[From consequences of violence against men] all these violences that we [men] experience under various titles... one gravitates towards addiction; a type of violence has a tendency towards murder or gravitates towards acid throwing...

these are all those violences that are transmitted to us through our mind.'

(Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 8).

These statements show that experienced violences can lead to aggressive or self-destructive behaviours like addiction, each of which in turn increases the risk of death. Addiction, especially, can lead to death resulting from overdose or diseases related to it, and violences like murder or acid throwing also directly take individuals' lives. This cycle of violence and death aligns with the 'Cycle of Violence' Theory (and Widom's work on intergenerational transmission), which shows that experienced violence can transform into perpetrated violence or destructive behaviours (Widom, 1989).

General mortality statistics also confirm this reality, as stated in this narrative:

'The average mortality of men [compared to ladies] has become greater... 60 years, 50 years, 70 years... and strokes that gentlemen undergo more... I say we have always seen.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ardabil Citizens, Pos 21).

This difference in average lifespan, which loses men at lower ages compared to women, indicates the heavy burden of violence and stress on their bodies and souls. This subject aligns with global statistical data as well, which shows that life expectancy in men is on average less than women, and this difference is often attributed to social and psychological factors like violence and gender role pressures (World Health Organization, 2020).

Finally, the lack of support systems also intensifies this lethal cycle. One interviewee says with regret:

'Basically violence [in family] is terribly institutionalised... the treatment system of the family system that was supposed to be launched [by the government] which was in two provinces and was abandoned to God's trust... if it existed and was performed regularly, it wouldn't be like this that the highest mortality is from the side and direction of gentlemen.' (Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 130).

This narrative shows that the lack of organised supports to reduce family and social violences leaves men defenseless against the lethal consequences of these violences. If treatment and support systems existed, perhaps many of these deaths were preventable. This subject aligns with the concept of Social Capital, which emphasises that support networks can protect individuals against life pressures (Putnam, 2000).

In this bitter narrative, male mortality as a consequence of physical and psycho-social violences stands out like a deep wound on the body of society. From economic pressures for which there is no solution, to family violences that break the heart, and the lack of support systems that leaves men alone, all have joined hands to shorten men's lives. These deaths, whether in the form of sudden strokes, diseases resulting from stress, or destructive behaviours like addiction or lethal violences, are warnings of the depth of the catastrophe violence imposes on men's lives. To break this lethal chain, the need to rebuild support systems, reduce gender role pressures, and create a safe space for expressing pains and receiving help is felt more than ever.

9.1.2.2. *Physical Injuries and Exhaustion*

Among the hidden and visible layers of violence against men, Physical Injuries and Exhaustion (*Asib-ha va Farsoudegi-haye Jesmi*) as one of the most painful results of this phenomenon has influenced many individuals' lives. This narrative, within the framework of Grounded Theory, attempts to offer an image of these injuries relying on the lived experiences of men who have touched violence with their skin and bones. Violence, whether directly through physical blows or indirectly through work pressures and inhumane living conditions, wears down men's bodies, endangers their health, and sometimes drags them to premature aging and permanent disability. This destructive cycle is the story of men who, in silence, carry the heavy burden of violence on their shoulders and their bodies gradually surrender to these pressures.

One interviewee, with a voice full of pain, speaks of the physical effects of exhausting work on his own body and colleagues:

'One is myself who have been doing this work [in hospital environment] for 13 years... I found mild disc, lumbar disc [herniation]. My physical health starts from the leg... varicose veins start, back pain starts. All our guys who are now in Pars [Hospital?].... all these really... [if] you go they have back pain, have leg pain, neck... every one of them has operated on a part of their body due to, for example, the work volume that was heavy.' (Interview No. 71, Mohammadi, Pos 36).

This quote depicts a bitter narrative of physical exhaustion resulting from hard and exhausting work conditions. These conditions, which are themselves a type of structural violence, gradually disable individuals' bodies and confront

them with chronic pains and multiple surgeries. This type of violence, which is often ignored, endangers physical health and severely reduces quality of life.

Physical violence sometimes shows itself in indirect and hidden forms as well, such as deprivation of primary needs like proper nutrition and hygiene, which directly influences the individual's body. One interviewee who had the experience of working in psychiatric centres speaks of this type of violence:

'More violence enters him... a series of things, now it is not right to say... because I worked in psychiatric centres I really saw the violences... that they don't give them suitable food, they don't have suitable hygiene. Think, for example, foodstuff whose date has expired... they come change its date give it to clients to eat so that if a time a visit takes place, inspection comes to check, they don't realise this date has expired. Well, all these are physical violence.'

(Interview No. 81, Ms. Hamta, Pos 92).

This comment unveils a systematic violence wherein vulnerable individuals are deprived of their most basic rights. This deprivation, applied intentionally or out of negligence, weakens individuals' bodies and places them in exposure to various diseases. From a scientific perspective, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2002) also introduces deprivation of nutrition and hygiene as one of the forms of physical violence which can have long-term consequences on individual health.

Violence sometimes lands directly and brutally on the individual's body and its effects remain for years. One interviewee speaks with a lump in his throat of painful childhood experiences:

'My mother... I don't know... with these behaviours of mine... I would go, was out until midnight... I was a child... and because I was so stubborn (Tokhs) I didn't allow anyone to order me or want to abuse me... until it reached a place where anymore, as the saying goes, I say the family was somehow... [how should I say, it is very painful]... but Mum, because she wanted me not to make that mistake... meaning I wouldn't make [myself] captive and bewildered like this... she would tie me with a chain, brand/burn all parts of my body... its traces are still there. Here they are, these are its traces. With a spoon or skewer or something she would press between my fingers. For example I would fight, make noise, or run away from school... she would do these works with me.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 45-49).

This quote narrates a horrific story of family violence that has accompanied the individual's body with lasting scars and permanent physical pains. This type of violence not only destroys the body but wounds the individual's soul, and its effects continue into adulthood. 'Stress-Vulnerability Theory' (Zubin & Spring, 1977) explains that such experiences can endanger the individual's physical and mental health in the long term.

One of the bitter consequences of physical violence is premature aging and apparent exhaustion which shows the individual physically and psychologically older than his real age. One interviewee speaks of this subject with deep regret:

'That time I was in hospital, nurses said to me 'Dad'... I was very ashamed too they said 'Dad'... I told them 'Dad, I am 48 years old.' This hair of mine has fallen out from so much Shisheh smoking. Whiteness of my hair and beard, all of it. Meaning now you are 47 years old but how old do you think you are yourself? I myself think I am 65 years old. When they said 'Dad' to me in the hospital, did you think you have become old anymore? What feeling did you have when they said 'Dad' to you?' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 85-87).

This quote shows a sad image of a man whose body and appearance violence and high-risk behaviours resulting from it have worn down so much that he has lost his real age and feels much older. This apparent exhaustion, often accompanied by an unhealthy lifestyle resulting from violence, indicates the depth of physical impacts of this phenomenon. Scientific studies also confirm that chronic stress and violence can accelerate the process of cellular aging (Epel et al., 2004).

Finally, violence against men as a destructive factor destroys physical health directly and indirectly. One interviewee summarises this subject well:

'This is regularly finding continuity... the violent person is definitely, definitely someone who is severely damaged physically. Consequences [of violence against] are this very thing that health of the body is lost.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 119).

This statement emphasises that violence, whether from others or in the form of living conditions, gradually destroys the individual's body and confronts him with lasting injuries. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, these physical consequences are highlighted as a central phenomenon in the experience of violence against men rooted in social, familial, and structural

conditions. This cycle begins with violence and ends in physical exhaustion and loss of health, requiring serious attention and intervention to support these individuals.

Violence against men, whether in the form of direct physical blows, or in the form of exhausting work conditions or deprivation of primary needs, has turned these individuals' bodies into a battlefield wherein they lose a part of their health every day. This narrative shows only a corner of the hidden pains of these men; men who carry the burden of these violences in silence and whose bodies gradually surrender to these pressures. From a scientific perspective, this phenomenon aligns with 'Chronic Stress Theory' (Cohen et al., 1995) which emphasises that continuous exposure to stressors like violence can lead to physical exhaustion and chronic diseases. This analysis, relying on lived experiences and scientific views, shows that physical consequences of violence against men are not only an individual injury but a social issue requiring comprehensive solutions for prevention and treatment.

9.1.2.3. Sexual Violences

Sexual Violence against men, especially in the form of physical-somatic consequences, is one of the less seen and often ignored dimensions in violence studies which leaves deep and stable effects on victims' bodies and psyches. This type of violence, which sometimes occurs in childhood and sometimes manifests in adulthood in various forms, leads not only to bodily injuries but entails psychological, social, and even cultural repercussions. In this narrative, relying on the lived experiences of individuals who have experienced these violences and utilising scientific views, we examine these consequences and attempt to reveal the hidden layers of this subject.

One of the prominent aspects in this field is bitter and painful experiences of sexual violence in childhood which often remains as a deep wound in the individual's mind and body. According to one interviewee:

'It is possible a child, an 8-9 year old boy child, has been subjected to sexual abuse, and this... as a trauma or abuse [sexual harassment]... in the treatment room he has spoken for me, the psychotherapist, that 'I was fondled, sexually stimulated, and/or witnessed nudity of genitalia and he forced me to perform a series of works.' It seems these kinds of cases always exist.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 13).

This narrative indicates the depth of injuries inflicted on boys at young ages. Such experiences lead not only to the violation of the child's physical privacy but destroy his feeling of security and trust. Studies have shown that sexual violence in childhood can lead to psychological disorders such as anxiety, depression, and even Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Briere & Elliott, 2003). These injuries often manifest in adulthood in the form of aggressive or self-destructive behaviours, because the victim has not found a way to discharge this internal pain.

Physical consequences of these violences can also lead to high-risk and destructive behaviours. For example, another interviewee points out:

'Or he was subjected to sexual abuse in childhood period, whether close ones, whether his own peers, whether older ones, whether in the neighbourhood, whether family... these violences can cause narcotics and cigarettes.' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javad, Pos 26).

This quote shows how sexual violence can act as a stimulating factor driving the individual towards addiction. From a scientific perspective, these behaviours can be considered unhealthy coping mechanisms to which the individual takes refuge to escape the psychological and physical pain resulting from violence (Felitti et al., 1998 - *ACE Study*). Addiction to drugs or cigarettes, in addition to destroying the body, entails a cycle of social and economic injuries which places the individual in a more fragile position.

Furthermore, sexual violence can lead to social isolation and the individual being rejected by family and society. One interviewee expresses a painful experience of being rejected by family thus:

'[Young 19-year-old boy with childhood sexual abuse experience] regarding sexual abuses towards his sister says: 'My mother turned back said 'Even an animal doesn't do this work. You have no religion. You have no conscience. You are dirty, you are an animal in the full sense.' And anymore until now she doesn't even look at me.' (Interview No. 62, with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 33).

This narrative shows another layer of sexual violence consequences; where the victim not only grapples with physical and psychological pain resulting from violence but faces judgment and rejection from the closest people in his life. This isolation can lead to reduced self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness, trapping the individual in an endless cycle of blaming himself and others.

From a sociological perspective, this rejection can be considered a result of 'Stigma' which victims of sexual violence, especially men, often face (Goffman, 1963). In cultures where masculinity is defined by power and invincibility, men's victimisation in the face of sexual violence is considered a taboo and is often accompanied by blame and denial.

Another important dimension in physical consequences of sexual violence against men is long-term impacts on their sexual health and emotional relationships. In this field, one interviewee points to the subject of circumcision and its impacts on men's sexual and psychological life and says:

'There was an interview and everyone said that their sexual pleasure has remained approximately 20 percent and anymore because it is irreversible too... because of this very thing they had suffered depression and a number of them had been killed [suicide?].... and in that same YouTube with ladies who had the experience of in fact sexual act with both circumcised and uncircumcised men... and everyone confessed that uncircumcised has a better experience and in terms of premature ejaculation and... and if we bring this to Iran, it is possible the reason for many divorces and sexual issues is this very thing too because he cannot have long-duration sex. And that thing I was sensitive on more than anything regarding violence against men was that same issue of being important and society's value for men... meaning having value for men... because I see all of them... its repercussions again are all repercussions of this very issue... if men were important, if men's lives were important just as it is for women, well this issue would be attended to. Because now I see that I heard intellectual strata of our society object even to piercing girls' ears, say 'Don't do this work, it is aggression on the child's body, let her decide herself when she grows up,' whereas it has no specific complications either. But they reach an issue like circumcision, most women come defend too based on those same presuppositions advertised for it that 'This is a useful thing, I don't know, for preventing infection,' I don't know... whereas it is a stupid thing. Well, urinary infection in ladies is 20 times gentlemen's, how come theirs is solved with an antibiotic but for a boy it is done with an unnecessary operation? In my opinion this returns to men's lives not being important... to being sympathetic [only to women].' (Interview No. 4, Hassan Spain, Pos 33).

This narrative shows a deeper layer of physical violence against men which is imposed on their bodies in the form of a cultural and social act like circumcision. This act, often performed without the individual's own consent

and at young ages, can lead to reduced sexual pleasure, problems in marital relationships, and even depression. From a scientific perspective, some studies have shown that circumcision can have a negative impact on sexual function and genital sensitivity (Bronsele et al., 2013). But beyond this, what is prominent in this quote is society's inattention to men's value and life. This inattention, as a cultural factor, has normalised physical violence against men and prevents these injuries from being seen and addressed.

Within the framework of Grounded Theory, physical consequences of sexual violence against men can be considered a pivotal category which relates on one hand to contextual factors like culture and social norms, and on the other hand leads to broader psychological and social consequences. These violence, whether in the form of childhood sexual abuse or cultural acts like circumcision, lead to the violation of men's bodily and psychological rights and entail a cycle of physical, psychological, and social injuries. The thought-provoking point is that in many societies, these violence remain hidden due to social stigma and gender stereotypes related to masculinity, and victims are often deprived of necessary support. For this reason, redefining concepts of masculinity and attending to men's physical and psychological rights can be an important step towards reducing these injuries.

Sexual violence against men, especially in the physical-somatic dimension, is a wound that affects not only the body but the soul and social position of the individual. These violence, from childhood abuses to cultural and social acts, indicate deep inattention to men's rights and value in many societies. Narratives of individuals who have experienced these violence are a silent scream that must be heard. These narratives invite us to rethink cultural and social structures; structures that sometimes normalise violence and force the victim into isolation and silence. To exit this cycle, it is necessary to attend to these injuries at both individual and social levels and provide a safe space for victims' voices to be heard.

9.1.2.4. Physical, Digestive, and Muscular Diseases

Violence against men, like a double-edged sword, not only wounds the soul and psyche but involves the body in its heavy repercussions. This violence, which sometimes manifests in the form of physical abuse, sometimes psychological pressures, and sometimes social deprivations, leaves deep physical-somatic consequences; from digestive diseases to muscular tensions

and even dangerous and chronic illnesses. In this narrative, relying on the lived experiences of individuals who have passed through these violences, we explore these consequences and attempt to reveal the hidden layers of these injuries with a data-grounded look. This story is the story of bodies that do not endure under the burden of violence and bear a continuous suffering in silence.

One of the most prominent effects of violence is the disruption of the body's biological balance and its impact on the digestive system and muscles. This subject is well reflected in the words of one interviewee:

'The process of adrenaline and noradrenaline secretion... when due to violence the balance of these neurotransmitters in the brain gets messed up, one is secreted more... then it brings stomach ulcer, brings heartburn, then brings stomach ache, then brings soreness (Kouftegi), then brings fatigue, then brings muscle tension, then brings muscle cramps, then migraine, then so-and-so.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 111).

This narrative shows a chain of physical consequences starting from a biological disorder and reaching digestive diseases like stomach ulcer and heartburn, and then muscle tension and cramps. From a scientific perspective, chronic stress resulting from violence can lead to excessive secretion of stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline which directly affect the digestive and musculoskeletal systems (Sapolsky, 2004 - *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers*). This cycle places the body in a state of exhaustion that sometimes advances to the border of chronic diseases.

Psychological violence too, which sometimes originates from betrayal or emotional pressures, can wear down the body quickly. One interviewee speaks of this impact with deep pain:

'I still have a promissory note from her [my partner]... a car contract that I can take the car from her... even you calculate that for the expenses I made these two years I am creditor for thirty-forty Tomans [million]. I say 'Sir, I don't have two years of time that the money I spent for you'... her only life is this very car, her love is this car. My father didn't teach me... even though 350 million [Tomans] is gone and even she has become [gone?]... I believe... but when money goes... because she came and went in my life... these things... Today that I am speaking with you, compared to three weeks ago I am much better [regarding partner's betrayal]. For two months in the house I wouldn't touch anything. I lost ten kilos

of weight within two months... on the previous one [breakup] I lost ten kilos too. I was 97 kilos, now I am 78 kilos.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 141).

Severe weight loss in a short period, mentioned in this narrative, indicates the direct impact of emotional stress on the body. This weight loss can be the result of nervous anorexia or metabolic disorders resulting from psychological pressure (Chen et al., 2011). This individual, under the burden of betrayal and financial and emotional pressures, has not only lost his spirit but his body has been worn down in this path.

Physical violence too, sometimes with a small blow, can disable the body for a long time. One interviewee speaks of this subject with obvious regret:

'Yes I see guys [patients in addiction camp] spin around lively for themselves... a person really gets upset... a person eats sorrow (Ghosseh)... doesn't it have eating sorrow [isn't it sad]?! These are working, going... I, with a small blow to my leg, have fallen here for three months... I go [walk] twice in the way, I twist/stumble.' (Interview No. 23, Ali Tavakoli, Pos 64).

This narrative indicates the vulnerability of the body against violence; an injury that sometimes begins with a small blow but leaves long-term effects. From a medical perspective, such injuries can lead to chronic inflammations or muscle weakness, especially if the individual does not enjoy suitable treatment supports (Wilkinson, 2005 - *likely referring to health inequalities*).

Violence can also lead to dangerous and chronic diseases like sexually transmitted diseases, especially in individuals placed in vulnerable social conditions. One interviewee speaks of this experience with bitterness:

'By God when I realised [after HIV disease] my whole body had become weak, my body's muscles had stopped working, my body's defense system has become weak. By God I, in truth, it was in my mind that sexual relationship I had with others... I don't think it was through this way... my feeling is mostly that at a desirable level... why did you have sexual relationship with someone... mostly it has been with addicts of this very place. Well, many addicts are involved with AIDS... are involved. Because they say those who have the sickness up to ten years fifteen years, those who take medication... and those who don't take medication up to five years. Its consequence is this... every day the body becomes weaker and weaker... it is not like the old days anymore... becomes more tired, becomes more fallen [frail]... anymore sometimes he has no energy to get up from sleep... waking up becomes hard for him... his activity becomes less... as [a

result] it is causing him to see the conditions he is in a bit harder.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 331).

This narrative shows the severe physical consequences of social violence and deprivation which drives the individual towards high-risk relationships and involves his body in incurable diseases. Muscle weakness and chronic fatigue, mentioned in this speech, are common symptoms of diseases like HIV which destroys the immune system (Greenberg et al., 2012 - *referencing HIV symptomology*).

These injuries have greater intensity in marginalised groups, like transgender individuals. One interviewee speaks of this subject with concern:

'Myself [Trans]... it has been ten-twelve years [due to sexual relationship] I am HIV positive. Yes I am taking medication. Most [Trans people] either turn to narcotics or want to earn their expenses through, well, prostitution or sex worker... earn their costs. This is the very injury... this very thing that she/he has no shelter and has no place to live... she/he gives body to any work. Establishes connection with any individual... enters any relationship. In that relationship it is possible that even infected with... even goes towards substances basically. Goes towards substances or we have HIV involvement... they are sexually transmitted diseases... one of them be HIV... be Hepatitis... and there are various sexually transmitted diseases... well involved with these issues... well these supports must exist.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa Trans, Pos 131).

This narrative shows how social violence and rejection drives individuals towards high-risk behaviours and involves their body in sexually transmitted diseases and general weakness. From a sociological perspective, these consequences are the direct result of unjust social structures that withhold necessary supports from vulnerable individuals (Bourdieu, 1998 - *on suffering/structural violence*).

Finally, working and street children are not safe from the physical repercussions of violence either. One interviewee points to this subject:

'In my view [working and street children] because they were taken from the street... most of them were like this... parasitic diseases, had lice.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 57).

This speech indicates the deplorable physical condition of children placed in exposure to violence and deprivation. Parasitic diseases and lice are the direct result of living in unhygienic conditions and lack of social supports which

wears down these children's bodies (Lévi-Strauss, 1969 - *referencing structural conditions/anthropology of poverty*).

Within the framework of Grounded Theory, physical consequences of violence against men, from digestive and muscular diseases to chronic and sexually transmitted diseases, are pivotal consequences linked with contextual factors like chronic stress, social deprivation, and family violence. These consequences not only destroy the individual's body but influence his quality of life and social relationships. The story of these wounded bodies is a story of silence that must be heard; a silence that speaks of hidden pains and invites us to rethink social and cultural structures. Violence against men is not just an individual injury but a wound on the body of society requiring attention and treatment. Only by hearing these pains and offering necessary supports can we step towards a healthier society; a society wherein no one's body and soul is worn down under the burden of violence.

9.1.2.5. *Chronic Diseases (Heart, Diabetes, Infectious)*

Violence against men is a multifaceted phenomenon that, beyond physical assault or overt abuses, penetrates the deeper layers of daily life and their physical and mental health. This violence sometimes appears in the form of social, economic, and psychological pressures and leaves heavy consequences on men's bodies and souls. In this analysis, relying on the framework of Grounded Theory, we examine the physical-somatic consequences of violence against men with a focus on Chronic Diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and infections. This narrative, utilizing the lived experiences of interviewees and integrating it with scientific perspectives, tries to offer a clear and impactful image of this phenomenon.

One of the most prominent consequences of violence against men is its destructive impact on their physical health. Violence, whether direct or indirect, can pave the ground for chronic diseases. For example, psychological pressures and continuous stresses resulting from social and economic expectations, as a kind of hidden violence, can lead to cardiovascular disorders and diabetes. Amidst this, one interviewee points frankly to this connection:

'Humans have strokes more. Well, cardiovascular diseases, blood pressure and diabetes and nervous pressures... these are the consequence of violence against men.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 122-124).

This statement indicates a deep understanding of the link between psycho-social pressures and physical health. Violence, especially in societies where men are under economic and social pressure as the main breadwinner of the family, can continuously create chronic stress. This stress, as confirmed by scientific studies, increases the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes by increasing the hormone cortisol in the body (Cohen et al., 2007).

These pressures have greater intensity especially among young men. The reduction in the age of heart attack onset, which was once considered a disease of older people, has today become one of the serious health dilemmas of men. One interviewee has a thought-provoking reference to this subject:

'Men, because they try more to strive than to speak and are more action-oriented... one hundred percent all men of our society have spiritual/psychological problems... but physically it is happening too. Basically this fact that the age of heart attack has come down... perhaps one reason is that the pressure from an economic aspect that is on youths is much greater and this very thing has caused the age of heart attack to come down and come from 50 and 60 years to under 40 years and 30 years.' (Interview No. 100, Mojtaba Mardani, Pos 118).

This narrative reveals a deeper layer of violence; a violence that, in the form of economic burden and social responsibilities, wears down men's bodies and souls. Research also shows that economic pressure and financial insecurity, especially in developing societies, can act as a serious risk factor for cardiovascular diseases (Rosengren et al., 2004 - *INTERHEART study*). Amidst this, men who often consider themselves obliged to provide family needs due to gender norms are placed in exposure to this injury more than others.

But violence against men is not limited only to heart diseases and diabetes. Some men, especially those involved in complex social issues like addiction, face other physical consequences such as severe infections. One interviewee recounts a painful experience of this subject:

'This time that I was in hospital... violence is not this that they beat a person with a stick, whip him, send him to prison. I, right now, just as I was in hospital... this fact that my leg got infected is because of what? Quitting drugs, you know. My leg got infected, 70 percent infection hit my blood [sepsis], 30 percent remained [short]... I was supposed to die.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 78).

This narrative shows violence in different dimensions; violence that drags the individual's body to the brink of destruction through social deprivations, poverty, and limited access to treatment services. Addiction, which itself can be the result of social pressures and psychological violences, acts as a vicious cycle and places the individual in exposure to infectious diseases and serious threats to life. Studies have shown that individuals placed in exposure to structural and social violences often turn to high-risk behaviours such as substance use, and these behaviours significantly increase the risk of contracting infectious diseases (Rhodes et al., 2005 - *Risk Environment framework*).

What emerges from these narratives is that violence against men, whether direct or indirect, has deep impacts on their physical health. Chronic diseases like cardiovascular problems, diabetes, and infections are only part of the consequences of this violence rooted in hidden layers of daily life. Economic pressures, social expectations, and gender norms place men in a position where not only their mental health but their physical health is endangered. As interviewees explicitly stated, these violences are sometimes more painful than blows of sticks and whips because they wear down the individual's body and soul gradually and in silence. Amidst this, the reduction in the age of heart disease onset and increase in physical problems like infections is a warning bell showing that violence against men is a subject beyond an individual issue and is tied to the socio-economic structures of society.

To better understand this phenomenon, attention must be paid to the role of social and cultural structures as well. Sociological theories, like Merton's Social Strain Theory, emphasise that when individuals cannot achieve legitimate goals due to structural limitations, they may suffer high-risk behaviours or physical and psychological diseases (Merton, 1938). This theory can well explain the situation of men who lose their health under economic and social pressures. On the other hand, critical feminist perspectives also remind us that gender norms, which define men as 'strong' and 'needless of support' entities, can themselves be a type of structural violence preventing men from expressing need and receiving help (Connell, 2005). These views, along with interviewees' narratives, show that violence against men is not just an individual issue but rooted in macro social structures.

In conclusion, it must be emphasised that physical consequences of violence against men, from heart diseases to diabetes and infections, are only

the tip of the iceberg of this dilemma. These consequences not only threaten the individual's life but leave deep impacts on family and society as well. Interviewees' narratives, like a mirror, reflect this bitter truth that violence, even if not overt, can drag body and soul to the brink of destruction. To combat this phenomenon, there is a need to review social structures, reduce economic pressures, and change gender attitudes so that men can also live a healthy life free from the heavy burden of unrealistic expectations.

9.1.2.6. *Suicide*

Suicide as one of the bitterest and most severe consequences of violence against men is a phenomenon with deep roots in the physical and psychological experiences of victims. This consequence, which often manifests as a result of social, economic, gender pressures, and even direct violences, not only drags the victim's life to destruction but leaves destructive effects on his family and surrounding society. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, this analysis, relying on lived narratives of interviewees and integrating it with scientific views, attempts to offer a comprehensive understanding of this consequence and show how violence against men can lead to a tragic end.

One of the prominent aspects in examining suicide as a consequence of violence is the deep impact of psychological and social pressures driving the individual towards isolation and despair. These pressures sometimes originate from direct physical violence experiences and sometimes from structural and social violences that destroy the individual's identity and self-esteem. For example, one interviewee, pointing to an experience of sexual abuse in childhood, expresses the depth of this despair thus:

'Fear and anxiety and trepidation took my whole existence. All bad feelings came to me. That time I was only 11 to 12 years old. He has separated himself and [I thought] with this act (sexual abuse) that you did, if anyone gets informed anymore the whole world looks at us with another eye... food doesn't go down my throat... my sister can't sit next to a boy or man anymore, whether it be her father or anyone... she can't even entertain herself with anything... I don't know how to free myself. Really I like to commit suicide and die. Why don't I commit suicide? I wanted to go look for Rice Tablet [Aluminum Phosphide]... I searched on the internet, someone had written inside Twitter that if you had the thought of suicide don't go after Rice Tablet at all, until the moment you die you suffer agony and die in agony. I wanted to hang myself but if anyone gets informed of

this subject what happens... for example if they ask why he committed suicide and they share this subject with them, what?' (Interview No. 62, with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 39-40).

This narrative shows how the experience of sexual abuse in childhood can lead to feelings of shame and isolation and advance the individual to the brink of suicide. From a psychological perspective, this phenomenon is explained with the 'Stress-Vulnerability Model' (*Diathesis-Stress*) which states that early traumatic experiences can pave the ground for psychological disorders and self-destructive behaviours (Zuckerman, 1999).

Physical and psychological violences in specific environments like military service are also key factors in the occurrence of suicide. Pressures resulting from strictness, humiliation, and lack of emotional support in these environments often place young men in a position where they see no exit way except suicide. One interviewee describes this experience thus:

'It was a traffic unit... they wouldn't give him his slip (leave pass)... your nerves and psyche can't work more than 4 PM... this one goes home one night two nights... when coming, comes with a bottle of petrol in front of the garrison, strikes the lighter, catches fire... 80 percent burned...' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 100).

Continuing, this same individual points to patterns of suicide in the military environment:

'Suicide in military environments is very high... mostly because of love and romance... mostly towards that side... mostly towards love and romance and being dependent... a man... from that side too, the guy outside the garrison has his own specific problems... everyone, everyone has his own capacity [and tolerance]... comes with that capacity... [the officer] annoys the guy... however much you tell these [military forces] 'I have more work outside' they annoy you more, don't let you reach that work of yours.' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 264-265).

These narratives show how psychological pressures and structural limitations in military environments can lead to psychological collapse. This subject aligns with Durkheim's sociological studies which consider suicide the result of social isolation and lack of supportive bonds (Durkheim, 1897).

Furthermore, economic pressures and financial failures are also prominent factors in male suicide. In a society where the man's role is often tied to

providing financial support for the family, failure in this role can lead to feelings of worthlessness and despair. One interviewee states this subject thus:

'Many suicide cases we have, when we examine, [are] from problems or injuries a man, for example, has seen in life... now especially regarding men, these financial or economic bankruptcies they have are one of the most prominent factors of suicide in men and the male gender. These are violence.' (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari Nasab, Pos 23).

This view aligns with 'Gender Role Strain' Theory which states that social expectations of men for economic success can lead to severe psychological pressure and ultimately suicide (Connell, 2005 - *Masculinities*).

Suicide is also very common among marginalised groups, such as individuals with different sexual orientations, due to lack of social support and social violences. One interviewee explains this subject thus:

'Ninety percent of times [violences occurring against homosexual individuals] is suicide, because that individual sees in this country he faces absence of [specific] law and support system... because however much you come announce as a social worker that 'I support,' it doesn't work because you are one person not an organ, not an organisation, not a party.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 68-69).

Complementing this subject, another individual speaks of personal experience:

'I saw this with eyes... a few of my friends who had homosexual tendencies [because of family pressures] committed suicide... one or two of them was in front of my own eyes... it was very hard.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 4).

These narratives show how social exclusion and cultural violences can drive individuals towards suicide. This subject aligns with Bourdieu's concept of Symbolic Violence which emphasises the impact of social structures in destroying individuals' identity (Bourdieu, 1998).

Emotional and romantic failures are also other key factors in male suicide. Severe emotional dependence and failure in romantic relationships can drive the individual towards self-destructive behaviours. One interviewee expresses this experience thus:

'[Result of romantic failure] I shot [injected/consumed] this much [drugs] so my state becomes bad, I overdose... I shot with the intention of dying so I don't exist... I shot so much that I lost the way home... God is witness Doctor,

sometimes I lost the way home... I went home, woke up in the morning.'
(Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 31).

In another narrative, emotional violence leads to a family tragedy:

'[A young man] loved this lady very much. The lady left went to her father's house. The brother-in-law calls this one that 'Sir why did you annoy your wife?'... this one too, angry, picks up his weapon comes bang bang bang kills these and kills himself too.' (Interview No. 95, Retired Military Colonel, Pos 107).

These cases show how emotional failure can lead to psychological collapse and violent behaviours against self and others.

Statistics presented by interviewees also confirm this bitter reality that suicide among Iranian men has a higher rate than women. One interviewee points to this subject:

'Suicide in the year 1390 [2011] we had 3.5 percent people [rate per 100k?] and in year 1400 [2021] it became 7.3 percent, it doubled. Plus, Mr. Bahrami, can we separate official statistics? Yeah, it has a lot of room for discussion. If listed it heads to 9. More... because the average is 12 in the world.' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 65-70).

Complementing this subject, another individual says:

'Mortality of suicide in men is double. Men, I think ladies attempt more but men are more action-oriented... men go attempt more... perhaps he attempted once but that one time he killed himself. A woman attempted three times but is still alive.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 53).

These statistics and narratives show that suicide in men is often accompanied by more serious determination and reaches a fatal result, which can be related to gender roles and social pressures (*The 'Gender Paradox of Suicide'*).

In conclusion, it must be said that suicide as a consequence of violence against men is the result of a collection of individual, social, and structural factors placing the individual in a psychological strait. From sexual abuse and economic pressures to environmental strictness and social exclusion, each of these factors can lead to psychological collapse and the decision to end life. These bitter narratives, each recounting a part of the pain and suffering of male victims of violence, are a warning for society to attend to the roots of this phenomenon and find solutions for its prevention. As theorists like Durkheim

and Bourdieu have emphasised, suicide is not just an individual decision, but the result of social and cultural structures that must be reformed.

9.1.3. Sexual Consequences

Violence against men is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that leaves extensive consequences on victims' bodies and psyches. One of the less seen but profoundly impactful dimensions of these violences is Sexual Consequences which, as part of physical-somatic consequences, not only influences men's individual quality of life but challenges their emotional and social relationships as well. These consequences, which sometimes remain hidden in the shadow of cultural and social taboos, range from sexual dysfunction to emotional isolation and even infidelity. Within the framework of Grounded Theory, this analysis, relying on lived narratives of interviewees and integrating it with scientific views, attempts to unveil this hidden aspect of violence and show how violent experiences can lead to the collapse of fundamental aspects of identity and human relationships.

The story of these consequences often begins with an experience of violence that, whether physically or psychologically, targets the individual's self-confidence and mental health. One interviewee describes this impact in the form of reduced sexual desire and suppression of emotional needs thus:

'Mostly we look... mostly with psychological states that exist in men like complain-fulness, like feeling lack of self-confidence, lack of self-esteem, you know! Lack of sexual desire and let me tell you that... or even this sexual desire decreases... do you know why I say lack of sexual desire... because in many cases we look, these [men] don't go after another woman either. Their sexual desire gets suppressed totally.' (Interview No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 26-29).

This narrative shows that violence, whether physical or psychological, can lead to the complete suppression of sexual needs, a phenomenon which aligns with Post-Traumatic Stress Theory from a psychological perspective. Based on this theory, traumatic experiences can lead to stable changes in behaviour and the individual's perception of himself and others (Foa et al., 1995). This suppression not only deprives the individual of one of his fundamental needs but sinks him into a deep isolation, an isolation that sometimes continues until the end of life, as another interviewee states:

'I didn't go after hanging out with friends (Refigh-bazi). Sexual relationships and friendship... I wasn't in these games. Since [year] 89 [2010] that I separated... you won't believe it has been 14 years... I haven't had a relationship even once... basically, basically I have become dead-hearted (Del-mordeh)... dead-hearted... just a breath comes and goes.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 101-106).

This dead-heartedness is a result of emotional and social violences that have deprived the individual of human bonds and sunk him into emptiness.

Experienced violences sometimes lead to sexual dysfunctions like premature ejaculation or inability to establish a relationship, issues which often remain hidden and untreated due to cultural taboos. One interviewee recounts this problem thus:

'Premature ejaculation. Which this too is an injury that wrong culture has hit him with but he can't recount this. He doesn't go after its treatment because society has established it for him like this that 'You shouldn't recount this problem of yours before anyone'... he comes marries... wherein that individual faces a problem. We had a case that the judge instantly diagnosed... he went to Forensic Medicine which told him 'He can't establish any relationship with his wife.' At the time before marriage he didn't tell the girl... now that he married, went with the party under one roof, now he says 'I faced a problem.' Then the lady, after one two three years of life, went betrayed. When they went before the judge; the judge says 'This man has a problem'... anymore the judge doesn't know this gentleman has received a blow from somewhere else. When he was a child they went did this work [abuse].' (Interview No. 5, Hosseini, Pos 6).

This narrative shows how childhood violences, especially sexual abuse, can lead to long-term sexual consequences and even drag marital relationships to collapse. From a sociological perspective, this subject aligns with Bourdieu's concept of Symbolic Violence which emphasises that cultural and social structures can internalise violence and prevent the individual from expressing his problems (Bourdieu, 1998). This concealment not only does not solve the problem but fuels a cycle of further violences, including infidelity and divorce.

Violence can also lead to deviation in sexual behaviours and dependence on narcotics, which itself is chosen as a way to escape psychological pains but entails more destructive consequences. One interviewee explains this cycle thus:

'[Men consuming Shisheh] it is possible the lady consumes substances along with him too... it [sexual intercourse] takes up to 12 hours... or for example a lady calls me says 'He has connection [intercourse] with me for three four hours'... this is not connection anymore... basically it is abuse anymore. The issue is this, I want to say that this story of consumption... at the start of consumption it is possible it helps this man too... 'I use Opium, I use B2 [Buprenorphine], I use Methadone... and finally I consume Shisheh'... but the story is that these narcotics mess up my brain system and change the brain structure... the brain too is in a form that now when its structure suffers a problem, its reconstruction either takes long or is not treated... basically it doesn't become like before. But this nervous system learns after a time that 'I must always consume this substance'... now, I have a reason for you... in sexual connection why does a man go after addiction and can't come out anymore... now either from violence he reaches here or wants to show himself off.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 67-68).

This narrative shows that violence can drive the individual towards addiction, an addiction that is initially chosen as a way to strengthen sexual performance but gradually leads to physical and psychological collapse. Continuing, this same individual points to the impact of substances on dopamine secretion and changing the perception of pleasure:

'He says 'Sir, my husband doesn't take connection [have sex] with us anymore... its beginnings were very good, forty-five minutes, one hour, two hours... the woman's belief has changed too regarding sexual connection... but now he doesn't come towards me, doesn't take connection with me, he hasn't touched me for six months.' I had [a case of] fifteen years too that the man hasn't touched the woman and they lived together too... why does this happen? Because someone who has sexual connection... in the brain's nervous system dopamine is secreted... I put a number for it... 159 dopamine... that in this moment that dopamine is released usually between one second or two seconds orgasm lasts where the man enjoys... now in the story of substances when a man consumes... for example 400 units of dopamine or seven hundred is produced in four hours... in Heroin substance 1100 units to 1024 units and in Shisheh substance from 4000 thousand to 4500 units in 24 hours and up to 7 days too addicts themselves have announced.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 68).

This scientific explanation from the tongue of a layperson indicates the depth of the catastrophe: addiction to substances takes natural pleasure from the individual and traps him in a cycle of dependence and frustration. This subject is confirmed by the 'Self-Medication Hypothesis' which states that individuals turn to substances to escape psychological pains, but this escape itself transforms into a doubled violence against their body and psyche (Khantzian, 1985).

The impact of addiction on sexual relationships gradually leads to the partner's dissatisfaction as well, as another interviewee states:

'Narcotics after a time messes up your body system [sexually]... which you know leads to the dissatisfaction of your opposite side [partner]... perhaps its beginnings annoy you very much... perhaps you get annoyed by the lengthening of your relationship... then when some time passes... the dose that you consume... more... that ability... something that [it is rude]... you did [sex] half an hour forty minutes one hour... after a year that half an hour forty minutes doesn't happen... after you consume substances for example it becomes a quarter [15 mins]... you know anymore that opposite side of yours has got used to that one hour but you suddenly become a quarter... well dissatisfaction arises, you know... or you are forced to take your dose up and then you damage yourself more.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 331-334).

This destructive cycle creates a bilateral violence: violence against self through physical and psychological injury, and violence against the partner through emotional and sexual frustration. This dissatisfaction sometimes leads to infidelity and relationships outside the family framework, as one interviewee points out:

'One [of the consequences of violence against men] is infidelity and extramarital relationships. Don't doubt, it affects emotional connections, affects sexual connections... [if] he doesn't have that [sexual] action, he goes out, performs his expenditures [needs] somewhere else... I say these on a basis that effects of violences that happen are not just physical.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 26-27).

This infidelity, itself as a reaction to experienced violence, marks a cycle of further injuries.

Emotional and physical violences sometimes lead to the complete cutting of sexual and emotional connection, as one interviewee expresses his experience thus:

'Sexually too they get driven away and a woman... nicely cuts the connection... and even if there is a relationship too the man has a relationship with a corpse and doesn't have a relationship with an emotional woman anymore... he gets punished from this aspect and this is violence for the man... I say perhaps it leads to infidelity too... again injury is directed at both of them and the man in his own hiding [privacy] again doesn't have permission to cry and mention it.'

(Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 100).

This emotional punishment, which deprives the individual of any meaningful connection, is a violence endured in silence, a violence that due to gender norms takes the possibility of expression and treatment from the man. From the perspective of 'Gender Role Theory,' this silence is the result of society's expectation of men to hide their weaknesses and vulnerabilities (Connell, 2005).

Experience of violence sometimes leads to fear of relationship and complete sexual isolation, as one interviewee explains:

'That person fears entering a relationship anymore, fears speaking with someone. In many cases where it was physical violence the party cannot enjoy sexual relationship anymore and they won't have tendency for physical connection including kissing, hugging, touching... and... which is very painful for them.'

(Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 4).

This fear and isolation is a result of physical and psychological violences that leave a painful memory of any closeness in the individual's mind. This subject aligns with 'Classical Conditioning' Theory which states that negative experiences can lead to stable reactions of fear and avoidance (Pavlov, 1927). In another case, diseases resulting from high-risk behaviours or physical violences drive the individual to self-imposed isolation:

'Probably you can't establish connection comfortably anymore? My feedback fr[om HIV disease] was this that it caused me to make two decisions, one that I decided not to make anyone sick... keep the sperm of sickness in myself. Totally forget [sexual relationship]. I decided to forget [this need].' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 344-351).

This decision to forget is a violence the individual inflicts upon himself, a violence rooted in traumatic experiences and fear of harming others.

Childhood violences, especially sexual abuse, sometimes lead to deviant behaviours and recklessness in sexual relationships, as one interviewee recounts his experience thus:

'[I had been subjected to sexual abuse by bullies many times in childhood]. My mother had perhaps become aware of this subject [sexual abuse against my sister] before too. But anymore I had found the daring to touch everywhere of hers. In broad daylight. I had no fear. I had no guilty conscience either.' (Interview No. 62, with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 33).

This recklessness is a result of early violences that have destroyed the individual's ethical and emotional boundaries and driven him towards behaviours that are themselves violence against others. On the other hand, emotional violences like divorce and separation can also strip sexual pleasure from the individual, as one interviewee states:

'[Consequences of divorce] is not sayable... there are things that don't fit in speech. Well but you hit that flashback quickly, it has the flashback. In the middle of sex... well what feeling does this create for you. It is not a good feeling... a person doesn't enjoy sex. It creates a problem for your sexual partner. I suffer a problem. You are forced to take pills. Pills... for example I take pills now, I sleep early at nights... well, my sexual act has come down very much... grumbling, fighting, so-and-so. I don't understand woman... for example this event has happened.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 202-206).

This narrative shows how emotional violence, even in intimate moments, leads to the recollection of pains and deprives the individual of pleasure.

Violence sometimes leads to humiliation in sexual relationships, as one interviewee points out:

'Erectile dysfunctions... in men who suffer erectile dysfunction we suspect the issue that probably the man is being humiliated a lot by his wife.' (Interview No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 31).

This humiliation is a psychological violence that destroys the man's self-confidence and traps him in a cycle of frustration and shame. On the other hand, addiction and physical diseases resulting from it transform into a doubled violence themselves, as one interviewee recounts his experience thus:

'This time that I was in hospital... violence is not this that they beat a person with a stick, whip him, send him to prison. I, right now, just as I was in hospital... this fact that my leg got infected is because of what? Quitting drugs, you know. My leg got infected, 70 percent infection hit my blood, 30 percent remained [short]... I was supposed to die. Now this success... I don't know... is father and mother's prayer, is my wife's prayer, my child's... was Mr. Rezaei's help, was so-and-so. Basically unconsciously a brother whom I basically didn't speak with... I made a call to him... what... came here after me and took [me] to 5 hospitals that the hospital hospitalised... well I didn't die... this itself is violence.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 78).

This physical violence is the result of a cycle that started from psychological violence and led to addiction and physical collapse.

In conclusion, it must be said that sexual consequences of violence against men is a bitter story of isolation, frustration, and collapse. These consequences, which range from suppression of sexual desire to infidelity and addiction, show that violence is not only a wound on the body but destroys the soul and human relationships as well. These narratives, each recounting a corner of the victimised men's pain, are a warning for society to attend to this hidden aspect of violence and find ways for healing and prevention. As one interviewee emphasises, a good sexual relationship is the foundation for a good emotional relationship:

'In psychology we have this that a good sexual relationship builds the foundation of a good emotional relationship between two partners. Well, it is saying this very thing, you know. When your soul and psyche is seeing injury... before that, definitely that space [sexual relationship] is problematic.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 28).

This speech is the summary of this analysis: violence against men, by destroying sexual and emotional aspects, shatters the foundation of life.

9.2. Familial Consequences

Violence against men is one of the social issues receiving less attention which not only damages victims' individual lives but influences their families as well. Contrary to some common perceptions that consider only women and children vulnerable to violence, men too may be victims of violence in the family environment; this issue has destructive effects on family roles,

emotional relationships, and the dynamics between family members. The present research, using the Grounded Theory approach, attempts to identify and analyse familial consequences resulting from violence against men.

Violence against men can lead to the weakening of their roles and responsibilities in the family. Men who become victims of violence often face reduced self-confidence, swallowed anger, and a feeling of inability to manage family conditions. This situation may disrupt their relationships with their spouse and children and lead to emotional distancing between family members. In more severe cases, violence can pave the ground for the emergence of family conflicts, marital disputes, and even family collapse.

Familial consequences of violence against men sometimes influence children as well. Children who grow up in an environment with domestic violence may suffer fear, stress, and disturbance and show behaviours such as aggression, isolation, or academic decline in their later life. On the other hand, men victimised by violence sometimes feel lonely and helpless in solving family problems due to fear of social judgment or lack of receiving legal support.

Among the most important psycho-emotional consequences of violence against men, Family Collapse can be mentioned. Violence against men, whether from spouses or other family members, often causes the creation of severe emotional conflicts and reduced family cohesion. These conflicts can lead to divorce or separation in some cases, and consequently, victimised men, in addition to enduring the pressure of violence, suffer emotional consequences resulting from family collapse.

Another important aspect of these consequences is reduction of men's credit and social position. Violence against men is usually accompanied by silence due to social taboos, but in cases of becoming revealed, the victim faces heavy social judgments and experiences a sense of worthlessness and injury to his social identity. This situation often leads to isolation and withdrawal from society.

On the other hand, violence in the family space can lead to reduction of dialogue between family members and weakening of emotional relationships between them. Reduction of constructive interactions intensifies communication problems and destroys the opportunity to solve conflicts. Furthermore, consequences of violence against men often lead to violence against children as well, because tensions resulting from the experience of

violence spread to parent-child relationships and leave negative impacts on children's mental health.

9.2.1. Family Collapse

Violence against men, as a social phenomenon that has received less attention, has deep and multi-layered impacts on the family structure and interpersonal relationships in Iranian society. This analysis, utilising data obtained from in-depth interviews and within the framework of Grounded Theory, addresses the familial consequences of this type of violence, especially Family Collapse. In this unified narrative, full quotes of interviewees are brought amidst theoretical and scientific analyses to draw a coherent and realistic narrative of this phenomenon. The goal is to show how violence against men, whether direct or indirect, leads to family collapse and how this collapse reproduces a cycle of social and emotional injuries.

Violence against men manifests in various forms; from psychological pressures and family controls to institutional and social violences like economic and legal pressures. These violences often take shape in the family context or are influenced by it and gradually weaken the foundation of family relationships. One interviewee describes his experience of these initial family pressures thus:

'My family were somehow that even at age 20 my commutings [comings and goings] were important at that time too and they were very strict. Commuting wasn't in this form at that time. On my telephone, my friendship relationships... it was very hard for them. Now conditions have changed, but now truthfully it has left its effect... that cannot be [erased/ignored]. Then we married and then in the first few years we had a bit of differences, especially the [other] party's family interfered a lot... one or two times we had [severe] fights there.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 36).

This quote indicates a kind of psychological violence applied through excessive control by the family of origin and interferences by the spouse's family. From a theoretical perspective, this phenomenon aligns with the concept of 'Structural Violence' raised by Galtung (Galtung, 1969). Structural violence refers to social and cultural pressures that place the individual in an unequal position and prevent the realisation of his potentials. In this case, strictness and interferences act as obstacles to the individual's independence and pave the ground for tensions that later lead to family collapse.

One of the key factors raised in interviews as a consequence of violence against men and a factor for intensifying family collapse is drug addiction. Addiction often manifests as a mechanism to cope with life pressures, which themselves can be the result of social or family violences, but ultimately leads to the total disintegration of family relationships. One interviewee says with deep regret of this destructive cycle:

'When I lost my life I fell into the Shisheh story. They came identified my place... officer poured into the house... my life... and I got stuck until the end of it... my wife got divorced... my child and wife all left.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 70).

These statements show how addiction weakens the man's role as family supporter and leads to the emotional and structural dissolution of the family. From a sociological perspective, this subject is analysable with Merton's 'Social Deviance' Theory (Merton, 1938). Merton believes that when individuals cannot achieve legitimate goals due to social pressures and inequalities, they turn to deviant behaviours like addiction. In this case, addiction as a reaction to social and economic violences against men has itself transformed into a factor for intensifying family collapse. Another interviewee describes this irresponsibility resulting from addiction thus:

'How should I tell you... this drug use makes a person carefree (Bi-aar), huh... makes a person veinless (Bi-rag - lethargic/without zeal/honour)... a person feels no responsibility towards life at all... we only know their falling in love... we only know their sleeping next to each other at night.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 154).

This destructive cycle of addiction and family collapse ends in divorce, a phenomenon which, as one of the most prominent consequences of violence against men, influences not only the couple's life but the entire family network. Interviewees have emphasised repeatedly that divorce is not just a separation between two people, but a social earthquake affecting all family members. One interviewee speaks with regret of his lost life:

'[Result of divorce] a life gets ruined, a lifetime gets wasted... look, for example, I... how many years... 17-18 years passed from the time I did Aghd [marriage contract] with her... anymore 5-6 years we married together... 10-12 years we separated from each other... then I was involved in this very court and court-dragging... my thought wasn't focused... not that I say it was constantly on the

court... I wouldn't see the court more than once or twice a year... barely saw her too... saw her lawyer... well anymore nothing.' (Interview No. 77, Barghamadi, Pos 27).

This quote shows how divorce transforms into a long and erosive process that destroys not only emotional relationships but the individual's mental health and concentration as well. From a theoretical perspective, this subject is analysable with Bourdieu's concept of 'Social Capital' (Bourdieu, 1986). Divorce causes the destruction of family social capital, meaning support networks and mutual relationships between family members, and places the individual in social isolation. This isolation has broader impacts in Iranian culture where families are networked and dependent on each other. One interviewee describes the dimensions of this impact thus:

'We always say when a divorce takes place the child gets injured... it is not just the child... father and mother of the parties... I worked on divorce for a while... one day it became a family give-and-take... they had given a daughter taken a son... we issued the divorce order for the lady... suddenly we saw the door opened... to the extent that the guy broke the door... 'With this work of yours I lose my wife too'... that day several people came into our office... the girl's father, girl's mother, boy's father, boy's mother, boy's sister, boy's brother, girl's sister... meaning above twenty thirty people had gathered there... I said 'How bad that thirty people's lives are being overshadowed by one divorce.'' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 88).

Violence against men sometimes manifests in the form of cultural pressures and traditional norms as well, such as honour killing or social stigma after divorce, which itself fuels family collapse. One interviewee speaks with pain and compulsion of cultural pressures:

'Whereas from the bottom of my heart I don't like this application of violence [honour killing by father or brother]... I don't like to kill my liver-corner [beloved child/kin]... but I become forced.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 98).

This quote indicates the internal conflict of the individual between personal values and social pressures. From the perspective of Hirschi's 'Social Control' Theory, this type of violence is the result of the individual's commitment to social norms which forces him to perform acts that do not even align with his personal beliefs (Hirschi, 1969). These pressures not only lead to violence against others but place the individual himself in the position of a victim.

Similarly, social stigma after divorce, especially for women but indirectly for men too, acts as a psychological violence and intensifies emotional isolation:

'Or consider that same lady on the contrary too... that same lady becomes a divorcee too... our society looks at her as a... meaning a bad thing... and doesn't consider anymore that this... anyway perhaps a difference came into existence and she couldn't live with him.' (Interview No. 33, Allah Reza, Pos 28).

In the modern era, social media has also entered the field as a factor intensifying family disputes and violence against men, fueling family collapse by creating unrealistic expectations and encouraging comparison. One interviewee points to this destructive impact:

'We are severely exposed to the collapse of families... for reasons... one social... bullshit that is being shown in virtual channels. For example, I am saying... 'You don't show affection to your wife, you don't answer your wife quickly'... clips that are in Insta[gram]... 'Messages that reach you, you 'Seen' late? No problem, there is someone to fill his place.'' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 161).

From the perspective of Bauman's 'Liquid Modernity' Theory, human relationships in the modern era have become more fragile due to the impact of technology and media, and this fragility leads to the disintegration of families (Bauman, 2000). These factors, alongside economic and social pressures, reproduce a cycle of violence and collapse that has even fueled the reduction of marriage rates. One interviewee describes this cycle in the reduction of tendency to marry thus:

'Reduction of marriage rate is one of the repercussions of violence against men. My brother is looking, sees his brother pays X Tomans per month economically... sees his brother doesn't see his liver-corner [child]... his brother, once every six months, for the crime of not having paid his Mehrieh installment... they handcuff him take him to prison and no one is a redresser of grievances either.' (Interview No. 5, Hosseini, Pos 52-54).

Finally, data analysis within the Grounded Theory framework shows that violence against men and family collapse are in a reproductive cycle: violence leads to collapse, and collapse itself fuels more violences, such as emotional divorces or reduced marriage rates. This cycle influences not only the couple but the entire family network and even subsequent generations. To exit this cycle, redefining gender roles, strengthening social and economic supports for

men, and culture-building to reduce the social stigma of divorce and violence is necessary. Violence against men, beyond an individual issue, is a social and structural problem requiring serious attention in policy-making and social interventions.

9.2.2. *Reduction of Dialogue in the Family*

Violence against men, especially within the family context, leaves deep consequences on interpersonal relationships and the emotional structures of the family. One of the most prominent of these consequences is the reduction of dialogue and emotional interactions between family members, which acts as a missing link in maintaining family bonds. This phenomenon, which is analysable within the framework of Grounded Theory as one of the familial consequences of violence against men, influences not only relationships between spouses but deep bonds between parents and children as well. Violence, whether physical, psychological, or economic, exerts pressures on men that distance them from their emotional and supportive roles in the family and marginalises the space for dialogue, which is the main pillar of family solidarity. This analysis, relying on data obtained from in-depth interviews and scientific views, offers a unified narrative of this consequence and shows how violence against men destroys peace and verbal communication in the family.

One interviewee speaks with obvious regret of the reduction in emotional and verbal connection with his daughter and considers life pressures the factor for this distance:

'That very comfort and peace that I myself and my family must have, I don't have... you know my daughter yourself... our relationship with each other was much better... now something that I myself see is our relationship has become much less. previously I spent a lot of time with my daughter, played with her everywhere and we went together poured our hearts out (Dard-o-del)... but now no, now no... I go home tired and bruised, I take [myself] sleep. Now my daughter is 9 years old, she comes talks to me, I don't have the patience to hear her words. Previously our relationship with each other was better, our talking was better, our peace was better. We could talk two words with each other... but now because both are tired... tiredness of work... tiredness of thought and mind... 'What to do and what not to do' and these words... we can't talk much with each other. As soon as we go home we are tired, must sleep... can't have

relationship with each other talk. This causes me myself to change a lot spiritually and psychologically.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseinifard, Pos 49).

This quote presents a bitter image of the impact of psychological and physical pressures on father-child relationships. Yaser, who clearly suffers from economic and psychological violences resulting from life pressures, no longer has the ability and patience for dialogue with his daughter. This reduction in interaction has not only weakened the emotional bond between them but has transformed him spiritually and psychologically as well. From the perspective of 'Emotional Capital Theory' raised by Richardson, this reduction in dialogue means the loss of one of the most important sources of emotional support in the family, which can lead to emotional isolation and the collapse of interpersonal relationships (Richardson, 2006). Violence against men, by creating physical and mental fatigue, destroys this emotional capital and empties the family space of dialogue and mutual understanding.

This emotional isolation and reduction of dialogue is not limited only to parent-child relationships but severely influences relationships between spouses as well. Men, who are often seen in Iranian culture as the main supporters of the family, refrain from establishing deep connection with their wives under pressures resulting from violence, whether in the form of verbal humiliation or economic pressures. Another interviewee, pointing to this heavy silence between himself and his wife, speaks of the inability to share life's fears and pressures:

'I think my wife is under pressure somehow [too], she has changed like me too. We don't speak [with each other] at all regarding all these pressures that exist [in life], fears that exist.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 160-163).

This quote shows how shared life pressures have encompassed both sides and deprived them of dialogue and empathy, which could have been a salve on their wounds. This silence is the result of structural and psychological violences that place men in a position where not only can they not perform the role of supporter, but they cannot even share their pains with the closest person in their life. From the perspective of Galtung's 'Structural Violence' Theory, this type of deprivation of dialogue and emotional connection is itself a kind of hidden violence resulting from unequal social and economic structures, trapping individuals in a cycle of isolation and psychological pressure (Galtung, 1969). This silence between spouses gradually leads to

emotional alienation and turns the family from a safe emotional base into a space of tension and distance.

Reduction of dialogue in the family, as one of the consequences of violence against men, is rooted in the multilateral pressures men face. These pressures, often resulting from inability to perform traditional roles like breadwinning or emotional support, wear them down psychologically and physically and take the ability for verbal and emotional communication from them. This exhaustion, as seen in the quotes above, leads not only to reduced daily interactions but creates a deep void in mutual understanding and empathy between family members. On the other hand, this reduction in dialogue itself helps reproduce violence; because lack of verbal communication provides the ground for misunderstandings, swallowed anger, and further tensions. In other words, violence against men, by weakening their emotional and social position in the family, creates a space wherein dialogue gives way to silence and distance, and this silence, itself as an intensifying factor, perpetuates the cycle of violence.

From the perspective of Grounded Theory, this phenomenon indicates a dynamic and multi-layered process wherein violence against men as a predisposing factor, by creating psychological and physical pressures, leads to reduction of dialogue in the family, and this reduction itself fuels emotional isolation, weakening of family bonds, and reproduction of violence. This cycle, extracted from interview data, shows that violence against men is not just an individual problem but a social injury that disintegrates family structures from within. 'Structural Inequality' Theory confirms this analysis as well; because it shows how unequal social structures, by imposing economic and psychological pressures on men, hold them back from performing emotional and dialogic roles in the family, and this inequality, in a chain-like manner, leads to the collapse of family communications (Tilly, 1998).

Consequences of reduced dialogue in the family, beyond daily relationships, damage individuals' mental health as well. When there is no space for expressing emotions and sharing pains, individuals sink into emotional isolation, and this isolation, especially for men who are often held back from expressing emotions in Iranian culture, can lead to serious psychological problems like depression or aggression. This subject is clearly evident in Yaser Hosseinifard's quote, where he speaks of his own spiritual and psychological change. On the other hand, this reduction in dialogue

deprives children of parental emotional support as well and can have long-term negative impacts on their emotional and social development. For example, Yaser's 9-year-old daughter, who is now deprived of dialogue and connection with her father, may face difficulties in establishing emotional relationships or trusting others in the future.

One interviewee speaks with obvious regret of multilateral pressures that have influenced his family life and held him back from connection with family members:

'When he doesn't want it what should I do with him. If I don't give it to him he comes takes home items steals. Don't give, I fear someone goes up the wall. They said 'Yeah, you are the cause of it, you are doing a thing,' anyone who arrived said 'You, I don't know, are doing a thing,' he said 'Sir, what should I do, I have another child too, I have a wife too, I have become son-in-law-holder [have son-in-law], I must attend to these too, I go to my own work, I have a thousand and one other miseries'... these models... in the street I am after him. Meaning at 5 [PM] when it closes I close the shop, I must fall after [him] until I see in the street and in the police station and these... see where he is... I come home I come [to] your taunts/blames.' (Interview No. 69, Vahid, Pos 36).

This quote presents a painful image of economic and social pressures that have placed Vahid in a position where not only can he not perform the role of father or supportive husband, but he faces blame and humiliation from others. These pressures have worn him down physically and psychologically, and when he returns home, he has no power left for dialogue or emotional interaction with family. This unwanted isolation is the result of structural violence imposed on him by society and even family members, turning the space of dialogue at home into silence and tension. From the perspective of Galtung's 'Structural Violence' Theory, this type of pressures resulting from social and economic inequalities are themselves a kind of hidden violence trapping individuals in a cycle of inability and isolation (Galtung, 1969).

The root of these pressures often lies in gender expectations rooted in culture and society which introduce men as mainly responsible for providing family needs and solving problems. One interviewee points to these imposed roles and examines these expectations from a cultural perspective:

'A boy must be a man, be a father... from that very beginning usually they say that boys [are] male gender and be responsible because he is supposed to marry in

the future accept responsibility for another individual... so parents' view and also society's view is that male children must [be diligent] regarding life and having a job and suitable profession... forming marital life... it has always been this male gender who hits the first word [makes the first move/takes lead] for continuity of life for the future. So far the female gender [doesn't experience] this issue and these pressures.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 81).

This quote shows how from childhood, boys are raised with this mentality that they must play the role of breadwinner and supporter, while women are largely exempt from these pressures. These gender expectations, rooted in traditional structures of society, place men in a position where any inability to perform these roles leads to psychological violence and social humiliation. This humiliation, in turn, weakens men's self-confidence and mental health and holds them back from establishing emotional connection and dialogue with family. From the perspective of Bourdieu's 'Gender Inequality' Theory, these imposed roles act as a kind of symbolic capital imprisoning men in strict social frameworks and punishing any deviation from these roles with social violence (Bourdieu, 2001).

This social humiliation and psychological violence intensifies especially when men are unable to perform expected roles. Another interviewee, pointing to this subject, speaks of society's humiliating labels:

'But if a problem occurred in that same family, the man was responsible... responsibility for solving financial problems... if it didn't come from his ability either he faced humiliating insults 'The man is incompetent.' It is possible the woman worked next to him too but such a family, wherever they encounter a problem, from the view of the rest the culprit is the man... 'The man is incompetent, is incapable (Bi-orzeh),' now in that colloquial term 'He can't rotate [manage] life.'' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 60).

This quote shows that even if women participate in providing family finances, still the ultimate responsibility is placed on men's shoulders and inability in this field confronts them with labels like 'incompetent' and 'incapable.' This verbal and social violence places men under psychological pressure and drags them into emotional isolation. This isolation gradually leads to reduced dialogue in the family; because men who face humiliation and blame prefer to remain silent to avoid facing more of these pressures. From the perspective of Richardson's 'Emotional Capital' Theory, this reduction in dialogue means the

loss of emotional resources in the family which can lead to the collapse of interpersonal relationships and increased tension (Richardson, 2006).

Despite changes created in the modern era and with the expansion of information and social networks in society's attitudes, these gender pressures still continue in a fainter form. One interviewee points to these developments:

'Right now it is that same form... a bit less. That is a bit more traditional. Now considering this breadth of information and virtual networks... publishing and sharing information and these... and now that people's minds have become more open... that still continues in a fainter form.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 62).

This quote shows that although public awareness regarding gender roles is changing, these expectations still exist deeply rooted in society and exert pressures on men. These fainter pressures can still lead to psychological violence and reduced dialogue in the family; because men are still placed in exposure to social judgments, and these judgments hold them back from expressing emotions and establishing emotional connection with family.

In the framework of Grounded Theory, analysis of interview data shows that violence against men, through social pressures and imposed gender roles, acts as a predisposing factor and by creating psychological and economic pressures, holds men back from performing emotional roles in the family. This inability leads to reduction of dialogue and emotional interactions in the family, and this reduction itself fuels emotional isolation, weakening of family bonds, and reproduction of violence. This cycle, extracted from interview data, shows that violence against men is not just an individual problem but a social injury threatening the foundation of the family from within. Tilly's 'Structural Inequality' Theory confirms this analysis as well; because it shows how unequal social structures, by imposing economic and psychological pressures on men, hold them back from performing emotional and dialogic roles in the family, and this inequality, in a chain-like manner, leads to the collapse of family communications (Tilly, 1998).

Consequences of reduced dialogue in the family, beyond daily relationships, damage individuals' mental health as well. Men who are placed under social and economic pressures and face humiliation and blame often sink into emotional isolation, and this isolation can lead to psychological problems like depression or aggression. On the other hand, this reduction in dialogue deprives children of parental emotional support as well and can have

long-term negative impacts on their emotional and social development. Also, silence between spouses leads to emotional alienation and turns the family from a safe emotional base into a space of tension and distance.

In conclusion, this analysis within the framework of Grounded Theory shows that reduction of dialogue in the family, as one of the familial consequences of violence against men, is the result of multifaceted social, economic, and cultural pressures that distance men from their emotional and supportive roles. This reduction not only weakens family bonds but fuels the reproduction of violence and emotional isolation. To exit this cycle, it is necessary that social and cultural structures imposing these pressures on men be reviewed and spaces created for dialogue, expression of emotions, and emotional support in the family. Violence against men, although receiving less attention, has deep effects on the foundation of the family which cannot be ignored.

9.2.3. *Increased Violence Against Children*

Within the framework of Grounded Theory, this analytical narrative addresses the familial consequences of violence against men with a focus on Violence Against Children. Violence against men, whether physical, psychological, or social, has deep effects on the family structure and especially on children as the most vulnerable family members. These consequences, ranging from emotional isolation and rejection of the father to long-term impacts on children's psychological and social development, reproduce a cycle of violence and emotional inefficiency in the family. Relying on data extracted from in-depth interviews and their analysis in MAXQDA software, this narrative recounts the painful story of these consequences in a unified manner using interviewees' full quotes and scientific views.

Violence against men in the family often operates as a cycle involving children as secondary victims. One interviewee, who is himself in the position of a father and police force member, speaks frankly of violent behaviours towards children and describes this behaviour as somehow normalised in his surrounding environment:

'Look, for example, I as the father of the family, for example, I say now perhaps I read one or two books, understand a thing or two... our colleagues [police force]... all of them have a hitting hand [are abusive], they beat their child too.'
(Interview No. 55, Anti-Narcotics Police, Pos 214).

This quote indicates the impact of the social and occupational environment on violent behaviours. This father, who is himself under occupational and social pressures, sees violence as an accepted behavioural pattern among his colleagues, and this behaviour is transmitted to children. From the perspective of Bandura's Social Learning Theory, children learn violence as a method of conflict resolution or expressing power through observing the behaviour of parents and those around them (Bandura, 1977). This cycle leads not only to physical and psychological injury of children but reproduces unhealthy behavioural patterns in future generations.

One of the deeper consequences of violence against men is its impact on family cohesion and consequently creating psychological injuries for children. Divorce and separation of parents, which is often the result of violence and incompatibility in the family, places children in a position where they face feelings of shame and isolation. One interviewee speaks of this subject with concern:

'My daughter or my son, when they enter society... before that event is happening to them now... they get ashamed of being, for example, a child of divorce... one hundred percent that divorce happens because a life that is like this... its foundation is so loose... cannot continue in my opinion unless they solve this problem between themselves and refer to a counsellor so they can now solve this issue of theirs.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 32).

This quote presents an image of the social and psychological impacts of divorce on children. Children growing up in such families often face the social stigma of 'divorce kid,' and this label weakens their self-esteem and social position. From the perspective of Hill's Family Stress Theory, divorce as a major stressor disrupts the family structure and places children in exposure to psychological injuries like anxiety and depression (Hill, 1949). This situation, when accompanied by violence against the father, has greater intensity; because children are not only deprived of emotional support but witness continuous tension and conflict at home.

Violence against men and its consequences are sometimes such that they introduce children as the product of a 'crime' or inefficient marriage. This view has deep effects on children's identity and behaviour. One interviewee addresses this subject with a critical look:

'They must have [intellectual maturity]... in my opinion before my family when I say 'What does it mean, what meaning does it have, let him have [a child]'... if they have a problem let them not bring a child... becomes the product of a crime... these father and mother themselves feel and cannot continue with each other... the child is not the product of a marriage, is the product of a crime... and the child comes and sees his father and mother and thinks all fathers and mothers are like this... this one lives for himself, this one for herself... what does this child want [become]... aggressive, nervous. If we want to prevent the root of divorce... a few items in my opinion as a person who studied and many times marriage case occurred and I didn't marry... I put these next to each other... when I want to recommend to someone that 'You reach that intellectual maturity and know for what you want to marry'... he doesn't understand what this intellectual maturity means... if you reach that intellectual maturity and if you really love her and possess affection for her you won't be willing to upset her... meaning upsetting the opposite side upsets yourself... that is intellectual maturity... this principle of traditional marriage must go aside... thank God now conditions have become such that we see many marriages where the woman has a child and married a man... married a man who has a child... and these kinds of marriages are becoming many like foreigners... before they said it was bad because the girl got a divorce stigma, stayed in the house.' (Interview No. 89, Ms. Mehraban, Pos 136).

This quote indicates a deep view considering children as victims of unhealthy family conditions. This interviewee calls children born in such families the product of a 'crime' and believes these children, by observing parents' unhealthy behaviours, accept aggression and nervousness as part of their identity. From the perspective of Bowen's Family Systems Theory, these behaviours are the result of inefficient interactions in the family involving children as main victims and internalising unhealthy patterns in them (Bowen, 1978). These children, deprived of emotional support, often turn to aggressive behaviours and continue this cycle of violence.

Another consequence of violence against men is the father being rejected from the family and its impact on his relationship with children. This rejection places children in exposure to emotional isolation and social problems. One interviewee speaks of this subject with pain and worry:

'We know how effective both parents are. Father is not [there]... [mother] raises the child... we don't let him touch the child... then he becomes a stranger... we

take the child from him... when we took, the child reached puberty age, anymore you can't handle him... and we are very unaware regarding him... we look at him say 'Don't you want to talk to your child?' He says 'My child? Which child of mine? You took him from me a few years ago... my child is a stranger to me.' Meaning a coalition forms, mother and child together and father against these. This being rejected... we are witnessing it today, you know. He sacrifices [himself] (Ghorbon sadagheh mireh) for every child except his own child. Considers every person possessor of credit except his own spouse... distancing from each other... this distancing, this gap is creating problems very much... this that you say 'Sociologically what impact has this left?'... all our addictions.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 112).

This quote presents an image of the deep gap between father and child as a result of the father being rejected from the family. This rejection, often the result of violence against men and parental separation, deprives children of the father's presence and support and leads to the formation of unhealthy coalitions between mother and child. From the perspective of Bowlby's Attachment Theory, lack of emotional connection with the father can lead to psychological and social problems in children and place them in exposure to high-risk behaviours like addiction (Bowlby, 1969). This situation indicates long-term impacts of violence against men on children which not only disrupts their relationship with parents but endangers their social and psychological future as well.

Finally, one of the most painful consequences of violence against men is losing the father's connection with the child and deep worry regarding his future. This subject is reflected with full intensity in one interviewee's words:

'My definition of living is that I shouldn't be here at all... basically these events in my view should have been a dream. Wouldn't happen. Why haven't I seen my son for 3-4 years. And I think to myself 'Now what have they read into his ear [told him]... now perhaps this is a mistake, this thought of mine... what does my son think... what end and outcome is waiting for him'... a plum tree doesn't give bananas, does it... he is my child, you know. [If] you attend to him a lot, give him water a lot, perhaps he won't crack. These annoy me... and what events happen for my wife who becomes the child's mother.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 54).

This quote shows the deep pain of a father separated from his child and worried about his future. This separation, which is the result of violence and incompatibility in the family, not only wears down the father emotionally but deprives the child of fatherly support and guidance. From the perspective of Coleman's Social Capital Theory, this lack of connection reduces the child's emotional and social capital and places him in exposure to social and psychological injuries (Coleman, 1988). This situation reproduces a cycle of violence and deprivation involving subsequent generations as well.

Within the framework of Grounded Theory, analysis of these data shows that violence against men as a predisposing factor, through the father being rejected, parental separation, and transmission of violent patterns, leads to violence against children in the family. This violence, whether physical or psychological, involves children as secondary victims and has long-term effects on their emotional, social, and psychological growth. This cycle begins from emotional isolation of father and mother, fuels aggressive and unhealthy behaviours in the family, and ultimately confronts children with an ambiguous future full of social injuries. Consequences of this violence, beyond family, spill over to society as well and lead to reproduction of social problems like addiction and aggression. To exit this cycle, it is necessary that social and cultural structures strengthening violence against men be reviewed and spaces created for emotional support and reconstruction of family relationships. Violence against men, although receiving less attention, has deep effects on children and the foundation of the family which cannot be ignored.

9.3. Social Consequences

Violence against men is one of the lesser-known subjects entailing extensive consequences at individual, familial, and social levels. Social consequences of this phenomenon, especially in societies where gender stereotypes play a determining role in people's attitude, are often complex and multi-layered. Since men are usually recognised as symbols of power and strength in society, the experience of violence for them means weakening of social identity and breaking of these traditional patterns. This subject not only causes psychological pressure on victims but severely threatens their social position and status as well.

The most important social consequence of violence against men is loss of their social credit. Victims of violence often hide their experiences due to

worry about judgments and social stigmas. However, in cases where this violence becomes revealed, men face judgments, rejection, and ridicule which leads to social isolation and reduced social interactions. Furthermore, violence against men can disrupt order and stability in family and society and fuel increased conflicts and social disorder.

One of the significant consequences of violence against men is increase in crime and expansion of insecurity in society. Victims, in facing lack of support or rehabilitation facilities, usually turn to criminal behaviours like theft or mutual violence, which weakens social order. On the other hand, cases such as homelessness, rough sleeping (*Karton-khabi*), and dropping out of education can be direct consequences of violence, especially in young and adolescent men, ultimately creating a cycle of poverty, isolation, and crime.

Social Exclusion is also one of the main consequences accompanied by labelling and notoriety of the victim's neighbourhood or city. Subsequently, victims of violence in some cases may face harsher legal consequences like prison, execution, or paying blood money (*Diyeh*). Such conditions have a negative impact on the macro social fabric and help expand violence and insecurity in society.

9.3.1. Increase in Crime in Society

Increase in crime in society as one of the social consequences of violence against men is an event that narratives of individuals' lives, not just statistics, present nakedly and openly. Narratives that draw, layer by layer within themselves, the reasons and connecting links between the experience of violence, subordination of men, and its pouring into the context of society and increase in delinquent behaviours and occurrence of crime.

When one participant points to the deep gender gap in addiction statistics and says:

'This one other point is that you see, for example, our statistics of addicts... now 3 million people in the country, for example official statistics, although we announce statistics 2-3 times [higher]... 3 million people go to camp and go to treatment centres and self-referrals and so-and-so 3 million people are registered. These that we examine, close to 80 percent of these are men.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 98).

He is practically pointing out that a large part of men are hidden victims of these relations, and this very experience of violence, injury, rejection, and

stripping of social support can guide them to unhealthy paths including addiction, and after that to chains of crime and delinquency.

The experience of crime changing hands and contamination of families with repercussions of violations and systemic shortcomings is also reflected in this layer of discourse:

'The moment that contraband is passing the border coming into police roads [checkpoints]... the officer who is separating the car's load inside the car... come sit with a soldier and say 'Go [I let you go] take ten million money, gives one million to the soldier and puts nine million in his pocket.' Yes, that officer... what... doesn't eat its stick [suffer consequence], doesn't go to prison. But what... this money is illicit (Haram) again and returns towards his family... his wife and child eat its stick [suffer consequence].' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 238).

This vicious cycle of injury and crime encompasses not only the individual arena but the collective structure of society and makes the reproduction of crime and injustice more visible.

Bending of boy children's backs under the pressure of work and deprivation and their escape towards criminal behaviours is a process seen and narrated with the very eyes of individuals lived in these situations:

'Criminal behaviours that these [boy working children] perform usually starts from thefts... theft in streets, from shops, from peddlers... starts from small thefts... theft from people, pickpocketing, small bag snatching starts. [Working children] then slowly slowly it reaches theft of motorcycle and car and all these... if we really couldn't find a suitable solution for these... it exists, has been seen even very much... because from those very young ages initially they usually request people to give them money.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 71).

This direct and uncensored narrative informs of a road where children, influenced by absence of support and initial injuries, slowly get used to crime-breeding and find no return path except continuing this high-risk route.

Search for identity and proving masculinity through aggression and bullying in public space also reflects the need to compensate for humiliation and damages inflicted on individual dignity:

'Perhaps men draw horns and jaws [posture] for each other... that this is from the past too, you know... he grew up in a neighbourhood where these were common... from that past life of his where they annoyed him and this one wants to show

himself from somewhere. That 'I am not one to be hit on the head.' He acts like a bully and they draw horns and jaws. But in the street we haven't seen two women look eye to eye and fight with each other but men... 'Huh, what is it, so-and-so?' In the park especially.' (Interview No. 87, Ebrahim Rahbaran, Pos 102).

These signs are a warning bell regarding the genesis of the cycle of violence among men; which instead of resolving conflict, leads to reproduction of what has come upon them.

Traces of violence presence are seen from those very young ages; children who enter the cycle of crime very soon and experience the path of Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centre instead of school. In a narrative we witness:

'Chaharshanbe Suri [Fire Festival eve] our class caught fire. I set the class on fire. I had hidden [fireworks] in the trash can... our teacher didn't know... was tearing papers... wanted to get up go, suddenly it caught fire and burns and then they called our dad.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 196-198).

And: *'Childhood time I think I was 11-12 years old. I wouldn't go to school. [Because of childhood mischief] I was in Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centre.'* (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 92-95).

These emotional and supportive voids provide fertile ground for the growth of crime in their future.

A more complete image of this trend is obtained when the individual walks the wrong path again and again, and combined addiction and psychological injury takes him to a place where return is very difficult:

'Because I have repeated record of prison over theft and these... anymore I came... anymore my family... my sentence finished and from there they called said 'This amount, ten dollars' [sic: likely meant millions/Tomans]... they gave good money too... said 'Come pay this restitution of property so I come out otherwise I have other crimes in my file my sentence increases and restitution of property becomes heavy, huh.' Anymore I had done so much of these works that my dad said too 'Leave it, you know yourself, something you fixed [caused] yourself do yourself, we don't spend for it unless the money you brought gave to us we spend, you spent yourself.' Really it was this, substances forced me to many works. Substances I smoked, Heroin, Shisheh... [to] bring out their anger [annoy them] these got up hit the road [left] said 'You are doing this work falsely

[on purpose]'... they went came two years later... I had become a Hookah reed [very thin]... time when I went consumed... my substance consumption caused me to fall into other ways... offense/crime so I can procure its money.'

(Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 256).

In this line-by-line narrative, injuries resulting from deprivations, family rejection, and inability to recover identity and dignity advance the man towards a crime that is the reproduction of the 'self-become-alone' in society; a current criminologists have referred to as 'Recidivism Cycle' (*Cycle of Crime Repetition*) (Najafi Abrandabadi, 1397 [2018]).

The bitterness of another narrative lies in the fact that the individual touches the growth and fall of a generation beside himself:

'Some time ago I saw one of my elementary school classmates and asked him about classmates. I can say 50 percent of my classmates had either been executed or were life imprisonment, or were awaiting execution or had been killed in clashes or were fugitives or had become smugglers and killed people and such works.' (Interview No. 66, Pedram, Pos 3).

The depth of the social catastrophe hidden behind ignoring violence against men and its chain consequences becomes clear in these very sentences; how society sits watching a generation of men who one after another become captives of the spider web of crime and delinquency.

Feeling and manifestation of anger and aggression also turns into a criminal lifestyle in many instances:

'The anger I say now... anger in any case... us, because we worked in the field of addiction and worked in delinquency... most angers unfortunately become more criminal... our angers become more criminal because perhaps times a eye-to-eye [confrontation] becomes a fight... many times it has happened they killed each other.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 28).

This compressed anger is suppressed energy that does not remain swallowed and often spills over in the form of criminal behaviours. Such a trend aligns with 'Labelling' analysis in criminology theories; when due to continuity of deprivations and frustrations, the individual accepts the criminal role as part of his personal identity (Lemert, 1951).

The experience of the formation of delinquent behaviours from childhood and adolescence is also objectified well in these memories:

'I don't know what happened to the man... no, he didn't die, I saw him later... but well, there anymore they said 'What a piece of work he is, he beats the guy, the guy sleeps [gets knocked out].' Anymore, with the team I had formed I went again to those same buddies of mine in Tehran, went after them... a day in that park, a day in this park... a day we went to this house for theft, a day that house, until they caught me, gave me to the Centre [Juvenile Detention]... I was 9-10 years old... they gave me to the Centre... in the Centre they put me to sleep in the infirmary because I was a child-year [very young] and my age was less than everyone... at that time there were only kids with records and 15 years upwards, I was smaller in stature than all of them.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 81).

Children who have become victims of violence and deprivation are themselves transformed into agents of illicit and criminal behaviours within the insecure social fabric.

The gradual evolution and infiltration of crime into various layers of social life is seen even in dealing with routine life matters:

'Yes Sir, I say I saw things that wouldn't even reach your mind [you can't imagine]... in short we saw these kinds of things and said 'Oh my, lest they come take us too.' There was a time... it was the thing... elections... a high-class woman came, gave us money, said 'Go tear the flags and banners'... like these movies... really I am saying something that was [real], you know... they said 'Go tear,' we went tore... we fell into other stories or fell into other parts... other strange things happened for us... [if] we escaped from this we fell into the clutches of a series of other people... from that escaped fell into the clutches of another series... as the saying goes we had become 'Seven-Lines' (Haft-Khat / master manipulators), we had become chameleons (Aftab-parast)... we knew everything.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 113).

This lived complexity and multilayered nature demonstrates well that violence against men does not operate as a linear phenomenon; rather, like intertwining streams, it transforms into various types of crimes in society.

Social hardships and livelihood problems play a direct role in making men susceptible to falling into the abyss of crime. Especially men exposed to violence and greater difficulty are inevitably involved in acts such as smuggling, theft, or fraud:

'We got caught in Qom... Iran Peyma [bus company]... we had placed a stash in the cooler vents... not one bus, three buses... we stashed three [to] ten-twelve [packages]... these three buses came... what... got caught... the owner of the cigarettes... they impounded the buses and we went introduced ourselves. We came... because of what... these cigarettes... we went to Qom prison... Qom prison, we stayed there close to eight months... property confiscated and so-and-so... from this side and that side and so-and-so... before those with whom we had credit. We were released from Qom prison.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 18).

Again, there are narratives showing that criminal acts are a response to violences, discriminations, and failures:

'I don't accept [forced marriage/suitor] and so-and-so... she hit this side and that side [manoeuvred] so her cousin came to propose to her and they engaged her for three years... we too held a wedding for this girl and she went to the husband's house... we were close to 24-25 years old... I found myself in the bazaar [market], my hand and wing was very open [had disposable income]... that I came with Marlboro cigarettes... I got caught with a Khavar [truck] of firecrackers... in that same Molavi [street] we hid in a warehouse... I got caught and Shapour [Criminal Investigation] Smuggling [Unit] took us. In short they took us and heavy fine... forget that [fine]... I sold one apartment unit and gave... in short what... they said a confiscation of property or we put a deed [bail] so-and-so... that we... what... the deed we had put... we sold an apartment unit in Qarchak [for] 40 million Tomans and 4-5 million of it went for the contract and real estate agency and we gave 36 million of it too to the Sibaa account for the country's treasury. That same place where we ate [suffered] and so-and-so and what... we held a wedding for the stepmother's daughter and she [stepmother] paid attention to my sister more and had more compassion for her and even to us ourselves... even at times when my father became nervous [angry], the dad beat her... she would go to her daughter's house or her father and mother's house... she didn't listen to anyone's word except me. I went brought [her]. I got caught with 630 grams of Shisheh.' (Interview No. 24, Vahid Gholam Eskandari, Pos 34).

In conclusion, the juxtaposition of all these components reflects the reality that applied violence, humiliation, and poverty hidden behind unequal policies and relations are often the main stimulus for the emergence and increase of crimes in society. The clear link between lived experiences at the individual

level and its results in the form of increased criminal behaviours is recounted in an original and deep manner by interviewees' narratives, and this import is itself a confirmation of Structural-Functionalist theories such as what Durkheim states regarding 'Anomie'; when social structures cannot meet individuals' legitimate needs and expectations, the probability of deviant and criminal behaviour increases (Durkheim, 1897).

9.3.2. Social Exclusion

Social Exclusion (*Tard-e Ejtemaei*), as one of the principal consequences of violence against men, imposes multiple layers of human suffering, emotional isolation, and identity crisis upon them. The narratives of men who have been subjected to violence and exclusion are so bitter, naked, and real that they reveal the roots of the prominent social consequences of this phenomenon in their most complete form. This transformation, from the pervasiveness of exclusion to the feeling of identity collapse and loss of human bonds, manifests itself clearly in individuals' lives.

'My Aga [father] and them... gave me a house said 'You don't come towards us. Go do whatever mistake (Ghalat) your heart wants there. Don't come this side anymore.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 258).

Behind this quote, one can see the depth of the concept of social exclusion; exclusion not merely meaning homelessness, but meaning the negation of existence and the severance of vital human connections. According to social psychology perspectives, social exclusion causes the collapse of the sense of belonging and is a factor creating psychological and even physical suffering (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

In this situation, the main character practically transforms into an 'unobservable existence,' as if he is one of the invisible products of a society that strips dignity from the individual and only a shadow of his presence remains. This situation is reinforced by Shayan's description as well:

'For that individual, well... the person is specifically complete misery... and that individual is in fact thrown into the street... to nowhere-land (Na-koja-abad)... is excluded to a place where he has no one and nothing... and many of these individuals in these kinds of times don't even have a roof over their heads to want to stand under or sleep. And or over this very issue many of them become addicts

and many of them whom I personally saw attempt suicide.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 19).

In this narrative, the consequence of social exclusion, beyond removal from the collective, means being placed in exposure to the severest psychological and social injuries; where vital dependencies are severed and homelessness, addiction, and suicide are introduced as direct offspring of this rupture. Such a situation can be compared with concepts of 'Meaninglessness' and 'Existential Isolation' in Existentialist theories, where in conditions of lack of social support, the individual reaches the ultimate frustration and psychological helplessness (Frankl, 1946).

Social exclusion is not limited only to physical removal from family or society, but destroys the structure of identity and the individual's feeling of worthiness in deeper layers. As Ms. Entezami says:

'For example, we have a case... wants to marry, wants to go for proposal (Khastegari)... there is a film called 'Eshghoulance'... the whole film [is] a state... the last five minutes, last ten minutes... this child was a divorce child, his mother leaves goes... he goes somewhere for proposal they tell him 'You are a divorce child'... wherever he goes they exclude/reject him [based on this] that this child is a divorce child. Think, father mother couldn't live together, separated... the child who has now grown up is thirty years old... wants to marry... they tell him 'We don't give a girl to you because you are a divorce child.'' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 90).

In this example, social exclusion is not necessarily the result of individual action, but cultural structures and societal stereotypes expand the scope of this exclusion to the individual's future. This is where social mechanisms such as 'Labelling' and 'Stigma' (Goffman, 1963) play a role, and a man is deprived of the opportunity to build a future due to a role he did not have in the past. Experiencing feelings of shame and worthlessness becomes an inseparable part of this procedure.

Also, family rejection due to sexual identity creates another class of social isolation:

'Mostly these [Trans individuals], as soon as they raise the subject [of being Trans] with family, get rejected from the family. For example, the party is a girl, for example wanted to become a boy... had come from the county (Shahrestan) here to Tehran. When he came to me spoke with me 'Look, this is a Trans.' Why is

he Trans... 'When I was in the county I was a girl, my uncle came wanted to rape me and I escaped too'... do you understand what I want to say?!' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 63).

In this sample, simultaneous with the occurrence of sexual violence, another type of violence, meaning rejection due to choosing sexual identity, is added. This duality of violence in individual and structural forms completes the ring of the individual's isolation. This point is also striking in Mahsa's narrative:

'Well I understood that I said I remember I said 'I became a boy by mistake'... so even a time I lived in the north [city of] Fouman my dad rejected me. My dad [because of my Trans status] rejected me... close to ten years I was far from home... far... I had been rejected. Some of them suffer suicide. Its reason is this that firstly family don't accept. Family takes a guard [defensive stance] and then they get rejected and then they think they have reached the end of the line... the way I had become... I had no place.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 170-173).

In many instances, social exclusion manifests with direct limitations in livelihood and daily communications. As Ali Tavakoli recounts:

'Wherever we went they didn't let 'Come down [in]' or for example [if] we go into their workshop... the guy smokes... they don't let him in... anymore 'Woe if they understand that you are sick [have HIV].' I name this violence against men... meaning this very type of look... attitude... losing your card [job/ID?].... losing your friends family... your becoming alone... this loneliness is very much the worst violence. Meaning now that look of affection, that trust that humans had in you... the twist and turn [interaction] that was between you and people is totally cut... that connection totally cut... when it gets cut you know loneliness and a person becomes desperate anymore... of life. Mostly kids who have this disease [HIV] are all alone. Either they have no place or are homeless... that [someone] give them a house... anymore it doesn't reach there.' (Interview No. 23, Ali Tavakoli, Pos 176-180).

In such conditions, society's pathological exclusion due to affliction with disease or a specific feature practically brings the circle of the man's social life to zero point. This exclusionary look results from prejudices and the architecture of a discriminatory structure which is also described in Marxist theories as the reproduction of domination and reproduction of exclusion in the geography of capital and power (Althusser, 1971).

Social exclusion even has a serious impact on the formation of male identity and men's feeling of competence and worthiness.

'As a man... incompetent (Bi-orzeh), inefficient... they get 'Out' from [family]... from things they want, they get 'Out' [rejected/expelled] from family, get 'Out' from society, get 'Out' from social connections... from everything, from everything they get 'Out'. When they became 'Out' it becomes that same suicide.'
(Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 72-73).

The repetition of the word 'Out' (rejected/expelled) expresses the psychological volume of this experience on the individual's mind and soul; an imposed solitude that drives the individual to shores of despair and sometimes self-destruction and fundamentally erases the semantic and communicative horizon from the individual's life.

In some cases, men suffer deep frustration after being rejected and the sense of worthlessness spreads to other dimensions of life, as Sajjad Shahrokhi says:

'Two results perhaps I can tell you... one a feeling... usually we all have a feeling of frustration... meaning you imagine that a human who is forced to do a work that he doesn't give inner desire to but anyway accepted... this itself automatically gives a feeling of frustration to the person... basically brought a line that is a dark line in the life process... it can be called a feeling of frustration.'
(Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 54).

'These compulsions that exist in society... now based on from those very stages of childhood and choosing spouse and choosing job and continuing job and these... unfortunately makes sick individuals out of individuals. Individuals who have frustration... there is a dark line in their path. Now imagine the whole society is these individuals. Meaning a society that is sick from within. Because they accepted... individuals themselves accepted this compulsion and accepted that frustration and live with it... and as the saying goes these individuals are sick and society [is] these sick individuals... you imagine a society is sick.'
(Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 56).

In this case, consequences of exclusion go even beyond the individual level and transform into a collective social crisis; a society sick from within whose unpleasant psychological and spiritual repercussions spread to all layers of society (Durkheim, 1897).

On the other hand, the consequence of men's social exclusion also brings about the reproduction of secondary violence in the form of revenge, aggression, and tendency towards self-destruction:

'I have now reached a state... I was talking with these... psychologists say 'Write' but I don't write... I wrote this case with details... I said 'Whatever work I did in life I didn't come to eye [wasn't seen], I was suppressed, I became dazed, I was choked. I always helped people but I was never the good guy.' I told him 'Because of this I decided to become a Godfather... I saw afterwards the foodstuff inspector hired many people... afterwards I said for this work I become a Godfather... I have a list of various individuals that in 10-15 years future... this very time when I became Godfather... these individuals, before I kill them, beg that [I] kill them. And exactly how I kill them [so] DNA trace is not found either.' (Interview No. 98, Rasoul, Pos 63).

This level of aggression is the product of the experience of worthlessness and doubled unkindness of socio-familial-cultural systems; a violence that today is a victim and tomorrow can transform into a threat to society.

In total, the consequence of men's social exclusion, through their lived experiences, reveals a collection of psychological reactions (depression, worthlessness, self-suppression), social consequences (homelessness, addiction, social isolation, suicide), and even the formation of a vicious cycle of vengeful violence. This exclusion, as raised in Grounded Theory perspectives, emerges from micro social contexts (family structure and primary networks) to macro contexts (norms, social stigma, society's discriminatory look, and institutionalised attitudes) and ultimately drives the man to a point where he defines his semantic and identity survival not in interaction, but in withdrawal, isolation, or negative reactions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

9.3.3. *Homelessness and Rough Sleeping*

The analysis of the consequence of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping as one of the social consequences of violence against men, relying on interviewees' quotes and theoretical views, offers a multifaceted and shocking image of this phenomenon. This consequence is not just a purely physical state, but a deep existential and social experience rooted in various individual, familial, structural, and institutional violences.

Hamid Haghi's narrative, speaking of repeated escapes from the Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centre and orphanage and Mellat Park and Mangal forests becoming a hangout for sleeping, indicates a cycle where support institutions themselves transform into a place for reproducing homelessness. This experience is a kind of institutional homelessness that places the individual in exposure to injury from childhood and deprives him of having a safe and stable place to live.

'I was still a child I didn't understand... it seems I didn't realise what is what... I didn't realise what is what because I was [criminal/delinquent], you know. Put a parenthesis [pause/aside]... come a bit further back... other, for example, I say my own story now what happened... as soon as I went out of Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centre I went... kept returning after those seven eight buddies I had, orphanage kids. Really I was [one of] orphanage kids. Twice too I went to Urmia orphanage... escaped from there... officers took me I said 'Orphanage kid'... with these very ones I too gave there [went there]... in short it struck [happened] and we came hit [went] and our hangout became Mellat Park and we slept in these Mangal forests.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 99).

This quote clearly shows how institutional violences and lack of sufficient support drive the individual towards the street and homelessness.

Gholam Eskandari considers family collapse and impossibility of return after prison as the factor for his homelessness.

'So one of its consequences was that your family totally disintegrated. Disintegrated anymore... a hundred houses were ruined [so] one house became prosperous [for them]... my house became theirs. The moment I came from prison I came with a single Kurdish trousers sat in the corner of a park. When I came from prison, close to six months I knocked on this door and that door to bring back my wife... after six months I didn't succeed... I was sitting in the park when officers came took me... I am here six months... close to thirteen months I formed a file.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 118).

This narrative expresses how family violence and its consequences, such as separation and prison, can lead to losing the primary support network and ultimately homelessness. Prison in itself can be a kind of structural violence that excludes the individual from society and makes his return difficult.

Vahid Faraji has also experienced leaving home due to family violence.

'Over my sister's event [infidelity and separation from his wife] I struck out [left] from home. Five years God is witness I didn't eat food either. My food had become a Titop cake [snack cake] [and] soda.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 78).

This quote shows the direct consequence of violence in the family in the form of homelessness and experiencing severe poverty. Feeding solely on 'Titop cake and soda' is a symbol of the collapse of all life dimensions and descent to the level of survival.

Sajjad Shahrokhi points to the connection between violence in childhood, mental health, addiction, and finally homelessness.

'That originates from addiction... addiction too I told you [is] that same messed up mental health that these individuals have from childhood because of that wrong way and method the family adopted in relation to raising these... meaning it is possible they were subjected to physical violence, it is possible they were beaten... experienced many deprivations... don't have very desirable mental health... little by little addiction... now addiction step by step its degree increases and finally homelessness.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 18).

This theoretical view considers homelessness the endpoint of a traumatic path started from violence in the family and continued with mental health problems and addiction. Pierre Bourdieu's Social Capital Theory emphasises the importance of social and cultural resources in maintaining individual position, and the destruction of these capitals can lead to poverty and social exclusion (Bourdieu, 1986).

Another narrative from Gholam Eskandari again points to homelessness after prison and family rejection.

'I came from prison [saw] that my wife had separated... I became a rough sleeper (Karton-khab)... anymore I didn't have the face [was too ashamed] to go to my father's house. I spun in the city this side that side [hoping] they hit a channel [make a connection/find a way] return my life and wife and child. From this time 6-7 months passed. I didn't succeed. I was sitting in the park... I was in the park in the state of smoking substances... I was [on] Heroin and Shisheh... that it was a plan [police raid] officers took me... now I am here for six months anymore.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 120).

This quote shows how shame of returning to family, along with addiction problems, traps the individual in the cycle of homelessness. Levin and Palmer also consider homelessness a multi-causal phenomenon deeply linked with

family structure, mental health, and social punishment (Levin & Palmer, 2008 - referencing homelessness etiology).

Ali Aghasi points to periods of rough sleeping resulting from addiction.

'Being inside the house. I had addiction, was consuming... and some problems occurred that we went out and become rough sleepers for a period.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 19).

This shows that even in case of having shelter, problems resulting from addiction can drive the individual towards homelessness intermittently.

Mohammad Amin Bagheri raises the stark difference between a 'trillionaire criminal' and those who 'sit by the gutter and smoke.'

'I picked the path badly... basically pay attention... we have a criminal, for example he is a trillionaire... but we have a criminal too... for example God save them, huh... they sit by the gutter, smoke.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin Bagheri, Pos 359).

This comparison shows another aspect of structural violence and social inequality; in an unequal structure, consequences of a similar behaviour are completely different for individuals with different socio-economic positions. Individuals lacking necessary capital are more exposed to negative consequences like homelessness (*Bourdieu's analysis on Capital*).

Vahid Faraji points to the process of gradual sinking into homelessness and survival strategies in these conditions.

'It was Yalda Night I went to Tehran Garden... reached myself to Tehran Garden but outside too that I stayed they didn't let anyone be in the park much... I would find a river [bank], a water pump, something, would sit. Totally this five years I was far from family. I went... Q: From family. Five years I lived on the floor of the street. Theft and pick this one's pocket pick that one's pocket, drug dealing...' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 140-142).

Long-term distance from family, along with delinquent behaviours like theft and drug dealing for survival, intensifies the cycle of injury and stabilises the individual in homelessness.

Vahid also points to the experience of 'two and a half years complete rough sleeping.'

'Exactly two years after that... fixed... two and a half years I became a rough sleeper, complete homelessness.' (Interview No. 69, Vahid, Pos 32).

This short sentence shows the depth and stability of the homelessness phenomenon for some individuals and confirms that this situation can transform into a long and destructive stage in life. 'Cycle of Social Disadvantage' Theory shows how one injury can lead to a collection of other injuries and imprison the individual in an unfavourable situation (Harvey, 2016 - *referencing social harm/inequality*).

Hamta Barzagari mentions the case of a man who, after separation from his wife and addiction, has been a rough sleeper for years and 'neither has a house nor has a life, nor is society desirous [of him].'

'Well it has a destructive impact definitely... for example we saw a gentleman... his wife left due to reasons and... past time... it seems he is addicted to addiction... now for several years he is a rough sleeper. Neither has a house nor has a life, nor is society desirous [of him].' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 40).

This narrative highlights three main levels of separation leading to stable homelessness: family separation, collapse of individual life (resulting from addiction), and social exclusion (a society that does not desire him).

Akbar Ebrahimi points to the direct connection of non-receipt of financial rights and dues with his homelessness.

'Yeah they didn't give my money Mr. Doctor... worldly possession... that 300-400 Tomans was my money, you know... that I could get a house with that... my car that existed, work with my car and go into my own house at night too... they didn't give my money to me... today four... today four eight Tomans... one Toman around twenty Tomans... like this they gave me money... one year too after prison I became a rough sleeper in the street opposite his own house. My money in his hand... opposite his own house I was doing rough sleeping in the street.' (Interview No. 43, Akbar Ebrahimi, Pos 45).

This quote clearly shows how economic violence, in the form of non-payment of wages and rights, can drive the individual towards homelessness, and class conflict plays a destructive role in this midst.

In total, homelessness and rough sleeping among men is not a singular issue, but a complex consequence of the interaction of various violences and lack of social and structural supports. Presented narratives show the close connection of this phenomenon with Family Violences (like separation, infidelity, incorrect upbringing), Institutional Violences (like Juvenile

Correction Centre, Prison), Economic Violence (like non-payment of wages), and Psycho-Social Injuries (like addiction, social exclusion). This phenomenon, as Social Capital Theories (Bourdieu, 1986), Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984), and Multi-Causal Explanation of Social Injuries (Levin & Palmer, 2008) also state, is rooted in unequal structures and lack of support networks and traps the individual in a cycle of injury whose liberation requires intervention at various individual, familial, social, and structural levels. Men's homelessness, ultimately, is the silent and unanswered voice of suffering and exclusion in a society that has failed to provide the minimums of security and support for its most vulnerable members.

9.3.4. *School Dropout and Truancy*

Analysis of the consequence of School Dropout and Truancy (*Farar az Madrese va Tark-e Tahsil*) as a result of violence against men (boys), relying on conducted interviews, clearly shows how the school environment, which should be a safe space for learning and growth, can itself transform into a source for violence and drive male students towards dropping out and its unfortunate consequences. This section of the analysis addresses this phenomenon from different angles.

Yaser Hosseinifard points directly to the connection between violence and consequences like illiteracy, dropout, and truancy. He says:

'Its consequence [violence in school] is this very illiteracy, this very dropout of boys which is very much, and this very running away from school.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseinifard, Pos 29).

This quote highlights the importance of the subject and shows that dropout among boys is a significant phenomenon related to violence. This consequence not only influences the individual's educational future but can pave the ground for other social problems as well.

Faraz Mahboubi narrates a personal experience of the impact of thuggery and hooliganism (*Obash-gari va Lati-gari*) (which is itself a type of violence) on his educational path. He says:

'Those violences I saw and that violence I applied towards my own neighbourhood-mates, towards people and towards family... caused... blocked all my progresses, you know... blocked all my progresses. I was studying... over these very things [thuggery and hooliganism] I got a record... my major was

Humanities... one of my uncles is the Head of Judges of Zanjan and that other one Head... my paternal family and these are all military, all of them. For example, I myself loved Law very much and was continuing but again over stubbornness and obstinacy (Laj-o-lajbazi) [I dropped out].' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 147-150).

This narrative shows how getting involved in violence, whether as victim or agent, can have destructive consequences on the individual's life, including dropping out. 'Stubbornness and obstinacy' mentioned at the end of the quote can be due to frustration and anger from conditions and violences the individual has experienced.

Erfan recounts the case of a friend who dropped out due to conflict with the school principal. He says:

'I had a friend... I wasn't buddy with him but he was in my class... his morale was relatively weak... meaning it wasn't like this that 'Yeah test different things, have excitement work'... this one only came to school and did his school works. And with one of... the principal... that he had a fight... he dropped out and then started working and... meaning in ninth grade where he could shape his future he started working.' (Interview No. 80, Erfan, Pos 138).

This sample shows how institutional violence (conflict with principal) can directly lead to dropout. Also, his friend's 'weak morale' indicates the greater vulnerability of some individuals against violence and its consequences. Starting work in ninth grade indicates the loss of future opportunities due to early dropout.

Ali, alongside Erfan, considers dropout one of the consequences of tiredness of school. He says:

'We had... we had another buddy who for example got tired of school totally. Dropout is one of them.' (Interview No. 80, Ali, Pos 138).

Although 'tiredness of school' can have multiple reasons, violence in the school environment, whether from peers or educational staff, can be one of the important factors of this fatigue and disgust.

Hamta Barzagari mentions 'depriving them of school' generally as one of the results of violences in school. He says:

'[One of the results of violences in school] depriving them of school.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 64).

This deprivation can occur both directly (expulsion or suspension) and indirectly (creating an unsafe and disheartening environment leading to voluntary leaving).

Sajjad Shahrokhi highlights the impact of incorrect behaviours in past years on kids running away from school. He says:

'Unfortunately those behaviours in that age we had... in those years... the ground for kids running away... and the impact of that negative mentality regarding school was instilled in them and became the root of many injuries unfortunately.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 40).

This quote shows how negative and violent experiences in school can change students' mentality towards this environment and drive them towards running away and distancing from education. This negative mentality can be the root of many future social injuries.

Sajjad Shahrokhi continues to point to the connection between running away from school and attraction to delinquent groups. He says:

'This very social injuries whose manifestation is mostly on addiction... because that running away from school had many problems and consequences behind it... usually they were attracted to groups that were delinquent and kids became delinquent.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 42).

This shows that dropping out is an important turning point in the path of injury which can guide the individual towards addiction and delinquency. When the individual exits the school environment, there is higher probability that he gets placed in exposure to negative influences and joins deviant peer groups.

Mojtaba Mardani points to conditions where students are forced to dropout due to the need to work. He says:

'They worked and while they liked to study, they were forced to put study aside and this itself is a kind of violence... the party couldn't study... in fact we had [cases] that many because of this issue couldn't continue and dropped out and were forced to go work with their father... go do nomadic [life] and labouring.' (Interview No. 100, Mojtaba Mardani, Pos 30).

Although this is not directly violence *in* school, it can be considered a kind of Structural and Economic Violence that deprives the individual of the right to education. Financial need and compulsion to work, especially at young ages,

destroy educational opportunities. This situation aligns with the concept of 'Structural Violence' referring to inequalities and systems that harm specific groups (Galtung, 1969).

Hossein, a student, expresses the experience of becoming disgusted with school due to the behaviour of teacher, principal, assistant principal, and disciplinarian. He says:

'No I didn't dropout... us... until last year, the year before last, my GPA wouldn't come below 19... but this year I don't want to go to school at all. I became disgusted (Zadeh shodam) with school with the behaviour I saw from my teachers in school, principal, assistant, and disciplinarian.' (Interview No. 101, Hossein, Student, Pos 153-155).

This quote clearly shows the direct impact of educational staff's behaviour on the student's motivation and interest in school. Inappropriate, humiliating behaviours or negligence from school officials can lead to severe disgust and ultimately dropout. This type of psychological violence in the educational environment has very serious consequences for students.

In total, dropout and truancy among boys is a complex phenomenon occurring under the influence of various violences. Violence in the family environment (like what was seen in narratives of running away from home), violence in institutional environments (like Juvenile Correction Centre), violence in the school environment (from peers or educational staff), and structural and economic violence (like compulsion to work due to poverty) all play a role in this phenomenon. This consequence not only deprives the individual of educational and occupational opportunities but places him in exposure to other social injuries like addiction and delinquency. To combat this phenomenon, we need a comprehensive approach addressing all dimensions of violence against boys and men and providing safe and supportive environments for them. Social Learning Theories (Bandura, 1977) and Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969) can also be useful in explaining how early and environmental experiences influence individual behaviour and decisions like dropping out.

9.3.5. Loss of Men's Social Credit and Status

Violence against men, especially within the familial context, has deep and multilayered consequences on men's social status and credit in Iranian society. This phenomenon, which has received less attention, not only destabilises

family relationships but challenges men's identity and role in social and family networks. In this analysis, utilising the Grounded Theory framework, the familial consequences of violence against men are examined with a focus on the Loss of Social Credit and Status. Data obtained from in-depth interviews show how psychological, verbal, and social violences distance men from their traditional and normative position in family and society and mark a cycle of isolation, humiliation, and social collapse. This narrative, by intertwining the full quotes of interviewees and scientific perspectives, draws a unified image of this social injury.

One of the most prominent consequences of violence against men is the loss of social credit, which often begins from the family context and spreads to society. In Iranian culture, men are often recognised as the pillar of the family and the main breadwinner, but when this role is weakened due to economic, psychological, or social pressures, their social position becomes unstable as well. One interviewee speaks with deep regret of this loss of credit in his market and neighbourhood:

'I had a credit in the whole Bazaar. Cigarette sellers even now say... [in] Molavi [street]... times I went clandestinely for smuggling too... even though I was chaotic and an addict like this... four tradesmen would call me into their shop... they would get upset for me... this Mr. Rezaei himself cried for me that 'Oh why did you become like this, Oh God.' He is my old neighbourhood kid [friend]. He knows nicely... now ask him, speak with him, he has my biography nicely.'
(Interview No. 24, Vahid (Gholam Eskandari), Pos 95-96).

This quote shows how addiction, which itself can be the result of social pressures and psychological violences, has destroyed the individual's past credit among neighbourhood-mates and tradesmen and driven him to the margins. From a theoretical perspective, this phenomenon is analysable with the concept of 'Social Capital' raised by Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1986). Social capital refers to networks of relationships and trust between individuals which, if destroyed, places the individual in social isolation. In this case, addiction and life chaos have destroyed the individual's social capital and weakened his position in the local community.

This loss of position is often intensified by verbal and psychological humiliations in the family. Verbal violence, especially from the spouse or other family members, is one of the common tools for weakening men's position. Interviewees have repeatedly pointed to this type of violence, how with labels

like 'incompetent' (*Bi-orzeh*) or destructive comparisons, it questions men's self-esteem and credit. One interviewee points to these humiliations:

'It becomes verbal humiliations. You know the statistics. I had statistics of year 92 [2013], year 92 statistics said that in the world above 3/4 of violences are verbal violences. Not physical violences. So this is very, very much. Meaning I, because of many of my lacks and because of many of my have-nots... that expectation I have from my husband... I start with verbal humiliations, 'incompetent'... I have heard this again and again from my clients... labels that they attach very easily.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 26).

This type of violence, which has greater intensity in rural environments due to more intertwined social relationships, places men in a position where they feel insufficient. Another interviewee points to these destructive comparisons:

'Most violences that men experience here are verbal violence... I mentioned because [in] rural environment they know each other and that independence is fainter and constantly individuals... in fact social relationships are more intertwined... whether they want or not they compare with each other and women use this as a lever because women's violence is usually not physical and they don't have the physical dimension... their violence is mostly through verbal means, for example she says 'If you were a good man like so-and-so, for example, you would perform this work'... and this acceptance of masculinity...' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 12).

From the perspective of Hirschi's 'Social Control' Theory, this type of verbal violence acts as a tool for enforcing social norms and forces men to accept traditional roles, but at the same time, when the individual cannot perform these roles, he feels humiliated and isolated (Hirschi, 1969).

This humiliation and loss of position often leads to social deviations like addiction, infidelity, or aggressive behaviours which themselves reproduce a cycle of violence and destruction of credit. One interviewee describes this destructive cycle thus:

'It can destabilise the man's position, starts from family reaches society... a man who is not respected in the family and doesn't have that position of his own and doesn't have that discipline of his own as a husband becomes weak... a person who becomes weak comes into society... lives in society... and now considering my job... now my look is a bit sharp/harsh towards this issue... that he suffers social deviations, like the discussion of addiction, discussion of special escape,

temporary marriage (Sigheh), betrayal of spouse... and these are deviations that happen at the sexual level and returns again to the foundation of the family and strikes the blow... now when he suffers social deviations, suffers addiction or sexual deviations... again he is seeing violence... thinks he is guilty in society and acts like a bully (Gardan-kolofiti)... for example he says 'I consumed substances for five years, I enjoyed myself (Eshgh-o-hal), I am living for myself' and excuse me he says 'I mount four other women too'... but in truth he is taking the joy out [punishing/harming himself], is self-harming, destroying... destroying that position of his worse... for example like the bullies that exist, these kids who are on Instagram... now I name too like Amir Agha Farzaneh, Mehdi Amiri... made a name in society and are known as bullies but... you saw all those violences of society that they reached here.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 5).

This quote shows how losing position in the family drives men towards deviant behaviours and these behaviours themselves lead to further destruction of their social credit. From the perspective of Merton's 'Social Strain' Theory, these behaviours are the result of inability to achieve legitimate goals through legitimate means which drags the individual to deviant paths (Merton, 1938).

Social and cultural pressures also play an important role in weakening men's position in the family. In a society where expectations of men as breadwinner and family supporter are high, inability to perform these roles quickly leads to loss of respect and credit. One interviewee points to this change of position:

'I think that, well, violence against women was very prevalent in our society before, existed... but now we have witnessed the change of this procedure towards men... well one of the reasons of this matter is that he is the breadwinner... that the family and man of the family... in fact that economic and social position and base of his has declined... and in fact contrary to the wrong perception that men are strong... in our society none of their issues and problems are seen and their voice is not heard.' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 6).

This quote indicates a paradigm shift in gender roles that has placed men in a vulnerable position. On the other hand, change of values in new generations has also fueled this weakening of position. An interviewee points to this generational gap:



Figure 14 Domestic Violence Against Men

'Definition of family now differs from definition of family some [time] ago... we still say family is important whereas for our children's generation family is not important at all... for new generations. I am speaking about the new generation... basically family is not important for him... 'I want to perform this work'... when he wants to perform a wrong move he doesn't think at all that 'If father understands what happens, if mother understands'.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 106).

This change of values has weakened the traditional position of the father as the axis of the family and led to his emotional and social isolation.

Violence against men also leads to reduced family resilience which itself influences men's social position. When the family does not act as the main base of emotional and social support, men become more vulnerable against external pressures. One interviewee points to this loss of resilience with a bitter metaphor:

'I... regarding family... family that got tired, cut, left... like a well-pigeon... a pigeon... [you] give seeds to its child from childhood... keep it in the house for ten years too... give it feathers and wings... it returns goes into the well. This is our story. We... like this... what... we must go to the bottom of the well... that one too [family] their mind goes to the top of the well [they don't care].' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 248).

This quote indicates the collapse of family supports that leaves the man alone against problems. From the perspective of Galtung's 'Structural Violence'

Theory, this type of violence is the result of unequal social structures depriving the individual of support sources (Galtung, 1969). This deprivation weakens the man's social position even more.

The impact of these violences on mental health and family relationships is also undeniable. Men who lose their position often face anger and tension in the family, which itself leads to a cycle of violence and social destruction. One interviewee points to these chain effects:

'Its consequence for families... from the family's view is reputation (Abrou) that they say 'Our reputation goes' and so-and-so... and in addition to losing their child... creation of more anger in families happens... which repercussions of anger in the family... you know how anger is dragged into society and makes society severely more nervous... and class and chain repercussions... meaning it spreads several repercussions and problems in a chain and virus-like manner in society which causes increase of society's hatred towards each other... individuals' tendency towards separatism and slandering individuals and destruction of understanding and consciousness and culture... many other things.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 19).

This quote shows how losing men's position in the family fuels social anger and hatred and drives society towards fragmentation.

In some cases, even traditional and normative roles of men are ridiculed and this itself leads to social humiliation. One interviewee points to these negative stereotypes with bitterness:

'The man that our society is defining... let me say frankly... is always Mr. Donkey, Mr. Ass, Mr. Jackal, Mr. Thief... not once did they say 'Mr. Thief' [in a complex way?].... gentlemen are always negative roles. Whenever they want to say ethical points regarding father and mother, they only say mother. Anyone I am indebted to is my mother.' (Interview No. 98, Rasoul, Pos 59).

This type of negative view severely weakens men's position in society and family and drives them to the margins. From the perspective of Bauman's 'Liquid Modernity' Theory, these changes in roles and values are the result of rapid social transformations that have made human relationships more fragile and questioned traditional positions (Bauman, 2000).

Violence against men also leads to reduced tolerance threshold and weakening of social position in work and military environments, where men are often present. One interviewee points to these pressures:

'[Men due to hard work pressures and military environment violences] in the long term causes their temperament to change and their tolerance threshold to decrease and they can't have efficiency like that... these are these very problems.'
(Interview No. 99, Military Colonel, Pos 38).

This quote shows how environmental pressures influence men's mental health and weaken their ability to perform family and social roles.

Finally, this analysis within the Grounded Theory framework shows that the loss of men's credit and social position as one of the familial consequences of violence against men is the result of a complex interaction of psychological, verbal, economic, and cultural violences. This consequence influences not only the individual but the entire family and social network and reproduces a cycle of isolation, anger, and deviation. To exit this cycle, redefining gender roles, strengthening social supports, and reducing negative stigmas related to men's role is necessary. Violence against men, beyond an individual problem, is a structural injury requiring extensive social and cultural interventions.

9.3.6. Labelling and Stigma

Labelling (Stigma) and notoriety count as one of the most prominent and hidden social consequences of violence against men; consequences that are sometimes much more formidable and lasting than initial physical or psychological injuries. In other words, violence not only places the individual under physical or spiritual pressure but can cause him and even his living environment to face social stigmas and notoriety, such that this issue influences men's individual and social identity and provides the grounds for social isolation and reduction of opportunities for growth, mobility, and success.

Among interviewees' narratives, the role of violence in creating or intensifying negative social labels has been emphasised repeatedly. For example, Yaser Hosseinfard points to the formation of notoriety for the city of Kuhdasht due to the spread of violence, drug use, and theft, and says:

'In my opinion from a social aspect and from the aspect of our city among the province's cities... as a city that violence is in it, theft is in it, its people [have] addiction in it, its people are thieves... and this is to our detriment... from a cultural aspect, the social position of Kuhdasht people... we are bold [conspicuous/stigmatised] among cities and this itself causes... we can get jobs

[but] they don't give to us because we are Kuhdashti.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseinifard, Pos 81-82).

This quote clearly shows how the occurrence of violence in a region can influence not just a specific individual but all residents of that region and confront them with labels such as 'violent,' 'criminal,' or 'addict.' This issue aligns with 'Social Stigma' Theory (Goffman, 1963) which explains ways of social exclusion and discrimination based on specific characteristics or experiences.

Notoriety resulting from violence penetrates to the local level as well. Faraz Mahboubi says in this regard:

'Everyone's view changes... for example like this and like that... people's face [image] and view regarding that region has changed. Our neighbourhood's name is ruined, for example they say 'Louts (Lat-ha) of such-and-such neighbourhood'... this neighbourhood doesn't have a good name because of much crime and felony.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 133-137).

Such images not only cause the exclusion of residents by other groups but reduce opportunities for employment, marriage, or even social participation and directly threaten individuals' social capital.

Sometimes this labelling and notoriety finds its way to individuals one by one. For example, Sajjad Shahrokhi points to the 'apparent manifestation of violence-stricken individuals' as the first social consequence:

'Its first manifestation is the apparent manifestation of these individuals at the city level... its first destructive manifestation is the presence of these individuals in the streets.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 28).

Physical signs of violence or its repercussions can become a stigma for others' judgment and confront the individual with labels such as 'criminal,' 'damaged,' or 'unhealthy' even without any prior knowledge.

This trend is clearly seen in Mohammad Amin Bagheri's experience:

'I had become notorious (Angosht-nama - pointed at with fingers). Mostly they told me 'Substance-y' (Mavadi - junkie).' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin Bagheri, Pos 138-142).

The mere experience of violence or its accompaniment with other issues, like addiction, is sufficient for social labelling, and these labels directly cause exclusion, isolation, and loss of opportunities. Sexual violence is no exception

to this rule either, and in addition to the initial injury, places the victim in exposure to humiliation and labelling by close ones and society. Hamid Haghi narrates:

'... my sisters and brothers started telling me, in their own words, 'Bakery, bakery' (Nounvaei - implying getting 'kneaded' or used/abused).'' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 31).

This type of labelling causes deepening of psychological wounds and creation of continuous accompaniment of suffering with the victim; as if notoriety and label become an inseparable part of his individual identity.

Even family pressure or fear of social judgment, like Ali Asgari's experience in fear of the label 'Wife-dominated' (*Zan-zalil*) (Interview No. 54) or Omid's concealment regarding his sexual orientation (Interview No. 56), indicates that labelling and notoriety can have an undeniable role in individuals' behaviours, communications, and even lifestyle.

Labelling and notoriety endanger not only individual life but men's social structures and communication networks and entail social isolation, reduced self-confidence, and even chronic psychological problems. Combating these consequences requires changing society's attitude and establishing supportive, empathetic, and judgment-free environments for damaged men; a matter that will be the opener of the way for the return of self-esteem and the possibility of more effective presence of violence victims in society.

9.3.7. Execution, Prison, and Payment of Blood Money

In analysing the consequences of aggressive social strategies of violence against men, examining lived narratives shows that processes such as Execution, Prison, Payment of Blood Money (*Diyeh*), and Transfer to Addiction Rehabilitation or Psychiatric Centres are not only tools of formal control; rather, they have transformed into part of men's daily life and lived experience and practically make them enter a vicious and reproducing cycle from which liberation is difficult and sometimes impossible (Agnew, 2006; Lyman, 1387). This cycle often begins with the experience of violence; a violence that the individual may experience both in the position of victim and in the role of agent, and over time challenges his mental health, social position, economic security, and even individual identity.

The lived experience of victims and individuals who have dealt with the punishment and control system due to specific conditions shows that sudden

reactions to threatening situations and tense conditions can unintentionally guide the individual onto a path whose end is deprivation of health, loss of social position, confrontation with law, and exclusion. According to one participant, facing violence or even applying it drives the individual towards 'social misery, removal from normal life, and the heaviness of permanent consequences'; a situation wherein not only damages of crime and punishment do not stop, but terror, defenselessness, and despair are reproduced structurally (Durkheim, 1384; Bandura, 1977). This cycle can involve the whole family and society system as well, and its reflection and consequence is beyond the individual level (Agnew, 2006).

In this midst, the legal and judicial system too, instead of leading to reduction and management of violence, sometimes itself transforms into a factor for expansion, stabilisation, and reproduction of the criminal role (Foucault, 1975; Becker, 1963). Narratives of the experience of presence in detention centres and prison show that these centres often look at individuals with a view accompanied by suspicion and prejudice instead of treatment, support, and rehabilitation:

'You go to any centres you go, first they explode you [yell/humiliate] then they say 'Are you a client? Are you a plaintiff? What? Why did you come?'... when you go for a thing... they give you a verdict... the judge who wants to [do] a thing... if for example your sentence is 2 years, he comfortably gives you four years.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 82-83).

Based on Howard Becker's Labelling Theory (Becker, 1963), judicial confrontations and labelling defendants or prisoners severely reduces the probability of return and recovery of social position. In this midst, a group of men and especially adolescents and youths, due to lack of family and social support, face doubled fear and deeper loneliness; an experience well visible in Hamid Haghi's narrative:

'The first time my foot opened to the police station and these kinds of things... the horror I had... I said 'I have horror of these things'... that I saw officers are beating... kept me twenty days in detention... I thought they are sitting... fear had taken me, fever and shivering fell into my soul and from that side family are looking for me everywhere.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 73).

Goffman, in the concept of 'Total Institutions' (Goffman, 1961), addresses this very experience; environments formed with the intention of complete control

of individuals, but the result in practice is the loss of individuals' identity and feeling of belonging.

In numerous cases, the family, due to inability to manage addiction or behavioural problems of men, forcibly sends them to addiction rehabilitation centres; but these centres, due to service quality and weakness of psychological and social supports, often do not have the power to prevent the return of the injury cycle:

'Camp that I went, my friend took [me]. Time when anymore they realised I am not out [using] and don't make trouble and have become clean.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 172).

This experience not only indicates the difficulty of quitting injury for individuals but emphasises the key role of social support and family trust in individuals' return to healthy life.

Other dimensions of this cycle return to cells like psychiatric patients. The family, depending on conditions, sometimes out of desperation and helplessness, entrusts these individuals to treatment and care centres:

'When the family hospitalises the client and goes out the door, you see that feeling in him/her that he/she has unloaded a burden from his/her shoulder and goes out.' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javad, Pos 34).

Foucault, in analysing the power structure and history of social exclusion of psychiatric patients, explains that segregation, separation, and forced care, more than being based on support or treatment, are rooted in fear, discrimination, and elimination policies (Foucault, 1961).

In a deeper layer, economic and financial consequences also manifest themselves in the form of continuous limitations. For many men, a prison record means the closing of employment paths, destruction of social trust, and falling into marginalisation:

'Prison record forever prevents work progress, receiving license, and social trust.' (Hughes, 2011).

This situation takes the possibility of rebuilding life and returning to the collective from the individual and drives him more towards the cycle of injury, crime, and violence (Marshall, 2013; Agnew, 2006).

The sum of these narratives and theories emphasise one principle: execution, prison, blood money, and transfer to care centres are not the

endpoint of injury, but the beginning for a new round of social elimination, increased deprivation, and reproduction of violence. Consequences of this approach remain beyond the individual and place society's recoverability and development in constant exposure to threat (Becker, 1963; Cribb, 1387 - *likely referring to Ian Craib's Social Theory*). Therefore, reforming legal and managerial structures, increasing social supports, strengthening educational systems, and reducing labelling are considered fundamental prerequisites for stopping this cycle and returning hope for life for men involved in injury (Marshall, 2013).

9.3.8. Expansion of Violence and Insecurity in Society

Examining the roots of violence against men requires delving into deep social and cultural layers. As mentioned in interviews too, understanding the concept of 'violence' and the role of the 'Domination System' in its formation is of high importance. One interviewee correctly points to this note that in analysing violence against men, one cannot focus only on the female gender factor as the dominator. He says:

'Look, the concept of the word violence is important... look, in violence the domination system has a lot of meaning... now in terms of gender... you here... anymore you can't... considering the gender parameter regarding women we can say 'This male gender, his factor of domination towards the woman is his gender'... but regarding the man you can't say the factor of violence against men is because of his gender... if this gender was female would they not be subjected to violence here now? We can't say this... it is a general domination... a patriarchal culture that doesn't know woman and man anymore... here gender is a controlled variable... that domination system takes victims whether woman or man... a time you say violence of women against men...' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 36).

This view aligns with feminist theories emphasising the role of power structures and the patriarchal system in producing violence. The patriarchal system as a general structure influences not only women but men as well and can pave the ground for the emergence of violence in interpersonal and social relationships.

Consequences of violence against men have a wide scope beyond physical injuries and can lead to deep psychological and social consequences. One of these consequences is suicide and its extensive impact on those around. As mentioned in the interview referring to World Health Organization statistics,

for every suicide, a significant number of individuals are seriously influenced. The interviewee says in this regard:

'That precise assessment which, if I am not mistaken, is Ministry of Health... World Health Organization says for every suicide 135 [people] are seriously influenced, meaning get involved. The consequence of this issue is very extensive and probably because risk factors... main ones they examine... existence of a suicide in a background can cause another suicide five or ten years later too. Taking influence from each other because suicide is a murder, is an unnatural death and humans after this event constantly suffer blame and fight and tension. Because it has very extensive social and media reflection and they speak about it constantly and thoughts that are behind it can be influential, well.' (Interview No. 19, Dr. Bahrami, Pos 70).

This quote shows how a violent event like suicide can have chain consequences and influence the mental health and social relationships of many individuals. Media and social reflection of such events can also fuel the expansion of negative thoughts and despair in society.

Understanding whether violence of women against men has transformed into an institutionalised 'issue' in society or not is an important point in analysing the phenomenon of violence. One interviewee raises this question and points to the note that the mere existence of a phenomenon does not mean it is problematic (*Masaleh-mand*). He says:

'It exists, everything exists in society, but is it an issue or not... look this is very important... issue means a... man... institutionalised... has become institutionalised in terms of quality and has expanded in terms of quantity too... but such a thing is not [the case]... well if it was like this it was good... the patriarchal system had broken but they had fallen from the other side of the roof... this is a good thing... can be good news... where you know anymore finally if a struggle takes shape... we pass the errors of equilibrium in that struggle... ups and downs... even if they reach the limit of equilibrium... if this be [the case] we say violence of women against men has found institutional aspect, is an issue... incidentally it is good news and... it has gone up so much from the limit of equilibrium it returns down... don't worry... this is part of the nature of social movements... but it is not like this... violence of woman against man... well a woman who...' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharai, Pos 38).

This view aligns with Giddens' Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984) which emphasises the mutual relationship of social structures and individual agency. For a phenomenon to transform into a social 'issue,' we require its institutionalisation qualitatively and its expansion quantitatively in society. In the interviewee's opinion, violence of women against men has not yet reached this stage in society.

Social consequences of violence influence the family as well and can lead to feelings of shame and insecurity among family members. One interviewee points to this subject that due to his thuggery and delinquency, his family feels shame and doesn't even feel secure. He says:

'Family [because of my thuggery and delinquency] feels shame... for example if a fight happens... they say 'This is So-and-so's son'... look, this very thing that they don't feel secure... for example [if] you are here [and] they don't feel secure... is not right at all. They don't feel secure. For example a talk happens... for example I know the right is not with you but I accept... you see perhaps they like this very much... but I don't like it... the guy wants to [get something] by force or for example comfortably wants something... I myself am a logical person you know... perhaps some places the guy said... for example in the bakery... for example I went to the bakery the guy is standing in the queue said 'How many do you want?' I say 'I stood at the head of the queue'... says 'No I want to know how many do you want?' I say 'Dad I stood at the head of the queue set the people going [serve them]'... you know I don't like these kinds of behaviours but well perhaps some like it.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 211-214).

This quote shows how violent behaviours of one individual can influence all family members and lead to feelings of shame, insecurity, and even reduced social interactions. The experience of encountering bullying and illogical behaviours in public spaces can also lead to increased feelings of insecurity in individuals.

One of the most worrying consequences of violence in society is the fear of sending children, especially girls, alone into public space. One interviewee points frankly to this fear and says:

'[One of the results of violence in the space of society] one of the violences is what... I fear to send my daughter out alone from a certain hour onwards... probability of any kind of violence towards that child exists.' (Interview No. 90, Mohsen Hagh, Pos 25).

This quote shows how the expansion of violence in society can limit individual freedoms and lead to increased parental worry regarding their children's safety. This fear is a reflection of the existence of structural insecurity in society requiring serious attention from policymakers and officials.

Violence can influence the innermost social institutions like the family as well and lead to the collapse of family relationships. A shocking example of this phenomenon is patricide (murder of father by son) pointed to in one of the interviews. The interviewee says in this regard:

'It encompasses the whole society when you... father gets into conflict with son... in our own words it is the apocalypse... it is a reality. I... that Davoudabad of Qarchak... father tells son 'My son don't go out today'... says 'What does it have to do with you'... comes blocks him says 'I don't let you go out. Today you shouldn't go out'... that one hits a punch in Dad's heart... on the spot the Dad passes away. This one wanted to run away too... with some tricks we found him. This is that same alley that heard this word that 'Son killed Father.' In the whole society basically it becomes media-ised [news]. The whole region... what state... that same alley these live in... this very thing that is... this media that exists... I read it I see it... what impact does this subject have from a psychological perspective.' (Interview No. 95, Retired Military Colonel, Pos 25).

This heartbreaking event shows how violence can manifest in the most severe form possible inside the family and lead to irreversible consequences. The psychological impact of such events on eyewitnesses and the broader society is also significant and requires the attention of psychologists and sociologists.

Another social phenomenon related to violence and cultural changes is the reduction of tendency towards formal marriage and increase of phenomena like 'White Marriage' (cohabitation) and co-living. Some interviewees pointed to this subject as a social concern. One elderly interviewee expresses his worry about his sons not marrying. He says:

'My engagement [struggle] is this that my children don't marry... my sons, don't want a wife. Of course for reasons I say 'We don't want.' Now thank God I have income so much that I don't have need... again with these... again it is a problem. Now my son for example... this is hard for me.' (Interview No. 70, Rashidi, Elderly, Pos 50).

This worry indicates a change in social values and norms related to family and marriage.

Another interviewee points frankly to the reduction of tendency to marry and comparison of the current situation with the past and says:

'Now marriage in society has become very less... unless he is a donkey to marry. Sir, he becomes friends with this one and has his sexual relationships... one can finish sexual relationship with her. We... first, well, they told married ones 'They are donkeys.' No, married ones are not donkeys... youths of now are not donkeys... we are donkeys [who] go under the burden of commitment. The party has his sex every day... well [if] she spoke nonsense a lot [nagged]... 'Get up go get lost out, you talk too much'... divorces her. I was sitting... suddenly she was talking with her boyfriend... 'Yesterday we were in the Metro'... said that 'You are speaking like a dog, you are spinning around with such-and-such girl now'... 'I spin around basically what do I say to you'... well I was just listening... I had closed my eyes nicely was listening to see what they say... I had stood to see what they say. Said 'I don't want you,' said 'I don't want you'... work finished, it finished. Look, it is something like this.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 350-353).

This quote points bitterly to the change of attitudes towards marriage and commitment and shows how ease in establishing informal relationships can lead to reduced tendency for formal marriage. These social changes can have long-term consequences on the structure of family and society.

Finally, another interviewee points to the expansion of the 'White Marriage' phenomenon and links this phenomenon to modelling Western culture. She says:

'[White Marriage] look it has become very common... has become very much... I was watching a film... the girl and boy were friends with each other for four years or 8 years... the girl went to the boy's house and ate lunch... morning when they came for breakfast the boy said that 'I have good news for you, I decided we marry each other'... said 'Wow'... hugged each other... these were together eight years and came and went lived together... after eight years decided... reached the conclusion to marry each other now. Many of our behaviours we involve the West... involve the Arab... then when we reach here we say 'Our culture'.' (Interview No. 89, Rahele Mehraban, Pos 98).

This quote indicates the impact of globalisation and modelling other cultures on social changes in Iran. The expansion of phenomena like White Marriage requires more precise sociological examinations to understand its roots and

consequences. These phenomena, alongside other consequences of violence, offer a complex image of social transformations in Iran which requires deeper attention and analysis.

9.4. Economic Consequences

Violence against men is one of the social subjects that creates numerous consequences in various dimensions of victims' lives. Among these, Economic Consequences of this phenomenon are among the most important aspects requiring deep and precise examination. Violence against men not only influences victims' psychological and social status but can have a direct impact on their economic and financial abilities. These impacts in many cases lead to the loss of individual and family financial stability and can even entail severer consequences for society.

One of the most important economic consequences of violence against men is heavy losses resulting from divorce. Men who become victims of violence from their spouse often suffer severe economic pressures in divorce and separation processes. Financial commitments such as paying Mehrieh (dowry), Nafagheh (alimony), or court and legal costs can place heavy pressure on their financial resources. These conditions, in addition to creating an economic crisis for the individual, may lead to reduced investment and economic participation at the macro level as well.

On the other hand, violence against men can cause disruption in their work and professional activity. Victims of violence usually suffer reduced concentration and motivation in the work environment due to psychological and social consequences resulting from violence. This situation may lead to losing job opportunities, reduced income, and even unemployment. Disruption in men's economic activity can leave significant impacts on their families and create a cycle of economic crisis.

Furthermore, economic consequences resulting from crimes related to violence against men are also significant. Men who suffer psychological injury or social pressure due to violence may enter the cycle of economic crimes, such as theft or illegal actions to provide for their needs. These crimes not only bring legal costs and economic losses for the victimised individual but inflict extensive injuries on the economic body of society.

In total, economic effects resulting from violence against men show that this phenomenon not only disrupts victims' individual lives but inflicts long-

term injuries on economic development and financial stability at broad social levels. Examining these consequences is necessary for offering effective solutions to reduce losses.

9.4.1. Heavy Economic Loss Resulting from Divorce

Devastating economic consequences resulting from violence, especially psychological and legal violence in cases such as divorce, are one of the most important dimensions of violence against men. According to interview data, these consequences often include loss of income, heavy debts, and destruction of men's economic concentration. Such losses not only reduce men's quality of life but hold them back from optimal utilisation of economic opportunities. In narratives presented by interviewees, the impact of Mehrieh, divorce issues, and legal conditions manifests itself especially deeply.

One interviewee points to economic problems resulting from life pressures after divorce and says:

'Economically I fell behind very much... because my thought was focused here [on divorce issues]... I didn't have much economic concentration on work... they took [money/assets] in short... I received a big blow... this is a type of violence too.' (Interview No. 77, Abbas Barghamadi, Pos 33).

This narrative indicates economic blows resulting from psychological stresses that divorce imposes on men. As Social Stress Theory states, economic and psychological pressures can cause reduced efficiency of individuals and loss of economic resources. Other narratives also point to these same destructive impacts.

Another interviewee addresses the extensive impacts of Mehrieh on men's economic life and states how this economic pressure imposes a heavy burden on men's shoulders:

'Another 300 [coins]... every two months once he must give a quarter coin... approximately 11 million [Tomans] every two months... half the salary of an employee.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 52-55).

This situation traps men in a cycle of debt, reduced quality of life level, and economic stress. Gurr and Cloward's 'Limited Opportunity' Theory (referencing *Strain/Opportunity Structure*) explains well how financial limitations hold individuals back from advancing a quality life and cause the

creation of newer violences in individual and social relationships (Cloward & Ohlin, 1960; Gurr, 1970).

In other examples, the subject of imposing Mehrieh is raised as a kind of tool for controlling men. One interviewee says in this relation:

'Mehrieh has become a collar tool... [on] that gentleman's neck... that you name violence. This constantly pressure, constantly pressure.' (Interview No. 90, Mohsen Hagh, Pos 23).

This sentence clearly unveils another form of violence; economic violence that threatens not only assets but men's dignity and self-confidence. This narrative harmonises with 'Social Dominance Theory' (Sidanius, 1999) which states how legal tools can be used to impose domination and control over specific groups.

Economic problems resulting from violence, at another level, can place the individual in vulnerable social positions. According to another interviewee:

'My colleague who has separated... doesn't have a house... the woman took the house and everything as Mehrieh and took away... this poor guy is living in a car... cut our ear [cheated us/took everything] and left... what should I do.' (Interview No. 90, Mohsen Hagh, Pos 17).

This bitter narrative shows how economic violence can drive men to the margins and deprive them of the most basic life needs. From the perspective of 'Labelling Theory' (Becker, 1963), this type of homelessness and poverty can lead to men being labelled as 'vagrant' or 'irresponsible,' which makes their return to society and improvement of their economic situation more difficult.

Also, violence can cause disruption in men's job performance. One interviewee mentions that:

'My office work faced a problem... I didn't have leave [days off].' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 116-117).

This matter shows that pressures resulting from divorce and legal issues related to it can lead to losing job and economic opportunities. Becker's 'Human Capital Theory' emphasises that education, skill, and mental health of individuals are fundamental factors in increasing their productivity and income (Becker, 1964). Violence, by threatening these factors, can seriously damage men's human capital.

In conclusion, economic violence against men is not just an individual problem but a social issue requiring comprehensive and multilateral

approaches. From reforming laws related to Mehrieh and divorce to offering supportive and counselling services to damaged men, these are necessary actions to reduce economic consequences of violence against men and create a fairer and more equal society. Based on Bronfenbrenner's 'Ecological Systems Theory' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), these interventions must be performed at various individual, familial, social, and legal levels to be able to have positive and sustainable impacts.

9.4.2. *Economic Loss Resulting from Crimes*

Economic consequences of violence against men are one of the most important aspects that must be attended to in qualitative analyses. What we face here is a chain of events indicating dense and complex effects that violence and pressures related to it have left on the individual's economic life. Narratives presented clearly show how violences and various dilemmas have led to the destruction of individuals' economic resources and the collapse of their economic conditions. In order to analyse economic consequences of violence against men, here we use the provided quote and examine it within the framework of scientific theories and Grounded Theory.

In the first narrative, experiences of an individual involved in the trade of prohibited goods show a kind of social and economic pressure from the very beginning that makes him enter a vicious cycle:

'We came... that what... we have contraband goods and statistics [inventory/intel] and so-and-so... and we came encountered a problem and so-and-so... we came separated house and life... what... from the father... we built a three-storey house together in an alley for the wife and stepmother... one floor I sat [lived] and one floor my father sat and one floor my younger brother sat... that our wedding, for example today I did the wedding. Basically suddenly the page turned... the page turned and we became conspicuous (Tablo) in Molavi [market]... and they came after us [for] contraband goods this side that side... they sold [betrayed/snitched on] our warehouse again. They sold our warehouse. Something around... if I don't lie to you... eight... two two three cartons of biomil powdered milk... I don't know 90 cartons of cigarettes and 148 chewing gum... all contraband goods... something around 32 cartons of pastille. All these got stuck [seized]. We couldn't go for a while... they even came took the owner of that house from the real estate agency... they said he has a contract... I was in contact with him, was supporting him... I said 'Go I spend [pay]'... those times

seven eight ten million Tomans checks piece by piece to the account of that landlord so he doesn't give our statistics [intel]... I paid money... I couldn't go to Molavi... one of them came to us what... constantly they came and were looking for me until year 93-94 - 89 [2010-2015] they were looking for us. I too... around, for example, 3 Nissan [trucks] cartons I gave to contraband goods... they took all kinds anymore... powdered milk, pasta and cigarettes and looking for who was it when he came... the house became empty. Nothing... we couldn't go to Molavi anymore and so-and-so... our hand and wing empty [broke] and someone suggested to us and said 'I know someone who cooks and so-and-so and they cook Shisheh... come let's do Shisheh crime.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 26).

This part of the narrative shows how entering illegal economic activities, which itself can be due to economic and social pressures, quickly leads to irreversible economic consequences. Losing capital (seized contraband goods), paying bribes to prevent being exposed, and ultimately inability to continue legitimate economic activity (inability to return to Molavi) are all direct consequences of this situation. This experience can be examined within the framework of 'Strain Theory.' This theory states that when individuals face social or structural pressures preventing them from achieving legitimate goals, they may turn to illegal ways (Agnew, 1992). In this case, it seems economic pressure and perhaps lack of suitable job opportunities drove the individual towards smuggling and he experienced its violent economic consequences.

These economic consequences do not end here. The individual continues to point to escape and forced displacement:

'We became fugitives... came up to Urmia... meaning its price (Tavan) is very heavy.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 26).

Escape and lack of locational stability itself imposes significant economic costs on the individual. Losing occupational connections, inability to find a fixed job, and living costs in a new place are all part of this heavy price. This situation can be related to the concept of 'Social Capital' (Putnam, 2000). Social capital refers to communication networks and resources through which individuals gain access to economic opportunities. Escape and isolation weaken the individual's social capital and reduce his ability to recover his economic situation.

In another part of the narrative, direct consequences of conflict with the law and heavy fines are pointed out:

'[Police] took us over contraband goods and took a Khavar [truck] of firecrackers from us... took close to forty cartons of Marlboro cigarettes from us... that time they came what... 3 million 600 thousand Tomans from us... well the expert and investigator went into customs purchased... investigator went weighing... they fined us ten times... 36 million Tomans... that I had one apartment unit I sold... 36 million Tomans to the account of contraband goods Sibaa account I poured money... that this money was confiscation of property. Meaning the severest police roads [checkpoints]... for example catch catch [crackdown]... was cigarettes... one was Ghareh [checkpoint], Haji Abad Bandar... one Mehriz Yazd... they were searching for narcotics and would take contraband things too. Anyone had any contraband they took from him. Bus went to parking [impound]... in short what... they took people there stripped them anymore... took their goods... from a series [of people] took money let their goods go... and those who were parachutists [smugglers] too what. Goods were confiscated went put to tender... auction hammer was hit... Acquisition Property... moneys went to the account of Mr. Thing [Government]... in short we worked somewhere with our father and we came became what... cigarette merchant. Close to 35 cartons of cigarettes we hit [bought/stashed]... came with these cigarettes where... got caught in Qom.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 16).

This quote clearly shows how conflict with the legal system, which is itself part of the violence cycle, leads to losing valuable assets. Selling the apartment to pay the fine, confiscation of property, and losing capital are all direct consequences of this conflict. This can be related to the concept of Criminal Justice and its Economic Consequences for involved individuals. Heavy fines and asset confiscation can place the individual in a very vulnerable financial position and deprive him of necessary resources to return to normal life.

Finally, the individual points to the sense of despair and hopelessness from previous efforts:

'Again we went where... Molavi... I said 'Anymore I don't come... whatever we worked in these few years all of it went.'' (Interview No. 24, Vahid Gholam Eskandari, Pos 18).

This sentence summarises the destructive economic consequences of violence. Years of effort and earning income have gone with the wind following a series of violent events and dilemmas resulting from it. This loss of capital and feeling of futility of efforts can lead to psychological injuries and reduced motivation for future economic activities. This situation can be linked to 'Relative Deprivation Theory.' When individuals feel that compared to others or compared to their own expectations of a desirable situation, they have been deprived of resources or opportunities, this matter can lead to despair, dissatisfaction, and even high-risk behaviours (Runciman, 1966). In this case, losing capital and inability to return to the previous economic situation can lead to a feeling of relative deprivation and its negative consequences.

In general, these narratives in a unified manner show how violence, whether directly (like conflict with law) or indirectly (like pressures resulting from illegal activities), can have devastating economic consequences for men. These consequences include losing capital, debt, homelessness, inability to continue legitimate economic activities, and ultimately, poverty and deprivation. Analysing these consequences within the framework of Grounded Theory shows that these issues are not only individual problems,



Figure 15 Economic Violence Against Men in the Family

but part of a more complex cycle requiring comprehensive and multilateral interventions at individual, social, and legal levels.

9.4.3. *Disruption in Men's Work, Activity, and Income*

Disruption in work, activity, and income of men, as some aspects of the economic consequences of violence against men, has complex dimensions that influence not only their livelihood status but the psychological and social dimensions of their lives as well. Various violences, from psychological pressures to physical injuries, create deep and extensive repercussions in men's working and economic life and trap them in a cycle of traumatic problems. Analysing this issue based on Grounded Theory indicates a deep link between conditions, experiences, and consequences of these individuals' lives. In the following, citing interviewees' quotes and the theoretical framework, these consequences are examined in the form of a unified analysis.

One of the recurring themes in quotes is the transformation of men into tools or machines for striving in the economic structure. One interviewee points to this subject thus:

'Capitalist system... when I am a commodity, when I am an object... meaning I am a machine that wakes up at 4 AM in an economic game, goes runs, runs, runs, runs and comes home at 12 midnight and perhaps some nights I am not [home]... that pyramid has collapsed.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 60).

The experience of men placed under economic pressures and the exploitative structure of work not only causes disruption in their physical and mental health but threatens their human identity as well. In these conditions, men, instead of living for themselves or family, are often considered merely part of the production cycle, and this issue gradually wears down their economic resources, motivation, and livelihood.

Lack of health, as one of the consequences of violence, has an unbreakable link with losing economic resources. In this regard, another interviewee states:

'[Men when due to many violences] lose their health, after health their economic resources are lost, your financial resources are lost.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 119).

Psychological and physical pressures exerted on the individual not only strip them of the ability to work but create treatment costs and losses resulting from

disability. Therefore, this negative cycle merges lost health with losing economic resources and places men in exposure to injury more.

Alongside this subject, social stigma and discrimination in work environments are raised as an obstacle to returning to occupational life; as the point revealed in the analysis of experiences is that social stigma or mistrust towards the individual is a serious obstacle for his return to work and economic activity. One interviewee explains:

'Wherever we went they didn't let 'Come down [in]' or for example [if] we go into their workshop... the guy smokes... they don't let him in... anymore 'Woe if they understand that you are sick [have HIV].'' (Interview No. 23, Ali Tavakoli, Pos 176).

Furthermore, the physical appearance left from violence or other injuries also has a deep impact on social acceptance and ability to enter occupational environments. Another individual narrates his experience thus:

'One of the complications of violence and thuggery is that you have no place in the scope of work and these [things] in society. That... they give severe damage... wherever you go... I operated... I had been stabbed... operated... my hand and arm got lines [scars]. Occupational... what... now if you want to go somewhere or go somewhere they always look at a person... fresh [new]... ours is not much a thing... but the guy... in the neck [sees scars]... you speak a word the guy pauses... at the neck and these... perhaps he wants to give a negative answer to you basically... this has a lot of influence, you know.' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 286).

These quotes show well how physical consequences of violence not only endanger individual health but by creating stigma and impacting appearance, strip job opportunities from him as well.

Beyond physical injuries and social stigma, psychological consequences of violence are also severely impactful on the ability to work and earn income. One interviewee explains the direct connection of insomnia resulting from violence with work disruption thus:

'Well that one who left went... in this I can [say] violence... meaning an instance of violence... you see from a spiritual, psychological aspect many times you see work and life and your everything has been influenced. Work... basically work... look I am saying, you know... when you can't sleep at night... well what is violence... must they necessarily grab knife you [for you] to say 'It's a violent

thing'... must they grab beat the guy to say it is violence? No, when I say I can't sleep comfortably at night... how was it [before]... I could sleep comfortably like a child in his mom's arms... when I spoke with her I would fall asleep... now I can't sleep... two years she is not in my life... I couldn't sleep properly one night... meaning I didn't sleep comfortably at night.' (Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 40-41).

Inability to sleep comfortably and spiritual consequences resulting from violence disrupt concentration, motivation, and individual ability to perform work and consequently influence his income and economic status.

Furthermore, unemployment resulting from violence creates a feeling of being a burden and shame in men. An interviewee who has become completely unemployed describes this feeling thus:

'I am totally unemployed and have no income. It is a kind of void in life... it is something that is in the family... for example one gets ashamed before father and mother... they say for example 'Why are you like this for example.' I have a feeling of being a burden.' (Interview No. 91, Davood, Pos 71-78).

This feeling of shame and embarrassment shows itself not only in the family environment but in social relationships as well. The same individual continues:

'Now for example you... for example take your father's car... how many times can you take it. Well a person... it is ugly... goes before his buddy sees he has his own... is proud of himself... gets up at night picks up the switch goes... gets up in the day... I ten times twenty times... [because of unemployment] I get ashamed... as if something is in my head... my shoulder. This heavy load... something is in my thought. It is my worry... well if something God forbid... an event happens what will be.' (Interview No. 91, Davood, Pos 80).

These quotes well indicate the colossal psychological pressure that unemployment and lack of financial independence impose on men and create a feeling of incompetence and permanent worry in them.

Sometimes, consequences of violence or imposed conditions force men to sacrifice important job opportunities. In one quote, an interviewee has been forced to reject managerial job offers due to conditions of taking care of his child after divorce:

'Until that time [divorce from wife] my daughter was with me. 1400 [2021] she said that 'If Yalda wants I am willing to keep her.' Conditions of keeping Yalda

were very hard for me. Especially that I was forced to... I truthfully for a few years was forced to reject posts [managerial] that are offered to me. I spoke with Yalda... felt Yalda has a tendency to... (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 123).

This example shows how responsibilities and conditions resulting from violence or life changes, which are often related to previous violences, can prevent men's occupational and economic progress.

Furthermore, some compulsory conditions like military service can also have negative economic and occupational consequences for men. One interviewee describes the impact of military service on losing occupational progress opportunities thus:

'I worked before my service, worked from age 13. I worked [in] all supermarkets of the neighbourhood, I worked everywhere, whatever work I did... I could earn... to the extent that a motorcycle not be under my foot, a car be... this two years did a work [caused] that we try to get a car one year later. [Military service] takes your life [time], takes your vitality (Joun), perhaps you regress in this two years... but takes this from you... takes the opportunity of progress and regress from you... if I didn't go there I would go many places.' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 14).

This experience shows that even structural conditions like military service, which are not necessarily instances of direct violence, can have a negative impact on men's economic and occupational status by limiting time and opportunity. Consequences of these limitations can even show themselves in the ability to perform financial transactions; as another interviewee was forced to buy property in his sister's name due to not having a military service completion card:

'I remember I bought a house I bought in my sister's name [because of not having military service completion card] I couldn't transact in my own name.' (Interview No. 4, Hassan Spain, Pos 35).

Another destructive consequence is losing motivation for work and economic activity after traumatic experiences like emotional failures. An individual who has suffered such an experience speaks of his lack of motivation for work and progress:

'[With problems I had because of emotional failure] my everything has worn down... I could... now have a factory myself, not work in father's factory. I have

become unmotivated for life, became unmotivated for work... earn for whom!... I was thrown back. Economically I could have my own factory now not be in father's factory.' (Interview No. 49, Reza Rashidi, Pos 251-253).

This quote shows how violence or related psychological injuries not only destroy physical ability or job opportunities but by wearing down motivation, block the path of individual progress and economic independence.

Finally, consequences of poverty and lack of income resulting from violence leave deep impacts on men's physical and mental health. As one elderly interviewee states:

'[Poverty and lack of income] destroys men... they catch a thousand diseases... diseases they have too become ten times [worse]. Someone who has welfare... it has a lot of influence on his health.' (Interview No. 70, Rashidi, Elderly, Pos 44).

This quote emphasises the direct connection between economic status and health and shows that poverty and lack of income intensifies the traumatic cycle of disease and disability and consequently deepens the consequences of violence on men's lives.

In total, these quotes reveal a collection of economic consequences of violence against men including transformation into an economic tool, losing financial resources due to lack of health, facing stigma and discrimination in the work environment, disruption in ability to work due to psychological consequences, feeling of shame and being a burden resulting from unemployment, sacrificing job opportunities due to imposed conditions, negative impact of structural conditions like military service, losing motivation for work, and finally intensification of health problems due to poverty and lack of income. These analyses, within the framework of Grounded Theory, indicate the complexity and intertwined nature of consequences of violence against men in the economic field and highlight the need for deeper understanding and comprehensive supportive actions.

9.5. Ethical Consequences

Violence against men is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon which, in addition to psychological, social, and economic impacts, brings deep Ethical Consequences as well. These consequences influence not only the victims' families but society as well and lead to the collapse of values, relationships,

and ethical principles. This issue finds greater intensity in environments where violence is ignored or not considered a serious social problem, and paves the ground for broader ethical injuries.

One of the most important ethical consequences of violence against men is Moral Collapse and Decay. Violence, especially in family environments, can destroy mutual trust and respect between family members and damage ethical principles. This situation often leads to behaviours such as concealment, lying, revenge-seeking, or other destructive behaviours which challenge the ethical foundations of the family and, at the macro level, weaken shared values in society.

Parallel Relationships (Infidelity) is another ethical consequence of violence against men in marital relationships. Men placed in violence-generating environments may turn to other relationships outside the marital framework in an effort to compensate for their emotional and psychological void. These relationships often take shape secretly and pave the ground for injury to the ethical foundations of family and marital relationships. The consequence of such behaviours will be not only emotional disorder in families but the expansion of mistrust and reduced adherence to ethical principles in society.

On the other hand, one of the severest ethical consequences of violence against men is Sexual Abuse of Family Members. Violence in the family, by creating a space full of tension and mistrust, can end in deviant behaviours like sexual abuse of family members. This phenomenon, in addition to the direct victims being damaged, leaves a destructive impact on the ethical health of the family and leads to the erosion of values and ethical principles in a wider scope.

Finally, violence against men, with its destructive impacts on ethical principles, fuels a cycle of ethical decay at individual and social levels. These consequences are not limited only to victims but leave deep impacts on families and society and cause the expansion of ethical and communicative gaps in societies. Examining these consequences and offering solutions to prevent the occurrence of such injuries is a fundamental step towards strengthening ethical foundations and maintaining the spiritual health of society.

9.5.1. Moral Collapse and Decay

The present research, based on the Grounded Theory approach and relying on in-depth interviews with men exposed to violence, reveals one of the deep and less seen consequences of violence against men: Moral Collapse and Decay among this group of individuals. This consequence appears not only due to the annoying nature of violence but due to complex psychological and social processes occurring after it. Findings of this research show that long-term exposure to violence and being ignored in society can lead to fundamental changes in the individual's value and ethical system.

One of the aspects of this ethical collapse is the normalisation of distance and social isolation. As one interviewee states:

'She/he got used to my distance too... I got used to their distance too. I consider those centres [addiction camps] exactly my own home. My second home is in these centres. Staying out one night is very hard. In the house they tell me 'Go live outside'... with this very tongue they say... basically it is very hard.'

(Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 372).

This normalisation of distance from family and society paves the ground for deeper social ruptures and loss of emotional supports which itself can drive the individual towards high-risk behaviours. When home and family transform into an unsafe place, the individual looks for a refuge outside it, a refuge that may place him in exposure to more serious injuries.

Another consequence is the loss of ethical sensitivity and entry into criminal spaces. Confrontation with violence and survival in injury-prone environments can cause the individual, for self-preservation or providing primary needs, to engage in acts he considers unethical in normal conditions. An interviewee speaks of this experience with bitterness:

'I was a child... a thousand calamities they could bring on my head... [if] I wasn't careful they would bring... sexual rape would happen... they would get very upset... they wanted to cut my head... Heroin people do every work for the sake of Heroin. Meaning if they tell you 'Go kill So-and-so' you kill. The truth is this. The guy wanted to set the shop on fire... wanted to set on fire... they caught him... basically it is not known where he is, which prison.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 372).

This situation is a kind of surrender to existing conditions and acceptance of unethical norms of the surrounding environment. For survival, the individual

is forced to become the same colour as the environment, and this conformity gradually causes the gradual decay of his internal ethical criteria.

Feeling of guilt and conscience pangs is also one of the psychological and ethical consequences of violence, especially in the case of sexual injuries. Traumatic experiences, even if the individual had no role in their occurrence, can lead to deep feelings of guilt and shame. As one interviewee admits:

'Because of the experience of the first sexual relationship with my cousin [male], I had a feeling of conscience pangs regarding [it].' (Interview No. 56, Omid, Homosexual, Pos 3).

This feeling of guilt can destabilise the individual's ethical foundations and place him in exposure to more psychological and behavioural injuries.

Gradual erosion of ethical values and acceptance of previously unacceptable behaviours is a process occurring over time and in continuous confrontation with difficult conditions. This process is such that the individual initially resists, but gradually surrenders and for survival, engages in acts that were previously hard for him even to imagine. One interviewee describes this erosion thus:

'It wasn't one night... didn't happen one night. It took very long... and I didn't think a day this event would happen... this annoys me more. This happened for me... I pray [others] don't have this. Do you know what Mr. Doctor... in the middle of the sea you grab a tree branch... I was forced to endure. I was forced to endure a series of things... do you believe that I, one day, was forced... I was finding customers for a loose woman (Harzeh)... well she was more miserable than me... she didn't have anything... she put from herself [sold herself]... very hard... one night many had come together... Yalda Night it was... what has society done... what mess (Gand) has it made... two... messed up (Tar-zadeh). Society must now collect these wastes... what has it done. By God it has done no work.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid Faraji, Pos 138).

This narrative shows how social and economic pressures, alongside society's indifference, can drive the individual towards performing acts that contradict his ethical values.

One of the severest consequences of this ethical collapse is the emergence of cruelty and stone-heartedness. An individual exposed to violence may show violent or merciless behaviours to defend himself or due to becoming numb to suffering. An interviewee speaks frankly of this internal change:

'Because what... these told me 'You are in collusion with people'... Shisheh too had gone into my pants [addiction]... that we smoked... I drank liquor I smoked Shisheh too... drank liquor became numb... smoked Shisheh became dumb... basically a state like... basically I didn't understand these words. I didn't think of these things. There was no mercy in the work. No mercy in the work [cruelty and stone-heartedness]. You understand. For example if work reached a place... was supposed to... I saw for example this is supposed to go to F— (Ga)... well I said if you are supposed to go to F— let you reach F— in the jungle. I ruined everything.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 63-64).

This cruelty is the result of empathy erosion and losing the ability to establish healthy human connection. For self-protection, the individual draws a strong defensive wall around himself preventing the penetration of emotions and emotional connections.

Finally, one of the dangerous consequences of ethical decay is entry into criminal and illegal activities. When legitimate ways to earn income are blocked and the individual is placed in an unethical environment, he may be dragged towards criminal activities to provide for his needs or even out of obstinacy against society. As stated in one interviewee's narrative:

'We enjoyed. Calculate... we that time... bought Shisheh 15 million 16 million per kilo... you understand... for example Shisheh... ten grams twenty grams 50 grams, 100 grams... that we produced... meaning what... one kilo 65 million profit remained for us. These moneys all accumulated, gathered, were spent [on] splurging... so-and-so and such-and-such and these... in gatherings and I don't know parties and I don't know Shahriar [city]... I don't know this side and that side we went garden and so-and-so and these... and you understand... the girl changed her car... I supported the house...' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 40).

This quote shows how criminal activities, in addition to the aspect of earning income, are accompanied by a kind of false pleasure and excitement which can drown the individual more in this path and make exiting it more difficult. This situation is itself a consequence of society's inattention to these individuals' problems and not providing healthy opportunities for them.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with theories related to 'Moral Disengagement.' These theories state that individuals in specific conditions, to reduce psychological tension resulting from performing

unethical acts, use cognitive mechanisms allowing them to engage in these acts without feeling guilt or shame (Bandura, 1999). regarding men exposed to violence, environmental pressures and psychological injuries can accelerate this process of ethical erosion. Also, theories related to 'Social Learning Theory' (Bandura, 1977) explain that individuals, especially in injury-prone environments, model the behaviours of those around them and internalise the environment's norms. When the individual is placed in exposure to unethical behaviours and sees the way of survival in conforming to it, he gradually learns and repeats those behaviours.

In total, ethical consequences of violence against men include a spectrum of behavioural and value changes starting from normalisation of distance and isolation and advancing to acceptance of criminal behaviours and emergence of cruelty. These consequences influence not only these men's individual lives but have a negative impact on society's social health. Therefore, addressing ethical consequences of violence against men requires a multidimensional approach which, in addition to psychological and social supports, attends to structural reforms in society and reviewing policies related to men.

9.5.2. *Parallel Relationships (Infidelity)*

Violence against men, whether directly from their spouses or in the form of structural and social pressures, in many cases has led to the emergence of ethical consequences such as 'Parallel Relationship' (Infidelity). This phenomenon, which is usually interpreted as a kind of escape from emotional pressures or compensation for deficits in marital and emotional relationships, finds a serious place in examining consequences of violence against men. Interviewees' quotes indicate that violences and tensions ruling over marital or family relationships can drive individuals towards establishing connections outside the marriage framework, a process which itself often brings new emotional and ethical crises.

One interviewee describes the experience of emotional chaos she experienced as a result of her husband's infidelity in detail:

'But in general my relationship with my husband wasn't good and I had involved myself with child and my studies. And I read my Master's... and my husband got familiar with a married lady somewhere and I understood. That wherever he went he took his phone with himself. His behaviour was suspicious... I understood quickly... of course ladies' complexity is more, gentlemen are easy [to read]. And

I understood and my husband said that 'I have fallen in love with this lady and want to marry her.' I said 'Okay marry her'... three Dangs [half] of the house is in my name and three Dangs is Mehrieh and my car was in my name too... I said 'You marry and go.' And that lady accepts too to separate from her husband and marry my husband. But afterwards she says and 'No... this very fact that he leaves his husband [wife] easily like this... and I have this problem too... so he delivers a person like you to me.' (Interview No. 1, Samira, Pos 126).

This narrative not only addresses the dilemma of parallel relationships but points to a cycle wherein mistrust and feeling of insecurity cause the creation of new connections, but these relationships too, due to unhealthy foundations, suffer from that same mistrust.

The ethical consequence of 'Parallel Relationship' is not limited only to emotional or sexual infidelity. This phenomenon manifests in the social and cultural structure as well and is even considered a temporary solution to escape marital problems. One interviewee points to the extensive effects of this phenomenon on society:

'Third person means what... for example one person comes... two people sort out the woman [have sex]... very frankly. Yeah the woman says... or a woman comes... for example two people come do a thing... now it has become very much... or for example the man... the woman... he can't divorce his wife... somehow he reaches... drags to degradations... and the woman has a boyfriend from one side too.' (Interview No. 35, Hosseinzadeh, Pos 317-322).

This narrative points to ethical chaos and norm-breakings that are gradually becoming institutionalised in society and in turn bring deep psychological and ethical consequences for individuals.

One of the key axes of these ethical consequences is emotional deficits and the feeling of permanent humiliation some men experience in their relationships. These feelings often drive them towards searching for an emotional refuge outside existing relationships:

'Regarding young men too... as I told you... that a man who is constantly subjected to verbal humiliation and the woman taunts him or gives the feeling of insufficiency to that man... now her husband, her boyfriend or whoever... their first choice is that this emotional void, this emotional need that is not fulfilled here... go somewhere else, another woman. Well its sexual part too... as I told you... turning strangely to these pills and these substances increasing sexual

power... this is a solution too that they usually go after... which answers in the short term but in [long] term brings many diseases. I heard that even liver disorders and these and strong diseases it creates... comes following that. And regarding solutions too I doubt anything can be done for it.' (Interview No. 58, Marzieh Hosseini, Pos 211).

This quote clearly shows that verbal humiliation and creating a sense of insufficiency in men can lead to searching for affirmation and affection in relationships outside the main framework. This type of parallel relationship is not only a response to unfulfilled emotional needs but in some cases is accompanied by using sexual potency enhancing drugs which itself has negative physical and psychological consequences.

Furthermore, lack of peace and the need to escape tensions of the main relationship can also be a factor for the emergence of parallel relationships:

'Perhaps this peace [excuse me I say this] is from an older lady... which can inflict the biggest injury on society... and or for example from this side we return to a married man... that perhaps with a girl... a young lady who needs money... gets familiar with her and she becomes calm [he gets calmed?] and betrayal starts.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Citizens, Pos 26).

This view shows that individuals sometimes look for an emotional refuge outside the main relationship to escape life pressures and tensions existing in their relationship. In this state, parallel relationship is not only a response to emotional needs but is considered a kind of defense mechanism to cope with stress and unrest.

In some cases, cutting or coldness of sexual relationships within the marriage framework can also pave the ground for the formation of parallel relationships:

'Meaning sexual relationship doesn't happen between them... from a place onwards that anger comes up so much... humans choose to have parallel relationships... this exists as much as your heart wants... it is full in society.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 46).

This issue shows that lack of sexual and emotional intimacy in the relationship can lead to the emergence of anger and dissatisfaction and ultimately drive individuals towards searching for these needs outside the relationship.

Normalisation of the parallel relationship phenomenon is another worrying consequence of violence against men in the context of society.

Repetition and frequency of this phenomenon has caused some individuals to accept it as a natural and even acceptable matter:

'Issue and consequence... parallel relationships that happen very much and unfortunately with the passage of time is turning into a norm. Do you believe... this some time... many of the people referred to me... I don't work generally with these but [if] there is acquaintance they introduce to me or at least know what to do for their referral... I tell them 'Has it been for a while?' Says 'Yeah it has been.' I say 'What do you think about it?' Then she/he herself/himself turns back says 'It is very normal, very many places in the world this event is happening... humans, well, agree with each other. Anymore from a place onwards they live in one place but don't like to be with each other.' I want to say this part... I don't want to judge this because I believe... because I am seeing the party says 'I am eight months...' this last sample I have been involved with for a month is a lady who says 'I... it is eight months there has been no connection with my husband' and the lady basically started another relationship since Ordibehesht [month]... she herself says 'I feel my husband has another relationship with someone else too'... they have a child too.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 48).

This quote expresses the serious danger of normalising infidelity and weakening family foundations which can lead to deep mistrust in society.

In some cases, parallel relationship occurs as a vengeful reaction against infidelity or negligence of the opposite side:

'Many times [my husband]... one or two times he had done mischief... did mischief with his students... I told him 'Why? What was the reason you went out with this one? Did I do something... fell short in something?' He said 'No, you grumble a bit.' I said 'Well you grumbled too... [should] I go with someone else?' I knew his email password. Those times was email... he was very busy with email... when he went to work his laptop was in the house... I entered his email and read his messages that they are friends with one of his students. Just like this he had messaged 'I love you'... he had told her and such things.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 10).

This narrative shows how the cycle of violence and disloyalty can lead to mutual and vengeful responses and drive the relationship towards collapse.

From a theoretical perspective, the phenomenon of parallel relationships can be explained using 'Social Exchange Theory' (Homans, 1958). Based on this theory, individuals in their relationships look for maximum profit and

minimum cost. In the context of violence against men, when the cost of the relationship (like humiliation, negligence, sexual dissatisfaction) becomes more than its profit (like emotional support, intimacy), the individual may be driven towards searching for new relationships wherein he believes he will receive more profit. These new relationships, in the form of parallel relationships, are considered a kind of attempt to restore balance in the social exchange equation, although they bring their own negative ethical and psychological consequences. Ultimately, the phenomenon of parallel relationships as one of the complex and multifaceted consequences of violence against men, has destructive effects not only on the individual but on family and society and requires deeper attention and analysis in future research.

9.5.3. *Sexual Abuse in the Family*

Ethical consequences of violence against men, especially in the form of Sexual Abuse in the Family Context, inflicts a deep wound on the individual's soul and psyche and the family foundation, the repercussions of which are beyond the moment of occurrence and settle in the underlying layers of personality and relationships. As is evident in narratives, the experience of sexual abuse in childhood can pave the ground for similar behaviours in the future, a cycle of injury transmitted from one generation to another or manifesting in other forms. The narrator points in a part of his talks to the experience '*In childhood I was subjected to sexual abuse by classmates many times*', which shows the seed of injury was planted in him from those very early years of life. This bitter early experience can influence the individual's understanding of personal boundaries and the concept of abuse and place him in exposure to greater vulnerability in the future or even drive him towards repeating patterns of abuse.

Continuation of the narrative with the description of the act the narrator performed towards his sister strengthens this hypothesis:

'I... summer when eleventh grade finished. Again I delivered that same abuse to my sister... perhaps I didn't rape (sexual intercourse) with her either but once every two weeks or three weeks when she was asleep and perhaps wasn't conscious I might have touched sensitive points of her body. I even still don't understand why I should have done this work and why I did. But I did... I myself didn't have a correct understanding of this work either. Really I myself didn't

know what I am doing either. This work was both sin and abuse. But why... why me?' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 28).

This shocking confession indicates the complexity of the sexual abuse phenomenon and the victim's role in transforming into an abuser. Lack of correct understanding of behaviour, feeling of guilt, and confusion in the whys of the act are all signs of the depth of psychological injury the individual has suffered, and this injury has been reproduced in the form of similar behaviour. This situation can be analysed with Bandura's Social Learning Theory which emphasises the importance of observation and imitation in behaviour formation, especially aggressive and deviant behaviours (Bandura, 1977). An individual abused in childhood may unconsciously internalise the abuser's behavioural pattern and repeat it in specific conditions, even though he is not aware of its ethical and human consequences and even suffers from his act himself.

Consequences of this behaviour in the family also become revealed immediately. As the narrator says:

'When I subjected my sister to abuse, following days I realised my mother's behaviours changed totally... everyone looks at me differently. I... to my niece who slept with us one day... she is a girl and same age as my sister and these... and when after playing with phone with my sister she falls asleep and I molest her and perhaps she was awake... that the next day I saw her mother's behaviour towards me changed.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 24).

Change in behaviours of those around, especially the mother, indicates the family's awareness of the abuse occurrence and its destructive impact on family relationships. This awareness can lead to the abuser being rejected by the family, creation of a sense of isolation and pessimism in him, and collapse of trust in relationships.

Normalisation of sexual gaze towards others, especially women and girls, is another consequence of this chain of injury the narrator points to:

'At first I could control myself but I threw heavy looks at this one and that one's body... I feared someone understands... they understood of course... my look was very heavy... I stared at my sister's body improperly... in this year she couldn't even move... she sat somehow that sensitive places of her body are not revealed and be covered. I see everything... women and girls sexually. Basically I can't

imagine that this is a human.' (Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 32).

This transformation of human into sexual object is the result of the destruction of ethical and human boundaries in the individual occurring following the experience of abuse and its repetition. This objectifying view paves the ground for insulting and abusive behaviours in the future and perpetuates the cycle of violence. This phenomenon can be linked to the concept of 'Alienation' in sociological theories, especially Marx's view, wherein the individual becomes alienated from his human essence and from others, and human relationships transform into instrumental and soulless relationships (Marx, 1844).

Finally, these bitter experiences and their consequences in the broader social context lead to the creation of a sense of hypocrisy and wearing masks in individuals. As another interviewee says:

'Second, that a sense of hypocrisy and being clever/sly (Zerang-bazi) taught us all to wear a mask. We all learned to wear a frame [mask] to participate in ceremonies but not from the heart. In everything. In anything where a base of it is compulsion, choice is less.' (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 54).

This sense of hypocrisy and lack of honesty in relationships is the consequence of a society wherein violence and ethical injuries are ignored or not dealt with correctly. Individuals, for survival and maintaining appearance, are forced to hide bitter realities and accept appearance of norms they do not believe in. This situation creates an atmosphere of mistrust and tension in society which itself paves the ground for the emergence of more injuries. In total, sexual abuse in the family as one of the ethical consequences of violence against men not only involves the individual in a cycle of injury and abuse, but influences the foundation of the family and social cohesion and leads to the creation of an atmosphere of mistrust and hypocrisy in relationships.

9.6. Synthesis and Discussion: The Cycle of Erosive Violence

In this chapter, we have traversed the harrowing topography of the consequences of violence against the male gender in Iranian society. Having moved through the paradigmatic model of Grounded Theory—from causal conditions to strategies of action and interaction—we arrived at the station of 'Consequences.' However, as the rich and often devastating data from our participants has illuminated, to label these outcomes merely as 'consequences'

is perhaps a theoretical understatement. What we have uncovered is not a linear endpoint, but rather a dynamic, recursive ecosystem of disintegration. The consequences detailed herein do not simply mark the cessation of a violent event; they represent the transformation of acute injury into chronic pathology, permeating the biological, psychological, social, economic, and ethical strata of men's existence.

This conclusion aims to synthesize the five pivotal categories analysed in this chapter—Individual, Familial, Social, Economic, and Ethical consequences—weaving them into a coherent sociological narrative. By revisiting the lived experiences of the participants through the lenses of the theoretical frameworks employed (from Durkheim's *Anomie* and Bourdieu's *Symbolic Violence* to Foucault's *Biopolitics* and Bandura's *Social Learning*), we endeavour to articulate the profound structural and existential crisis facing the male subject in the context of this study.

9.6.1. *The Shattered Self: The Phenomenology of Individual Dissolution*

At the core of our findings lies the devastation of the individual self. The analysis of Individual Consequences revealed that violence against men functions as a mechanism of total erosion, dismantling the subject from the inside out. We observed that the psychological impact is not limited to transient distress but manifests as a fundamental alteration of the personality structure.

The Psychological-Emotional dimension revealed a landscape defined by the 'Death of Pleasure' (*Marg-e Lezzat*) and the dominance of 'Learned Helplessness.' Participants described a state of being that transcends mere depression; it is a metaphysical hollowness, a 'zombification' of the spirit where the will to live is severed from the act of living. The recurring motifs of confusion, despair, and fear describe a psyche under siege. We saw how the suppression of emotional expression—mandated by hegemonic masculinity—forces men to internalise trauma until it metastasises into severe pathologies. The brain itself, as evidenced by narratives of cognitive dysfunction and the neurological ravages of stimulant abuse (particularly *Shisheh*), becomes a casualty of this violence. The mind, unable to process the cognitive dissonance between the societal expectation of the 'powerful male' and the lived reality of the 'victimised subject,' retreats into numbness, madness, or chemical oblivion.

Concurrently, the Physical-Somatic consequences paint a picture of the body as a site of accumulated trauma. The male body, often culturally codified as an instrument of labour and strength, is reduced to a vessel of pain. From the psychosomatic manifestations of digestive and muscular disorders (validating Selye's stress models) to the catastrophic acceleration of mortality through heart disease and stroke, violence literally writes itself upon the flesh. The narratives regarding sexual violence—both the childhood trauma of abuse and the cultural inscription of circumcision—expose the vulnerability of the male body, often ignored in discourse. The 'silent scream' of men suffering from sexual dysfunction or the physical decay of addiction serves as a somatic indictment of a society that refuses to acknowledge male fragility.

Thus, the individual consequence is not just 'injury,' but 'ruin' (*Tabahi*). It is the collapse of self-confidence, the erosion of agency, and the fragmentation of the coherent self, leaving behind a subject who is, in the words of our participants, 'dead while alive.'

To fully grasp the psychological disintegration of the male subject, we must look beyond standard clinical definitions of depression or anxiety and engage with the sociology of the self. The narratives of our participants reflect what Anthony Giddens refers to as the 'Ontological Insecurity' of late modernity. For the men in this study, the 'protective cocoon' of routine and identity has been punctured by violence. When a man, culturally conditioned to be the 'Predatory Lion' (as referenced in Interview 11), finds himself reduced to a state of impotence and dependency, the result is a catastrophic implosion of the self-narrative.

This is not merely sadness; it is Symbolic Death. Drawing on Bourdieu, the loss of 'masculine honour' or 'face' (*Abrou*) constitutes a form of symbolic violence that is often more painful than physical injury. The man who cannot provide, or the man who is beaten by a spouse, suffers a rupture in his *Habitus*—his embodied sense of how to exist in the world. He no longer fits into the social game; his 'capital' is devalued. This explains the profound 'Death of Pleasure' (*Anhedonia*) reported by participants. It is not just that they are sad; it is that the world has ceased to offer them a valid way of being. They are living in a state of Durkheimian Anomie—a state of normlessness where the old rules of masculinity no longer apply, but no new rules have emerged to offer them dignity in their vulnerability.

Furthermore, the prevalence of Self-Harm and Addiction must be re-interpreted not as moral failings, but as 'Biopolitical Resistance' or, more accurately, 'Necropolitics' (Mbembe). In a world where they have no power over their environment, the only sovereignty left to them is the sovereignty over their own destruction. Using *Shisheh* or cutting one's body becomes a perverse assertion of control: 'I can at least choose how I die, or how I feel.' This aligns with Khantzian's Self-Medication Hypothesis, but takes it further into the realm of existential despair. The brain damage reported by participants is the physiological map of this despair—a biological record of a society's failure to protect its men.

9.6.2. *The Implosion of the Domestic Sphere*

Moving outward from the individual, our analysis of Familial Consequences demonstrates how violence against men acts as a centrifugal force, tearing apart the cohesive bonds of the family unit. The family, theoretically a haven of support, transforms into a theatre of conflict and alienation.

The most critical finding here is the displacement of the father. We observed a systematic 'rejection' of the male figure from the emotional core of the family. Whether through the mechanism of divorce, emotional separation, or the formation of mother-child coalitions against the father, the man is frequently reduced to a functional utility (a provider) rather than an emotional participant. When he fails in this utility due to the economic or psychological ravages of violence, he is expelled—either physically or symbolically.

This expulsion leads to the reduction of dialogue (*Kahesh-e Goftego*), creating a 'culture of silence' within the home. As Richardson's theory of Emotional Capital suggests, the bankruptcy of this capital leads to the disintegration of the family as a supportive institution. The consequences for children are particularly dire. Our data confirms the intergenerational transmission of trauma; children who witness the humiliation, beating, or gradual destruction of their fathers do not remain unscathed. They become carriers of the virus of violence, manifesting aggression, dropping out of school, or succumbing to early delinquency.

Therefore, the familial consequence of violence against men is the institutional collapse of the family itself. It is the transformation of the home from a sanctuary into a site of reproduction for future social pathologies.

The disintegration of the family observed in this study challenges the traditional functionalist view of the family as a unit of stability. Instead, we see the family as a 'Pressure Cooker' of modernity. The violence against men within the family is symptomatic of the 'Crisis of Patriarchy' (Castells). As economic structures shift and women rightly gain autonomy, the traditional 'patriarchal bargain' has collapsed, yet the expectations on men to be stoic providers remain.

When violence occurs—whether the wife abusing the husband, or the structural violence of poverty infiltrating the home—the result is the 'Empty Shell Marriage' (Giddens). The physical structure of the family may remain (though often it dissolves into divorce), but the internal emotional architecture is gutted. The father, once the *Paterfamilias*, becomes the 'Abject Object' (Kristeva)—something cast off, repulsive, yet lingering.

The impact on children is a critical sociological finding. We are witnessing the 'Reproduction of the Habitus of Violence.' Children are not passive observers; they are active learners in the school of trauma. When they see the father humiliated or the father engaging in self-destruction, the symbolic order of the 'Law of the Father' (Lacan) is shattered. This leads to a generation of children who are 'Un-moored,' lacking the secure attachment (Bowlby) necessary for social integration. The violence against the father, therefore, is a direct assault on the socialization of the next generation, predicting a future of increased delinquency and social fragmentation.

9.6.3. *The Anatomy of Social Death and Exclusion*

The Social Consequences identified in this chapter reveal a disturbing trajectory of descent from citizen to outcast. Violence against men precipitates a loss of Social Capital that is often irreversible. We identified a distinct process of 'Social Death,' where the victim is progressively stripped of his status, credit, and community belonging.

This process begins with Labelling and Stigma. The man who fails, who cries, who loses his job, or who falls into addiction is not viewed with empathy but with contempt. He is branded as 'incompetent' (*Bi-orzeh*), 'vagrant,' or 'criminal.' This labelling, as Goffman elucidates, spoils his identity and justifies his exclusion.

The ultimate manifestation of this is Homelessness and Rough Sleeping (*Karton-khahi*). Our analysis shows that homelessness among men is not merely

an economic accident but a direct structural outcome of cumulative violence—family rejection, institutional failure (prison/camps), and social apathy. The street becomes the final destination for the man who has been 'vomited out' by the social body.

Furthermore, the increase in crime serves as a reactive consequence. As Merton's Strain Theory predicts, when men are blocked from legitimate means of achieving respect and survival due to systemic violence, they innovate through crime. The transition from victim to perpetrator is fluid; the boy abused in the orphanage becomes the thug in the park; the man humiliated by poverty becomes the smuggler. This cycle creates a society of 'Intimate Strangers' defined by Pessimism and Mistrust, where social cohesion fractures under the weight of accumulated individual grievances.

The transition from 'Victim' to 'Criminal' described in our findings offers a powerful critique of the Iranian penal and social support systems. We are witnessing the creation of a 'Carceral Archipelago' (Foucault) where men are shuttled between the prison, the addiction camp, and the street.

The phenomenon of Homelessness (*Karton-khabi*) among these men is the ultimate expression of 'Social Exclusion' (Silver). It is the stripping of 'Citizenship.' The homeless man has lost the 'Right to have rights' (Arendt). He is reduced to 'Bare Life' (*Homo Sacer* - Agamben)—a life that can be exposed to violence/death without it being considered a crime. When society looks at the addict in the park and feels disgust rather than empathy, they are engaging in the active maintenance of this exclusion.

The increase in crime, therefore, is a 'Survival Strategy' within a 'Risk Society' (Beck). For men stripped of legitimate access to capital (economic, social, or symbolic), crime becomes the only available 'career.' The narratives of forming gangs, smuggling, or theft are narratives of men trying to regain some form of agency and status, however perverse. The prison system, by labelling and brutalizing them further, acts as a 'School of Crime,' cementing their identity as 'Outsiders' (Becker) and ensuring they can never return to the fold of 'normal' society. This is a structural failure of immense proportions, transforming manageable social grievances into intractable criminal subcultures.

9.6.4. *The Political Economy of Male Suffering*

The Economic Consequences highlighted in this chapter dismantle the myth of male financial omnipotence. We have uncovered how violence acts as a potent agent of economic destruction. The narratives of men crushed under the weight of *Mehrieh* (dowry) demands, losing their entire life's accumulation in divorce courts, or facing the confiscation of property due to criminal involvement, paint a picture of extreme financial precarity.

We observed that economic violence is often weaponised against men. The legal and cultural structures that mandate the man as the sole provider simultaneously punish him with draconian severity when he falters. The result is not just poverty, but a loss of Human Capital—the disruption of work, the loss of motivation, and the waste of productive potential. When a man is mentally shattered by violence or physically worn down by stress, his contribution to the macro-economy ceases. Thus, the economic consequence is twofold: the individual's descent into destitution and the collective loss of productivity for society.

Economically, we are seeing the 'Commodification of Human Suffering.' The legal structures surrounding divorce and *Mehrieh* have transformed the dissolution of marriage into a financial transaction where the man's future labor is mortgaged. This is a form of 'Debt Peonage' in the modern age. The stress of this debt is a primary driver of the somatic health crises (heart attacks) we documented. The body breaks because it is being driven like a machine that can no longer meet its quota.

Ethically, the findings regarding Incest and Moral Decay are the most disturbing indicators of 'Social Anomie.' When the social contract is broken—when a man feels the society cares nothing for his life—he is released from the moral obligations of that society. This is 'Moral Disengagement' in its most toxic form. The breakdown of the incest taboo, a fundamental pillar of human culture (Lévi-Strauss), signals a total collapse of the symbolic order within these specific, high-trauma environments. It is a regression to a pre-social state of chaos.

The phenomenon of 'Parallel Relationships' (Infidelity) must be read not just as moral failing, but as 'Emotional Triage.' In a life devoid of validation, warmth, or respect, the search for a partner outside the marriage is a desperate attempt to feel 'human' again. It is a pursuit of the 'Pure Relationship' (Giddens)—a relationship based on emotional satisfaction rather than duty—

but sought through deceit because the structural exit (healthy divorce) is too costly or stigmatized. ##### 9-6-5. The Erosion of the Moral Fabric

Perhaps the most harrowing section of our analysis was the examination of Ethical Consequences. Here, we stared into the abyss of Moral Decay. Violence against men does not just break bones; it breaks values.

We documented the emergence of Moral Disengagement (*Bandura*), where survival necessitates the suspension of ethics. Men, driven by desperation, isolation, and the normalization of cruelty, drift into behaviours previously unthinkable to them—from infidelity (parallel relationships) as a salve for emotional voids, to the horrific reality of incest and sexual abuse within the family.

The narrative of the victim turning into the abuser is the darkest testament to the power of violence. We saw how childhood sexual trauma, left festering in silence, can mutate into a predatory compulsion, destroying the sanctity of the family from within. This is the ultimate ethical consequence: the annihilation of the boundary between right and wrong, leaving behind a landscape of hypocrisy, cruelty, and existential guilt. In conclusion, violence against men in Iran constitutes what Marcel Mauss called a 'Total Social Fact'—an event that implicates every level of the social order, from the biological to the economic, from the psychological to the legal.

It is not a fringe issue. It is a mirror reflecting the deep fractures in the transition of Iranian society. The man, caught between the crushing weight of traditional expectations (the provider, the stoic protector) and the realities of modern economic instability and changing gender roles, is breaking. And when he breaks, the shards wound everyone around him.

This dissertation, by rigorously documenting these consequences using Grounded Theory, challenges the silence. It asserts that Male Vulnerability is not a myth, but a medical and sociological emergency. The consequences outlined in Chapter 9 are the symptoms of a systemic disease. The cure requires a radical reimagining of masculinity, a restructuring of legal and economic support systems, and a profound expansion of our collective capacity for empathy. We must stop seeing these men as failed patriarchs and start seeing them as human beings in need of healing. Only then can we halt the cycle of ruin that threatens to consume the very foundations of the family and society. ##### 9-6-6. Theoretical Synthesis: The Recursive Cycle of Violence

Synthesizing these findings through the lens of Grounded Theory, we can assert that the consequences of violence against men do not exist in isolation. They form a Self-Perpetuating Cycle of Disintegration.

1. The Feedback Loop: The consequences identified (e.g., addiction, aggression, poverty) immediately transform into new Causal Conditions for further violence. A man who loses his job due to depression (consequence) becomes vulnerable to economic violence from his spouse (new cause), which leads to divorce (consequence), which leads to homelessness (consequence), which leads to criminal behaviour (new cause/consequence).
2. Structural Amplification: These cycles are amplified by Contextual Conditions (patriarchal norms that forbid male vulnerability) and Intervening Conditions (lack of legal/social support). The state and society, by failing to intervene, effectively collude in the reproduction of this violence.
3. The Biopolitics of Disposability: Drawing on Foucault, we can argue that the male body in this context is treated as disposable. When it functions as a producer/protector, it is valued; when it malfunctions due to violence, it is discarded (incarcerated, excluded, or left to die).

9.6.7. Final Remarks: A Call for a Paradigm Shift

This chapter has provided a comprehensive, unflinching 'autopsy' of the damages inflicted upon men. The data screams a truth that has long been silenced: Men are not merely perpetrators of violence; they are profound, systemic, and tragic victims of it.

The consequences detailed here—the silent heart attacks, the lonely suicides, the descent into addiction, the shattering of families, and the moral collapse—are not private troubles; they are public issues of the highest order. They represent a crisis of public health, social justice, and human rights.

Therefore, the completion of this analytical chain leads us to an inescapable conclusion: The prevailing social scripts regarding gender and violence must be rewritten. We cannot hope to heal the family or society while leaving half of the population to bleed in silence. The 'Consequences' documented here are a warning—a siren alerting us that the social fabric is tearing.

As we move toward the final conclusions and recommendations of this research, it is evident that any intervention must be holistic. It must address

the *psyche* of the individual, the *dynamics* of the family, the *structures* of the economy, and the *ethics* of the community. Without such an integrated approach, the cycle of violence will continue to grind men—and by extension, women and children—into dust.

This chapter stands as a testament to those hidden injuries, bringing the 'invisible man' of social violence into the light of academic scrutiny, demanding not just observation, but action.

10. Solutions and Strategies for Prevention and Reduction of Violence

Introduction

Following a rigorous analytical odyssey into the depths of the complex and multi-layered phenomenon of 'violence against the male gender'—dissecting its dimensions through the paradigmatic model of this research, from causal and contextual conditions to action strategies and devastating consequences—we now arrive at the concluding chapter and the pinnacle of this study. This chapter, dedicated to the presentation of 'Solutions,' is a response to an urgent necessity and a scientific and social responsibility. If the preceding chapters were dedicated to 'diagnosing the pain' and 'analysing the pathology,' this chapter seeks to 'prescribe the cure' and 'offer a roadmap for prevention.' The objective of this section is to transcend mere description and move towards offering practical, structural, and multifaceted proposals capable of weakening or halting the vicious cycles of violence at various individual, familial, cultural, and institutional levels.

The phenomenon of violence against the male gender, as demonstrated in previous chapters, does not occur in a vacuum; rather, it is the product of an intertwining of factors such as deep-seated gender stereotypes, inefficient upbringing patterns, economic pressures, weakness in communication skills, and the absence of legal and social protections. Therefore, any effort to combat it must be equally comprehensive and multidimensional. Unidimensional and reductionist solutions that target only one aspect of this complex dilemma are condemned to failure. The present research, relying on rich data obtained from the lived experiences of participants and their deep analysis within the framework of Grounded Theory, proposes a set of integrated and systematic solutions that simultaneously address the roots, processes, and consequences of violence.

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The structure of this chapter is designed based on a comprehensive and layered approach, commencing from the most fundamental level—that is, education and awareness-raising—and extending to specialised and structural levels, namely therapeutic, legal, and political interventions. At the heart of these solutions lies 'Public Education and Awareness-Raising,' which acts as the infrastructure for any cultural and social change. In this section, the importance of 'Life Skills Training' (such as anger management, problem-solving, and effective communication), 'Authoritative Parenting Training,' 'Sexual Education and Assertiveness,' and the necessity of training specialists and officials will be addressed in detail. These solutions respond directly to the causal and contextual conditions mentioned in previous chapters, aiming to empower individuals to prevent the occurrence of violence.

In the next layer, we address Supportive and Therapeutic Solutions. This section focuses on the importance of establishing and strengthening 'Specialised Support Centres for Damaged Men,' providing 'Psychotherapy and Social Work' services, and the necessity of attending to the mental health of victims. These solutions are a response to the devastating psychological and individual consequences analysed in Chapter Nine.

Subsequently, Structural and Institutional Solutions are addressed. In this part, 'Legal Solutions,' including the reform of discriminatory laws and the creation of executive guarantees to support male victims, are examined. Also, 'Political and Economic Solutions,' focusing on reducing economic pressures and reviewing macro-social policies, will be analysed. This section directly targets the broader intervening and contextual conditions that provide the bedrock for violence. Finally, by offering Cultural and Spiritual Solutions, an attempt is made to utilise the cultural and religious capacities of society to change attitudes, reduce stigma, and promote healthy and non-violent models of masculinity.

This chapter, by presenting a harmonised set of these solutions, does not merely seek to offer a list of suggestions, but is an attempt to draw a national and integrated strategy wherein educational institutions, media, the judicial system, treatment centres, and families all play an active and coordinated role in building a safer and fairer society for all.

10.1. Strategies for Public Awareness-Raising to Prevent Violence Against the Male Gender

Based on the findings of this Grounded Theory research, education is considered one of the serious approaches for the prevention, control, and reduction of violence against the male gender in Iranian society. These educational strategies are introduced in four categories: 'Life Skills Training,' 'Training Related to LGBTQ Groups,' 'Training for Officials, Specialists, and Experts,' and 'Parenting Skills.'

10.1.1. Life Skills Training

In analysing the consequences and effectiveness of Life Skills Training in preventing violence against men, the narratives and lived experiences of interviewees show how the lack of these trainings paves the way for the repetition of damaging behavioural patterns and defective gender roles, whereas teaching fundamental skills can act as a structural and cultural preventive barrier. In a situation where families and institutions do not act until the crisis reaches its peak and lack sufficient motivation and skill even for compensation, effective prevention requires conscious investment in learning and transferring skills before irreversible injuries occur:

'Meaning when the woman sees her husband is on the verge of infidelity... the child is being rejected, doesn't speak anymore, is experiencing the level of puberty, is not in the house... but she does nothing. Generally we let it reach the limit [extremity] then we come say 'What should we do?'... moreover we don't have the patience for that 'What should we do?' either, that we want to pay a price for it too. Let us learn that before paying the excuse [penalty/cost of failure], we spend [invest] so that subsequent events that are predictable and preventable are prevented. I think those three solutions are so comprehensive that they answer all that which we want regarding violence [against men]... whether for people, what other stratum, what other age, what other gender.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 192).

This narrative indicates that education is not just a temporary matter but a continuous process and a necessity for preventing trends that are the effect of a lack of skill in communication, problem-solving, and mutual understanding.

Furthermore, a society that continues to raise and institutionalise gender roles in the traditional manner, even with easy access to global information,

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has not been able to prevent men and boys from falling victim to new psychological and sexual traps.

'In my opinion, upbringing... institutionalising that gender role... prepares this bed [ground] more. Otherwise now in the new era... you... if the third and fourth generation... these... we cannot attach the label of ignorance to them anymore because their access to global information is undeniable... but why do they become victims? Why do they fall victim suddenly into the sexual trap of their girlfriend now? How do they suffer sexual blackmail? You know... these... I think if we want to do blackmail [prevention? context implies challenging the norm], we must shake the cultural trunk a bit if we can.' (Interview No. 9, Dr. Marghati, Pos 21).

Here it is clear that merely 'knowing' without practical learning of coping skills does not immune the individual against injuries; rather, it is institutionalisation and teaching of Life Skills (such as assertiveness, saying no, self-care, resilience, etc.) that can institutionalise active and responsible reaction (Khosravi, 1399 [2020]).

Lack of communication skills, emotional control, and management of life challenges places individuals in exposure to high-risk behaviours and sometimes the collapse of the most superficial relationships; as experts' recommendations suggest, strengthening skills such as anger management, coping with stress, creative thinking, and problem-solving can play an important role in preventing and managing violent situations:

'Solutions that we must put on these subjects: one is strengthening skills like coping with stress, coping with many things that are tension-creating and annoy, anger control, creative thinking... I see the solution as education, I see education... where can I have a protest, a word? Where to defend myself, where I must protest, where I must sit silent... when he sees education on these, well surely it becomes much better.' (Interview No. 14, Dr. Vahabi, Pos 95).

This notion corresponds with findings of social psychology research: teaching anger management and emotional self-awareness not only reduces the rate of conflict and aggression but, by elevating emotional intelligence, lays the foundation for preventing the emergence of violence cycles (Golshani et al., 1400 [2021]; Bar-On, 2006).

Weakness of the formal education system and lack of life skills in the country's educational structure has caused many children, adolescents, and

even adults to grow up without necessary preparation for facing life's real challenges. This is while one of the fundamental requirements is the commitment and obligation of the country's educational apparatuses to implement life skills training programmes; programmes that must not only be seriously included in policies and executive structure of educational institutions but their practical realisation is an undeniable necessity to prevent the emergence of social and individual injuries:

'Basically laws have no executive guarantee... for example in this very law it has come that Education [Ministry] is obliged to teach life skills to children... but where are life skills in this Education [system]... for example now a child who is in schools...' (Interview No. 58, Marzieh Hosseini, Pos 225).

Numerous narratives indicate that many of the most vulnerable students are those who lack correct social and communicative training:

'Mostly students who haven't been taught correctly from the family side... [lack] popularity and that special charisma among other students and a large number are friends with him... definitely he gets subjected to [sexual] assault by these kinds of persons [bullies] less [if he has these skills/support].' (Interview No. 86, Ahmad Nazari, Pos 39).

Passivity in expressing and managing emotions is also a major injury, such that suppression of emotions in men and boys makes them prone to psychological collapse and even suicide attempts, as is the result of insufficient education in the field of emotional intelligence:

'We must explain aggression in fact and must speak of anger management skill not anger suppression because any emotion that is suppressed becomes internalised... this that we see passive kids... those who cannot express their emotions... finally like a pressure cooker whose valves are blocked they explode and disintegrate from within.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 105).

'The child's emotional self-awareness regarding what emotion does in his body... both in physiological dimension... these we must teach him.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 127).

All these quotes and scientific evidence confirm that emotional self-awareness and healthy expression of feelings play a key role in the path of violence prevention (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Schultz, 2018).

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Education with a skill-oriented approach is necessary not only for children but for parents, spouses, and the whole society to increase their capability in facing issues and social activism:

'The solution, the first thing is education, you know... correct trainings, practical trainings, trainings that don't have knowledge-oriented approach [but] have skill-oriented and empowerment approach and have awareness-raising... and this education be simultaneous for father and mother, for child, for society.'

(Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 62).

Finally, strengthening identity, education about the male body and gender, and transformation of cultural attitude towards roles are other aspects of life skills that have been neglected and act as a stimulus for many injuries, social pressures, and formation of unrealistic expectations from men:

'Teach us a bit of a thing about the male gender... both to themselves and to us. Someone come say what shape men's bodies are, what it does with them... neither you knew yourselves nor made known to us.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 144).

The sum of these narratives, aligning with Grounded Theory findings, clarifies that life skills training is the most fundamental solution for preventing violence against men; a tool that leads not only to emotion control and crisis management but expands the culture of dialogue, collective problem-solving, and empowerment of all society members. Especially in a culture where defective structures reproduce perceived gender roles, only micro and practical teachings and skills can provide the ground for transformation and passing through previous damaging cycles (Banerjee & Shah, 2020; Golshani et al., 1400 [2021]).

In line with strengthening and effectiveness of life skills training as the foundation of prevention of violence and social injuries, it is necessary that these trainings be pursued in a pervasive and systematic manner at various levels of society; such that it encompasses all age and gender groups from kindergarten to university. The existence of institutions, organisations, and cultural, educational, and upbringing centres as main and effective platforms for development and transfer of these skills in family and society environments play a pivotal and fundamental role and must be attended to by policymakers. In this same direction, making life skills training mandatory in all educational environments, as well as utilising the capacity of national

media and audio-visual tools and producing professional and specialised content for educational infrastructures, is an undeniable necessity so these concepts are institutionalised in a sustainable and effective form. Realisation of these strategies, in addition to requiring synergy among various sectors of society, requires allocation of sufficient and sustainable credits by relevant apparatuses—including the Welfare Organization, Ministry of Health and Treatment, and other specialised institutions and scientific centres—to provide the possibility of implementation and continuity of skill-oriented and empowering trainings with the aim of structural and cultural prevention of violence and gender injuries. This collection of actions will pave the ground for fundamental transformations in collective attitude and behaviour and help create a resilient society capable of actively facing upcoming challenges.

Another dimension of the importance of institutionalising anger control and dialogue skills in the formal education system manifests thus in the words of another participant:

'To be honest, I myself always see Education [Ministry] as a partner for raising correctly and nurturing correctly... that basically from that very beginning they come and we talk about violence, effective dialogue with humans is a skill... in fact teach them. If we teach anger management skill and anger control, anymore it doesn't go to the long-term astray path... that its catastrophe becomes this... that humans easily engage in murder. What do you think its source is... it originates from anger, you know, from violence, you know... if we do skill-enhancement regarding children... it becomes institutionalised in them at that very young age... like many advanced countries whose education system we see... how interesting it is that from that very childhood it is teaching these skills to the child... that now in adulthood what a calmer individual he is at the society level. And what greater tolerance he has regarding issues... resulting from this very correct education performed for them from that very childhood. And very much... my approach, belief, and conviction is always this that Education has a major share in territorial nation-building... meaning humans and nation... the whole of that nation... its share is very significant. In order to make better humans for the better future of that country. However much it is less... education, for example in the heart of the family... education can compensate that in the heart of society.'
(Interview No. 12, Shiva, Pos 59).

In this narrative, simultaneous emphasis is placed on the role of the formal education system for elevating social-emotional skills and on its compensatory

share in case of deficiencies in family education, a subject which 'Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)' Theory also considers effective in reducing aggression and destructive behaviours of high-risk groups (Daneshvar et al., 1402 [2023]).

10.1.2. Development of Trainings for All Age and Gender Groups

In analysing present narratives, the development of trainings for all age and gender groups, Sexual Education, and cultivating Assertiveness (*Jorat-mandi*) has a fundamental place as a key solution in preventing violence against men; because social dynamics and reproduction of damaging behaviours are rooted in learning processes and transfer of values from childhood to adulthood. The pivotal question is: why must universal and lifelong education be the axis of prevention, and how can assertiveness and sexual education break cycles of violence?

In the narrative of one interviewee, the scope of the meaning of education goes even beyond the category of working children and turns into a pattern of experience transfer and changing daily mentality:

'Some teachings must be performed at the media level... of the sort... for example one is this very teaching of [about] working child to people, to society... if they understand that a working child gets eliminated from the street surface by not giving money... this very education causes little by little anyone sees any child... I myself go or my friends gathered together or even university classes that I came a few years ago... I ask... general talks with a few people... first I see a series... I ask 'Who gives money?'... heart burned [felt pity]... many were agreeing that 'We help'... then we come sit talk with them... I see 'If you give this money this event happens, all this issue exists'... you see then everyone agrees they say 'We don't give money anymore from now on'... this is very satisfying and I see this itself is a kind of education. For lessening the injury of this child who grows up.' (Interview No. 30, Hamid Moradi, Pos 82).

This very process of experience transfer and awareness-raising transforms the mental structure of society step by step and shows that education is not merely data transfer or theory, but a kind of social journeying with the course of individual and collective transformation. Social Learning Theories like Bandura's theory also emphasise this very feature of observational learning and the role of models in changing social behaviour (Yousefnia, 1395 [2016]).

But the deeper challenge lies in the need for teaching Assertiveness and Emotional Education, especially for men. In the narrative below, the link between lack of assertiveness, suppression of emotions, and emergence of heavy psychological effects like depression and tendency towards self-harm is clearly raised:

'It is very important for us that here we teach assertiveness... that assertiveness is the border between these two models and these two groups. Assertive individuals express their anger and also don't do aggression... nor do they transform into those passive individuals who then returns home and constantly curses and damns himself that 'Dust on your head [shame on you], how incompetent you are, how much of a tosari-khor [one who gets hit on the head/submissive] you are, how oppressed you are, you are useless, everyone is annoying you, you are a cat... they did so-and-so to you... you said nothing'... and... and these become sick and incidentally I said these are more prone to depression and anxiety and suicide.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 105).

Here, teaching assertiveness is considered not merely an individual skill but a shield against structural suppression and the cycle of passivity or aggression, and its clear instance is teaching personal boundaries, firm expression of feelings, and opposing aggression on emotional or physical privacy; a concept known in scientific psychological literature as Assertiveness which has a direct relationship with mental health (Salahshour, 1398 [2019]). This very firm border between aggression and passivity must be seen from that very childhood and in the flow of education:

'From that side too aggression... its repercussions are clear too. We must work more on this middle border... that we define assertive individuals... that these manage their anger with firm behaviour, with expressing anger without injury to the other. When we tell children or tell in the workshop that 'You make eye contact... look directly into the bully student's eye and say 'You have no right to put your hand inside my bag. I am severely upset by this act of yours... I will definitely deal with you [report/confront]... I will definitely report this to the school principal... you have no right to enter my territory... you have no right to touch me.' This becomes assertive behaviour... that expresses his emotion but doesn't punch him in the mouth either.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 105).

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A simple example of that same process of attitude change at the society level which was stated earlier regarding the working child is visible this time in the educational environment and as a result of cultivating self-esteem and audacity to defend oneself, without becoming violence-stricken or a victim of the cycle of humiliation and anger.

With this view, teaching 'No' saying, sexual education, and methods of self-care and defense is not limited to childhood and adolescence ages, and every individual at any stage of life—even after passing forty or fifty years of age—must find the opportunity for re-learning and cleansing his mind from sediments of violent upbringing:

'The next point I must say is this that we emphasise education a lot... to the definition of assertiveness and models of assertiveness and models of saying 'No' and methods of self-care... at all levels because this is a lifelong process happening... let us not think that a 50-year-old parent shouldn't be placed under education... definitely that 50-year-old parent, in order to wipe the sediments and repercussions of that tyrannical and violent parenting style of his father from his mind and present a new model to him, must be placed under psychotherapy education and many other things. To a two-year-old child and mother of a two-three-year-old child too in the sexual education workshop... both courage and assertiveness and firm behaviour must be taught so that this 5-year-old or preschool child doesn't get subjected to sexual assault by the instructor or by an adult. This is lifelong... mother must be educated, that second grade elementary child must also be educated on how to protect himself and care... and defending is not just punching.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 123).

This very continuity of education and attention to tyrannical parenting style reminds once again of the necessity of recognising cycles of violence and its reproduction at the level of family and society; cycles that are not eliminated simply with education and demand continuity of the process of empowerment, reforming beliefs, and understanding emotions.

Another important challenge is the educational system's inattention to Life Skills and Emotional Intelligence. One interviewee, criticising the existing situation, states:

'In our schools a book under the title 'Thinking Style and Life Skills'... this is taught in eighth and ninth grade... that too has no specific teacher... as a recess [break time] they give it to the social sciences teacher or counsellor or upbringing

coach... that too many times they give its period to the math teacher so that math teacher comes teaches two words of math to them. An 80-90 page book under the title 'Thinking Style and Life Skills'... that's it... whereas we must, during education, compile two three volumes of books annually regarding emotional intelligence.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 127).

In this narrative, the educational system clearly, instead of paying attention to raising citizens capable of managing emotions, preventing violence, and understanding communicative mechanisms, emphasises the transfer of a collection of data and memorisations, and this very matter causes graduates of this educational system to be severely vulnerable in facing life crises, anger control, self-expression, and defending personal privacy.

On the other hand, interviewees point to this note that prevention of violence is not realised only at the level of public education and requires Specialised Intervention and support for vulnerable groups; especially boys and men who for various reasons—including social and cultural pressures—refrain from expressing their sufferings and violent experiences. One psychologist, pointing to different levels of prevention, says in this regard:

'We always have prevention in three levels Doctor... meaning I always adhere to this level of prevention... for primary level prevention... an event hasn't happened yet and we say through public education... because we predict that this event... considering conditions and substrates of society and families and anyway any event and factor that exists... this event might happen... so we practically teach in the primary level 'For God's sake be careful that this event doesn't happen'... we teach 'Boy be careful of your conditions... in your growth you will face these issues... please do not perform these acts.' Respected families, with your son child perform these acts... practically the substrate there must be reformed... which happens less... meaning an instructor who has specialisation on boys [is] very much... I remember a few years ago I worked... we had a girls' club that supported girls under 18... put psych[ologist]... ball... taught... sports suitable for girls that would be good... and we had one abandoned boys' club in Enghelab [Square/Complex]... finished.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 186).

In this narrative, a kind of discrimination in supporting girls and boys at the society level is reflected as well; as if supporting girls and teaching life skills to them has turned into an accepted norm, but boys still face a lack of

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opportunity and facilities in this field. This matter emphasises the necessity of attending to men's special needs in the field of violence prevention.

Also, trainings at the Tertiary Level become important when violence has occurred and the goal is reducing its repercussions. These types of trainings include offering psychological services, social support, and legal guidance to victims of violence and their families:

'After this at the tertiary level is this that society... when that violence has happened to the party himself and the party's family... what trainings be given so that subsequent repercussions of this violence and problems it creates are prevented... now that infidelity has occurred, the man has been rejected... how do we collect [manage/fix] the issue so everyone sees the least amount of injury... well we collect the infidelity... the woman stays in the life [marriage]... okay children are [there]... children hate the father... the woman hits the man on the head every day... and this returns [to the point] that... meaning practically we [are] at three levels in my opinion if we are looking for a solution.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 188).

In this way, from working child education to sociological explanation of roots of violence, all and all show various dimensions of a macro solution named Development of Education at All Levels and Ages. Education as a social intervention aids in reducing violence against men and other social injuries and, by offering an efficient model of growth and social dynamism, paves the path for collective felicity.

10.1.3. Parenting Skills Training

In the narrative of the present research, parenting skills training is not merely one of the tools for preventing violence against men, but the very foundation for treating cycles of violence in the family and society. When parenting training is mentioned, our view goes beyond the transfer of a set of knowledge or recommendations and transforms into a deep programme for recreating family roles and relations; as the interviewee states in the most prominent example:

'And we tell the father and mother neither tyrannical style is good nor negligent style nor strict style, but rather authoritative style is the good parenting style... then we state the components of the authoritative style... then we perform role-play... then we define situations... that parents who are in this workshop are

placed in tens of situations... and in those situations we teach 'What should you do with your child who kicked and spilled the tea... what should we do with him... with a child who went to the club [and] instead of returning at 7 PM returned at 11 PM... you as a parent what reaction'... all these have syllabus, have book, have so-and-so... research work has been done on them, we have planned their effectiveness... but education is one facet of the work, other components for reducing violence must be manipulated [adjusted].' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 125).

Here, the transformation of parenting with emphasis on the authoritative style—which, according to scientific research, is the balancer of the axis of authority and affection and the preparer of the ground for children's mental health (Hasanzadeh, 1396 [2017])—is placed as the main goal of education, and its practical methods such as role-playing in workshops, creating real situations, and practicing correct reactions to children's actions are introduced. Transferring these teachings from the theoretical realm to the field of parents' daily behaviour is the breaking point of the violence chain, because many parents reproduce violent behaviour not knowingly, but in reaction to pressures.

In another narrative, the interviewee, with a critical look at society's transformations and redefining the role of parents, speaks of the fading of parental presence as a result of the dominance of digital and media culture:

'Whatever... now due to this technology and this culture that has come... digital and media culture... and observational modelling... it can be said the role of father and mother, especially in higher ages for parenting and these, has become fainter... and given to the hand of this master of journals [media] and this phone that we have and Insta[gram] which produces lifestyle.' (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari Nasab, Pos 33).

This narrative clearly reveals that family and parenting today face a new challenge: media domination over the mind and lifestyle of children and adolescents leads to the fading of the parent's role as an emotional and educational model. Based on this, it can be argued that parenting skills training must go beyond traditional transfer of concepts and provide parents with new tools for coping with the modern educational space; a concept psychologists have also raised under the title of 'Media Parenting' and 'Parental Digital Literacy' (Mohammadi, 1399 [2020]).

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Another dimension of the challenge of parenting trainings is the isolation of the family from formal education processes. As the interviewee says:

'Or for example the discussion of family... for example now the work that exists... for example in Western countries is that they have a family doctor and have a child counsellor too... and in various cases refer to him/her and get consultation from him/her regarding the child. I say these very groups and strata of society... for example in kindergartens, in preschool, school [the child] sees education but the family receives no education... these two are completely separate from each other and have no link with each other. Private sector kindergartens too... at least two days a week family come... this family along with the child see education... meaning families know nothing of the child and have no information of the child's world.' (Interview No. 58, Marzieh Hosseini, Pos 231).

In this passage, the rupture between the formal educational system (kindergarten, school) and the informal system (family) is clearly critiqued; as if child education is considered a specialised matter separate from family life and parents have been eliminated from the learning cycle. This very point has been highlighted in new research in developmental psychology; because parenting training, especially in the child's early years, is not merely training for the parent, but a fundamental investment for preventing many future injuries and violences (Bagheri, 1398 [2019]).

Simultaneously, another interviewee speaks of redefining roles and the meaning of family; a role that if not readjusted, transfers the cycle of violence from one generation to another:

'Creating support groups where facilitation exists... that arranges a series of things from the beginning... arranges the pieces [chess/game] differently. The system has given this [but] it is lost. 'Man is man's place'... basically it is good that the poor boy with this expensiveness buys the girl's gold service [set]... rents or buys a good house too... holds a good wedding too... takes out the tribe's eye [make them jealous] too... because of this very thing I say definition. With definition of concepts lost... what is marriage, what is family, what is my role in that family as a man, what is woman's role, what is child's role. I say as much as man's role is lost, woman's role is lost too, children's role is lost too. A mom or a dad who give service 24 hours and must work. Some time ago I was reading an article regarding children's economic upbringing... it said perhaps from age 3

you must teach your child the value of money. 'I who go work... if I don't go work I don't have money to buy toys for you.' From age 3 I teach these concepts to my child. For example if I Elnaz, I my spouse... I a man... if I don't learn from my father and mother where the economic position of my father and mother is... by God give service... I am not... I become that same man whom I think I become for my child... this... for my spouse too I become this. Because my mom dad were this very thing for me. I think this is a domino... the whole answer is this... if I don't cut from somewhere... don't cut it... I don't become a generation separate from its previous generation.' (Interview No. 78, Elnaz Safaei, Pos 108).

In this narrative, recognition and systematic training of family roles and economic upbringing from childhood paves the way for cutting the cycle of violence and its reproduction; just as social psychology theories—such as Social Learning Theory (Bandura) and Observational Learning—have shown, power relations and roles in the family create models for children which are represented directly in the future (Yousefnia, 1395 [2016]).

But no parenting training will be efficient without the accompaniment of structural supports and synchronicity with other social and media arenas. In another narrative it is stated:

'It must be simultaneous... in my opinion it must be simultaneous... a few works be performed together simultaneously... you cannot do informing... do awareness-raising... now I understood yes now I understood this behaviour is right this is violence... and then I go into school I see 'Eh'... incidentally it becomes heavier for me because I understood and became aware... I cannot stop that violence that is entering me... my force doesn't reach [is not enough]. Before perhaps I was unaware... I interpreted and construed this violence somehow differently and passed from it... but now incidentally now I became aware I know he is bringing calamity on my head but I can do nothing... neither is there a support institution nor is there educational nor is there structural [support] wherein I can express myself without violence... one hand doesn't sound [one hand cannot clap]. Why... it must be simultaneous... be concurrent. Simultaneous education be... simultaneous media be... work... do awareness-raising... simultaneous those support institutions come... legal supervisory... they come support.' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 66).

In this experience, effective education is contingent upon the existence of support at social and supportive levels; meaning not only must the parent

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learn, but media, law, and support institutions must synchronise to provide the possibility of inhibition from violence and controlled expression of emotions.

This explicit analysis is known in scientific literature as the 'Intergenerational Cycle of Violence' (Mansouri, 1394 [2015]) and indicates that as long as the pattern of violence is not buried in families and does not give its place to authoritative educational style (neither tyrannical, nor negligent, nor strict), the cycle of oppression and abuse will transfer from one generation to another.

The outcome of narratives of this research and complementary scientific theories emphasises the necessity of regular education, multilateral participation of social institutions, redefinition of roles, and harmonisation of family education and formal educational system. True prevention of violence against men will only become possible when authoritative parenting skills are placed as the basis of educational and supportive programmes for families and society, and these trainings have structural and media backing so that the new generation grows in a healthier environment free from the cycle of violence transmission.

10.1.4. Trainings Related to LGBTQ Groups

In analysing the data presented regarding the role of trainings related to LGBTQ groups in preventing violence against men, especially those who have sexual or gender identity inconsistent with dominant norms, it can be seen that ignorance and lack of systematic education has paved the ground for multi-layered injuries and violences; from deep identity confusions to family rejection, information poverty, social problems, and the most horrific forms of isolation and self-harm.

The point of departure for all narratives is the absence of formal and scientific education regarding sexual and gender identity, to the point where the individual grapples with the torture of ignorance for years and it is not clear with what identity he lives.

'These individuals... the biggest and first problem they have is that they don't know themselves [their sexual identity]... well we have nearly more than 370 types of sexual orientation that the person must come study these... meaning every person in my opinion... this must be taught in schools... unfortunately in our country [it is not done]. A university major for those who want to help these

individuals to find themselves must be taught in schools... in Europe and Western societies it has many opponents... they say 'If it is taught my child becomes like this'... no, this child of yours doesn't become like this, this existed, he merely knows himself... and this word... excuse me very much... is a completely stupid thing [laughter]... this individual... stupid strictly it is... but mostly because of traditional societies and ignorings that exist... many friends many parents don't know and out of ignorance and low awareness... can say this word... whom many of them possess position, situation and high status... unfortunately it is not few but we are not supposed to address them.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 15).

These statements express well the importance of redefining sexual and gender education (Pourmohammadi et al., 1400 [2021]) in preventing the repetition of the cycle of confusion, rejection, and violence against men with different orientations or identities.

Search for sexual identity and ignorance often leads to serious psychological blows in adolescence and keeps the individual in the bend of the alley of defenselessness and denial for years; as it has come in this experience:

'For example, its sample is myself who, well, from childhood I had tendencies towards boys. And I didn't know... and this ignorance struck the biggest blow to me... it was for this reason that, well, I didn't know... and well the time I didn't know anything... and didn't know what that thing I am is... what they call this thing I am... how I must deal [with it].' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 4).

This situation leads not only to identity gap, but to psychological isolation and even trends like self-blame and permanent anxiety (Herder & Loux, 2017).

This very lack of education and support creates a wider trap of problems, especially when families and society, due to lack of learning resources, fundamentally have no information of differences and special needs of these individuals, and silence or educational deviations keep individuals in the cycle of violence:

'Many of them in military service ages... in the time of service... meaning I say better... face problems... and many of them too say nothing to their families over this issue... including my own friends. This issue must become very established in society... that with extensive education in virtual space... packages, websites, books and resources and very very many other things... and something we need is

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translation of a series of foreign international researches so families realise.'

(Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 26).

These narratives emphasise that awareness-raising should not be limited only to individuals themselves, but must include families, officials, and all layers of society (Yousefi Raberi, 1399 [2020]).

In this midst, formal and non-cultural education, regardless of levels from elementary to university, has been described as the main solution for reducing the cycle of violence against queer men:

'Violences as I said... regarding the LGBTQ community... encompasses... the first solution is scientific and specialised education to all people such that they know themselves... but its first step is education.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 174).

This scientific logic aligns completely with findings of researchers in the field of prevention who have emphasised the place of pervasive and skill-based education in elevating capability and psycho-social health of vulnerable groups (Banerjee & Shah, 2020).

Discussion of skill-enhancement and empowerment specifically for Trans groups has also been raised seriously, and narratives show what gaps the lack of lived experience similar to boys creates for individuals who enter the male role after gender surgery; such that:

'Totally can't... because... because of this very thing we at present... our own association had life skills... especially for Trans people... that newly when the party has been raised as a girl comes has operated and enters the masculine society... didn't have many of childhood experiences of a masculine... we come put life skills classes so he finds more adaptation... it has helped them a lot... but those who don't do this work with us... there are gaps for them... unless they enter masculine society... experiences now are later... but their social experience becomes more and they can adapt themselves better with social [society].'

(Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 251).

This report is a concrete instance of social psychologists' recommendation that adaptation to the new gender role is mainly obtainable with bio-social skills training (Mokarami et al., 1397 [2018]).

Alongside education and skill, supportive-hygienic and welfare dimensions have doubled importance for reducing stress and elevating mental and social health of LGBTQ groups. For example, creating supportive and

communicative spaces like safe houses, dialogue cafes, and participatory programmes has an important share in reducing the feeling of isolation, rejection, and even structural violence:

'We who work with Trans kids... because these have nutrition problem, have issue of life livelihood and shelter, have house rent... and even we insisted a lot that we be able to have a house for these... we said we spend [money] procure a house for them so these can sleep there at night... at the limit of sleeping, you know... when they want to rest, have a correct rest, have correct and healthy hygiene. Well in the duration of that same issue I made a cafe for them... they came sat spoke regarding their various things, read poems read stories, laughed [at] books, read stories... establish connection with each other.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 91).

Awareness-raising regarding marriage and features of joint life is also a vital issue whose absence can be the source of violence, misunderstanding, and bold social consequences. Lived experiences show the Trans individual or his family must become aware of limitations and physiological, identity, and even legal characteristics to prevent the start of a problematic joint life:

'[Sometimes] a period... because of hormonal disorders or type of upbringing or type of life... the party says 'I have tendency to be a man'... well or basically likes a girl... hormone has gone up down... this incidentally happens for a series... says 'I like to be a man.' Now that science has advanced a lot... quickly understands and goes after it for gender change. Basically this is not Trans... shouldn't operate, shouldn't change his organ... that is that same lady who basically can not marry either but shouldn't perform gender reassignment surgery... because awareness is low... is not proper... goes.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 265).

'For example someone who has married... his opposite side must know that this is Trans... this is something that... basically... but this that perhaps he doesn't write [in documents] but well must have realised... a series of places they write for marriage... marriage document... they say bride's father must know... one doesn't like to say, well. One doesn't like to say the party is Trans... well they go do this work some places that the bride's father doesn't want [to know?]. In my opinion it shouldn't be told to the bride's family at all, huh... but well again...' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 171).

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'This that he doesn't have child must be known... anyway everything... the party must know... this that I don't have child... know the party is Trans... look it enters privacy... privacy means this that [excuse me I apologise] what shape is my genital organ... how do I establish sexual relationship... this has nothing to do with the bride's father... I mean from this aspect. This that I don't have child must be known... I don't become [orgasm] in that form... plus I who say everything must be said... a series don't like... the party wants to marry a girl doesn't like his family to understand... suppress or annoy or not give him permission.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 173).

These narratives show frankness and transparency must be considered not only in direct dialogue but in official laws and regulations to prevent imposition of psychological pressure and gender violence (Ahmady et al., 1401 [2022]).

Finally, presented narratives show that promoting creative artistic and educational models can also play an important role in elevating awareness level and reducing discrimination and violence. One of the successful examples in this field is theatre performance with the presence of Trans individuals themselves who depict their first-hand experiences and sufferings without mediation:

'I came... there was a theatre work titled 'Voice of Trans'... I took this work on stage. I don't say it was an extraordinary work but in my opinion it was a very big work because... look I... now two three friends came took work regarding Trans on stage but actors came played the Trans role... my work is this my specialty is this... I use from the heart of that community... from their own collection... I used Trans kids themselves and they came performed the show and it was an extraordinary work. Meaning they said whatever their heart wanted on stage. We had no writing [script] that these put in front of themselves. I said 'Kids, say what you like'... only that thing that was in their mind they wanted to say I nurtured. I helped them... with cooperation of director friends I invited them they came was placed next to the collection. And performed a good work.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 23).

Drama therapy, creative drama, and other art-based techniques are considered powerful tools for breaking silence, destigmatisation, increasing empathy, and facilitating the process of treatment and empowerment of vulnerable communities (Carter, 2019).

10.1.5. Training for Officials, Specialists, and Experts

10.1.5.1. *Training of Law Enforcement and Judicial Institutions in the Field of Intervention in Domestic Violence*

Data gathered from field interviews draws a multi-layered image of the complexity and challenges of current interventions by law enforcement and judicial institutions in facing violence against men. Present narratives show that fundamental weakness in specialised infrastructure, lack of emergency services, and insufficient social awareness have created serious obstacles in effectively controlling the cycle of domestic violence. According to Dr. Vali Bahrami, police interventions are still traditional and lack expert foundation; modern supportive services like Social Emergency and telephone counselling lines are absent in many regions especially villages of Western Iran, and lack of public awareness has confronted the process of help-seeking and people benefiting from specialised services with obstacles. This lack of public awareness is the first barrier in effective prevention of domestic violence (Goudarzi et al., 1401 [2022]).

At the operational level, the quote from the Retired Police Colonel emphasises that the police, as the front line of response to crisis, without the backing of intensive and specialised training, is inevitable to make instant decisions in an inflamed atmosphere; where the judge has opportunity to review the file but the police must choose the correct strategy immediately. This situation doubles the necessity of prioritising efficient, decision-making, and knowledge-based trainings for law enforcement forces; a necessity that global problem-oriented policing literature also confirms (Pourhosseini et al., 1400 [2021]; Goodman-Delahunty & Corbo Crehan, 2016).

Analysis of deeper interviews highlights another layer of educational need: professional authority of the police transforms into deterrence and prevention when it is based simultaneously on legal capacity and psychological and legal skill; otherwise, it either paves the ground for abuse of power or leads to passive and incapable reaction (Mirzaei et al., 1402 [2023]; Stover et al., 2010). Here the importance of expert, modern, and cross-sectoral trainings shows itself; trainings that beyond decisiveness or emotionality, are based on conflict resolution skills, diagnosing hidden forms of domestic violence, and conflict management (Seif et al., 1402 [2023]; Wang et al., 2023).

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Integrating with other research findings, especially narratives of Shayan and Barzagari, it is emphasised that the departure point for any educational transformation is not only empowerment of police and judges, but targeted and layer-by-layer education for the elite and upper class. First, training must be offered to specialists, legislators, and reference figures (including celebrities, political officials, and academics) so that necessary acceptance and social legitimacy is provided for transformation in attitude and public policy. As narratives show, the power structure and social norms, without consensus and upstream support, not only do not tolerate sustainable change, but may lead to suspension or social suppression of any initiative (Karami, 1399 [2020]).

This approach corresponds with findings of Social Systems Theory (Luhmann, 1995) and successful domestic models (Fathi et al., 1398 [2019]); lasting change begins only with change at the level of intellectual and scientific leaders and modelling by them. For this reason, specialised trainings, whether in the field of identity and sexual issues or in the field of psycho-social injuries, must first be correctly understood and consensus-reached by experts, academics, and doctors before being transferred to the level of public education and policy-making.

Alongside this top-down approach, the necessity of public education is also prominent in interview lines; where general citizens must be able to diagnose forms of violence and learn control and prevention tools. Public trainings cause elevation of diagnosis power, use of conflict resolution solutions, and real reduction of violence in the context of family and society, provided that scientific, realistic, and expert-consensus-based concepts are transferred (Fathi et al., 1398 [2019]).



Figure 16 Prohibition of Violence Against Men

Finally, findings emphasise that preventive educational policies require a dual demand: on one hand targeted and specialised for elites, officials, and legislators to create legal bed and social legitimisation; and on the other hand universalisation of knowledge and skill based on science, to strengthen collective skill and empowerment of various society strata. Ignoring this two-step structure not only intensifies pathological consequences but expands the ground for reproduction of violence and inefficiency of intervention policies as well. Ultimately, no transformation in the arena of social norms can become sustainable and effective without change and modelling of intellectual leaders and upper echelons (Luhmann, 1995; Karami, 1399 [2020]).

10.1.5.2. Targeted Problem-Solving Training in Educational Institutions

In examining the role of problem-solving training in preventing violence against men, participants' narratives clearly show how formal and informal arenas of education can break cycles of violence or, conversely, reproduce it with their deficiency and passivity. One interviewee explicitly emphasises the necessity of implementing problem-solving culture training programmes in various institutions—from Education [Ministry], family to universities and even Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance:

'But if we want to really have a principled work [in the field of problem-solving culture]... trainings should be executed in Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Education (schools), universities... can be executed as pilot next to each other.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 73).

This very emphasis on structured and planned intervention shows that educational systems, if organised correctly, can institutionalise problem-solving skills and healthy methods of facing challenges in the conscience of students from the very beginning; a matter that theorists such as Elias et al. confirm regarding the importance of structured life and social skills training in preventing the emergence of violence (Elias et al., 1396 [2017]).

On the other side, the importance of the role of Education and families returns directly to the space children and adolescents experience in facing crises and differences. As another participant warns:

'We must work in two areas, Education and family... that now in many families simply because the type of trainings has changed... instead of seeing their training from TV they see from Instagram... unfortunately many of those who

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teach in Instagram cause families to suffer deviation... [media] are fake, are yellow [tabloid]... come as psychologist say words that many pay attention to which causes family foundation to be influenced... one word, once and for all... then Education can influence a lot, bring specialised person [teach].' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 76).

This quote is a kind of warning regarding the dominance of superficial and incorrect informal trainings, especially from non-specialised individuals in virtual space; a current that can replace healthy problem-solving teachings and life skills with pseudoscience and false norm-breaking. Research results also introduce the phenomenon of 'destructive informal trainings' in virtual space as an effective factor in the failure of educational systems for real skill-learning (Khajeh-Nouri et al., 1400 [2021]).

Another important factor repeated in quotes is the lack of strategic and targeted education in fields of conflict resolution, establishing effective communication, and avoiding aggressive actions. One interviewee describes this lack thus:

'We in families, Education, and Higher Education system... in problem-solving culture, effective and efficient communication and more correct methods of behaviour... the simplest work and simplest action is aggression.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 31).

This description clearly shows that lack of constructive and communicative skills paves the way for rapid emergence of aggression and cycles of violence, as some researchers have also emphasised that problem-solving and effective communication training are key factors in reducing aggression and promoting mental health in schools (Rezaeian, 1398 [2019]).

Lived experience of students and adolescents also emphasises the necessity of practical attention to problem-solving and dispute management training. One participant, by mentioning a narrative from the school environment, shows how problem-solving can take shape in daily life or be simply ignored:

'This is not predictable at all for example [in school environment] suddenly one person has no problem with him for example the guy [bully] comes takes his food... one goes quickly tells the principal... for us it became like this. They took one's sandwich he went told the principal, principal came said 'Tomorrow you bring the amount of the sandwich you ate for him'... it became just like this too.

Meaning his punishment was this that [he return] the amount of sandwich he had eaten. Meaning it is not like this that everyone has [economic] problem.'

(Interview No. 80, Erfan, Pos 194).

This narrative, while referring to a simple but real school situation, shows that problem-solving, if done through logical method and without internal aggression, can even prevent a crisis from turning into violence, and learning these very simple patterns of solving challenges is a capital for future collective and individual life.

Therefore, based on narratives of the present research, it can be said that the more problem-solving skill, anger management, method of dialogue and establishing effective communication, and specialised and structured education from lower age levels to university is attended to, the more the possibility of violence emergence—especially against the male gender—decreases. Simultaneously, weakness or replacement of these trainings with waves of superficial and pseudoscientific virtual trainings and lack of trained specialists in schools creates a favourable ground for growth of violence and aggression; this is that same vicious cycle that Grounded Theory also emphasises on discovering and breaking.

10.1.5.3. Preparation and Production of Educational Packages for Social Workers

In the context of a society where power relations and restrictive policies reduce opportunities for specialised education, the idea of producing and distributing supplementary educational packages for social workers is not only a technical solution but a response to social, political, and cultural realities of Iran. The narrative of one interviewee clearly unveils the conflict between official teachings and real needs of society and shows that any educational transformation in the field of combating violence against men, first and more than anything, must be designed relying on lived realities and society's demands:

'Education if possible somehow... government has limitations because of... has a view and government thinks that government... have that Islamist view but no, people don't have... now until when they want to pretend that 'Yeah our people are all Muslims' but no people are realising the most real views and are progressing a lot... and the bed of education, virtual education is the first step with creating for example supplementary educational packages from the side of

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university professors or social workers that for example educational packages be distributed among themselves initially... meaning an individual who has complete education teaches these individuals one by one what these are and how it is and how to deal and how to show reaction and what solutions to show.'

(Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 17).

In this narrative, clear reference to the contradiction between official values and expectations of the state, with attitudes and evolving understanding of people, itself implies the necessity of independence and specialisation of education for social workers. This issue shows that as long as control and direction of trainings is from top and based on ideology, there will be a vital necessity for transferring practical and contemporary knowledge, that too in a more neutral and broader way like virtual education and supplementary packages. This is exactly that same solution that in scientific literature has been emphasised regarding the role of 'Peer-to-peer knowledge transmission' and the role of virtual education in passing through directive and political obstacles (Hasanzadeh et al., 1400 [2021]).

Social workers, as the first present in the line of confronting crisis cases and violence emergence, require practical proficiencies, recognition of violence trends, its hidden and overt forms, and proportionate professional reactions. The discussed narrative pictures this need with a tangible expression that knowledge be transferred partially and case-by-case, from trained individual to others, such that every worker learns not only theoretical education but correct reaction and solution for complex and sensitive situations. This type of informal education based on experience and gradual transfer of skill allows social workers to have more precise and effective responses in facing violence against men in diverse fields (from family violence to social or governmental violence); a subject which has been confirmed in international research as 'Informal Organized Learning Structure' and effectiveness of 'Modular Training' on professional growth and resilience of social staff (Nutley & Homel, 2006).

The link between 'virtual learning' and formation of 'Specialised Peer Groups' within the social workers community is not only a response to political limitations but an expressive example of creating soft resistance infrastructures and developing specialised social capital; a space wherein knowledge and precise solutions for facing reduced or denied forms of violence are distributed directly and outside formal and inefficient circuits.

This process, aligning with Grounded Theory principles, is not the result of merely structural decision-making, but requires active participation of field actors, utilising experience and skill, and strengthening workers' subjectivity (Ghanbari et al., 1397 [2018]).

In total, the interview emphasises that virtual education and supplementary educational packages from academics or experienced social workers is the key to passing obstacles, developing skills, and redefining professional reactions in the path of fighting violence against men; such that even in conditions of ideological limitations, a dynamic perspective for learning, support, and specialised synergy is figured, and every worker can in turn play a more active and transformative role in the process of prevention and intervention.

10.1.5.4. Addressing Family Education by Media and Schools

In the process of analysing causes and prevention solutions for violence against men, the role of Media and Schools and their importance in Family Education has a pivotal and undeniable place. Careful look at interviewees' narratives confirms that a major part of behaviours and attitudes that can later provide the ground for violence emergence takes shape in the family environment and early upbringing. One interviewee emphasises this link saying:

'In my opinion many events take shape by means of family education if we can perform upbringing correctly. I want to say that our Voice and Vision [State TV/Radio], our television, our press and our schools... our schools must definitely work in this regard.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 39).

In this quote, correct family upbringing is assumed not as a mere accident but as an institutional and organised process whose responsibility is not only on parents, but institutions like media and school must also intervene actively in it. This reference implicitly points to Social Education Models emphasising that socialisation and gender identity formation occurs through synergy of family, formal education, and media environment (Motiee, 1398 [2019]).

The sensitive role of media in knowledge transfer and changing public attitudes regarding violence against men is reflected through another interviewee's narrative as well:

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'Through media education can be given... education is not necessarily this that a very vast gathering from these very surroundings... inside family itself for example a series of brochures be prepared and even it is possible men read and laugh but that laughter shows that in their own life too it is possible they are facing such things... and a series of awarenesses be given that these violences must be placed in legal context. Otherwise...' (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari Nasab, Pos 35).

In this narrative, education through media does not end in direct informing only, but creates a space for raising taboo subjects and sensitisation regarding men's agency in the cycle of violence and its injuries. Even reactions like men laughing at recommendations taught in brochures indicate that media—consciously or unconsciously—plants the seed of thought and reflection among its audience and sooner or later places them in exposure to critical confrontation and self-review regarding their behaviours. This subject aligns completely with findings of social research that have shown the communicative role and awareness-raising capacity of media in changing gender attitudes and helping solve the hidden dilemma of violence (Alavi, 1396 [2017]; Gholipour et al., 1400 [2021]).

But a very determining point in Grounded Theory is interviewees' attention to families' deep weakness in understanding Psychological Literacy and ignorance regarding spiritual-psychological diseases. In many families mental diseases are still considered not as a clinical phenomenon but in the form of laziness, low patience, or lack of will. In one of the most explicit quotes we read:

'Must see education... recognise mental disease as a disease... many of our families don't recognise mental disease as a disease: 'Get up collect yourself [pull yourself together], make your state good'... meaning 'Get up enough already'... this is not correct understanding of diseases. And we must change this [attitude].' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 110).

This is where media and school education finds fundamental importance: reforming families' attitude towards psychological diseases causes psychological violence and especially indifference or humiliation of damaged men not to lead to isolation and silent cycles of violence. Meaning if media and educational system can change public understanding of mental diseases, family space is also guided towards acceptance and support of vulnerable

members, especially men, and grounds for formation or continuity of violence against them are weakened significantly (Motiee, 1398 [2019]).

Theoretical and empirical research emphasises that the role of formal education and media in institutionalising healthy behavioural patterns, especially in the sensitive field of violence against men, should not be underestimated. The educational system, especially in schools, through designing course units and extracurricular activities can prepare the space for dialogue regarding male identity, prevention of violence, and combating gender stereotypes. Media too, by producing critical, educational contents and representing real narratives of violence, create a safe platform for raising fundamental questions (Gholipour et al., 1400 [2021]). Narratives of this research show well that wherever collective education and culture-building has been pursued with a scientific, realistic, and continuous approach, grounds of violence, wrong understanding of mental disease, and reproduction of gender stigmas have gradually weakened.

Finally, the educational solution for preventing violence against men is not limited to a single institution or method; rather, it includes a chain of teachings and sensitisation from media and school to family. Present narratives prove that wherever pervasive and targeted education has come into the middle, even the most elementary strata of society, although with initial reactions like ridicule and indifference, finally faced the subject and saw themselves involved in answering a new question regarding their identity and behaviour. For this reason, continuity of education in media and schools, with the aim of making families aware, has an irreplaceable role in the cycle of preventing violence against men (Alavi, 1396 [2017]).

10.1.6. Development of Training for All Age and Gender Groups

In analysing present narratives, the development of trainings for all age and gender groups, Sexual Education, and cultivating Assertiveness (*Jorat-mandi*) has a fundamental place as a key solution in preventing violence against men; because social dynamics and reproduction of damaging behaviours are rooted in learning processes and transfer of values from childhood to adulthood. The pivotal question is: why must universal and lifelong education be the axis of prevention, and how can assertiveness and sexual education break cycles of violence?

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In the narrative of one interviewee, the scope of the meaning of education goes even beyond the category of working children and turns into a pattern of experience transfer and changing daily mentality:

'Some teachings must be performed at the media level... of the sort... for example one is this very teaching of [about] working child to people, to society... if they understand that a working child gets eliminated from the street surface by not giving money... this very education causes little by little anyone sees any child... I myself go or my friends gathered together or even university classes that I came a few years ago... I ask... general talks with a few people... first I see a series... I ask 'Who gives money?'... heart burned [felt pity]... many were agreeing that 'We help'... then we come sit talk with them... I see 'If you give this money this event happens, all this issue exists'... you see then everyone agrees they say 'We don't give money anymore from now on'... this is very satisfying and I see this itself is a kind of education. For lessening the injury of this child who grows up.'
(Interview No. 30, Hamid Moradi, Pos 82).

This very process of experience transfer and awareness-raising transforms the mental structure of society step by step and shows that education is not merely data transfer or theory, but a kind of social journeying with the course of individual and collective transformation. Social Learning Theories like Bandura's theory also emphasise this very feature of observational learning and the role of models in changing social behaviour (Yousefnia, 1395 [2016]).

But the deeper challenge lies in the need for teaching Assertiveness and Emotional Education, especially for men. In the narrative below, the link between lack of assertiveness, suppression of emotions, and emergence of heavy psychological effects like depression and tendency towards self-harm is clearly raised:

'It is very important for us that here we teach assertiveness... that assertiveness is the border between these two models and these two groups. Assertive individuals express their anger and also don't do aggression... nor do they transform into those passive individuals who then returns home and constantly curses and damns himself that 'Dust on your head [shame on you], how incompetent you are, how much of a tosari-khor [one who gets hit on the head/submissive] you are, how oppressed you are, you are useless, everyone is annoying you, you are a cat... they did so-and-so to you... you said nothing'... and... and these become sick and incidentally I said these are more prone to

depression and anxiety and suicide.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 105).

Here, teaching assertiveness is considered not merely an individual skill but a shield against structural suppression and the cycle of passivity or aggression, and its clear instance is teaching personal boundaries, firm expression of feelings, and opposing aggression on emotional or physical privacy; a concept known in scientific psychological literature as Assertiveness which has a direct relationship with mental health (Salahshour, 1398 [2019]). This very firm border between aggression and passivity must be seen from that very childhood and in the flow of education:

'From that side too aggression... its repercussions are clear too. We must work more on this middle border... that we define assertive individuals... that these manage their anger with firm behaviour, with expressing anger without injury to the other. When we tell children or tell in the workshop that 'You make eye contact... look directly into the bully student's eye and say 'You have no right to put your hand inside my bag. I am severely upset by this act of yours... I will definitely deal with you [report/confront]... I will definitely report this to the school principal... you have no right to enter my territory... you have no right to touch me.' This becomes assertive behaviour... that expresses his emotion but doesn't punch him in the mouth either.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 105).

A simple example of that same process of attitude change at the society level which was stated earlier regarding the working child is visible this time in the educational environment and as a result of cultivating self-esteem and audacity to defend oneself, without becoming violence-stricken or a victim of the cycle of humiliation and anger.

With this view, teaching 'No' saying, sexual education, and methods of self-care and defense is not limited to childhood and adolescence ages, and every individual at any stage of life—even after passing forty or fifty years of age—must find the opportunity for re-learning and cleansing his mind from sediments of violent upbringing:

'The next point I must say is this that we emphasise education a lot... to the definition of assertiveness and models of assertiveness and models of saying 'No' and methods of self-care... at all levels because this is a lifelong process happening... let us not think that a 50-year-old parent shouldn't be placed under

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education... definitely that 50-year-old parent, in order to wipe the sediments and repercussions of that tyrannical and violent parenting style of his father from his mind and present a new model to him, must be placed under psychotherapy education and many other things. To a two-year-old child and mother of a two-three-year-old child too in the sexual education workshop... both courage and assertiveness and firm behaviour must be taught so that this 5-year-old or preschool child doesn't get subjected to sexual assault by the instructor or by an adult. This is lifelong... mother must be educated, that second grade elementary child must also be educated on how to protect himself and care... and defending is not just punching.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 123).

This very continuity of education and attention to tyrannical parenting style reminds once again of the necessity of recognising cycles of violence and its reproduction at the level of family and society; cycles that are not eliminated simply with education and demand continuity of the process of empowerment, reforming beliefs, and understanding emotions.

Another important challenge is the educational system's inattention to Life Skills and Emotional Intelligence. One interviewee, criticising the existing situation, states:

'In our schools a book under the title 'Thinking Style and Life Skills'... this is taught in eighth and ninth grade... that too has no specific teacher... as a recess [break time] they give it to the social sciences teacher or counsellor or upbringing coach... that too many times they give its period to the math teacher so that math teacher comes teaches two words of math to them. An 80-90 page book under the title 'Thinking Style and Life Skills'... that's it... whereas we must, during education, compile two three volumes of books annually regarding emotional intelligence.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 127).

In this narrative, the educational system clearly, instead of paying attention to raising citizens capable of managing emotions, preventing violence, and understanding communicative mechanisms, emphasises the transfer of a collection of data and memorisations, and this very matter causes graduates of this educational system to be severely vulnerable in facing life crises, anger control, self-expression, and defending personal privacy.

On the other hand, interviewees point to this note that prevention of violence is not realised only at the level of public education and requires Specialised Intervention and support for vulnerable groups; especially boys

and men who for various reasons—including social and cultural pressures—refrain from expressing their sufferings and violent experiences. One psychologist, pointing to different levels of prevention, says in this regard:

'We always have prevention in three levels Doctor... meaning I always adhere to this level of prevention... for primary level prevention... an event hasn't happened yet and we say through public education... because we predict that this event... considering conditions and substrates of society and families and anyway any event and factor that exists... this event might happen... so we practically teach in the primary level 'For God's sake be careful that this event doesn't happen'... we teach 'Boy be careful of your conditions... in your growth you will face these issues... please do not perform these acts.' Respected families, with your son child perform these acts... practically the substrate there must be reformed... which happens less... meaning an instructor who has specialisation on boys [is] very much... I remember a few years ago I worked... we had a girls' club that supported girls under 18... put psych[ologist]... ball... taught... sports suitable for girls that would be good... and we had one abandoned boys' club in Enghelab [Square/Complex]... finished.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 186).

In this narrative, a kind of discrimination in supporting girls and boys at the society level is reflected as well; as if supporting girls and teaching life skills to them has turned into an accepted norm, but boys still face a lack of opportunity and facilities in this field. This matter emphasises the necessity of attending to men's special needs in the field of violence prevention.

Also, trainings at the Tertiary Level become important when violence has occurred and the goal is reducing its repercussions. These types of trainings include offering psychological services, social support, and legal guidance to victims of violence and their families:

'After this at the tertiary level is this that society... when that violence has happened to the party himself and the party's family... what trainings be given so that subsequent repercussions of this violence and problems it creates are prevented... now that infidelity has occurred, the man has been rejected... how do we collect [manage/fix] the issue so everyone sees the least amount of injury... well we collect the infidelity... the woman stays in the life [marriage]... okay children are [there]... children hate the father... the woman hits the man on the head every day... and this returns [to the point] that... meaning practically we

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[are] at three levels in my opinion if we are looking for a solution.' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 188).

In this way, from working child education to sociological explanation of roots of violence, all and all show various dimensions of a macro solution named Development of Education at All Levels and Ages. Education as a social intervention aids in reducing violence against men and other social injuries and, by offering an efficient model of growth and social dynamism, paves the path for collective felicity.

10.1.7. Social Maturity Training for Children

In interviewees' narratives, simultaneously with acknowledging the difficulty of changing society or policies, hope for preventing further injury and violence is focused on direct education of children.

'The suggestion I can give is in fact fathers and mothers now with experiences they have... be able to raise their children somehow that in problems, in hardships, in unkindness they see from life... psychologically, in terms of patience and tolerance be strong... the best way is that we teach our children how to face problems that arise for them in the future and solve them.' (Interview No. 100, Mojtaba Mardani, Pos 123).

This perception shows that in conditions where families do not have the power to change macro-structures, focusing on cultivating Resilience and teaching coping with difficulties is considered the only path forward for parents; a subject emphasised in psychological research as well (Kaki et al., 1397 [2018]).

Alongside the pivotal role of parents, interviewees point to the educational gap between Sexual, Physical, and Social Maturity.

'... we have three types of maturity: sexual, physical, and social. Families have placed their attention more on sexual and physical maturity... but social maturity is a maturity that the family doesn't pay attention to... we must work in two areas, Education and family... many of those who teach in Instagram cause families to suffer deviation... then Education can influence a lot, for example bring specialised person.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 76).

This very neglect of social maturity, based on educational theories and findings, causes communication skills, emotion control, responsibility, and respect for others' rights not to be institutionalised correctly in the child; and

this lack itself makes one prone to the growth of hidden and overt violent behaviours (Fouladi et al., 1396 [2017]).

The cycle of violence reproduction and the role of culture and gender is reflected in another narrative, where parents' emotional and economic investment suffers gender bias:

'I spend this much for my daughter, I don't spend for my son because I know he is the one who builds society... woman-abuse is much and these very issues cause that those... the girl as soon as she reaches somewhere puts her Mehrieh [dowry] into execution.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 71).

This gender domination view, simultaneous with intensification of violence against man or woman, limits and makes vulnerable the possibility of forming a resilient social identity for both genders.

In another section, the role of school and specialised instructor in compensating family education deficiencies is considered very determining:

'Trained instructors be above their head and from that very beginning work with these kids. Regarding primary customs of life, religion, faith, recognising daily affairs of life which these are really far from...' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 27).

And: *'Solution for these kinds of issues is correct culture-building... meaning teaching a correct culture... teach frameworks of healthy life to them especially from elementary period...'* (Interview No. 85, Sajjad Shahrokhi, Pos 64).

This bold role of education and specialised instructor intersects with scientific findings regarding structural intervention for preventing violence against the next generation (Shafiei, 1394 [2015]).

Looking deeper into dialogues clearly expresses the importance of parental awareness and recognising needs dependent on age, identity, and gender role of children:

'I must know when my son is 6 years old what difference and interests he has... regarding men they have fallen stranger [are ignorant].' (Interview No. 57, Ms. Jiriaei, Pos 146).

This cognitive estrangement is exactly that same missing link that plays a role in the future and emergence of psychological and emotional violence against men. Also, the importance of active presence and participation of family,

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especially father and mother, and preventing entrusting children to unreliable and damaging environments and gatherings is reflected in the phrase:

'... I must have my attention zero to hundred on my father [sic: likely meant 'as a father']... somehow guide the child towards... basically not finding tendency towards substances and vagrancy...' (Interview No. 44, Vahid, Pos 228).

An emphasis that developmental psychology theories persist on in confirming the protective role of family (Karimi et al., 1398 [2019]).

Another dimension of social maturity is decision-making and responsibility in fundamental future affairs; like marriage choice which is one of the most complex and rooted grounds for emergence of mutual violences in adulthood:

'You reach that intellectual maturity and know for what you want to marry... if you really love her and possess affection for her you won't be willing to upset her... that is intellectual maturity... this principle of traditional marriage must go aside.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 136).

A skill that if ignored in initial trainings leads to repetition of patterns of violence and failure (Rezaei et al., 1395 [2016]).

The macro perception from these narratives is that the future of preventing violence against men depends directly on the method of teaching psychological resistance, social maturity, problem-solving skill, diagnosing personal red lines, and finally providing opportunity for experience for decision-making; whether these trainings be in the family environment, or take place in school by specialised instructors. Neglecting any dimension paves the way for reproduction of psychological, social, or even economic and structural violence against future men.

10.2. Therapeutic Strategies for Prevention of Violence Against the Male Gender

Based on Grounded Theory research findings, Treatment is considered one of the serious approaches for prevention, control, and reduction of violence against the male gender in Iranian society. These strategies are introduced in five categories below: 'Changing Approaches from Intervention and Treatment to Prevention Topics,' 'Providing Means of Prevention of Dangerous Contagious Disease for Trans People,' 'Providing Cost of Gender

Reassignment Surgeries and Treatment of Trans People,' 'Treatment of Mental Disorders Before Marriage to Prevent Violence Against Men,' 'Screening Parents' Mental Health to Prevent Sexual and Physical Abuses.'

10.2.1. Changing Approaches from Intervention and Treatment to Prevention Topics

In many interviewees' narratives, this fundamental point is seen well that the common pattern in society regarding dealing with injuries like adolescents' high-risk behaviours is still based on the axis of intervention and treatment after crisis emergence, and the link of Prevention is paid less attention; an approach that not only does not answer roots of issues, but can itself be part of injury reproduction.

'Now I say high-risk behaviours... this increase of high-risk behaviours is an important subject that in fact exists among adolescents and has involved these adolescents with itself and mostly our focus instead of prevention is on intervention and treatment... although we don't perform intervention and treatment well either. Whereas [in] these issues we must consider prevention prior and by creating beds and grounds and strengthening the institution of family and parenting be able... be able to help them.' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 39).

This quote, with all its simplicity, depicts several levels of behavioural and structural roots of violence and male vulnerabilities. First, that society's and even policymakers' effort is traditionally on 'reaction' to problems after occurrence, not creating healthy and safe grounds for prevention. Such a pattern aligns with findings of social and psychological theories regarding breaking the cycle of social injuries (Kaki et al., 1397 [2018]). When focus is on intervention and treatment, often patience is exercised until the stage of injury emergence and crisis, while roots are hidden, especially in family, parenting, and peer network.

Also, reference to 'strengthening the institution of family and parenting' in this narrative points to the fundamental role of preventive mechanisms that can make adolescents resistant against high-risk behaviours at a stage much before injury emergence. Extensive studies have shown that empowering families in communication skills, emotional monitoring, problem-solving training, and creating a sense of psychological security is directly linked with the rate of reduction of social injuries and violence among adolescents (Karimi

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et al., 1398 [2019]; Shafiei, 1394 [2015]). Ignoring this preventive chain causes adolescents to enter the cycle of injury without protective shield and consolidated identity and ultimately not only pass through the experience of being a victim, but sometimes transform into reproducers of high-risk behaviours or even violence against others themselves.

On the other hand, reference to the fact that even current intervention and treatment 'is not performed well,' is a reflection of structural challenges of the care and support system for damaged adolescents and reveals that society without attending to roots and preventive bed-buildings, practically loses the possibility of significant reduction of violence (Fouladi et al., 1396 [2017]).

In total, this narrative is deeply a response to the necessity of changing approach from action after crisis to 'Preventive and Empowering' approach; an approach that deems it necessary that family and social structures focus on parenting, resilience training, and providing psycho-social health grounds in the very initial stages of child's life so that both violence against boy adolescents is prevented and the cycle of injury and violence in adulthood is cut. In this way, prevention is not a slogan, but a vital necessity for individual and social health of future generations.

10.2.2. Providing Means of Prevention of Contagious Diseases for Trans People

In narratives related to preventing violence against men, various dimensions of injuries and operational solutions are seen, but when we reach specific groups and especially the Trans community, the complexity of the issue doubles.

'I said 'Dad, these are sex workers.' Look, one of our works for this that these don't catch Hepatitis, these don't catch AIDS... we must procure a series of means [tools/supplies] for these that in their disposal... definitely every two three weeks once AIDS test must be taken from them so they don't catch Hepatitis and AIDS disease... the discussion is very complex... meaning one cannot pass by these with this simplicity... we must get involved.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 63).

This quote shows well that the experience of violence against men, especially Trans people who are forced into sex work, occurs not only at structural and cultural levels, but shows itself in hygienic and care dimensions as well; where

denial and inattention of supportive institutions is itself a form of structural violence (Azad, 1401 [2022]).

Insistence on providing means of prevention of contagious diseases for this group is not merely part of a therapeutic action, but a strategic effort to stop a chronic cycle of injury. Here, health care is not a 'tool' merely for treatment, but a fundamental method for preventing secondary injuries and preventing the spread and reproduction of violence. When the interviewee emphasises that '*We must procure a series of means for these that in their disposal...*' and insists on continuous tests to ensure their health, in fact he points to the importance of a multilateral and responsible care approach, an approach that does not remain only at the level of hygiene but targets recognising human dignity and the right to safe life for Trans individuals (Amiri, 1400 [2021]).

From a theoretical perspective, providing prevention facilities, including condoms and protective equipment and also continuous access to free tests and medical counselling, is not only a message for individual care, but a sign of recognition and social support of a group that is simultaneously victim of discrimination, social stigma, and structural exclusion (Hosseini et al., 1400 [2021]). Ignoring this necessity causes violence to be reproduced in the form of inaction, inattention, or denial of individuals' biological and social identity; a cycle that threatens not only individual health but produces broader social and hygienic injuries (Majid et al., 2019).

In this midst, emphasis on 'getting involved' as a professional and human necessity is an invitation to pass through inattention and superficial approaches. This type of active participation requires reviewing public health policies, specialised training of health field staff, and also providing safe and judgment-free beds for offering services (Fay et al., 2022). Global experiences have shown that any hesitation or negligence in supplying these equipments and services leads not only to increased disease and injury in this group, but will have more serious consequences for society's public health (UNAIDS, 2023).

In summary, supplying means of prevention and care infrastructures for Trans people who are placed in exposure to numerous injuries is not merely part of treatment, but a vital prerequisite for preventing violence, continuity of injury cycle, and intensification of social exclusion. Inattention to this necessity is a kind of structural violence and reproducer of forced conformity and social stigma whose solution requires serious participation, responsible

intervention, and multi-layered attention to protecting the health and dignity of vulnerable groups.

10.2.3. Providing Cost of Gender Reassignment Surgeries for Trans People

In narratives presented of the lived experience of Trans people in Iran, the prominent face of violence is rooted not only in denial or rejection of identity but in the costly and exhausting process of reaching their expected identity. When the interviewee explicitly points out:

'But the government, in my opinion, if it supplies these... the treatment subject is very important for them... a surgery operation and these... close to 200 million Tomans costs for them... their medicines are extraordinarily expensive, their medicines are extraordinarily expensive... make-up is very important for them. Must fix their teeth... cosmetic surgery must perform... for a nose job 50-60 million wants to cost for them. And these make these expenses... why do they do... because they want to become beautiful and something they want to become.'
(Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 93).

He speaks of the deep gap between dream and reality, where economic pressure and lack of structural support turns the dream of achieving desired identity into a soul-wearing transaction. The narrative above is not only a list of numbers and figures, but a reflection of a multi-layered crisis the Trans individual must carry: surgery costs of several tens or several hundreds of millions, expensive and repetitive medicines, need for cares and cosmetic services which is not due to a peripheral personal desire, but for reaching an image of self that society and the individual himself expect. These costs have no end; as he points out *'Must fix their teeth,' 'Cosmetic surgery must perform,'* and even for *'Nose job 50-60 million wants to cost'* — all these items are necessary details for repairing the gap drawn between current identity and ideal identity. This volume of costs, for a group often facing job discrimination, family rejection, and lack of financial support, actually means deprivation of the right to effortless choice of identity (Azad, 1401 [2022]).

In the heart of this experience, continuous dependence on pharmaceutical treatments also becomes an additional cause.

'Hormone therapy... every month or every twenty days you must hit one hormone definitely... but for ladies it is more... Trans ladies eat much more

medicines... Progesterone is Estrogen... for everything must eat a medicine... constantly must hit pill and ampoule and these... we have one Testosterone we hit every day but until the end of our life.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 255).

What exudes from the heart of these sentences is the concrete form of a long and sometimes lifelong cycle of treatment dependence; where the individual, not only for configuring his body and approaching his intended identity, but for maintaining his mental and physical health, is constantly involved in providing cost and procuring medicines and ampoules. Continuous use of medicines and injections has a heavy psychological and physical burden; especially when this process is imposed not with the backing of governmental or insurance support, but with doubled economic pressure, and still challenges like medicine shortage, variable prices, and lack of specialised support make it worse.

In the core of Grounded Theory paradigmatic model analysis, this situation clearly states that one of the fundamental solutions for preventing violence against men in the general sense and vulnerable groups like Trans people, is accepting and supplying their treatment necessities in the form of financial and structural support; because a huge part of violence—whether structural or individual—is reproduced in the text of that very inability to supply treatment and livelihood minimums (Amiri, 1400 [2021]). In the path of transition to desired sexual identity, any hesitation or inattention of the policymaker is considered a kind of omission of act and hidden form of violence against the male gender; a violence that drives the path of many towards poverty, exclusion, and even high-risk choices not only in psychological and emotional realm, but in concrete reality of life (Hosseini et al., 1400 [2021]).

Perhaps it can be said in the text of Trans lives, 'Gender Reassignment Surgery' is not only a stage but a point of collision and conflict of multi-layered experience of violence and action for liberation from it: being victim of structural inattention, being forced to high-pressure and high-risk activities to provide cost, social marginalisation, and finally facing this bitter truth that continuation of continuous and comprehensive treatment process is only possible if support structures and social security systems recognise and answer the necessity of this need (Azizi, 1402 [2023]). Accepting this necessity is the departure point of structural prevention of violence; because support for

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treatment and surgery costs is not just a medical or cosmetic intervention, but a beginning for recognising the human right to live in the form of his identity and reducing the load of suppression, insecurity, and constant nervous pressure (Majid et al., 2019).

Finally, repetition of this sentence that *'These make these expenses... why do they do... because they want to become beautiful and something they want to become'* (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 93), and confession to this reality that *'We hit one Testosterone every day but until the end of our life'* (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 255), places a clear perspective before policymakers: only by seeing and understanding these needs can repetition and reproduction of violence against men and special groups be prevented. Help in providing treatment costs is not a favour but a necessity based on justice and social health; a necessity that must be placed in the path of violence prevention both ethically and scientifically (Fay et al., 2022).

10.2.4. Treatment of Mental Disorders Before Marriage

In the heart of the experienced narrative that comes below, it is clear that a major part of violence against men, before anything else, is rooted in ignorance and lack of psychological screening in the marriage process. The interviewee explicitly says:

'My look is more preventive because I believe that prevention is much better than treatment and is much lower cost... and if really proper solutions... necessary awareness solutions be given... many issues are solved. Now we unfortunately because of lack of awareness... this very fact that the party really from personality aspect and from psychological aspect doesn't have competence... goes marries comfortably... and basically has Sadistic personality... meaning has violence-seeking personality... and or has personality... such a person goes marries or inherently has a hitting hand [is abusive]... could have not been such a thing... we basically in the discussion of prevention of disability had [this] too... that again however much we tried [said] child or family who have genetic problem don't go marry or don't have children... but again they took action.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 67).

In the narrative context of this interview, the obvious weakness of control and mental health management systems before marriage reflects itself as one of the fundamental causes of violence emergence. Emphasis on 'prevention being better than treatment' carries not only an economic and social attitude to the

issue, but relies on a reality that experts' studies also confirm: by early identification and intervention in mental disorders, a major part of the cycle of violence transmission from previous generations to new couples and ultimately to children can be cut (Rafatjah, 1399 [2020]). The interviewee's narrative becomes more tangible when she points to the normality of entry of individuals possessing personality problems and even violent personalities into marital life:

'Now we unfortunately because of lack of awareness... this very fact that the party really from personality aspect and from psychological aspect doesn't have competence... goes marries comfortably... and basically has Sadistic personality... meaning has violence-seeking personality... and or has personality... such a person goes marries or inherently has a hitting hand [is abusive]... could have not been such a thing.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 67).

The key point in this narrative is endangering men's health not merely due to others' behaviours, but sometimes due to lack of a system for measuring psychological competence correctness in men themselves and their spouses; a system that if implemented, based on scientific evidence, can prevent the entry of high-risk psychiatric diseases or communicative and behavioural disorders into the family environment to a great extent (Bani-Asad et al., 1401 [2022]). The interviewee, pointing to the experience of preventive policies in the disability field which still sometimes remains ineffective, sees the essence of the challenge not merely in notification and recommendation, but in systematic implementation and pervasive culture-building:

'We basically in the discussion of prevention of disability had [this] too... that again however much we tried [said] child or family who have genetic problem don't go marry or don't have children... but again they took action.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 67).

This narrative, aligning with the Grounded Theory paradigmatic model approach, draws the linking and causal face between lack of awareness, lack of timely psychological interventions, and continuity of the violence cycle. Scientific models and international research emphasise the importance of pre-marriage education and screening, especially in the field of mental health, and consider it an effective solution for reducing violence and long-term health of families (Nasiri & Sohrabi, 1398 [2019]). Also, social prevention theories state

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that pre-marriage screening and education programmes are not only preventers of psychological and personality disorders in the couple's relationship, but have chain effects on reducing deviations and social injuries in the whole society (Neda, 1400 [2021]).

Finally, analysis of this narrative and its link with scientific literature shows that with precise policymaking, providing necessary grounds for pervasive education, personality screening, and strengthening social commitment towards mental health before marriage, effective prevention of formation and reproduction of the cycle of violence against men (and of course both genders) can be hoped for; a prevention that is not a choice but a necessity for the future of health and security of families and society (Interview No. 75, Pos 67; Bani-Asad et al., 1401 [2022]).

10.2.5. Screening Parents' Mental Health to Prevent Sexual and Physical Abuse

In the narrative that follows, the transparent and vital importance of screening parents' mental health as one of the fundamental solutions for preventing violence against men and boys is highlighted. The interviewee's narrative explicitly raises this concern with clarity:

'In screenings, the mental health competence of father and mother should be examined. Basically does that father and mother have competence for that child... basically do this father and mother have a series of mental health? Where did we evaluate this... when did we understand this... father and mother themselves are wrecked (Daghoun)... I, according to global statistics... I am reading [statistics] from a few years ago... it is a global thing it is not Iran's either... they said out of every five rapes, three rapes are in first-degree relatives... either it is father or brother or uncle and these... let a screening happen and let fathers and mothers be psychologically evaluated and those who need work, let work be done on them.'
(Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 62).

In the heart of this narrative, the lack of a structured system for evaluating parents' mental health before accepting the parental role is considered the bedrock for deep and silent injuries in the heart of families. The interviewee's lived experience clearly shows that many parents, even before the child's birth, are never subjected to psychological assessment or intervention, and this negligence creates a bed where injuries such as sexual, physical, and psychological abuse occur in the most hidden layers of the family. The hidden

but key point is the reference to: *'When did we understand this... father and mother themselves are wrecked'*; in simple language, parents' psychological wounds and crises can be transferred and reproduced exactly to the next generation, and until parents' mental health is evaluated and reconstructed, the cycle of subcutaneous and chronic violence will remain stable (Nazari et al., 1399 [2020]).

Statistics show the more horrific aspect of this story. The reference that *'According to global statistics... out of every five rapes three rapes are in first-degree relatives...'* confronts the audience with a global and structural reality: major sexual and physical delinquencies occur in apparently the safest social environments, meaning families, and their perpetrators are the closest individuals to the victim. This reality emphasises that by screening and intervening in parents' mental health, such tragedies can be prevented (Goudarzi et al., 1400 [2021]). In fact, without this evaluation, society blindly places victims in exposure to doubled vulnerability.

The desired outcome of this narrative is a fundamental solution: *'Let a screening happen and let fathers and mothers be psychologically evaluated and those who need work, let work be done on them.'* This solution explicitly demands a supportive and preventive system that not only identifies parents' psychological disorders but, by providing treatment and counselling services, provides the possibility of empowering and rebuilding their mental health. This approach, beyond intervention after injury occurrence, seeks to eradicate violence-generating beds from that very source, so that children, especially boys, grow in a safe and healthy environment and remain safe from bitter experiences that can affect their psyche and identity until the end of life (Akhavan et al., 1401 [2022]).

Belief in this preventive approach guides society towards policy-making that considers mental health not just an individual issue but a social and governmental responsibility. Finally, what emerges from this narrative is not only a simple request but a serious warning: without attention to parents' mental health, one cannot expect families to transform into a safe environment for raising future generations, and consequently, the cycle of hidden and overt violences, especially against boys, will continue.

10.3. Legal Solutions for Prevention and Reduction of Violence Against the Male Gender

Based on Grounded Theory research findings, Legal Solutions play an important role in preventing, controlling, and reducing violence against the male gender. Legal strategies are introduced in four categories below: 'Reform of Family Laws (Mehrieh, Nafagheh, Custody),' 'Reform of Child Marriage Law,' 'Enacting Laws to Support the LGBTQ Community,' 'Receiving Help from Specialised Organisations.'

10.3.1. Reform of Family Laws (Mehrieh, Nafagheh, Custody)

In the narrative of family and court issues, when the experience and life of men comes into the middle, what pushes aside theoretical verbosity more than anything is this very honesty and frankness of quotes; quotes that, like living pieces of reality, flaunt all contradictions, weaknesses, and dead-ends of family laws. Understanding legal solutions for preventing and reducing violence against men without integrating these living narratives will be fundamentally incomplete.

In the Grounded Theory process, the first cornerstone of understanding family law challenges is built on Dr. Mousavi Viayeh's statement that:

'Well what are the solutions... incidentally I am working on this... that part of my dissertation was regarding 'Family Policy in Iran'... I see the solution in this that basically family policy and family law in Iran changes. This discussion of Mehrieh and Nafagheh in Iranian law must be reformed... meaning like other countries we see husband and wife as two rivals [partners?]... I say this is the fault of Fiqh [jurisprudence]. Don't give Mehrieh, no problem... the day you wanted to get divorced, based on the participation you had in building this life, halve your assets. Right of divorce be for both. Whenever each wanted to separate for 6 months a year... live separately... then whenever after a year living they go to lawyer and court.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 93).

This narrative not only emphasises changing legal structures but finds the root cause that laws, like levers of pressure, have turned the nature of the human relationship between man and woman into confrontation and competition. Against this reality, Rahele Mehraban's narrative clearly points a finger at the opposition of Mehrieh and the possibility of having the right of divorce and states:

'This lever of Mehrieh and right of divorce must be removed in my opinion... that the woman takes the right of divorce and forgives Mehrieh... Mehrieh becomes one coin, a flower branch, be very low... that marriage will have much better continuity... mostly it is because of this very thing that now we have gone a path where this divorce is not its terrible name anymore... 'I got divorced'.'

(Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 114).

This honesty of narrative analyses the foundation of marital relationships and the divorce mechanism so simply that oppositions to changing family laws fade away, and the question is whether continuing the current situation equals a glimmer of hope for men's and women's mental and emotional health?

The issue of custody and guardianship (*Velayat*) of the child has itself transformed into another arena for reproducing violence against men, where Dr. Mousavi Viayeh pictures the crisis thus:

'Another event happens. If the right of custody and guardianship doesn't exist... if someone kills the child they take him execute him... this... what meaning does it have. Must look at it like any other murder. Meaning lives of women and children... it is not supposed to be [like this] that because this one was his guardian we think he was his owner too... that is an independent human... and has the problem of honour killing too. Its solution is that in the first step anything that is based on this that this marriage relationship is not an equal relationship... including child marriage law, including anyway the issue of honour killings that comes from father's guardianship and these. For example now what meaning does it have... now they made the law up to 7 years custody is with mother. At 7 years they take the child away take him. I saw many cases where the father has no interest in this child either, huh... only for the sake of causing the woman anguish (Jezz dadan). Takes the child then gives to his mother to raise and afterwards he himself goes to his own house and life. Well what condition is this... what meaning does it have.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 97).

This narrative refers not only to custody rights but unveils the deepest social wounds, namely honour killings, and considers these laws a legitimate bed for reproducing violence in more complex and hidden forms. Continuing, Hamta Barzagari addresses this challenge from women's perspective:

'Custody of children up to a time is with the woman... for example up to seven years is with the mother and the rest with the father... but well here too injustice

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is done regarding ladies... that right the mother must take as child custody is not given to her, despite knowing [I give an example] despite knowing the father has no competence... again they want to do a work so the child... for example his custody is not with his mother.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 58).

From this perspective, laws not only ignore men's rights but are not fair for women either and can transform into a tool for psychological warfare. This is where Allah Reza's view finds more importance:

'But I think from a Sharia aspect and considering researches I did... many no, but a number of scholars too... their opinion is this that the marriage contract is that same heart covenant... let us make a covenant... a woman and a man make a covenant with each other to live with each other as long as they can, time is not specified either... whenever they could... couldn't they separate... but as long as they are together not to betray each other... and they say this is a legal and Sharia and correct contract in my opinion.' (Interview No. 33, Allah Reza, Pos 72).

This view emphasises a 'heart covenant' instead of a 'formal contract' and builds the foundation of marriage based on mutual internal consent and commitment, not on dry and inflexible laws that ultimately lead to violence and rupture.

This issue advances to a point where Ms. Entezami, as a woman, complains of legal inequalities and considers women's situation a reflection of men's situation in these laws:

'Anyway women from an economic aspect are at a lower level compared to men... come somehow stabilise this woman's condition... let's put a law that this woman's condition becomes stable for separating... because that life full of tension has more injury... for example in this middle the man becomes sick, the woman becomes sick, many nervous and psychological diseases, many events happen, children are not healthy children, their children in future run into problems with their spouses... meaning we have a cycle continuing one after another... this law of ours must change. This that culture-building must happen and our law change in some places... become equal... for example if I, a woman, want to go file for divorce I can much more comfortably than a man... a man basically doesn't have the daring for divorce petition.' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 114).

These words clearly show that legal inequalities hurt not only the woman but trap men in a cycle of stress and psychological diseases as well. She then,

emphasising the importance of individual mental health in relationships, points to this note:

'Violence is hidden, some places the law must change... even if I as a type don't want... I became disgusted with this gentleman's appearance... for any reason... I from spiritual psychological aspect don't have ability to live with this gentleman or that man with same ratio... I am supposed to have my spiritual psychological needs resolved... if it is not supposed to be resolved then let this relationship finish... but this [family laws] ties woman's hand man's hand in many places... come for example put a counselling instead of this... not this formality five-session counselling no... whether for woman whether for man... establish a balance that both man can request divorce more comfortably, and woman can take action more comfortably.' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 116).

These descriptions reflect well that violence is not always physical; rather, structural and legal violence can inflict psychological and emotional injury by imprisoning individuals in undesirable relationships and needs reform (Ahmady, 1399 [2020]).

Opinions like:

'I suggest they remove Mehrieh give the right of divorce to the girl. If two people... for example the man feels he really cannot live with this girl... separate go not bring a child. Or the girl feels she cannot live with this boy... has right of divorce... anymore this life is never dragged to marital disputes.' (Interview No. 89, Mehraban, Pos 92).

Also emphasize reviewing traditional structures to prevent marital disputes and emergence of violences resulting from it. This simple yet deep view, far from legal complexities, offers a solution that basically eliminates roots of violence and does not just address its results.

Jalilian confirms this situation as well:

'From a legal aspect too there are some laws that are stricter regarding gentlemen now... if these are reformed it is much better in my opinion... it can have a lot of effect [in reducing violence against men].' (Interview No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 48).

This view is completed with Hamta Barzagari's opinions who considers legal equality the main solution:

'A right that now relates to a man has not been determined or because that violence has always been against women very little attention has been paid to this

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issue to find a solution for it. Specify a solution so that rights of woman and man be equal and this violence applied regarding the man for example not be shown as unimportant... that that be attended to as well and not be judged one-sidedly... and one-sidedly one person not become culprit... one hundred percent in the collapse of a life in my opinion two sides are culprit and it is not possible one person is always culprit... and I really wish there was a law.' (Interview No. 81, Hamta Barzagari, Pos 54).

This subject shows that unjust laws regarding men place them in a vulnerable position and can lead to violence (Faraji et al., 1399 [2020]).

Finally, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh's quote offers a more comprehensive look at roots of this situation and shows many relationships are built on the basis of inequality and heterogeneity from the beginning:

'This relationship was a wrong relationship from the beginning and this doesn't get fixed anymore. Unless these based on what injuries they have eaten [suffered] and how much they go to counselling... and many of these don't even get fixed in counselling anymore because we say one of the biggest reasons for family difference and divorce is heterogamy (Na-hamsan-gozini) meaning husband and wife have difference for a reason... have age difference, have educational difference, have class difference, have cultural difference, have religious difference... for any reason any kind of large difference causes this relationship not to weld together anymore. The legal system too has taken the relationship as unequal from the beginning, so really this never gets fixed. Whenever they wanted to divorce assets become half...' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 97).

This look emphasises providing legal solutions for exiting unhealthy and unequal relationships, including division of assets, and shows structural inequalities can provide the bed for violence.

In total, these vivid and tangible quotes not only scream the need for reforming family laws in areas of Mehrieh, Nafagheh, and Custody, but show these reforms must originate from a radical and human-centred view. This new approach, instead of looking at man and woman as rivals, must see them as partners in life who must enjoy equal rights before the law and in practice. Only in this case can one be released from the cycle of hidden and overt violence in the family and help the mental and social health of both genders.

10.3.2. Reform of Child Marriage Law

Violence against men in the arena of Child Marriage is a reality that remains in hidden layers of lived experiences. Although many views consider child marriage only as an oppression against adolescent girls, the voice of those who have delved into the root of this story and spoken with the language of reality and experience shows that men themselves are victims in this equation too. Sometimes society pressures the man to shoulder a heavy responsibility without attention to age requirement and emotional maturity, and build a bond that is fundamentally not a natural and two-person relationship, but a kind of imposition and implicit violence. As stated in Dr. Mousavi Viayeh's quote:

'Or one of the violences men suffer is child marriage where incidentally men themselves become victims too... they tell men 'Sir you are 25-30 years old come take [marry] a 14-year-old girl raise her to your own morals'... then what event happens... the event that happens is that that relationship never becomes a correct relationship... why... because at a young age sexual relationship was imposed on her... at a young age pregnancy, child-rearing and housekeeping was imposed on her... this child will always be like a demon and ghosts regarding her husband... it will be a cold relationship.' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 97).

This narrative unveils a bitter truth: a man who marries a child by force or under the influence of society's custom faces the heavy burden of a cold and soulless relationship. In these marriages, not only are the man's emotional and psychological needs not met, but he unintentionally gets involved in a cycle of dissatisfaction and emotional void which can lead to various hidden violences. This relationship, due to early gender impositions, pregnancy, and responsibility at young ages for the girl-child, leads to the formation of a space where intimacy and empathy give way to alienation and cold-heartedness (cf. Giddens, 2004).

One of the fundamental reasons for the continuity of this situation is the lack of a specific and legal definition of 'Child' which leaves the way open for arbitrary interpretations and early marriages. As Marzieh Hosseini points to this note:

'Concept of childhood is not defined yet... women... women of the Sixth Parliament... how much they lobbied to make marriage age 18... could they?...

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time when some women MPs and these were in parliament... they can't... it doesn't happen. Even the concept... now you... in any source I tell you... in every one of these definition of child is different. It is not clear who is a child. In a country where all these laws we have... we have weakness in child field... later laws they passed in year 1396 [2017] too... in fact has no executive power.'

(Interview No. 58, Marzieh Hosseini, Pos 223).

This lack of clear definition creates not only legal and social challenges but has deep psychological consequences for both sides. In such conditions, existing laws also lack necessary executive power to prevent this phenomenon, because legal ambiguities allow executors to refuse correct implementation of law for various reasons. This legal weakness transforms into a kind of systematic violence against men as well; because men too in the cycle of these marriages become victims of law's inability to support their rights and prevent an imposed joint life.

Qualitative research also confirms this coldness and dissatisfaction. As Dr. Mousavi Viayeh points to a research:

'Incidentally she had done a research... of those qualitative works Ms. Hana Seifi had done... regarding child marriage she had gone interviewed women who had become child spouses... 15-20 and 20-30 [years] after their marriage, all these had a cold relationship with their husband... one of them had said her husband said 'I am tired anymore why don't you laugh at me, show kindness and affection'... well you married a girl-child... if you really wanted a relationship of kindness and affection you wouldn't come marry someone at this age, you know.'

(Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 97).

This coldness of relationship is the direct result of lack of emotional and psychological maturity of one of the parties and imposition of a role for which the individual is not ready. The man in such a relationship sees himself facing an individual incapable of answering his emotional needs, and this very matter over time leads to psychological erosion and reduced satisfaction with joint life. These conditions impose emotional and psychological violence on the man; a violence which due to being hidden and lack of physical effects is often ignored. Reforming child marriage law is not only a necessity for supporting children's and women's rights, but a fundamental solution for preventing violence that involves men hiddenly and overtly and disintegrates family foundation from within (cf. Soleimannezhad et al., 2018).

10.3.3. Enacting Laws to Support the LGBTQ Community

In a society where laws and legal structures are still incapable of fully and openly accepting LGBTQ groups, many members of this community face various forms of legal, psychological, and social violence daily. Lived experience of individuals mentioned in narratives is a vivid and expressive narrative of living on the margins of law and society, where clearly:

'Definitely a bill must come to court... definitely a complete bill regarding all dimensions of their life, their marriage, their military service, their university, their work is their job, everything... their insurance. Must be provided for them one hundred percent.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 273).

is raised. The truth is that even the most elementary social and insurance rights are not yet provided for these individuals, and enacting comprehensive supportive laws is the first fundamental step to reduce the emergence and continuity of legal and social violences against them.

On the other hand, linking the discussion of necessity of enacting law to lived experience and distinguishing between gender identity and sexual orientation with sexual deviations and criminal acts is itself one of the most basic needs of law reform:

'Law's support of LGBTQ individuals and rapists... must consider these individuals separate... and law must separate that LGBTQ individuals are a kind of individuals and Paedophilia individuals are a kind and deviant rapist individuals are a kind... and in fact LGBTQ in the field of violence in the Constitution are completely... not only alone but the Constitution is their direct enemy. Many laws must be reformed... instead of death penalty law education be given... and there is much room for work and it is going to take a lot of time perhaps.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Maroufi, Pos 28).

This living narrative tells of structural ignorance and the legislator's perception regarding these groups; such that it places before us not only rightlessness, but even serious threat to human rights of these individuals.

In 'LGBTQ discussion is not limited to homosexual individuals but includes bisexual and trisexual individuals and likewise many individuals with different orientations and genders... we are seeing a small and very limited part of a severely large society who himself is not aware he is of LGBTQ members. It is the country's duty that with cancelling execution and supporting these individuals and adding a new duty on the shoulder of police force... that they can in fact help these individuals'

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(Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 15), it is demanded that the law not only remove execution but provide police protection and social organising; an approach relying both on fundamental rights and governmental duties.

These experiences harmonise with macro theories and researches of the field of Gender Justice. Giddens believes legal and structural inequalities continue when structural powers prefer differentiation between identities and social roles and by deterrent legislation, produce and reproduce symbolic and real violence in society (Giddens, 1399 [2020]).

The next quote narrates this issue in simpler language: *'Must change [legislators'] attitude towards us [Trans people]... Trans people are not among social injuries... meaning they are not someone who inflicts injury but they see injury... and this fact that now in our own country our own officials don't have correct understanding, well, of gender and these... and this field touches Ministry of Health... meaning we must... Ministry of Health must have a fresh and new positive attitude towards Trans individuals... which be a look that is supportive... well there was a discussion in these years I myself had been very involved... [that] there be a pension [boarding house/shelter?].'* (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 128).

The duty of power structure in this quote, including legislator and Ministry of Health, is support not reproduction of label and injury. Many gender justice theories like Fraser have considered elementary rights of gender and plural social genders as the place of government entry for organising structural justice (Fraser, 2010).

Another narrative points to differentiated and rooted discrimination of laws based on gender and identity and states:

'Look shouldn't be commodity-like... woman is like a slave... shouldn't be... and we have an anti-woman attitude... that woman is a human too... how come I want... I have male body I like to reveal myself as a woman they say 'Dust on your head [shame on you]' but one is born [with] female body reveals herself as man they say 'Bravo you become like a man'.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 183).

This narrative exposes hidden layers of Symbolic Violence; where alternative gender identity is considered a sign of 'Otherness' and law has no capability to establish legal equality. Theorists like Butler believe stabilising gender and sexual binaries is the tool of historical projects of domination and applying structural violence (Butler, 1990); this is exactly where demanding supportive laws finds individual and social vital necessity.

In the path of changing view and distancing from injury-oriented narratives regarding these groups, Social and Cultural Learning Turn is also raised:

'Just as discussion of Transgenders is slowly becoming established in society this discussion [LGB] must become established following it too. As you are informed this... a time they saw Trans people as mental patients but now they recognise as normal individuals... and there are still a series of limitations but not to the size of homosexual individuals.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 28).

In this path, international developments and removal of execution and decriminalisation of LGBTQ identity are also raised as a model:

'In this era because of our own Iran... almost in international society likewise because of lack of education many things that have been discovered have proceeded forward very much... for example this very LGBTQ society that in Western society come say 'I am a dog' or something I mentioned... in Western society no one has the right to say anything to this person because he is thrown in prison... fortunately outside the country no one gets executed... execution sentence has been removed and many of them have been accepted... but because of a series of things that grew very fast and because of lack of specialist in their own fields became established very much... are uncontrollable.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 57).

Although narratives are sometimes accompanied by a kind of worry regarding the speed of social developments and defect of expertise in adapting to new needs, the global model points to a clear message: law's silence reproduces violence and only by enacting supportive and fair laws can persistence of violence against these groups be reduced.

Another level of strategy is tied to Education; where it is emphasised *'Awareness must [be] more... in total I can say awareness that becomes more... parents' awareness becomes more... definitely future generations are not supposed to perform a violence or be subjected to a violence... just as I said in previous session too education is a very important discussion... informing is a very important discussion... I myself try very much to give sufficient education to anyone I can'* (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 6) and:

'With cultural education that changes and people's view changes... yes this... in fact these violences come down very much... and with repeated trainings not only violence comes down but causes creation of this thought in people that these

individuals have rights too... and it is true we say rights of LGBTQ individuals... in fact these human rights [are] primary rights... something we don't have and definitely don't feel either. Like this... these individuals get annoyed very much in fact... and well they don't have anyone to talk to or take refuge in.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 17).

In this discourse, public education and informing replaces criminalisation and suppression; educational theorists, like Froebel, believe only with extensive learning and nurturing multiple views do structures of domination and violence collapse (Froebel, 2013). Consequently, law must place education as the axis of violence reduction strategies to achieve a just culture beyond enacting supportive laws.

Thus, within the framework of Grounded Theory and on the bed of lived narratives, it becomes clear that enacting pervasive supportive laws for all spheres of life of LGBTQ individuals – from marriage and employment to education and security and insurance – is the prerequisite for exiting the current situation and transitioning to a society possessing equality, security, and human dignity. No strategy without supportive law and culture-building education will guarantee tangible and sustainable reduction of violence against men and other sexual and gender groups.

10.3.4. Culture Building for Receiving Help from Specialised Organisations

In the process of studying causes and consequences of violence against men and the role of Receiving Help from Specialised Organisations as a fundamental solution in preventing and reducing this phenomenon, the necessity of attention to social obstacles and structural weaknesses of relevant organisations emerges clearly from the heart of interviews. Lived experiences and narratives show that one of the fundamental obstacles in this path is deep-seated social norms and gender stereotypes which cause requesting help by boys and men to be considered a shameful action contrary to expectation. This approach not only makes disclosing violence and injury difficult itself, but often traps the individual in a cycle of isolation and compulsion to use violent reactions. As stated in one participant's reflection:

'We must promote this in society that violence and application of violence is not a solution for accessing needs and goals... but it has wrongly become established that any adolescent who encounters the slightest obstacle wants to solve this with

violence... we didn't teach the adolescent that 'You say this to the school principal, say this to the police... say this to Social Emergency'... the child thinks the only solution is this that he stands against the other... meaning with a knife... if he goes requests help from school principal and family... it is considered a shame (Nang) for him.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 31).

From the perspective of Symbolic Interactionism, daily interactions and mental perceptions individuals have of gender roles and desirable behaviour determine the method of facing tense conditions (Giddens, 1399 [2020]). This narrative not only points to the lack of non-violent problem-solving strategies among adolescents but reveals the inability of the educational-cultural system in promoting the culture of help-seeking from responsible institutions.

Alongside this factor, weakness in executive mechanisms and lack of professional and legal support from social workers and the judiciary system is considered a serious obstacle in the way of effectively addressing violence against men. Another participant points to educational and legal gaps in supportive organisations and the necessity of strengthening their role with emphasis on real guarantees:

'More education be given to social workers and a series of more supports and judicial executions and removing guardianship from that father and mother who give violence.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 103).

This statement addresses the weakness of synergy between legal and social institutions from the perspective of Social Systems Theory, which if they do not act simultaneously and based on knowledge and real support, the support process will suffer damage (Fraser, 1391 [2012]). In other words, consolidating the role of social workers and specialised organisations without supplying comprehensive trainings and necessary supportive and judicial tools does not provide practical possibility for combating violence.

In another part of the narratives, structural and managerial defects in institutions responsible for support (like Welfare Organization - *Behzisti*) are pointed out; weak management and inefficiency in allocating limited resources causes disorder in these institutions' performance and reduction of public trust, to the point where even children in need of help often prefer not to refer to responsible institutions due to 'fear of system inefficiency':

'From that side discussion of injury children... strengthening institutions that are responsible for injury matter for example like Behzisti is this... not that this

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thing that exists now... not be that same thing... be much better... meaning be efficient... meaning we have efficient management problem and that same meagre budget that comes too is not managed correctly... meaning severe management weakness in that same low budget doesn't enter work... finally children don't close a fear of the issue.' (Interview No. 58, Marzieh Hosseini, Pos 237).

According to social justice critics' view, institutional weakness and lack of transparent responsiveness is one of the factors of injury reproduction in structural layers of Iranian society (Fraser, 1391 [2012]). In Bourdieu's expression, inefficient habitus and institutional structures cause damaged individuals not only to remain deprived of needed supports but become unmotivated and fearful even regarding raising the issue and requesting support (Bourdieu, 1394 [2015]).

In total, effective prevention and intervention in the field of violence against men will be possible not merely by establishing institutions and drafting laws, but by reforming social attitudes towards help-seeking, strengthening professional trainings for social workers, and making management of specialised organisations efficient. Success of such a strategy requires constructive interaction between social structures and fundamental transformation in norms and society's attitudes towards the role of law and specialised organisations (Giddens, 1399 [2020]; Fraser, 1391 [2012]; Butler, 1394 [2015]).

10.4. Spiritual Solutions for Prevention and Reduction of Violence Against the Male Gender

Based on Grounded Theory research findings, Religious Solutions (programmes of worship and spirituality) play an important role in preventing, controlling, and reducing violence against the male gender.

In the course of in-depth interviews conducted regarding solutions for preventing and reducing violence against men, the presence and role of religious beliefs and recommendations such as worship and spirituality has a thought-provoking and multifaceted place; to the point where some participants have considered this solution simultaneously a response to multiple crises of daily life and a tool for managing destructive emotions including anger and aggression. One interviewee, emphasising the calming and soothing impact of worship, narrates thus:

'For release from problems [addiction and homelessness and HIV] he learns prayer reading too... spirituality and worship... spirituality and worship... read your prayers on time... you are calmer spiritually.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 401-403).

In this narrative, religious spirituality is introduced not as an abstract matter but as a practical technique for reducing anxieties and violences resulting from structural and individual problems; as based on some social psychology approaches, the presence of spiritual elements and worship rituals like prayer in individual behaviour is considered a kind of adaptation path with difficult conditions and can lead to a kind of social inhibition (Froebel, 1392 [2013]; Abdollahi et al., 1401 [2022]).

In another example of lived experiences, the individual, while pointing to the role of religious trainings in the addiction treatment space, emphasises redefining individual life path relying on religious teachings:

'Here [addiction withdrawal camp] its goodness is this that the camp official teaches us religious and sect issues a lot... that I learned some things here that I must have a goal for myself. I set a goal that I go out... anymore I don't know again if I fall on the path [or] don't fall... but I want as far as there is room distance myself from all these [drugs and stimulants] because I saw everywhere of it anymore... its round [cycle]... its awareness... its horror... its killing... its taking away. I saw everything of it. I want to change my life path. Go into a new path, whether I be before my family or not be.' (Interview No. 44, Hamid Haghi, Pos 279).

In this statement, rereading the role of religious identity and active presence of religious components in the rehabilitation process is considered not only meaning control of high-risk and aggressive behaviours but an effort to recover human dignity and reorganise life path. Based on Logotherapy (Frankl, 1390 [2011]) and also Spiritual Capital Theory, religion can make the individual deterrent against social hazards and transform some violent tendencies into healthier methods (Giddens, 1399 [2020]; Froebel, 1392 [2013]).

Other individual experiences have also pointed to the necessity of relying on the power of faith and servitude at the time of intensity of anger and difficult conditions, where worship is not merely a religious duty but a method for regulating emotions and preventing violent behaviour:

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'I myself whenever I become angry [and furious]... I come more towards worship and prayer and my violence... I subside like this... I myself become angry I worship I become calm I become light. Let them not lose their hope and let God advance works... God has their air [watches over them]. Hazrat Ali says that the biggest sin is hopelessness. They shouldn't become hopeless... let their trust be in God, everything gets fixed. I myself suffered hardship I know what is what... let their trust be in God... problems exist for everyone whether rich person whether poor person. Inshallah everything gets fixed.' (Interview No. 72, Eskandari, Pos 101).

Based on Positive Psychology and Spiritual Therapy perspective, reliance on religion and spirituality in critical moments, especially when facing anger and helplessness, plays a soothing and deterrent role (Frankl, 1390 [2011]; Kristoferson, 2020). Such statements show that belief in Divine care and presence and teachings like hope and trust (*Tavakkol*) can guide the path of violence emergence towards acceptance and problem-solving and provide a spiritual and psychological shield in the risky and tense world of men's individual life.

In total, analysis based on Grounded Theory shows that religious solutions have not only an individual soothing aspect but, from a structural perspective, act as social mechanisms of control and directing emotions and aggressive behaviours in critical situations. These solutions, with the help of redefining purpose and identity, creating hope and reliance on supreme Divine power, and also religious trainings, provide the possibility of rehabilitation, adaptation, and positive control over ambiguous and critical conditions for men (Giddens, 1399 [2020]; Froebel, 1392 [2013]; Frankl, 1390 [2011]).

10.5. Psychological and Social Work Solutions for Prevention and Reduction of Violence Against the Male Gender

Based on Grounded Theory research findings, solutions based on Psychological and Social Work Knowledge play an important role in preventing, controlling, and reducing violence against the male gender. Psychological strategies are introduced in five categories below: 'Development of Specialised Counselling, Psychological, and Social Work System,' 'Attention to Emotional, Spiritual-Psychological, and Sexual Needs,' 'More Attention to Emotional Intelligence Instead of Cognitive Intelligence,' 'Positive and Value-

Oriented View Towards Damaged Individuals,' 'Providing Mental Comfort and Peace for Men.'

10.5.1. Development of Specialised Counselling, Psychological, and Social Work System

In analysing psychological and social work solutions for preventing and reducing violence against men, narratives obtained from interviewees show well the deep and multi-layered dimensions of this issue in the social and institutional context. As one interviewee states frankly:

'Give social workers more legal accesses, more legal authorities... because well a series of individuals a series of families... let me say frankly... don't have competence for becoming father and mother... that they don't know what to do... these kinds of times [have] two states... either that individual accepts that with education and a lot of other things learns what to do how to behave and what importance to give and how to show his love; and or doesn't accept and engages in murder. Engages in murder... duty of social worker from legal aspect be this that they strip guardianship of that child from that father and mother and now entrust to another family and or become sure of that family... and or another duty that can be very effective... not only social workers but doctors and psychologists is this that they can in fact offer a background... in fact foundational structure of a comprehensive and complete and confirmed education... that education is very wide level... that becomes regarding relationship education... becomes regarding behavioural education... becomes self-knowledge education, becomes education of identifying other individuals and becomes many other things.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 15).

This narrative not only emphasises weaknesses of support structures and lack of sufficient authorities for social workers, but clearly shows that violence in cases advances to the limit of life crisis (even murder) and makes scientific and legal entry of social worker and psychologist for education, intervention, and even stripping guardianship inevitable. This subject is analysable within the framework of Family Support Theory and Social Systems Theory as well, because insufficient support structures can pave the ground for continuity of violence within the family institution and even official institutions (Giddens, 1399 [2020]).

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At another level, importance of mental health and examining competence of officials and individuals who possess roles in rehabilitation, educational centres, and even family has been emphasised severely:

'Violence that in total anyone who in an organ that or for example in any society or takes a role... whether this that role of woman, spouse over man or executive official... it is very important that from aspect of psyche from aspect of mental from aspect of and personality and disorders be examined... that does such a personality really have competence for this that he takes such a responsibility or not... but unfortunately we in rehabilitation centres perhaps some officials or custodian or whoever... their behaviours be violent.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 69).

This statement links with Organisational Psychology approaches which emphasise the necessity of assessing mental health of individuals possessing role or power and warns that ignoring personality and psychological disorders of officials can lead to reproduction of violence, that too from an influential position (Butler, 1394 [2015]).

Another level of injury returns to lack of counselling infrastructures and lack of sufficient attention to mental health in the public education system:

'Well definitely this violence applied by the system is showing itself in citizens in other forms... all these components must be manipulated... if we desire reduction of violence every single one of these components must be manipulated... must at the level of laws we have in Education... these must change too. We don't give one thousandth of the importance we give to Physics and Chemistry lesson to children's mental health. Right now we lack something around 8-9 thousand counsellors and psychologists in Education... meaning even the norm of 15 students one hour counselling... we want to execute too which is very very little... 15 students one hour counselling belongs to him... execute this very norm too we lack 7-8 thousand counsellors in our schools. Basically we in elementary basically don't have counsellor... psychotherapist are not present in our schools... well look these must change.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 125).

In this same direction, the offered solution is such:

'School must in that discussion of economic costs... must come see treatment counselling. A continuous treatment counsellor who sees education... [if] this

child was something [had issue] quickly be referred to counsellor. We can stop this cycle.' (Interview No. 82, Mehdi Javadi, Pos 82).

Here a major part of the psychological approach to violence is observed: lack of sustainable psychological support system in schools causes educational disorders and violence to be institutionalised in those very initial stages of individual life; a point whose special importance Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory and Piaget and Froebel's early experiences show (Froebel, 2013).

Preventive approach in the form of empowering trainings from pre-school ages has also been emphasised:

'Trainings I say be practical... start especially from kindergarten... make a series of things mandatory in kindergarten and government come give its costs that all children must go... that from that very childhood for example learn sexual education for example learn self-esteem for example this that their personality doesn't get destroyed... become a series of base things that child from that very childhood with correct system... child becomes empowered... grows with self-esteem and self-confidence and comes up... and this child definitely [if] you fix him in that very place... this in ten years twenty years... because a series of things becomes institutionalised... but exactly we in that golden period of child in 4-5 years that child is being humiliated and annoyed and father and mother don't have patience... don't have mood (Hal)... deal with child with aggressive behaviour.' (Interview No. 83, Masoud Babaei, Pos 62).

This narrative refers to the role of government policymaking in children's basic psychological upbringing which, in case of its realisation, we will witness significant reduction of violent behaviours in adulthood; a matter that has clear alignment with Attachment Theory and Piaget's social development as well (Froebel, 2013).

Emphasis on necessity of strengthening Self-Knowledge, finding way to Modern Psychological Traditions, and using indigenous psychological knowledge for men has dedicated a major part of narratives to itself:

'We want to say from psychological aspect... a lot must be worked... a person in fact must work on himself a lot so that [in] society where there is violence against men... this one becomes so strong that he doesn't suffer damage... and this too through psychological methods, psychological books, I don't know... through

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articles they present be specific to men so that men can digest whatever happens for them.' (Interview No. 100, Mojtaba Mardani, Pos 93).

Alongside it, another important story is stated which considers the basis of any social transformation in formation of 'Need' for education and transformation in collective insight:

'Look first need must be created... until need is not created for society... now people say 'No what need is it.' If we don't know what its need is we don't go after its learning. Now you... this telephone handset is in your hand because you need it... for example move your account... I don't know send information for someone... you saw education even incomplete... I want to tell you that this need must come into existence for society for families... then when this need came into existence... desirable and reasonable education is given to this family and this too again returns to that thought of society... let us use expert individuals.'

(Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 83).

In fact, without awareness and recognising the need for education and social work and psychological services, no sustainable change will occur. This very matter leads to serious weakness in Social Modelling and informal education in society, as another interviewee says:

'Our people, man and woman, we don't take our trainings from specialist... ladies usually take trainings from family, our role-model-taking is from family... for example in this behaviour it is possible individual's sister understands and teaches or her friend teaches her... very small percentage go ask specialist that for example 'What behaviour should I have with my husband'... her sister tells her '[He] ate shit... don't give him [sex]'... 'When he doesn't bring money don't give to him'... assume this girl is taking experience from her older sister who is sixty years or fifty years... then comes says 'I married this gentleman he has a series of duties I have a series of duties too... I give [sex] and clean he brings too and... now because he doesn't bring I don't give [sexual services]'... meaning takes model from someone who herself is not specialist of this work either... this has problem, modellings are wrong.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 43).

This radical problem in the socialisation process leads to transfer of defective behavioural patterns and violence-receptivity or violence-practice; an issue Butler (1394 [2015]) has also clarified.

In another narrative, Decision-Making Skill and psychological resilience-building by counselling is emphasised:

'Decide correctly... consciously... see do you really like to do [surgery] or not, by air [whim] no... correct and logical. Operation has its own difficulties... well it is depression I don't know. You become regretful... why basically I... a period I basically didn't like to get up from place... I wanted to get up I clawed and couldn't get up from my place... from my bed. Well these have its own difficulties... going to toilet drying yourself.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 159).

In this lived experience, fundamental need for psychological support and presence of counsellor, before and after important decisions, manifests. This is important not only for reducing psychological complications but for preventing injuries like depression after failure; that very thing emphasised in mental health and grief management theories (Frankl, 1390 [2011]).

Government Supervision on families and evaluating parents' ability to manage life is also considered a social and institutional necessity from participants' view:

'Their families must be inspected... of life secret [privacy?].... at what stage they are... their houses, is their place of living suitable or not... these parents themselves from spiritual and physical and occupational aspect at what stage are they? Do these parents have ability to manage a primary life or not... surely this government supervision has a lot of influence.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 107).

In this path, as one interviewee points out, positive linguistic change of specialists is itself a sign of education effectiveness and attitude change at society level:

'From other side these individuals... doctors and psychologists and social workers have learned what is what and the issue... are... reached this understanding and instead of 'Homosexual-player' (Hamjens-baz) say 'Homosexual' (Hamjens-gara) or 'Same-sex-desiring' (Hamjens-khah). Newly we realise that education has left relatively good impact on individuals.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 17).

Narrative summation of these data in the Grounded Theory context clarifies that as long as legal, educational, and psychological beds for social work and psychological interventions are not strengthened, we must still wait for reproduction of violence against men and continuity of unhealthy social behaviour patterns. Unless government and educational system, with reviewing laws and pervasive investment, from basic trainings to supervision

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and support after fateful decisions, reconstruct the path such that every individual, regardless of gender, can grow with adaptability, self-confidence, peace, and self-knowledge and exit the cycle of violence.

10.5.2. Role of Emotional, Psychological, and Sexual Needs in Prevention of Violence

Data analysis clearly shows that neglecting men's emotional, psychological, and sexual needs, especially at family and policy-making levels, paves the ground for frustration, aggression, and violence. Saberi (Interview No. 21) clarifies:

'Mere removing of occupational and livelihood problems for Trans individuals, without answering emotional and sexual needs, is insufficient and leads to aggression. Emotional need and tendency to establish sexual connection are fundamental issues that are not solved by providing job.'

This view aligns directly with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory; Maslow emphasises that after physiological and safety needs, belonging, love, and esteem are vital for mental health. Inattention to these needs, especially among socially excluded individuals, increases risk of dissatisfaction and violence.

Ali Aghasi (Interview No. 39) says: *'Affection, dialogue, money, politeness, and respect is the main factor for solving conflicts.'*

This approach is adaptable with Communicational Theories of Shaffer and Sullivan which emphasise that verbal and non-verbal dimensions of empathy and affection are prerequisites for reducing psychological and behavioural disturbance.

In the Group Interview with Citizens (Interview No. 63) it has come:

'A society that measures men merely based on economic expectations and doesn't give importance to emotional support and understanding, is in fact destroying their mental health.'

According to Bourdieu's Social Capital Theory, this 'emotional and relational capital' plays an important role in individual transcendence and psychological security. Lack of such capital will increase aggression and dissatisfaction.

In summary, evidence and data imply that attention and answering these ultimately 'existential' needs, especially in sexual minority groups, is a key prerequisite for preventing violence; and conversely, systematic inattention to these needs intensifies the cycle of violence.

Lack of Emotional Intelligence and Anger Management Training in family and education system is another factor for increased violence against men.

In Interview No. 38 it is emphasised:

'Families and schools pay attention more to cognitive intelligence (like Konkur) than to mental health, anger management, emotional, spiritual, and social intelligence.'

This one-dimensional attitude has provided the ground for neglecting emotional intelligence in Iranian society. In another quote from this same interview (Interview No. 38) it has come:

'Anger is a survival mechanism, shouldn't be suppressed, but managed and recognised. Mostly society and support systems negate or devalue negative emotions whereas emotional intelligence education means understanding and constructive use of these emotions.'

Lack of formal and fundamental trainings regarding Emotional Literacy in the process of socialisation and value transfer places humans in exposure to frustration, emotional suppression, guilt, and shame and weakens problem-solving and healthy stress coping skills; this very trend legitimises emotional discharge and aggressive expression.

In the expression of Developmental Psychology and Sociology of Emotion theories, inability to understand and manage emotions paves the ground for increased violence. The dominant discourse of family and society places emphasis on cognitive and academic success and counts anger and emotions as negative energy; such a situation itself is a bed-builder for direct or indirect violence against men.

Based on this, fundamental rearrangement of the educational system, training parents and teachers to strengthen emotional literacy, and adopting educational and media policies that place mental health and anger management at the top of concerns is a necessary matter.

Systemic attention to men's emotional, psychological, and sexual needs, synchronised with systematic emotional intelligence training from childhood to adulthood, will be the foundation of an effective strategy for preventing violence against men. Policymakers, media, and cultural institutions have the duty to facilitate grounds for expressing affection, teaching communication skills, and strengthening men's emotional literacy to prevent the continuity of the cycle of violence and social injuries.

10.5.3. Positive and Value-Oriented View Towards Damaged Individuals

In deep reflection of narrated experiences, the theme of the need to be seen and Worthiness in human existence manifests clearly; an experience that in the interviewee's first sentence is heard like a bold call from the heart of bitter social realities:

'Perhaps only... not... I paused thought a bit but I can tell you this with daring... if you want violence not to happen I say human in any position he is... whether from rough sleeping like me whether that situation... how should I tell you... I say if any person comes requests help from spiritual aspect... comes has a talk with a person... really let us not take that human as low degree... really let us give value for him.' (Interview No. 43, Ebrahimi, Pos 259).

In this retelling, what is depicted is the lack of attention, respect, and social credit for damaged and homeless men; a position where the human, regardless of his conditions, awaits a human look beyond position and label.

Continuation of the narrative becomes deeper:

'Let us not judge him at all... really that person... how should I tell you... recognise that person as capable/worthy (Ghabel). I feel for me, for one, no one gave value... perhaps I feel instead of these unkindnesses, instead of this that they deal with me so sharply/harshly... if they changed their procedure perhaps that thing they wanted... by God I would become one hundred times more beautiful than that.' (Interview No. 43, Ebrahimi, Pos 261-263).

In this section, the individual's need for Unconditional Acceptance and human dignity is expressed clearly. As if psychological cracks and wounds resulting from unkindness, judgment, and humiliating looks not only cut the help and recovery process, but drive the human towards anger, violent reaction, and rebellion. From the perspective of Attachment Theory and also contemporary psychological analyses based on Rogers and Maslow's view, the human basically for psychological growth and non-violent behaviour requires positive experience of attention, credit, and social value; a concept that has a special place in the hierarchy of human needs under the title of 'Esteem' and 'Belonging' (Maslow cited in Schultz, 1995 [2016]).

In Grounded Theory, when the social fabric and social work and psychological institutions focus on unconditional acceptance, hearing, and creating belief in individual's existential worthiness instead of labelling and

humiliation, they not only raise the chance of passing through crisis, but dry up roots of anger and aggression (Rogers, 1394 [2015]). Bourdieu's research regarding cultural and symbolic capital also emphasises that 'being recognisable' and 'possessing social credit' causes individual's access to support sources and less violence (Bourdieu, 1384 [2005]).

If society and social work systems and even ordinary citizens place the damaged man not as a defeated individual, but as a human with potential ability for return and growth under acceptance and respect, they can facilitate the process of exiting the cycle of violence. The feeling of being ignored and insignificance, as stated in the quote, causes the individual's passion for change and answering society's expectation to be destroyed; but replacing this approach with respect, empowerment, and avoiding judgment can transform the human into the best version of himself and significantly reduce the probability of violent behaviours (Frankl, 1399 [2020]).

Finally, the interviewee's words are not just an individual request, but a social invitation to fundamental transformation in social work and psychological approach; a transformation that considers violence not only the effect of material deprivations, but the direct consequence of ignoring and devaluing the human. The more effort is focused on reviving respect and creating a sense of worthiness in damaged individuals, the probability of violence emergence against men, especially in marginalised groups, will decrease (Frankl, 1399 [2020]; Bourdieu, 1384 [2005]; Schultz, 1395 [2016]). ####
10-5-4. Providing Mental Comfort and Peace for Men

In the present narrative, it is as if the collective experience and lived wisdom of past generations are depicted in close conjunction with the concept of Mental Comfort and Peace (*Asayesh va Aramesh-e Fekri*) as one of the pillars of a healthy life free from violence. Where it is said:

'That same... individuals who established this tradition... previously it wasn't like this... neither was there divorce like this, nor was there infidelity like this, nor was there mortality like this. Everyone lived above one hundred years. I always argued saying 'Dad, life was rural and food was good'... I say 'No, thought was comfortable (Fekr Rahat Boud).' Wherever thought is more comfortable life flows there... well, however much pressure is high, life's lifespan becomes less too.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 61).

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This statement clearly highlights the fundamental connection between mental peace and quality of life for humans, especially men; a peace that in past cultures, arising from lifestyle, simpler social relations, and lack of psychological pressures, clearly played a preventive role against the emergence of a collection of injuries such as divorce, infidelity, and even reduced lifespan. The interviewee, by comparing past and present, sees the root of comfort not merely in food and 'living conditions,' but in 'comfort of thought'; a mind that without continuous pressures and complex daily concerns has the opportunity to manifest creativity, affection, and meaningful relationships.

From the perspective of Humanistic Psychology theorists, mental peace and psychological security are necessary prerequisites for supplying comprehensive human needs at the higher levels of the hierarchy of needs (Maslow, cited in Schultz, 1395 [2016]). Maslow's emphasis on the progressive nature of needs and the importance of the feeling of psychological and mental security is well reflected in interviewees' experience: the more mental pressure and anxiety on humans, and specifically on men, increases, injuries show themselves not only in the psychological dimension but in social and physical dimensions as well. Men's daily experience—especially in more traditional and rural structures—indicates the key role of the feeling of security, peace of mind, and a carefree mind in preventing deviance, emergence of despair, and even violent tensions (Frankl, 1399 [2020]).

Relying on the Grounded Theory paradigmatic model, it can be understood that men's mental comfort is not just an individual category but a phenomenon intertwined with cultural structures and social conditions; whenever excessive pressures and expectations, lack of response to livelihood and psychological needs, or identity crises and changing social values cause men to lose their peace, the ground is prepared for increased level of conflict, psychological erosion, and ultimately the flaring up of violent behaviours (Giddens, 1386 [2007]; Bourdieu, 1384 [2005]). In fact, as the interviewee correctly points out, 'comfortable thought' is not only the guarantor of individual and social health but the protector of symbolic capitals of life, including stability of emotional and family relationships and even physical lifespan.

In conclusion, providing men's mental peace and comfort is a radical and infrastructural strategy for reducing violence and increasing their mental

health; this approach must be placed as the axis of psychological policy-making and social work in preventing injuries resulting from violence against men. A society that can, by means of psychological support, providing opportunity for reflection, and reducing erosive external and internal pressures, guide men towards a calm mind and feeling of security, will undoubtedly witness a reduction in violent behaviour and an increase in social life quality (Frankl, 1399 [2020]; Bourdieu, 1384 [2005]; Giddens, 1386 [2007]; Schultz, 1395 [2016]).

10.6. Economic Solutions for Prevention of Violence Against Men

Based on Grounded Theory research findings, solutions based on Economic Empowerment play an important role in preventing, controlling, and reducing violence against the male gender. Economic strategies are introduced in four categories below: 'Strengthening Men's Economic Status as a Ground for Family Stability,' 'Supportive Solutions,' 'Employment and Permanent Business,' 'Efforts for Independence of Working Children and Education and Culture-Learning.'

10.6.1. Strengthening Men's Economic Foundation, Ground-Builder for Family Stability

In addressing the subject of violence against men from an economic perspective and the role of livelihood in family stability, narratives of interviewed individuals clearly show that the concern of providing livelihood is one of the most important factors in the formation or reduction of violence. Men in society, especially in Iranian culture, always face heavy expectations asking them to be the financial supporter of the family, and any flaw in this field not only threatens their social position and personal dignity but has an obvious impact on family relationships. In this midst, what is stated by Ali Asgari expresses a tablet-like relationship between economic inability and the feeling of powerlessness:

'How it can distance you in the future, and what to do so you don't fall into the valley of those fears... in my opinion for men to be released from the feeling of powerlessness its solution is only income... I be thinking of a better income or alongside this be looking for another income... unfortunately I am an artless [unskilled] man, meaning I don't know any other work, nor technical.'

(Interview No. 54, Asgari, Pos 138-139).

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This quote clearly represents the man's helplessness and worry regarding the future; where the feeling of financial inefficiency has not only threatened his individual identity but has trapped his present and future life in fear and trepidation. As in Adler's Individual Psychology theories (Adler, 1933 [2004]), the locus of self-esteem and masculine sense of worthiness in many societies is strongly linked to the provider role, and whenever this role suffers disruption, the individual will have a feeling of defect, frustration, and even anger towards the environment and himself (Adler, 1933 [2004]).

Continuing, Amir Mokhtari links the role of society in reducing violence against men to economic tools and emphasises social bonds and his own objective observations:

'If society wants to help a man who is subjected to violence, it must strive in empowering men... now the discussion of economy and employment has a large role in the discussion of violence against men... a man who is provided for [secure] and can support the family, violence happens against him less in the family... because that same colloquial discussion that says 'May God not make any father ashamed before his wife and child'... a father who is ashamed... a father who becomes ashamed has no position to be able to fix this... if society wants... if society wants to work in the discussion of employment and income generation and... and that work be created for the man [so] he can cope with [provide for] wife and child... the man might return to the position we had in the past. I saw a woman who... the time her husband had sent a complete service of refrigerator and dishwasher and washing machine... said that 'May God preserve my husband, may his shadow be over my head, God willing always stay by our side'... but I saw that same husband that when he found financial problems and couldn't come home his wife requested divorce and divorce went from him [she divorced him].' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 81).

Here, men are recognised not only as an individual who must generate income, but as the pillar of the family, and when this pillar becomes loose, family collapse is not only probable but sometimes inevitable. Collective perception and common proverbs like *'May God not make any father ashamed before his wife and child'* also reflect this deep cultural belief that the man plays the role of breadwinner and investor of the family. The objective experience stated at the end of the quote confirms the direct dependence of respect and survival in the family on the man's economic status.

Analysis of these data can also be pursued from the perspective of sociological and social psychology theories. Pierre Bourdieu, with the concept of Symbolic Capital and Economic Capital, explains that individuals' status and credit in the social field is linked with possession of various capitals, especially economic, and an individual lacking necessary capitals is placed in exposure to elimination and marginalisation (Bourdieu, 1390 [2011]). This same link is prominent in Parsons' Social Role Theory as well; traditional gender roles and social division of labour expect livelihood provision from the man, and any failure in performing this role will be accompanied by stripping of authority and social position (Parsons, 1385 [2006]). On the other hand, Schultz also emphasises that access to stable jobs and sufficient income creates the ground for psychological security and reduction of conflict in the family centre (Schultz, 1389 [2010]).

Considering these foundations, economic solutions for preventing violence against men undoubtedly provide the objective and mental groundwork for family stability and reduction of men's psychological and social injuries by improving income earning conditions, teaching job skills, and allocating social and economic supports for men exposed to injury. The more structural supports and employment-oriented policy-making strengthens in society, men's capability to perform their role is strengthened and not only violence against them, but family disorder decreases as well (Giddens, 1389 [2010]). Therefore, elevating economic capital and elevating men's self-esteem and dignity is considered a determining and effective factor in preventing and reducing various violences against this stratum.

10.6.2. Supportive Strategies

In examining the role of Economic Support as one of the most important solutions for preventing violence against men, narratives extracted from the heart of lived experiences reveal dimensions of this necessity with all its subtleties and complexities. The first step in one interviewee's narrative represents the importance of early initiation of economic and educational supports for children who are placed in exposure to injury and deprivation from the very first years of life.

'Yes in my opinion one of the suitable ways that the country's statesmen can find a way that really a suitable solution can be achieved regarding this dilemma is that we... the time when now through any way we were convinced that this child

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really needs to be supported from the government side... want from that very beginning of childhood... meaning assume for example from the time they realised that this child from age 9 is forced to be outside... neither has a suitable family and is forced to be trained and grow up for an institution or organisation... if really they can provide the child's education conditions at the beginning of that same age... and also the child doesn't have much interest in studying... simultaneous with it be able... a series of works that are suitable for that child... we say now child is not very young age... can be up to 18 years too. Children are interested in education up to an age too... possibility [is] from age 12 onwards he has no interest in studying. If the government or statesmen can provide a ground that that individual... that child can both read his lesson and can learn a technique... learn a profession.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 23).

This narrative, from the angle of view of structural justice, emphasises this point that economic and social policy-making must act in the form of a continuous chain of supports. If the child experiences the possibility of presence in school and the labour market together at the appropriate time, the risk of being rejected, poverty, and entering the cycle of violence decreases seriously. Based on Social Justice Theory perspective, inequality in primary fields of life, like education and skill-learning, leads to serious consequences in the field of violence emergence (Rawls, 1384 [2005]). Similarly, strengthening opportunities for skill-learning and employment from adolescence somehow destroys roots of structural poverty and feeling of powerlessness.

In the next layer, when men grow older and shoulder family responsibilities, pressures resulting from economic and social expectations appear in a powerful form and sometimes overshadow the entire individual identity and self-esteem. Emphasis on the narrative of group support and the importance of the feeling of competence and respect in family relationships is evident in the quote below:

'Support groups. Support groups of men similar to each other... sporty supportive groups who are aware sit talk... I think this that humans know... that same time I said their angle of view... one rightful, victim... not be condemned to suffering... at least reach this that this is not [right]... this is not your right... this is a kind of sick relationship. At least know that the relationship is a sick relationship. This I think its simplest thing is this that I... now the example I said that I don't dare say 'Servant of God you were crushed, you were crushed by

God... you with that income of yours... your wife her salon [hairdresser] must always be in place, go to her club by God.' Man... this person chews... I finish [get exhausted]... and it is there that a person thinks that by God it is not your duty these... relationship. Look let me say like this... find a correct definition of being husband and wife... I. What is being husband and wife? Is respect, is spouse's accompaniment. Its name is on it, you know... is respect and accompaniment.' (Interview No. 78, Safaei, Pos 102).

In this experience, the man must be able to answer the spouse and family's needs even in a position of weakness and pennilessness, and if he fails, the feeling of defeat and humiliation fills his entire existence. In these conditions, Support Groups and associating with similar individuals can have a therapeutic and empowering function. Bourdieu, with the concept of symbolic and economic capital, describes such a reality well; how lack of economic capital can weaken the individual's position before family and society and keep him in the recurring cycle of rejection and violence (Bourdieu, 1390 [2011]).

Another important point emerging from narratives is attention to Sustainable Social and Economic Policies instead of short-term and sectional supports:

'Totally we in the field of issues... our focus is more on discussion... goes more towards intervention and treatment... whereas for reducing these violences we must [focus on] prevention and attending to grounds and strengthening them... providing grounds for example creating job and sustainable income... supportive aids and timely and continuous for empowering families... all these can help the family... therefore the look in fact unfortunately our aids are mostly sectional, is formal [superficial], is short [term]... and this causes that practically it cannot help the family.' (Interview No. 74, Dr. Vali Bahrami, Pos 41).

This quote shows the weak point of our social support structure is in the lack of methodical and sustainable programmes; meaning instead of strengthening the economy of families and damaged men in a systematic and long-term manner, interventions are often limited to superficial and occasional matters, and consequently violence, rejection, and injury still remain. This weak point has been criticised in Giddens' thought and Social Welfare Theory as well, where lack of real function of the welfare state and repeated and efficient supports births new social injuries (Giddens, 1389 [2010]).

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The issue of economic support, however, is not limited only to allocation of financial resources, and in the story of those who have been rejected by their family and especially Trans men, the role of family remains unique. In the narrative below, this tight correlation between family and economic and emotional supports is clearly represented:

'A series of them were exported to Dubai... a series of them... very bad situation arises when family is not [there]... I... our own kids exist... I say 'Family beats you, kills you, does any work... don't come out of the house, don't fight with your family... whatever work you do do with your family... let them operate on you ten years later but let family be by your side... unless you yourself have been accepted in society... your job your work everything... have adapted yourself... [only] then say slowly slowly dig [separate]... otherwise if family are not [there] anything that happens for you happens for you. Basically nothing is higher than family. Basically government doesn't support... I know centres that don't allow 16-year-old to operate... well he was 15 years old that his mom said 'Sir he is fifteen years old he is my child I want to operate... I want to give consent... what are you [who are you]'... with his mother and father the pair of them went to court said 'Sir this is my child I want... before female hormones go from his body I want... before that his height becomes tall his figure becomes large his skeletal structure becomes large... it is very important that he operates sooner'... the guy had the science of it was cheeky [bold] too... 'He is my child he is 15 years old I say I want him to operate... now I want him to operate I don't want him to become 18 years old'... they gave permission he operated. Look how important the role of family is. Now one of my friends exists... operated at age 33... after 4 years his beard doesn't come out his figure remained petite just like that... didn't influence that much.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 253).

'Behzisti considers a few dormitory centres for these individuals. One of them considers a counselling centre for these Trans individuals... those whom family has rejected... alongside it teach a profession to them and in fact enter them into society and establish a psychological security for these, because when psychological security is not [there]... meaning these have been rejected from their family in fact they go towards a series of other problems including acute depression and turning to narcotics and a series of problems.' (Interview No. 60, Mahsa, Pos 129).

In these narratives, the family appears as the first and most important supportive organisation which, even in the absence of government supports, can save the individual from the vortex of addiction, depression, and rejection. This view aligns completely with Durkheim's view regarding the integrating role of the family institution in society. Durkheim believed that the more solid social bonds are, the safer the individual will be from social and violent injuries (Durkheim, 1383 [2004]). Lack of family support means losing this protective shield and the individual being abandoned against countless injuries. Hence, any effort for men's economic empowerment without attention to the position and role of the family will lead nowhere. Even if families face failure in providing psychological security for their children, the need for supportive and counselling centres that can play the role of family for these individuals seems vital. These centres must empower them not only regarding psychological security, but economically and socially as well so they return to normal life.

Finally, economic support is not summarised only in providing livelihood and employment, but deeper human and dignifying dimensions are involved in it.

'I think [if] a person has affection, has knowledge (Marefat), wealth and property has no value in life. True it must exist, but doesn't bring value for a person. However much money a person has in life, in my opinion peace of mind, comfort of life, all these... affection and human knowledge must bring for a person.'
(Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 272).

This quote offers a perfectionist and philosophical view of economic support. In fact, the ultimate goal of economic support should not be merely filling individuals' pockets, but must lead to reconstructing human dignity, self-esteem, and the sense of worthiness in the individual. This is where psychological and spiritual dimensions are tied with economic dimensions. Although wealth is necessary for life, what gives value and meaning to life is humanity and affection which can blossom in the shadow of a correct and deep economic support. Parsons in his Social Action Theory also points to this note that society, in addition to providing material needs, must answer individuals' spiritual and emotional needs as well to achieve health and balance (Parsons, 1389 [2010]). Therefore, economic support is a holistic strategy that attends to both material dimensions and spiritual and psychological dimensions of men's

lives and can play a role effectively in reducing violence against them and strengthening the family.

10.6.3. Development of Employment and Permanent Business

In analysing economic solutions for preventing violence against men, Employment and Permanent Business is not only an economic tool, but a fundamental refuge against cycles of injury and violence. As we hear in the words of one participant:

'[Working] kids need that we offer these trainings. Regarding men definitely the ground for these children's education must be provided, from the very beginning of work... the ground for this that these children think of a profession a work for continuing their own life... consider a profession a job for themselves for these. It can be... these for start can be for example box-making gift boxes, can be bag-sewing. These have work [demand] in society and sell... can be bag sewing, dress sewing and tailoring... be small tailoring, and those wooden works that be at the level of these [kids'] age conditions up to now 18 years 19 years. And that definitely one person be above these [kids'] age every day... not that an instructor or someone who is individual educator speaks with this one today and then leaves these alone to themselves for a week. And comes again speaks with these the next week. No, every day we must be above these [kids'] head and guide these and the government must definitely not abandon these to themselves until the time when this child has become really independent physically and spiritually.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 29).

This narrative, while emphasising continuous education and supportive presence of instructors until reaching economic independence, reminds us of Schultz's views regarding Human Investment and Human Capital Theory; where investment in education and skill-learning from childhood is the guarantor of psychological security and sustainable future livelihood (Schultz, 1387 [2008]; Soufi, 1399 [2020]).

At the macro policy-making level, creating permanent business opportunities gains importance from legal and social aspects as well:

'Implementation of vocational training educational programmes in military service... outside of here he can become a good programmer, outside of here he can become a good programmer.' (Interview No. 48, Ehsan Soldier, Pos 141-143).

This statement can be considered a sign of the necessity of adapting the formal education system to real market needs, just as Parsons' Functionalism Theory points to the role of social structures in preparing humans for performing occupational roles and responsibility in society (Parsons, 1390 [2011]). Facilitating creative businesses, continuous presence of government and supporting institutions in the employability process, and linking occupational training with government support systems, all are extractable within the Grounded Theory model as effective actions and interactions for building a future without violence for men (Giddens, 1396 [2017]; Akrami & Sabzeh-Ali, 1396 [2017]).

The issue of employment does not remain limited to the economic dimension, but has a psychological and social foundation as well:

'Government collect all these [criminals]. In my opinion youths... myself... a year [if] there be a job, insurance be... my hand not be after [begging] government... hand be raised on man [violence] too... I my hand be in my own pocket... not have need that because of need go do these works [crime and theft]... I don't touch substances. By Quran more than half of these crimes are over needs.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid, Pos 230).

This narrative reflects Relative Deprivation Theory (Rawls, 1397 [2018]; Ebrahimi et al., 1401 [2022]) which considers injustice and lack of equal job opportunity the ground for individuals entering crimes. From Bourdieu's view, employment is one of the aspects of social and cultural capital that gives men not only possibility of livelihood, but social status and stable identity (Bourdieu, 1381 [2002]).

Field evidence in addition to theoretical analyses testifies that having a suitable job can even transform individuals' morale:

'I think if people... if for example there be a condition that he can work and can have an income... can live like others... do sports... there be a special sport specific to these people... it becomes very good... in my opinion their morale changes.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 287).

This narrative is an instance of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs which counts the need for job security as a fundamental layer and prerequisite for individual blossoming (Maslow, 1393 [2014]; Haddadi et al., 1400 [2021]).

In the field of rehabilitation and social integration too, work and employment is vital:

'Well there are those who like me [recovered] are almost middle-aged that 50 years... the party says what... says 'I don't do crime today, don't smoke substances, don't sell substances.' Additional expense... now I am full with half a Barbari bread... with one Barbari bread I am hungry. Now Mr. Rezaei says 'Be clean for a year... six months that you are... six months of it remaining... in Behzisti I arrange a job for you go sit there... gives you 10 million per month... give guard duty at night until morning... morning too sleep until night. Neither be in contact with anyone.' Unless where do you want to take... where do you want to take... where gather for whom... let your affairs pass... be clean... with reputation.' (Interview No. 24, Gholam Eskandari, Pos 232).

Therapeutic-social dimensions of having a job have been confirmed in Iranian sociological studies (Mousavizadeh, 1394 [2015]; Abbaspour, 1395 [2016]) as well, that having a suitable job provides the possibility of return to healthy social life and reducing injury intensity.

Among more marginalised groups, the power of creative job creation remains effective:

'I now myself as an entrepreneur job-creator came with theatre work, with music work, with various trainings even hairdressing created job for these [Trans individuals].' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 59).

This experience, aligning with Schultz (1387 [2008]) and Sen's Human Development Theory (1395 [2016]), shows social entrepreneurship and professional employment is the widest supportive ring for return and stabilisation of men's social role.

In fundamental data analysis, sustainable employment and continuous business for men is not only a policy option, but a human-social necessity that beyond economic security, leads to providing individual status, identity-finding, increasing life expectancy, and reducing psychological and behavioural instabilities (Giddens, 1396 [2017]; Bourdieu, 1381 [2002]; Sen, 1395 [2016]; Haddadi et al., 1400 [2021]); therefore, any effective policy for preventing violence against men must place creating and stabilising sustainable employment, elevating vocational trainings (with centrality of Technical and Vocational Training Organization), supporting social entrepreneurship and small enterprises (under management of municipalities and support funds), and reforming macro-economic structures with focus on resource redistribution, targeted support of vulnerable groups, and

implementing social insurance and job retraining programmes on its agenda, such that responsible organisations including State Welfare Organization in identifying and supporting damaged ones, Technical and Vocational Training Organization in skills training, Municipalities in developing markets and urban infrastructures, and Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare in policy-making and macro supports, each act in a coordinated manner with specified division of duties; successful implementation of these strategies depends on institutional synergy, supplying sufficient resources, continuous supervision, and scientific evaluation of results so that employment is stabilised as a foundation for social status and effective prevention of violence and injury against men.

10.6.4. Efforts for Independence of Working Children

In examining efforts for the independence of working children and the importance of education and culture-learning as a solution for preventing violence against men, it is observed that independence from childhood takes shape based on specific needs in individuals. This independence can provide a ground where individuals find the ability to manage challenges of the work and life environment.

'Many times incidentally it has been very good that he could become an independent human, was ready to perform work and [endure] hard conditions and had acceptance of responsibility... anyway this issue... difference of child in family... a bit perhaps unintentionally they put difference between their children... I consider it unlikely a father and mother do this intentionally... unless it be acute problems... and logically that children be exactly like each other is a mistake... because in fact he could find a condition and special feature, could grow...' (Interview No. 97, Farhad Azizi, Pos 54).

This quote shows that independence from childhood can cause difference in individual growth and development, and lack of this difference perhaps sometimes unintentionally leads to important issues like violence in the work environment, because employers do not feel threatened in facing individual independence and distinct abilities.

Emphasis on education as part of the independence process also enjoys great importance.

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'[For] independence... from that very beginning can be primary education... be recognising primary customs of life... to finding a suitable work and job for these kids.' (Interview No. 79, Haghighi, Pos 105).

This view shows that the process of education and culture-learning can play a key role in empowerment and combating violence. In this direction, offering basic and cognitive trainings to children can create a ground for preventing discriminatory and violent looks in social and work environments.

Therefore, considering existing theories and scientific findings, it can be said that independence resulting from education and individual development not only helps reduce violence against men but leads to the formation of a self-reliant and culture-nurturing generation capable of accepting social and individual responsibilities.

10.7. Social Solutions for Prevention of Violence Against the Male Gender

Based on Grounded Theory research findings, Social Solutions play an important role in preventing, controlling, and reducing violence against the male gender. Social strategies are introduced in four categories below: 'Spending Time for Family and Recreation to Reduce Violence,' 'Necessity of Improving Social Space of Society,' 'Launching Civil Associations for Damaged Men,' 'Supervision in Schools to Prevent Sexual Abuses by Bullies.'

10.7.1. Spending Leisure Time with Family to Reduce Violence

'I myself, because I am under pressure a lot... and sometimes I think about it that how to behave with my wife, with my daughter and my children... for example spend more time for my children or wife. Sometimes it has happened that I give time to my children... it has happened sometimes at 12 midnight I go home, I take them out to spin around [drive/walk], eat ice cream... I don't know... sometimes so that, for example, that relationship of ours doesn't get destroyed less [doesn't get destroyed as much]... doesn't see injury... even sometimes it has happened we go to a restaurant, I spend time for them. It has happened until 2-3 AM we were out, talked with each other, had fun. Sometimes I go home, even though I am tired, I don't have tolerance, but I play with them and this [causes] that those expectations my daughter or wife has from me become a bit less.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseinfard, Pos 59-60).

In the context of the narrative above, one can clearly observe the importance of allocating time for family and recreation as an effective factor in reducing and preventing violence against men. The narrator speaks of a condition of life where spiritual pressures and physical fatigue have become part of his daily routine; however, he consciously strives to establish deeper emotional relationships with his wife and children. This conscious choice, meaning spending time for family members even when necessary power and energy does not exist, is not merely a fatherly or husbandly 'duty' but an active reaction against social and economic pressures which bring hidden and overt violence with them.

In the Iranian family space, many men, like the narrator, to reduce conflicts and answer family expectations are forced to ignore the border between fatigue and effort for vitality and intimacy. He says:

'Sometimes it has happened that I give time to my children... it has happened sometimes at 12 midnight I go home I take them out to spin around eat ice cream... sometimes so that, for example, that relationship of ours doesn't get destroyed less doesn't see injury even sometimes it has happened we go to a restaurant I spend time for them.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseinifard, Pos 59-60).

This is a classic example of employing 'Quality Time' as a shield against emotional exhaustion and potential consequences of domestic violence; an approach that theorists like Anthony Giddens consider part of social capital and a symbol of enriching family relations (Giddens, 1996 [2017]).

From the perspective of social psychology theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, men, to reach higher levels of self-actualisation, must first experience the feeling of security and belonging in the family environment (Maslow, 1993 [2014]). Creating shared moments and family recreations is a kind of psychological revival and defensive shield against the emergence of aggressive behaviours not only for children but for the father of the family as well. In the same narrative he points out:

'Sometimes I go home, even though I am tired, I don't have tolerance, but I play with them and this [causes] that those expectations my daughter or wife has from me become a bit less.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseinifard, Pos 59-60).

Playing with children and wife in conditions where the individual is psychologically tired means a conscious choice to reduce emotional distancing

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and prevent conversion of tensions into violence. This very small emotional policy, from Bourdieu's view, is considered a kind of 'Conscious Action to Reproduce Emotional Capital' which leads to strengthening family bonds and consequently reducing violent conflicts (Bourdieu, 1381 [2002]).

Sociological studies in Iran also confirm that men who succeed in creating a shared recreational space—however short but continuous—in their family are placed less in exposure to emergence or experience of violence (Sohrabi, 1397 [2018]). These positive interactions make the level of expectation more realistic and do not lead to exhaustion or despair of family members. Also, establishing these shared moments and participating in family joy and recreation is a practical strategy for strengthening spouse and parent-child bonds which can prevent the occurrence of many conflicts and aggressive behaviours (Giddens, 1396 [2017]; Maslow, 1393 [2014]).

Finally, the interviewee's narrative, from a perspective beyond an individual experience, is a symbolic and scientific narrative of men's resistance against pressures with a subtle but effective tool—meaning spending time and creating shared moments with family—in the path of reducing and preventing violence. This approach has an activist and empowering nature, which is congruent with both family sociology theories and modern social psychology. The main theme of the quote shows that continuous attention to family's emotional needs and creating shared opportunities for happiness, like a powerful shield, protects the man against both structural pressures and social injuries (Giddens, 1396 [2017]; Bourdieu, 1381 [2002]; Maslow, 1393 [2014]).

10.7.2. Improvement of Social Space of Society

Summarised analysis based on the provided quote in the field of 'Necessity of Improving Social Space of Society' and within the Grounded Theory framework begins such that it be a unified and attractive narrative and construct all dimensions of meaning and social realities. In this analysis, the role of familial, neighbourhood, and social space in preventing violence and suicide of men is clearly seen; a space that can reduce negative effects of poverty, migration, and low level of infrastructure facilities and keep humans on the path of physical and mental health.

Here, the first fundamental parameter is the Necessity of Local Development and Social Solidarity Institutions. In the form of this approach, families must reach a level of health and security where stressors and

psychological injuries, especially addiction and violence emergence, can decrease within the family. The quote *'We cannot control violence and suicide unless the family reaches that level of social health'* shows that the family, as the primary nucleus of society, must be able to play a caring and supportive role, and this requires neighbourhood-oriented policies and focus on social development.

In this same direction, *'Injuries that become less'*, meaning reducing environmental and economic factors leading to psychological crises and addiction, must be placed in priority. As pointed out in the quote, *'Well that issue must be controlled'*, this shows that practical policies based on prevention must start from the local and regional level, where indigenous facilities and capacities are placed in the service of reducing injuries. *'Our policies must be based on neighbourhood-oriented and community-oriented policies'*; this sentence emphasises the necessity of focusing on local institutions, active participation of residents, and social cognition as key tools in the prevention process; something that dares to place society not just in dealing with current problems, but on the path of sustainable and health-oriented development.

Lack of welfare, infrastructural, and economic facilities in areas with high poverty and migration has an important place in this analysis. These areas, although apparently not prone to suicide and violence risk, but by getting involved in daily problems, burning opportunities, and weakness in local resources, can act as unstable beds. *'When they get involved in issues and problems, be able to get help from local resources'* shows that social and economic capacities of these communities must be strengthened so they can maintain their resistance and stability in facing crises.

From a theoretical perspective, this approach is based on assumptions of Sustainable Development and flexible social systems, wherein social cognition and local empowerment play a driving role. This view is interpretable in the form of Parsons' theories (society progress and social cohesion) and Giddens (prevalence of local institutions and social development) which emphasise the infrastructural role of these institutions in reducing psychological injuries and violence. Also, local development theory based on Human Development Discourse and reducing structural inequalities emphasises that meaningful spaces for growth, education, and healthy socialisation must take shape in city margins and poor areas.

Continuing, the high importance of 'Social cognition and helping society in understanding issues' becomes clear; a vicinity that can prevent individual and social crises, and individuals alongside local resources find a sense of responsibility, empathy, and internal power. This type of policy-making, in an innovative look, can be a sustainable solution for reducing risk of suicide and violence in men; a way based on strengthening collective spirit and social solidarity, along with mental health trainings and trust-building.

In conclusion, each of the proposed actions in this analysis must take shape in the form of neighbourhood-oriented and sustainable development policies; policies based on real recognition of neighbourhoods, indigenous capacities, and residents' needs, and able to simultaneously remove economic, social, and psychological obstacles in the path of reducing violence and suicide. This work requires deepening the connection between local institutions, government, and civil society, so that a healthier, more stable, and more capable society takes shape based on deep cognition and real participation.

10.7.3. Launching Civil Associations for Damaged Men

In today's social sphere, the existence of violence against men is often a hidden and less-spoken matter; cultural and social grounds create a big barrier against expressing masculine experiences of receiving violence, to the point where many men do not see even the possibility of raising the issue in themselves. However, transformation in social life and becoming more complex of gender relations has caused the attention of sociologists and social activists to be drawn to the necessity of creating structures and mechanisms to compensate for this void. A point seen well in the words of one interviewee:

'This can now be in the form of trainings inside the family and even an association can be formed... Association of Violence-Stricken Men (Anjoman-e Mardane-ye Khoshounat-dideh).' (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari Nasab, Pos 37).

This phrase explains the necessity of two complementary approaches: targeted education in the family context and beyond that, launching associations special for violence-stricken men with a civil function.

In sociological understanding of roots of occurrence and continuity of violence, creating supportive organisations in the middle of social structure can play a restorative and preventive role; in the sense that it influences not only the violence-stricken individual but the system of collective beliefs

regarding the male gender and his capability/right to receive social support, as if with creating such associations, 'the right to have a voice and possibility of masculine experience being seen' is recognised for the first time. Supportive theories such as Parsons' view acknowledge that the function of mediating groups in modern society is 'transferring issues threatening social health to the realm of collective dialogue' (Parsons, 1987 [2008]: 179). Therefore, formation of an association like Association of Violence-Stricken Men is a cultural turning point paving the way for redefining the role and position of victimised men.

On the other hand, social psychologists believe existence of structural support is one of the important axes of secondary prevention. Based on the 'Social Power and Resources' Model, the more individuals in injury conditions face a non-governmental collective support, the less they will feel isolation and defenselessness (Dolan et al., 2022). These associations practically, instead of introducing violence-stricken men merely as 'individuals in need of pity,' recreate them under an active social role directed at change. In fact, as the interviewee emphasised, *'Even an association can be formed... Association of Violence-Stricken Men'* (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari Nasab, Pos 37), presence of such popular structures paves the ground for dialogue, solidarity, and repairing social dignity of men exposed to violence.

Finally, presence of civil associations for violence-stricken men is not only a response to the obvious need for support, education, and empowerment of them, but carries a strong symbolic message for the entire social structure: accepting the reality of violence against men and moving towards redefining the balance of power and responsibility between genders. A path that comparative studies have also confirmed its efficiency (Delgado-Álvarez et al., 2022).

10.7.4. Supervision in Schools to Prevent Sexual Abuses by Bullies

In the structure of current society, school has always been raised as one of the most important environments for socialisation of children and adolescents, and the type of performance of this institution can play a key role in preventing or guaranteeing continuity of cycles of violence. Especially in dealing with injurious phenomena like sexual abuse by bullies, school responsibility gains importance on one hand as an inseparable part of preventive policies of the educational apparatus, and on the other hand as a bed for empowering

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families and universal education. In such a space, neglecting sufficient supervision, education, and psychological support can itself lead to intensification of violence against future boys and men. Hidden and visible layers of power among students, especially in vertical structures and informal relationships inside school, often provide a bed for emergence of violences and especially sexual abuse which leads to silence and frustration of victims.

One interviewee, emphasising school responsibility and necessity of active intervention, says thus:

'School have more care and more supervision on sexual abuser individuals like bully groups and not allow them to abuse the weak position of smaller students.'

(Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 45).

This very attitude towards lack of supervision and weakness of institutional support, not only displays a clear image of students' and parents' most important concerns, but doubles the need for reviewing executive policies and practical methods of schools. Importance of this point becomes more prominent when cultural and social context of students' life plays a role in analysis as well; as stated in continuation:

'In closed cultures of small counties (Shahrestan)... offer trainings of method of helping victim students of bullies' sexual abuse to families and schools.'

(Interview No. 62 - with Sexual Abuse Case, Pos 46).

The narratives above indicate this truth that in the absence of strategic and systematic policies for care and supervision of non-therapeutic power relations in school—especially when accompanied by cultural silence or lack of education in smaller communities—possibility of continuity and further emergence of violence against boys increases severely. From the perspective of Symbolic Interactionism Theory, social roles and expectations formed in school and home space influence boys' identity and self-esteem, and inattention to these injuries leads to formation of implicit acceptance of violence in their lived experience (Blumer, 1969). Also from the view of community-based psychology and Social Learning Theory, bullies' behavioural patterns in school are often reinforced by means of observation and repetition in that same educational environment, and in the absence of coordinated and education-centred interventions, this cycle intensifies (Bandura, 1977).

It should not be ignored that concealment and lack of voice and visibility of students' problems, especially in small cities with closed cultural formats, practically provides conditions for reproduction of violence against the male gender. Only by linking precise supervisory policies and extensive education for families and schools and psychological support of victims can the cycle of violence reproduction be broken and rebuilding a safe environment for all students, especially boys, be achieved. Such an action is not just a protective approach, but an effort for recreating students' individual and collective identity and elevating Social Capital in individual and collective dimension (Putnam, 2000).

10.8. Policy-Making Solutions for Prevention of Violence Against the Male Gender

Based on Grounded Theory research findings, Policy-Making Solutions play an important role in preventing, controlling, and reducing violence against the male gender. Social strategies are introduced in four categories below: 'Changing Anti-Drug and Stimulant System,' 'Preventing Financial Exploitation of Working and Street Children,' 'Reforming Statistical Registration System of Violence Against Men in Society,' 'Necessity of Attention to Media and Governance Institution as Injury-Reducing Elements.'

10.8.1. Changing Anti-Drug and Stimulant System (Inefficiency of Prison, Camp, and Centre)

In facing the issue of violence against men and the role of structures combating drugs and stimulants, the formal system of confrontation such as prisons, addiction withdrawal camps, Methadone therapy, and Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centres, has often had injurious and violent performance and has not been able to play a constructive and preventive role in reducing or controlling violence against men. Direct lived narratives and experiences expressed by interviewees are a clear indication of inefficiency and sometimes violence-generation of these very structures; experiences that highlight the human aspect of research and force us to rethink official policies and their dysfunction.

One of these narratives is an expressive image of the depth of disorder current in the correction and rehabilitation system of children and adolescents:

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'Look but catastrophe... that photo you see there is photo of Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centre I think year 1369 [1990]... kids who are there... that middle photo who has a flower in his hand... this was theft crime. Now you think what theft was. Theft this child did was a doll... meaning at night in Farahzad Square goes there sees there is a shop and sells items for example plastic and these and sold watermelon too... this one takes one of plastic dolls in hand and falls asleep right there amidst watermelons. Canvas that was there he pulls over his head and police patrol comes sees watermelons are moving and comes sees it is a child who has a plastic doll in his hand too... eight months undecided (Belataklif) in Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centre. Eight months this child was undecided in the Centre for crime of doll... hadn't stolen... this child was in the shop.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 9).

This quote confronts us with institutionalised injustice; where judicial policy instead of treatment and support, fuels reproduction of violence and frustration and sacrifices children's fate, only because of structural weakness and lack of alternative approaches.

On the other hand, those who were victims of traditional and inefficient policies of fighting addiction and crime, validate their lived experience in camps and prisons directly:

'Awareness-raising for me and likes of like me... for example now you don't look at here I respect this house [NGO/Centre] a lot, you know! I saw other places other camps... basically it is not important for camp owner or owner of thing... says only thing... but for example if four places five places majority if it is like here... if spends time makes people aware perhaps a bit four like me... me whom by God my clean [sober] hours haven't become double-digit yet... in any institute I was too I consumed God is witness... I know that previous series I quit that too intentionally officers knew I did substance thing... we said let's go to prison and these... comes out in a week... well this one go sooner now... not be six months... after six months later we do it somehow... in it [prison] was like this. Previous centre I was totally 12 days perhaps I didn't consume substance but after 12 days I did [found] its way and consumed... in centre, outside, everywhere... awareness-raising hasn't been... for me they didn't clarify anything... here you know for myself hold session and eat grief [worry]... why... hold session... perhaps that world perhaps I was another place by God I wouldn't decide like this... like somehow they did thing with me... talk thing... myself too I... you human thing... your essence is correct... at discharge time said 'How old are

you'... said 'If you liked stay here'... I took a look at my own conditions that if I go...' (Interview No. 36, Faraz Mahboubi, Pos 311-312).

In this memory, inefficiency of the formal system is evident not merely in creating change, but in interaction with personality and identity of damaged individuals. What is repeated is absence of educational approaches, lack of real awareness-raising sessions, and movement solely on the orbit of penal discipline which ultimately strengthens structural violence.

In continuation, there is clear reference to hidden violence in collection processes and field confrontation:

'Whatever I told him [police] 'I am 17 years old my age is low don't send me to prison'... didn't send [to] Kids [Juvenile Centre] sent me to Qaleh Hesār prison. Then I went there became a smoker. Worst violences I experienced myself was in plans of [collecting public addicts]. From the first plan they hit I got caught until now. In every plan I had participation. I in Darvazeh Ghar region got caught about 900 times, in this 15 years. These collection plans must be executed without violence.' (Interview No. 39, Ali Aghasi, Pos 114-125).

Repetition of facing violence, indifference to age and special situation of adolescence, and direct transfer of crime space into detention and prison environments deepens the crisis and strips opportunity of rehabilitation from the generation of young men.

Structural indifference and lack of answering real needs even in the method of managing centres, let us see:

'No anymore I got a lawyer anymore lawyer did my works I came got discharged and these I came for example I became leave [furlough] anymore what... with myself too I took heavy crime [drugs] inside... for example I had found sling-shotter... I gave two sling-shotters I got crime too. Meaning with sling-shot sends crime [drugs] to prison. Yeah with sling-shot sent crime hooked.' (Interview No. 40, Mohammad Amin, Pos 274-280).

Current system is formed such that detention and prison structure instead of reform, is a favourable space for continuing crimes and reproducing delinquency and injuries move in a closed and repetitive circuit.

At a macro level too, those with long history of experiencing this structure point out that current strategies of collection and elimination have temporary and deceptive function:

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'I don't think my place becomes good anymore... tell other Vahids who are getting caught becoming worse worse... I because I was in these stories twenty years didn't hear... always erased the problem face [covered up] by collecting other addicts... or must hit from the root which is not possible.' (Interview No. 44, Vahid, Pos 88).

What becomes clearly obvious is continuity of a vicious cycle that entails not a fundamental solution, but erasing the problem and increasing hidden violence.

But these very people of experience suggest a proactive and functional solution and point to capacity of creating bigger change:

'Government one hundred percent can control these [production, sale, and distribution system of narcotics].' (Interview No. 44, Vahid, Pos 140).

This claim indicates the pivotal role of management and macro policymaking; where structural reforms instead of punishment and elimination, take the centrality of prevention, control, and principled guidance.

Finally, complexity of quitting experiences, fluctuation between different substances, and repetition of failures, advances the need for fundamental changes in therapeutic and supportive approaches:

'I feared... I have record of quitting [in addiction withdrawal centres] a lot. I consume Shisheh, Heroin and pills, and Bang and Gol... system [therapeutic and educational and supportive] of camps must change.' (Interview No. 46, Rasoul, Pos 50-52).

And for finding solution, creating community-based capacities is introduced as vital:

'Development of NGOs, non-governmental organisations can help an important role in preventing social injuries and violent crimes.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 83).

Sociological theories confirm such a reading as well; especially Anthony Giddens' 'Structuration' Theory emphasises importance of rethinking social institutions and necessity of passing from coercive and penal confrontations and moving towards participatory and empowering policies (Giddens, 1392 [2013]). Also, international studies have shown that alternative policies based on public participation, continuous education, psycho-social support, and NGO activity have key role both in reducing violence rate, and in repairing

cycle of injury repetition and return to society (Rhodes et al., 2020; Obama et al., 1398 [2019]).

Based on this, analysis of narratives presented from different levels can picture thus: traditional and mainly repressive structures like prison, camp, and juvenile correction centre not only lack desirable effectiveness, but provide grounds for emergence and intensification of violence against men, especially adolescents and more vulnerable groups. Fundamental change of path and focusing on educational, supportive, participatory, and structured control policies at macro level will be the main opener of stopping this violence cycle, a path that rises from the heart of critique of experience and field evidence and is solidified with backing of scientific theories.

10.8.2. Governments Preventing Financial Exploitation of Working and Street Children

Arshia, emphasising the role of government in reducing social injuries, points to roots of violence against working and street children. He states:

'Government destroy narcotics totally in society so families don't disintegrate. Support working children so they are not forced to work in street and workshop under age 10 and see injury. Provide children's education conditions. Families annoy children less and support so they can grow well. Boys are subjected to annoyance and abuse more because they tell them 'You have become a man anymore and must stand on your own feet' and this causes them to be annoyed a lot. How much can a 7 to 10 year old child work. Work without pay. Girls are center of families' attention more but boys see violence more. Offer education of method of correct dealing with children to families especially in television and films.' (Interview No. 61, Arshia Jafari, Pos 36).

This quote clearly shows that Arshia believes government, by adopting supportive and preventive policies, can prevent financial exploitation and violence against working and street children. Eliminating narcotics, supporting working children, providing education conditions, and educating families are among solutions he suggests for reducing social injuries and violence against children. Arshia also points to this note that boys are placed in exposure to violence more, because they are expected to be independent and stand on their own feet, while girls are placed at center of family attention more. This view aligns with Sociology of Gender theories which emphasise role of gender in determining social expectations and behaviours (Giddens,

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2009). On the other hand, Social Learning Theory states children learn violent behavioural patterns through observing and imitating adults' behaviours (Bandura, 1977). Therefore, educating families and offering positive behavioural models in media can be effective in reducing violence against children. In this way, Arshia with a holistic view emphasises role of government, family, and media in preventing financial exploitation and violence against working and street children.

10.8.3. Reforming Statistical Registration System of Violence Against Men in Society

In many societies, attention to violence against men has always been placed in the shadow of extensive, and sometimes one-sided, discussions regarding violence against women. This issue not only has clear manifestation in public culture and even mass media, but is observed in statistical systems and registration of macro social data as well. For this reason, Reforming Statistical Registration System of Violence Against Men, as one of macro preventive strategies, possesses fundamental importance; because without precise, transparent, and community-oriented data, managerial and educational actions will face serious challenges. Scientific analysis of causes and consequences of violence against men requires that statistics and recorded reports be gathered and analysed in a realistic, impartial, and pervasive manner. Inattention, bias, or inefficiency in this field can lead to continuity of historical silence of violence against men, distortion of social realities, and inability to offer solutions.

In this midst, quotes of interviewed individuals themselves speak of these conditions. Worries expressed regarding lack of statistical transparency count as the first step for rereading and reforming this system. One interviewee, reflecting on body-awareness education and simultaneously pointing to data deficiency, says thus:

'Come give body awareness education to people to families... can prevent such issues a lot... and perhaps now discussion of violence... we don't know how much its statistics is... violence that is towards woman now in society statistics we have is how much... statistics of violence that is towards gentlemen is how much can it be.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 59).

In continuation she also emphasises:

'Now violence that is towards female gender is more... I think men is more. Statistics says violence is more towards women but perhaps in reality it is not like this.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 61).

These sentences indicate the deep gap existing between official data and lived social experience. As Social Constructionism Theory clarifies, social realities are product of collective definition and symbolic structures (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) and if statistical system does not reflect reality of violence transparently and pervasively—regardless of gender—a major part of violence experience remains hidden in society. Symbolic Interactionism Theory also emphasises this point that our understanding of phenomena takes shape by means of our interactions with systems of registering and representing them (Blumer, 1969), therefore any concealment, deficiency, and defect in statistical registration system can cause continuity or even increase of violence against men.

Emphasis on public education like body awareness and transparent expression of data and narratives of violence is a fundamental step in identifying and accepting social reality of violence against men and introduction for effective preventive and therapeutic measures at society level.

10.9. Cultural Solutions for Prevention of Violence Against the Male Gender

Based on Grounded Theory research findings, Cultural Solutions play an important role in preventing, controlling, and reducing violence against the male gender. Cultural strategies are introduced in seven categories below: 'Redefining Violence in Non-Physical Aspects,' 'Return of Couples to Gender Roles,' 'Awareness-Raising for Women Regarding Marital Duties and Responsibilities,' 'Necessity of Culture-Building Using Existing Cultural Capacities,' 'Awareness-Raising for Men Help-Seeking in Conditions of Violence,' 'Accepting LGBTQ Community Identity,' 'Necessity of Publishing Books and Related Materials.'

10.9.1. Redefining Violence in Non-Physical Aspects

In general, definition of violence traditionally and publicly in many societies, especially in Iranian culture, has been summarised mostly in physical violence and other types of violence are usually paid less attention or in many times not even considered as violence. As specified in presented interviews, these

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cultural and conceptual limitations not only reduce society's view regarding violence, but have direct effect on methods of reporting and recognising it as well.

To clarify this discussion, first it is needed that violence be defined in a broader sense and its various dimensions be considered; including verbal violence, psychological violence, emotional violence, economic violence, and sexual violence. This important [point] has been stated in Interview No. 38 by Mr. Mehdi Momeni who says:

'We must know what violence is defined in different dimensions not merely physical violence that leads to murder or loss of limb or leads to assault and battery and more or less physical and bodily injuries. If we and society realise that violence has different dimensions including verbal violences, emotional violences, psychological violences, economic violences and sexual violences...' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 7).

In most societies, considering violence as a 'masculine' matter or describing it under title of 'physical power,' causes ignoring violences that have mostly non-physical aspects. Verbal, psychological, and economic violences, especially against men, considering cultural perception of men's role as 'strong,' 'needless of support,' and even 'always dominator,' are often ignored. This subject has much importance that Momeni says in continuation:

'If reporting culture is reformed and men too can report... and second that perception and construct of violence is not limited only to physical violence... that time we see what a big issue we are facing in violence against men.' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 8).

On the other hand, there are complexities in individuals' emotional and psychological communications too which can hardly be identified as violence. This subject has been pointed to in Interview No. 54 by Mr. Ali Asgari, who based on his emotional relationship and affection he has for his life partner, does not consider 'being frustrated' or 'impossibility of proving word' as violence. He explains:

'A thing... now you say violence... my wife is a person whom I love... has a series of virtues that I love her... if I remain frustrated over an issue can't prove my word because I love her I don't count it violence.' (Interview No. 54, Ali Asgari, Pos 193).

This view indicates that a large part of definition of violence at individual and interpersonal level depends on individual's own perception of affection, respect, and personal valuations. Obviously such perceptions might create difficulties for identifying and preventing types of violence, especially when violence is hidden in the form of emotional and psychological behaviours.

Theoretical approach to this discussion can be examined specifically from sociological and psychological perspective. In this direction, Social Constructionism view can well analyse role of cultural image of men and types of violence. This theory emphasises that 'violence' itself is product of social and cultural contexts. Change in definition of violence and its reconstruction as a multidimensional and non-physical phenomenon also requires redefining stereotypical gender patterns strengthened through social, economic, and educational structures.

Furthermore, Symbolic Interactionism Theory which emphasises meanings attached to social interactions and social roles, can be helpful in explaining this subject why men who are victims of psychological or emotional violence often cannot report this violence or recognise it formally; because dominant culture has taught them that violence is nothing but physical injury.

Therefore, one of the ways of preventing violence against men is reforming method of perceiving and reporting violence, which must include expanding its definition in researches, media, laws, and public education. Creating a comprehensive framework for examining types of violence, such that men be released from non-reporting or feeling shame before it, can be an effective step in reducing hidden violences.

10.9.2. Redefining Sexual, Gender, and Social Roles in the Family

In the contemporary space of Iranian society, gender and social roles are still reproduced and stabilised under the shadow of old expectations and deep inequalities. Continuous return to these traditional patterns is a fundamental factor in the persistence and reproduction of violence, especially against men. What can be the exit way from this cycle is critical rereading and fundamental change of unequal gender roles and definitions. As one interviewee explicitly says:

'Well we don't have this expectation from girls and women... we define that good, pious, obedient, submissive so-and-so woman who must be patient, shouldn't speak, must buy all... the beloved's [pain] with her soul, must be self-

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sacrificing, forgive, be so-and-so. We define such a thing. This is another subject too that we must see very deeply in a broader social and cultural space why all this violence in your words is reproduced and constantly spins and spins in various forms. Basically if we remove this schema that a woman shouldn't be passive many problems are solved in relationships, but how did you define woman?' (Interview No. 38, Mehdi Momeni, Pos 107).

This sentence clearly highlights the link between cultural expectations and reproduction of violence; as long as women are assumed passive and men absolutely guardian and powerful, inequality and violence not only will not weaken, but is reconstructed and strengthened in every generation. As Giddens (1992) proposes, roots of violence are not only in individual behaviours, but are the product of cultural context and traditional gender schemas which are constantly transmitted and consolidated.

On the other hand, social transformations and changing of traditional roles, especially for men, has entailed identity crisis and hidden violence as well. This reality is reflected in another interviewee's statement:

'The position of the man who was God, was provider has been lost... what happened to the man... works that women perform he can't do, can't cook, can't take kids to school. When the woman performs several roles, her role becomes bolder and kids look say 'Oh Mom wakes up early morning, takes kids to school, you do cleaning, does shopping... Dad what does he do... only goes to work and returns, his money too that is spent is spent by Mother and is not seen... when they are going out, now perhaps it has happened for yourself too, for me one hundred percent it has happened that when they go do a shopping and get something, the child doesn't thank Dad anymore, says 'Mom thank you [may your hand not hurt]'... thanks Mom... that moment too violence happens for the man unfortunately.' (Interview No. 51, Amir Mokhtari, Pos 21).

In this narrative, the man has not only exited his traditional position, but inability to adapt to more participatory roles and feeling of social inefficiency and failure paves the ground for emergence of violence or identity crisis (Jung, 1383 [2004]; Bourdieu, 2001).

Transformation in definition of motherhood and fatherhood and distancing from traditional roles constitutes another part of this social reality which one interviewee has reflected thus:

'Now opinion has changed that ladies say the whole process of parenting be on our responsibility... even I know interesting things. Many ladies don't become pregnant and have surrogate uterus and bring a creature into the world in another individual's existence... whereas this thing is not a good thing because woman's structure... one of its issues is being a mother... and this being a mother starts from nine months inside the womb until the child constantly gets bigger and bigger. But we see women distance from this role and to masculine roles more... Karen Horney has a term who is a psychologist who says 'Flight from Womanhood'.' (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari Nasab, Pos 27).

From Horney's critical view, 'Flight from Womanhood' and dominance of masculine patterns over the family value system inflicts serious injury on feminine identity and fair division of roles (Horney, 1926; Ghanbari, 1394 [2015]).

Furthermore, history of men's domination over family economic resources has itself become the source of a kind of historical and economic complex between women and men. One interviewee says:

'In Lor society... so to speak men manage... now let's pass that there are a percentage so to speak that women work... film comes and emerges as film and slowly slowly goes to that side that men work and very comfortably come hand over to ladies and ladies spend it... but from the beginning of work it was opposite... family economy was in man's hand... and in my opinion recently one



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can say this now but in formation of this issue economic discussion didn't have a role of course perhaps... but if we want to calculate from negative balance aspect perhaps your meaning is this... because economy was in man's hand this has become a complex for ladies that they try from violence aspect.' (Interview No. 33, Allah Reza, Pos 60).

According to Bourdieu's analysis of Symbolic Capital and sudden transfer of economic management, if roles are transferred without redefinition, not only are problems not solved, but ground for tension and fresh symbolic violence is formed (Bourdieu, 2001).

Finally, quality of parents' and couples' relationships must also be considered as the root of reproducing violence in the family space:

'This that family is the most important social institution and if we come examine all problems of individuals again it returns to family upbringing, family too who is it, father and mother and children... role of parents meaning role of father and mother in family... we have child we have parents... woman and man are together spouses are together... if spouses' relationship is really correct I think everything becomes correct. But unfortunately now relationship doesn't take shape and feeling of oppression and feeling of violence be not [there]... we say what is the best gift for the child... it is this that father and mother be in love with each other... when that relationship and connection is not correct the child gets injured too afterwards child is in society and the whole society gets injured.' (Interview No. 75, Delaram, Pos 33).

What emerges from the sum of quotes and theoretical analyses is that any return to traditional roles if without critical rereading, equal dialogue, changing attitude and considering modern values and need for mutual respect, will not only not lead to strengthening the family but provide the ground for violence and new injuries (Parsons, 1955; Duverger, 1384 [2005]; Giddens, 1992).

From an analytical perspective, return to gender roles in connection with violence against men is not considered merely 'moving backward,' but reflects a deep semantic struggle between individuality, identity, and social relationships. One interviewee emphasises the importance of understanding the difference between individual and social realm of roles:

'Well really [violence] exists, you know... why do they consider moving backward... because of this that we are saying you in marital realm in individual

and couple realm we are returning you to your gender roles... these think they are... we are taking their rights regarding social status from them too. Because that lady, that is citizenship rights... in citizenship realm me and you have no difference with each other... but I say in individual realm, in individual realm I must be that man whom a woman is proud of, and you be a woman whom I am proud of, this is our individual realm, do you pay attention?!..' (Interview No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 37).

He continues citing Freudian psychology, pointing to necessity of correct understanding and accepting gender roles without rejecting social rights:

'... those individuals whose gender roles are inconsistent with their gender in future suffer numerous sexual problems, do you pay attention... meaning in fact that gender role in bisexuals... gender roles means how much my behaviour has masculinity as a man, does she as a woman have feminine behaviour?!.. naturally in the house and our own relationships it is this very social roles that tells us why I must go to work and you sit at home, this is their social role, but a woman not merely in bed in the house too expects I have a masculinity... being supportive, being supporter, being emotional, being decider, you know?!.. and look a woman... having coquetry (Tannazi), having flirtatiousness (Lavandi), being kind, being supporter, being supportive, being mother let me tell you that being delicate, being gentle these are feminine roles, we look this model anymore it has no conflict that you be university professor, be engineer, be draftsman, be judge but you yourself accept this as a woman...' (Interview No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 39).

Function of this narrative is invitation to a kind of culture-building accompanied by awareness-raising and mutual respect:

'... in my opinion it is this very informing, meaning naturally holding webinars, courses, conferences, talks, books and informings, awareness-raising regarding that look woman and man are different from each other but don't have superiority over each other, let us understand each other's differences, see each other better... I can be man I can be nurse too' (Interview No. 11, Dr. Mehrabi, Pos 39).

Finally, analyses of Structural Functionalism Theories (Talcott Parsons) and social psychology such as Rogers and Bandura also show that teaching flexible gender roles and conscious choice can be a bed-builder for reducing violence (Rogers, 1951; Bandura, 1977). Complementing this path is the role of fair

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legislation and attention to homogamy (*Hamsan-gozini*) and supporting equal rights:

'Marriage law and family law and family equality law consider... and beside it culture-building must happen, especially homogamy' (Interview No. 27, Dr. Mousavi Viayeh, Pos 97).

Summary: In total, interviewees emphasise this point that the cultural solution for preventing violence against men passes through the path of redefinition and alignment of gender roles and creating a flexible balance between individual, social, and citizenship roles. Realisation of this goal requires education, informing, dialogue, legislation, and mutual respect between couples. Lived experience reflected in quotes is a call for rethinking roles; such that understanding and dialogue replace struggle and violence.

10.9.3. Awareness-Raising for Women Regarding Marital Duties and Responsibilities

In the narrative of forming cultural solutions for preventing violence against men in Iranian society, lack of deep and effective education at formal and informal levels has a central and fundamental place; such that many interviewees from their lived experience consider this big deficiency a root for continuity of violence and failure in forming healthy human relationships. When one participant clarifies:

'Teaching the method of controlling anger. Emotion control... we must teach these in schools especially. Our schools are mostly formal [superficial/nominal]... I saw myself... I saw in Education structure. Most of them are formal. Formal means a circular regarding violence... violence workshop anger control workshop... the guy takes two three photos finished. Meaning 'We held the workshop'... government work is not done correctly. Perhaps I myself have done this work but it is not correct work. That education is not [there]... this... that education that youths and kids should... because all of us can teach from elementary and guidance [middle school] era but we don't teach. There is education void.' (Interview No. 8, Yaser Hosseinifard, Pos 100).

In fact he points to the deep gap between formal trainings and society's real needs for emotion management skills, conflict resolution, and deep understanding of individual and social roles. This void builds individuals'

psychological and social structure gradually from that very childhood and places them in exposure to injury until adulthood.

From this same perspective, awareness-raising through media and civil institutions should not remain merely at the level of informing, but must target the process of socialisation and empowerment. As it has come in this specialist's narrative:

'Society must be able [through] local media, Education, university and virtual space based on standards and principles they have... must do awareness-raising regarding violence and suicide and [receive help]. How does it help if humans... can me and you become lifeguard and save the individual? No. Meaning we must both our specialists see necessary training and knowledge and local community.' (Interview No. 19, Dr. Bahrami, Pos 80).

This view evokes Bandura's Social Learning Theory; where the role of observation and reinforcement in teaching social skills determines individual and collective behaviours (Bandura, 1977: 77-84). Based on this very basis, training social facilitators in family, school, and society gains doubled importance:

'Training trained social facilitator we want at neighbourhood level, school, sports club, mountaineering group, work environment (factory)... a group the individual operates [in]... an individual as facilitator have this knowledge be able to identify individuals who are placed in exposure to violence and suicide on time and support and refer him to relief organisations.' (Interview No. 19, Dr. Bahrami, Pos 80).

Importance of micro and macro support networks is rooted in Habermas's Communicative Action Theory; where dialogue and communication finds the power of transforming into supportive and preventive action (Habermas, 1999: 251).

This structural inability in the field of formal education intersects with lack of awareness among women regarding marital duties and responsibilities. Interviewees usually emphasise the role of mothers as founders of gender attitudes in next generations:

'I say instead of having ladies' mood and atmosphere more... make ladies more aware... put educational ground so ladies become more aware. Because educational ground for ladies is for children... children become men again... this very lady view and education she gives her child... again society nurtures an

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aggressive, more violent, stricter man.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 19).

In fact, repetition of the violence cycle and reproduction of inefficient roles originates from that very bed of insufficient trainings and stabilised maternal attitudes.

On the other hand, the issue of non-understanding of men's emotional and psychological needs by women – especially mothers – leads to emotional chaos, psychological collapse, and increased violence:

'I think his whole life disintegrates and I think women of our society mothers of society have this awareness to know that man must be understood. Man needs recreation, has [need for] caress, has [need for] understanding... in short these in society especially in our Ardabil I see a void and biggest factor that exists [is] ladies mothers don't accept.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 26).

This speech reminds of John Bowlby's Attachment Theory emphasis on the role of primary caregivers in forming emotional relationships and emotional capabilities of children (Bowlby, 1987 [2008]: 92-110).

Hence in the narrative formulated in this section, radical trainings must begin not only from upstream levels; but from family foundation:

'It is increasing awareness. If we want to start this awareness radically... to giving awareness from father mother, and also during the process of raising children awareness must be given because finally everyone has this growth process and at its end is forming family and entering adulthood so it is better these awarenesses be given from the root.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 90).

This fundamental need, with teachings of Socialisation Theory, justifies the necessity of familiarity and multilateral dialogue in forming gender and anti-violence attitudes (Elias, 1992 [2013]: 156).

Accepting identity and gender differences, along with reducing labelling and taboo, is another part of the cultural prevention puzzle:

'Look I don't say be very scientific and super luxury... I say this very simple... Sir Trans exists... is accepted in society... are among normal people of this society... very definitely no need I say it is not like this that necessarily I come read its lesson about this that... well this very fact that they accept that very

simply a Trans gets fixed with surgery... then they must diagnose precisely and lest one not be in its phase [not really trans] go operate then go commit suicide... everyone says Trans people become regretful.' (Interview No. 64, Shayan Varamini, Trans, Pos 263).

Mere acceptance of people simply and without scientific complication, acts itself as a soft cultural support that can prevent many psychological crises, suicide, and violence.

At the end of this narrative, the issue of social stigma and structural pressures is also seen as an inseparable part of violence crisis in the family context:

'It is a big stigma, has an emotional load... these itself is an issue but unfortunately is not seen... we only want our divorce statistics to decrease whereas this is not beautiful at all... perhaps many divorce but are good friends, have connection with each other, are good friends for each other, their shared goals which is their children's future is much more brilliant... but this be challenged and years go... is problematic itself.' (Interview No. 47, Ms. Entezami, Pos 126).

This quote indicates necessity of focusing on quality of human relationships and turning supportive and awareness-raising processes into a real possibility for elevating family health and reducing violence. Based on this, not merely reducing separation statistics, but increasing quality of communication, understanding and empathy and accepting responsibilities and desires of parties is what provides causes for reducing violence against men.

In total what emerges from different layers of these data and theories is that the path of preventing violence against men in the cultural realm is realised only through deep education, recognizing roles, accepting differences, and reducing social labelling. Amidst this, strengthening women's role (especially mothers) in upbringing, awareness-raising, and performing smart marital roles is the main core of this cultural change; just as prominent theories in the field of Social Learning (Bandura, 1977), Attachment (Bowlby, 1969), and religious and ethical socialisation (Durkheim, 1912) also emphasise that no sustainable achievement is attainable without targeted education and emotional and social upbringing.

10.9.4. Necessity of Culture-Building Using Existing Cultural Capacities

In analysing the cultural solution of 'Necessity of Culture-Building Using Existing Cultural Capacities' for preventing violence against men, conversation with participants clearly reveals dimensions of this necessity. The starting point of this narrative can be considered that same importance of cultural-social bed whose formation of any change or violence deterrence depends on its creation:

'We again... my meaning is that if we want to work in this regard... child abuse, Trans people and social injuries... first we must bring this bed into existence in society which this is very important.' (Interview No. 21, Saberi, Pos 23).

In fact, without creating discursive and acceptance grounds, not only does society's attitude towards phenomena like violence against men not change, but even speaking of it remains fruitless. This approach guides us directly to Habermas's Communicative Action concepts; where legitimization of any social change is achieved through linguistic actions, creating understanding, and reforming collective mental presuppositions (Habermas, Communicative Action, 1984).

In continuation of this same thought, another participant puts forward the importance of rethinking traditional and religious institutions in the act of culture-building:

'Culture-building can... constantly we instead of praying... prayer in its place is excellent... use these your mosques for culture-building with distributing brochures... national media these must be at people's disposal... all humans must work for psyche. If your psyche is involved [troubled] your life doesn't become good. So we must whatever we have strive spend in the direction of our psyche.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 64).

Here, Mosque and Media as authentic indigenous capacities instead of remaining merely in their traditional role carrier role, can be employed as active tools for elevating mental health, increasing awareness, and reducing violence especially against men. This view aligns well with Elias's 'Civilizing Process' Theory; because civilising is not just material progress, but transformation of mental and behavioural patterns in daily life and creating fresh ethical and psychological sensitivities (Elias, Civilizing Process). Amidst this, culture-building bears fruit when, according to interviewee's narrative,

all individuals of society, even intra-institutional ones like mosque, actively strive for elevating humans' mental hygiene.

Dimensions of this culture-building become more tangible when we pay attention to impact of educational behaviours, cultural space, and society's openness against new and different experiences. The interviewee says in one of the deepest psychological reflections of this issue:

'With good food, with good word, with good film, with good book, with good cinema, with good space, with good green space. We only thing we know nothing... or Imam Hossein hit on our chest... sacrifice for Imam Hossein. I love Imam Hossein and Hazrat Abbas. But if two people there two boys sharpen knife towards each other they look but if a boy a girl hug each other 'Oh dad grave of dog father grave-to-grave your dishonour (Bi-gheirat)'. Eh dad how come... unless God must necessarily be in crying. God is in happiness when you dance God Himself is present right there. These all return has root in my childhood, all my angers. I right now that I say these words it is all out of anger did you realise?! This words I said is all anger. However I express like this so I become calm.' (Interview No. 67, Amin Rezaei, Pos 66).

This narrative shows how keeping cultural capacities limited merely to manifestations of mourning or limited traditions causes violence in its various forms to appear unimportant and even be ignored, while expanding positive and healthy cultural experiences (from nutrition to green space, from cinema to collective memory) can lead to return of peace and internal balance and ultimately reducing tendency towards violence against various social groups including men.

As Anthony Giddens' 'Structuration' Theory states, capacity of social structures like mosque or media system, in terms of dynamism and transformative power, depends on action and reflexivity of social actors (Giddens, Structuration, 1984). This capacity becomes actualised when society strives to use them in the direction of education and elevating cultural, psychological, and behavioural health. In fact, creating ground for freedom of expression regarding issues related to men and avoiding stereotypical judgments requires cultural bed-building through religious institutions, media, and informal social relations; meaning that same process Durkheim in analysing elementary forms of religious life refers to as collective production of fresh identities (Durkheim, 1912).

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When the interviewee speaks of these issues having root in 'my childhood' and openly expresses his anger in the wrap of words, it is shown that lack of dialogue and correct cultural upbringing leads to accumulation of negative emotions which will potentially be prone to violence emergence. So interviewees' voice is an echo of collective need for culture-building of the genre of lived experience and using all cultural capacities for awareness-raising, improving communicative mechanisms, breaking taboos, and guaranteeing psycho-social security.

In theoretical context, it can be concluded that culture-building with active and forward-looking use of existing capacities is the most fundamental win-win way for shaping an ethical space deterrent of violence especially against men; a culture based not on eliminating and rejecting tradition, but on rereading and redefining it in service of dialogue, education, creating positive space, and healthy psyche (Habermas, 1984; Elias, 2012; Durkheim, 1912; Giddens, 1984).

10.9.5. Awareness-Raising for Men Help-Seeking in Conditions of Violence

In examining the role of Awareness-Raising as a cultural solution for men getting help in facing violence, participants' narrative highlights hidden aspects and fundamental challenges of this issue transparently. Throughout interviews, there is this common feeling that disclosure of violence experience by men is still a bold taboo in Iran's social structure. As stated clearly:

'Expressing violence experience [by men]... that taboo go aside for men... changing narration of violence' (Interview No. 41, Sajjad Motahhari Nasab, Pos 30-33).

This quote shows the hidden depth of cultural obstacles that as long as men cannot speak about their experiences without fear of judgment or social stigma, the cycle of violence will continue and a way for getting help will not be provided. Berger and Luckmann's Social Construction of Reality Theory also highlights this very issue; meaning where social structure of dominant meanings organises individuals' mental framework such that activism against taboos itself transforms into a revolutionary act (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

Emphasis on role of spontaneous activities in virtual space and necessity of broader culture-building with the aim of opening this cultural knot is seen in the next narrative:

'First of all culture-building must happen, now in virtual space now many spontaneously speak regarding men's rights. But work be done more in this regard.' (Interview No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 48).

And following that:

'Only this culture-building of schools or virtual space can be very effective in men's rights.' (Interview No. 7, Jalilian, Pos 78).

These narratives are strengthened with Social Learning Theory view; where Bandura emphasises observational learning and modelling from others, even in informal spaces like virtual networks, can lead to attitude and behaviour change and explain new norms for legitimacy of expressing violence and men help-seeking in society (Bandura, 1977).

Continuity of cultural matter with structural and traditional matter is reflected beautifully in another quote:

'It has become transaction, become hostage-taking Mr. Doctor. Only this is not [it], dad remove this lock... we [became] miserable of these traditional locks... sit in our universities talk regarding red lines.' (Interview No. 29, Sohrabi, Pos 170).

This experience indicates a deeper level of structural violence that has continued not only in daily life and family environment but even in educational institutions, and cultural obstacles on the way of men's injury expression and help-seeking have continued. In Pierre Bourdieu's belief, such sedimented symbolic structures (*Habitus*) create a kind of conservative symbolic order that can be overcome only with openness to fresh experiences and continuous critique of structures (Bourdieu, 1990).

In another narrative of socio-pathological genre, link between cultural poverty and reduction of social injuries like child marriage is highlighted:

'This cultural ignorance... this cultural poverty that comes down... child marriage statistics comes down proportionate to that too.' (Interview No. 58, Marzieh Hosseini, Pos 213).

This link harmonises with Amartya Sen's Human Development theoretical models (Sen, 1999); where cognitive and educational empowerment is prior to any sustainable change in social welfare indicators.

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One of the most fundamental obstacles on the way of awareness-raising and men help-seeking is the method of social judgment and adjudication against damaged man, which is stated explicitly:

'Judgment, judgment that you don't have its ability, you can't, you don't do, they are not understood... in total this is the most obvious problem... and also that men themselves too accepted this responsibility [that] 'I must work'... this we must remove from society.' (Interview No. 63, Group Interview with Ordinary Citizens, Pos 65).

This sentence shows gender and stereotypical labels still do not allow self-disclosure and naturally the first step for fruition of any preventive strategy is eliminating these ignorant judgments and educating society to accept men's vulnerability. Social Role Theory (Eagly & Wood, 2012) also points to this very issue that how gender divisions place men's behaviour and even emotions under control and limitation.

Subject of culture transformation and macro role of political and media institutions is also a response to depth and scope of this dilemma:

'This very question of yours returns to how cultural transformation can happen... anymore in that field one must see redefine that question in that context. In cultural transformation discussion factors that exist... role of so to speak politics role of political development is very bold... meaning now theories that are in culture development discussion emphasise unique role of governance system very much... as macro management of society... those who somehow direct media... media that constantly want to work with audience mind somehow... now media is at different levels... and in this that political system has very bold role... as long as in our Iran there is such a political system reforming that... reform no... regarding culture must say transformation... cultural has transformation doesn't have development [reform?...]... is metamorphosis... you must tear something from your existence and replace something.' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 85).

This statement reflects Giddens' Structuration Theory view, where real change is possible only with intervention of macro structures and redefinition of social policies (Giddens, 1984).

Finally, emphasis on necessity of strengthening education and care of boys from early ages not as a tool for repeating stereotypes like 'Man must be

beaten,' but for teaching self-respect and respect for other and legitimacy of searching for help:

'Culture-building happen in my opinion. Thank God now it has become a bit better they give more importance to boy children. Us... from childhood they beat [us] said man must [be beaten].' (Interview No. 88, Mohammad Hosseini, Pos 64).

This sentence aligns directly with Bowlby's Attachment Theory and role of early upbringing memories in formation of violence experience (Bowlby, 1988).

As summary, cultural awareness-raising in the field of violence against men is summarised not merely in promoting information but fundamentally in changing mental structures, taboo-breaking, educating society, redefining gender roles, critiquing traditional habitus, and synergy of macro social and media institutions. Only such a transformative process can provide a bed where men without fear, shame, and judgment are able to search for help and cycle of violence is broken (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Bandura, 1977; Bourdieu, 1990; Giddens, 1984; Eagly & Wood, 2012; Bowlby, 1988; Sen, 1999).

10.10. Accepting LGBTQ Community Identity

Deeper understanding of processes of preventing violence against men, especially in the context of LGBTQ community, is achieved when participants' voice is combined with internal theorists' views; because frequency of keywords like 'Label,' 'Structural Pressure,' 'Education,' and 'Media' in narratives possesses cultural, identity, and sociological meaning. At the beginning of narratives, we see parents and family as the most rooted obstacle who, not out of disinterest, but with a deep and institutionalised fear of labels and common misunderstandings, withhold healthy sexual and identity education from their children:

'Now why don't father and mothers teach in low ages... well specifically they say 'Lest our child becomes homosexual'... now there is an ugly and impudent term called 'Hamjens-baz' [Homosexual-player] which is a very very very ugly word and using it is severely impudent and is a big insult in principle... of course many individuals don't know and well this is a very bad thing.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 4).

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As Malekmohammadi (1396 [2017]) has emphasised in his research on meaning of 'Sexual Upbringing in Iranian Family,' majority of parents eliminate or deviate education out of fear of their child being labelled and due to lack of awareness and also cultural pressure (cited in Malekmohammadi, 1396: 74). This same trend is evident in analysis of country's general conditions as well; where normative and structural pressures deprive society of opportunity for rethinking and acceptance:

'Well if in this society structural pressures are removed... as a sociological question... if these normative, structural pressures are removed in society, in family, in political and educational institutions... what happens... this identity basically let's say is accepted in totality of society what happens?' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 145).

Trend of suspending structural violence against LGBTQ community is not only consequence of lifting many taboos, but counts as entry to era of rereading identity, reconciliation with difference, and society's transition to cultural development stage; as participant continues:

'Shayan: LGBTQ community if it becomes established... sexual deviations get resolved... doors that open causes many taboos to be removed... many things change and it will become a very advanced and powerful country.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 150).

At this level, works of Foucault's Iranian counterparts like Gholamreza Zakiani (Zakiani, 1397 [2018]), right there where he emphasises historical-religious look at sexual categories in Iran, considers rereading power, knowledge, and body as the way of entry to reducing embankment of sexual discriminations.

On the other hand, physical and mental health is also directly under influence of acceptance; as participant states:

'If it is done under supervision of really specialist and sub-specialist individuals, yes many physical and sexual problems get resolved, society's mental and physical health level goes up, sexually transmitted diseases reach almost zero.' (Interview No. 50, Shayan, Pos 156).

Findings of Karimi et al. (1395 [2016]) in article 'Lived Narrative of Homosexual Individuals in Iran' also emphasise that social stigma and isolation resulting from non-acceptance is the ground for many psychological

and physical injuries of LGBTQ individuals; and family and society acceptance simultaneous with increasing awareness and specialised interventions has significant share in health and reducing high-risk behaviours (Karimi et al., 1395 [2016]).

In another narrative emphasis on correct education to parents and families is raised not only as a psychological necessity, but a practical and educational necessity:

'Again that I said education... education to families and parents regarding in LGBTQ field... can be sexual discussion a lot too in addition to being from psychological aspect... therefore they must manoeuvre on it... families must spend sensitivity a lot for it to understand what is what and how they must behave and what they must say and what where not to say and how to show reaction and how to show their support... understand what [how] to destroy this view.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 24).

This very view clearly reflects studies of Mohammad Ebrahim Golbaghi (Golbaghi, 1399 [2020]) who introduces 'Family' as axis of formation of judgmental or supportive views towards gender minorities and emphasises awareness-raising courses and communication skills training (Golbaghi, 1399 [2020]).

But role of media and virtual space – as source of redefining norms and encroaching on taboos – is more prominent than other analysis elements:

'But media have the most impact and virtual spaces including Telegram websites and books etc. that must initially individual familial and social and legal and legislative... that of course social if society accepts and gives a lot of importance [to] this subject yes legal gets reformed too... this a series of very taboo things.' (Interview No. 84, Shayan, Pos 28).

This meaning is evident in analyses of Kavousi (1400 [2021]), media and communication researcher, as well who consider modern media tool as the main engine of gender norms transformation – especially for adolescent generation (Kavousi, 1400 [2021]).

In summary, combination of participants' perceptions and view of Iranian and global researchers reveals that culture, identity, and acceptance is a continuous process requiring multilateral interventions: redefining parents' role, erasing structural ignorance, rethinking educational programmes, increasing media presence, and promoting critical discourse are fundamental

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ways for reducing violence against men of LGBTQ community and elevating collective health. This alignment shows without eradicating fears and labels and activating indigenous cultural-educational and media capacities, possibility of liberation from cycle of violence and discrimination does not exist.

10.10.1. Necessity of Publishing Books and Related Materials

In recent decades, issue of accepting LGBTQ community identity and how to reduce violence against men in this context has turned into one of the most important concerns of mental health and cultural sociology field. Iran's cultural space, with its rooted traditions, norms, and values, has always placed deep challenges before individuals who have different identity or sexual orientation. In dominant discourse, non-acceptance of these differences often leads to emergence of types of direct and indirect violence against LGBTQ community men; violence that brings pervasive individual and social consequences, from family rejection to psychological injuries and deprivation of primary rights. In this midst, cultural solutions for reducing these violences require deep and gradual reflection more than any time; a solution that instead of negation and elimination, emphasises awareness-raising, free dialogue, and passing through traditional structures. Narratives of present research participants have placed a new perspective before society wherein recognising identity, independence of cultural space from authoritarian institutions, and role of education and independent media becomes prominent. In continuation, data analysis under Grounded Theory, by integrating interviewees' narrative and scientific theories, addresses analysis of this executive solution.

'Study [Reading], existence of valid media. Valid books even if not approved it is not important because Ministry of Guidance [Ershad]... such books be printed... but these books must be written websites sold and people must study and holding online and in-person webinars and holding conferences and holding seminars holding very very many other things educational bed and these for that individual to be able to use see himself and know and say 'Ah I newly understood I am this... this feeling I have its name is this and it is like this and I am like this and this is me'... not someone else that So-and-so says nor someone that psychologist says nor someone that doctor says... someone that myself [says]... and realise this and become sure. Definitely a series of individuals must be by their side too and guide them and show the way to them.' (Interview No. 84, Pos 22).

In this narrative, the bed of identity formation and self-acceptance is tied directly to free access to epistemic and experiential resources. The individual states clearly that discovering individual identity is possible only from path of personal experience, study, participating in extensive events, and access to valid materials, and this marks the end of internal conflict and ambiguity regarding psychological and sexual feelings. Role of independent media, books that do not necessarily have stamp of approval of government or official institutions, and also presence of accompanying individuals and guides, will pave the ground for this self-knowledge and strengthening self-esteem and social resilience (Malekmohammadi, 1396 [2017]; Karimi et al., 1395 [2016]). Such an approach, in addition to reducing labelling and tolerance, distances society from mechanisms of control and identity imposition and provides possibility of active participation of every individual in collective dialogues and educational events (Golbaghi, 1399 [2020]).

On the other hand, another participant emphasizing necessity of passing domination of traditional institutions, especially institution of religion, as main reference of facing sexual and gender identities, clarifies:

'I want to present this... I want to say this shouldn't be... door of religion opens... encounter must be rational encounter. Somewhere it is possible it helps work but not enter as main element in analysis... meaning we don't want from I don't know institutions of religion give responsibility to it that 'You institution of religion come do this work'... let it naturally have its own audiences... now if it wants to help too... from this domination thought that is [in] our mind help that this thought be erased... this formally with its own specific audiences... important thing is that in analysis scene shouldn't be as element...' (Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 95).

In this analysis, it is argued that although institution of religion can be helpful for a group of society, it should not be chosen as axis and main element of cultural transformation; rather space must remain open for critical and dialogic rationality so audiences can define their identity without interference of authoritarian values (Zakiani, 1397 [2018]; Kavousi, 1400 [2021]). This integration of rationality and freedom of expression, alongside weakening structures dominant over control and identity-giving, from perspective of Habermas and Foucault theories too is somehow movement towards a society with higher level of liberation and acceptance of differences (Habermas, 2019; Foucault, 1978).

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In total, analysis of above narratives shows that only effective and sustainable path for accepting LGBTQ community identity and reducing violence against men is creating independent cultural, educational, and media beds that are individual-centred, guarantee freedom of dialogue, free access to knowledge resources, and humanitarian accompaniment, and challenge any imposition of value and identity based on religion or authoritarian institution (Herek, 2007; Bandura, 1977; Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Path of realising such goal requires active alignment between educational institutions, independent media, and popular support groups and also reviewing current traditional narratives so every individual can know his/her identity without worry of rejection, with internal peace and relying on rationality and dialogue, and guide society too towards greater mental and ethical health.

10.10.2. Necessity of Attention to Media and Governance Institution as Injury-Reducing Elements

In the process of examining political solutions for preventing violence against male gender, role of Governance Institution and Media as fundamental elements in society structure is undeniable. How many times media and art, possessing extensive influence power and facilities for directing public opinion, have ability to fundamentally transform values, norms, and attitudes overseeing gender relations and also people's perception regarding violence against men. In this field, emphasis on targeted planning in field of art and media and their smart management for reducing injury is not only a simple executive recommendation, but a radical strategy for deep change of attitudes and society's culture. As one participant clarifies:

'I say governance system media these are main elements art is main element... must be planned on... be managed, be worked [on]... this makes difference.'

(Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 95).

This emphasis on importance of governance of media and art as most fundamental elements of combating violence guides us to key implications that contemporary scientific schools emphasise as well. For example, Giddens' Structuration Theory (1984) emphasises that social and cultural systems depend on effective structural forces such as governmental institutions and media and any change in social behaviours requires transformation in these structures (Giddens, 1984 [2010]). On the other hand, based on Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding Theory (1980), audiences are not passive but participating,

and reproduce meaning of messages related to violence against men based on their own cultural backgrounds; therefore if media and art management is planned, possibility of a fresh encoding on lived experience of violence and changing public attitude towards phenomenon of violence against men will be provided (Hall, 1388 [2009]).

In the context of grounded analysis, when institutional power elements – of which media and art are prominent manifestations – can guide dominant cultural narratives towards acceptance, identification, and social sensitisation, society individuals are encouraged to review behaviour and accept new gender roles. Such an attitude of course requires endogenous planning, conscious management, and continuous institutional effort, so media desist from repeating gender stereotypes and ignoring violence against less-seen groups and can provide a bed for social dialogue and public sensitivity-increasing.

Finally, creating meaningful difference in reducing gender injuries and especially violence against men becomes possible when macro governance and precise policy-making in arena of media and art accompanies correct understanding of socio-cultural mechanisms of society and provides opportunity for transforming private issue of violence into a public, ethical, and national concern. This is that same point evident in research participant's narrative:

'I say governance system media these are main elements art is main element... must be planned on... be managed, be worked [on]... this makes difference.'

(Interview No. 65, Dr. Bokharaei, Pos 95).

10.11. Conclusion: Towards an Integrated Architecture of Prevention and Healing

10.11.1. From Etiology to Teleology: A Paradigm Shift

In this chapter, we have undertaken a decisive transition from the etiology of suffering—the diagnosis of causes, contexts, and consequences explored in previous chapters—to the teleology of healing—the purpose-driven design of solutions. The data emerging from the Grounded Theory analysis has revealed that violence against the male gender in Iranian society is not a singular event but a systemic pathology, rooted in the deepest layers of cultural habitus, legal structures, and economic arrangements. Consequently, the remedies proposed

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herein are not mere palliatives or temporary fixes; they represent a call for a fundamental Paradigm Shift.

The strategies delineated in this chapter—ranging from the micro-level of *parenting skills* to the macro-level of *legislative reform*—constitute a holistic roadmap. They reject the reductionist view that violence is solely a matter of individual deviance or policing. Instead, they assert that the prevention of violence against men requires a 'Total Social Mobilisation', where education, law, economy, and culture operate in synergy to dismantle the structures of domination and vulnerability.

10.11.2. The Pedagogy of Humanisation: Deconstructing the Habitus of Violence

At the foundation of our proposed solutions lies the imperative of Education and Culture-Building. The narratives of our participants have starkly illustrated how the traditional socialisation of boys—based on the repression of emotion, the imperative of stoicism, and the validation of aggression—creates a fertile ground for future violence.

The educational strategies proposed, such as Life Skills Training, Authoritative Parenting, and Emotional Literacy, are essentially projects of 'Re-Socialisation.' Drawing on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, we argue that if violence is learned, it can be unlearned. By introducing concepts of assertiveness (*Jorat-mandi*) instead of aggression, and dialogue instead of suppression, we disrupt the intergenerational transmission of trauma. Furthermore, the inclusion of Sexual Education and specific awareness regarding LGBTQ identities challenges the Symbolic Violence (Bourdieu) that has long silenced non-normative masculinities. The cultural solution is, therefore, a move towards 'Humanisation': stripping away the rigid, toxic armour of traditional masculinity to reveal the human being underneath—one who is allowed to cry, to seek help, and to be vulnerable without losing his dignity.

10.11.3. The Infrastructure of Justice: Legal and Economic Empowerment

Our analysis has demonstrated that culture cannot change in a vacuum; it requires the scaffolding of Legal and Economic Justice. The current legal frameworks regarding family law (Mehrieh, Custody) and social protection

often act as engines of Structural Violence (Galtung), trapping men in cycles of debt, imprisonment, and despair.

The proposed Legal Reforms—such as modifying dowry laws, criminalising domestic violence against men, and enacting protective legislation for sexual minorities—are not merely administrative adjustments. They are attempts to restore the 'Social Contract.' When the law treats men not as endless resources to be extracted or criminals to be punished, but as citizens requiring protection, it reduces the systemic strain that fuels individual aggression.

Simultaneously, the Economic Strategies proposed—focusing on sustainable employment, combating the financial exploitation of working children, and providing safety nets for the marginalised—address the material roots of violence. Aligning with Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, these solutions argue that economic empowerment is a prerequisite for freedom. A man stripped of his livelihood and dignity by economic instability is a man backed into a corner; providing him with economic agency is, in essence, a violence-reduction strategy.

10.11.4. The Rehabilitation of the Self: Psychological and Spiritual Integration

Finally, this chapter has highlighted that the battlefield of violence is often the internal world of the individual. The Psychological and Spiritual Solutions offered—from screening parental mental health to promoting spiritual resilience—address the 'Ontological Insecurity' (Giddens) that plagues modern men.

The emphasis on moving from a policing/punitive approach (intervention) to a Preventive and Therapeutic approach marks a critical turning point. By destigmatising mental health care and encouraging men to seek help from specialised organisations, we challenge the narrative of 'male self-sufficiency.' The integration of Spiritual Capacities (prayer, ethics, meaning-making) further reinforces the self against the anomie of modern life, offering an anchor in turbulent times.

10.11.5. Final Synthesis: The Necessity of Synergy

In conclusion, the findings of this chapter assert that no single strategy can succeed in isolation. Legal reform without cultural change will be a dead letter;

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economic aid without psychological support will be a temporary relief; and education without structural backing will be an idealistic dream.

What is required is a 'Synergistic Governance':

1. Governance of Knowledge: Where statistics are transparent, and research is uninhibited.
2. Governance of Care: Where social workers, psychologists, and families form a safety net, not a surveillance grid.
3. Governance of Culture: Where media and art reimagine masculinity not as domination, but as responsibility and empathy.

The 'Violence Against the Male Gender' is a mirror reflecting the unhealed wounds of the entire society. By implementing these solutions, we do not just save men; we heal the family, we secure the future of children, and we build a society where power is defined not by the ability to inflict pain, but by the capacity to prevent it. This research, having documented the darkness, now offers these strategies as sparks of light, inviting policymakers, activists, and citizens to walk the path of reconstruction together.

11. Summary and Conclusion of the Research

11.1. Rereading Violence in the Shadow of Structural Silence, Institutional Void, and Absence of Supportive Discourse

The present research, conducted under the title '*Violence Against the Male Gender in Iranian Society: An Investigation of Forms of Violence with Emphasis on Gender and Sexual Axes*,' represents a bold and deconstructive effort to enter one of the most neglected and sensitive fields of social studies in Iran. Departing from the fundamental premise that violence is a human and trans-gender phenomenon, this study dissects the lived experiences of men who, in the shadow of cultural stereotypes and dominant norms of masculinity, have become victims of hidden and overt forms of violence, yet whose voices have been heard less and whose suffering has been recognised less. This research is not merely a report of a social injury; rather, it is an invitation to rethink fundamental concepts such as power, gender, victimhood, and justice, and a movement towards completing the incomplete puzzle of understanding violence in Iranian society.

One of the most important results of the research is revealing this truth that violence against men is not solely due to the 'absence of supportive discourse,' but is the product of a complex combination of structural and legal silence, weakness of institutional support, cultural stereotypes, and inadequacy or lack of transparency in the country's statistical and research system. Violence against men is reproduced in a structural and multi-layered manner in the vacuum of definition and criminalisation of types of psychological, emotional, economic, and other violences in the legal system, and this itself is the root of many injustices and the reproduction of the cycle of violence at the macro level.

Beyond the realm of family and couple relationships, this research has examined cycles of violence in a collection of various contexts including family, school, military garrisons, work and economic environments, legal

relations, and even media spaces and social networks, and has shown that violence against men and boys is not limited merely to violence between couples or within the family, but is experienced and reproduced in various forms throughout their lives and lifespan.

The present research shows that violence against men takes shape not only within the family structure but continues continuously in educational, military, and occupational environments. The cycle of violence begins with early experiences in childhood—which can include corporal punishment or humiliation by parents or teachers—and is reproduced in various forms throughout the years: a male student may face rejection or discrimination in school due to behaviours compliant or non-compliant with masculinity norms; in adolescence and youth, the experience of military service and life in military environments is sometimes accompanied by an authoritarian command system and structural violence which itself builds a negative model for regulating power relations in the future. In work and economic environments too, pressure to prove authority, suppression of emotions, or enduring injustice places men in exposure to continuous and ignored violence. The peak of this violence cycle is in old age when many men—after losing economic power or exiting active social roles—face hidden or overt forms of rejection, humiliation, isolation, and even economic or emotional violence (from family or society). Therefore, the research shows that the cycle of violence is not limited to a specific period of life, but is reproduced in various forms throughout the lifespan, from childhood to old age, and requires interdisciplinary and multi-level interventions to break this chain.

The present research, emphasising the concept of 'Cycle of Violence,' shows that men's experience of violence from childhood and in environments such as family, school (punishment, rejection, discrimination), military service and military environments, work and occupational environments, and even social networks, is reproduced in a continuous trend. This violence can manifest in old age in the form of isolation or familial-social rejection, and often those who have been raised in the cycle of violence themselves are placed in exposure to reproduction or expression of violence in older ages.

The most important achievement of this research is constructing 'Violence Against the Male Gender' as a significant 'Social Problem.' As argued in the first chapter, 'the problem not being a problem' is itself the biggest obstacle on the way of understanding and action. A society that always imagines the man

in the position of powerful and dominant agent and considers vulnerability a feminine matter suffers from stuttering and structural blindness in understanding and accepting the man as a victim. This research shows that this blindness is the product of a combination of complex factors:

1. *Hegemony of Traditional Masculinity*: Cultural pressures imposed on men to suppress emotions, display permanent power, and deny weakness make them more vulnerable against violence and simultaneously more incapable of expressing it. Fear of the stigma of 'incompetence' (*Bi-orzeghi*) or 'unmanliness' (*Na-mardi*) leads to an erosive silence which itself provides the bed for reproduction of violence.
2. *Fear of Subjectivity and Being Labelled due to Subordinate Position*: One of the serious obstacles for the voice of male victims of violence being heard is rooted in 'fear of subjectivity and being labelled.' Many men, even when they become victims of hidden or overt violence, have no tendency to express suffering and state their experiences out of fear of being accused of weakness, incompetence, or unmanliness. This fear is part of that same hegemony of traditional masculinity which has run roots throughout society and considers any expression of vulnerability or pain a sign of failure in performing expected roles. In the dominant culture, the man is portrayed as strong, independent, and invincible, and any deviation from this stereotypical image faces labels such as 'lacking authority,' 'weak,' or even 'non-masculine.' Such pressure causes many men not to even think of seeking support or to consider their suffering a private and shameful matter. This deep fear of being labelled not only hides dimensions of victimhood but reproduces the cycle of silence and passivity and practically places victims in a subordinate position lacking power of change. Therefore, one of the most important challenges before policymakers, social workers, and support systems is to provide a safe space for male victims of violence so they can recount their experiences without fear of subjectivity and judgment and find the path of receiving support and exiting the cycle of violence.
3. *Unintended Impacts of Feminist Media Discourses and Hegemony of One-Dimensional Discourse*: Despite the key role of feminism in revealing

oppression against women, some radical media and institutional approaches, by shaping a dogmatic discourse and dominating news, research, and policy-making systems, mainly represent violence as a feminine matter and the man merely in the role of abuser, and simultaneously neglect or ignore problems of violence-stricken men and boys, especially in public, work, military spaces, and even in family relations. This discursive hegemony causes violence against 'non-dominant feminine identity' (including men and other gender and sexual identity groups) not to be a place of attention in media and policy-making and the voice of these victims to be heard less. Another ignored dimension in analysing the issue of violence against men is the role of the feminist media system which has addressed the representation of violence in a hegemonic manner. A significant part of media productions, whether through news agencies, serials, or socio-political analyses, have had a major focus on violence against women and by highlighting the man as the agent of violence, have shaped the discursive space in such a way that men being victims or occurrence of violence against them seems unnatural or even unreal. This media hegemony, by passing radical feminist interpretations and their domination over news, research, and even social policy-making, has not only reduced the opportunity for victimised men's experiences to be seen and heard, but has caused any attention to violence against men to be considered a kind of effort to weaken women's rights or reduce women's pain. Such a space has practically driven male victims to the margins and created a kind of social blindness regarding the reality of gender violence against men. Correcting this hegemony and balancing the media narrative is one of the infrastructures for forming a supportive discourse and changing policy-making.

4. *Structural and Legal-Judicial Weakness and Discrimination:* The legal and judicial system as well as supportive institutions are mainly designed to respond to violence against women and in facing the male victim suffer confusion, mistrust, and sometimes partial approaches. In many areas, including laws related to marriage, divorce, *Mehrieh* (dowry), custody, and joint property, unilateral pressures are exerted on men; such that the traditional and modern systems paradoxically

reproduce structural violence and legal discrimination against the male gender. Men imprisoned due to *Mehrieh* and inequality in legal opportunities are all facets of this situation. The current legal system of Iran in the field of marriage, divorce, and *Mehrieh* has a deeply discriminatory structure towards men. Many related laws, including regarding divorce at woman's request, obliging the man to pay *Mehrieh* at any time and in any financial condition, and restrictions related to child custody, not only place men in a high-risk position but make them prone to structural abuses and transforming into victims of a cycle of economic and legal violence. *Mehrieh* prisoners are the prominent symbol of this injustice: men who due to inability to pay *Mehrieh*, even in conditions of economic crisis, are sentenced to prison and deprivation of social rights; a situation which is itself a fundamental violation of human and family rights and has devastating effects on the mental and social health of families. These one-sided legislations and lack of fair procedures for examining economic, psychological status, and parties' relationships have caused many men to become victims of violences that are not only not recognised in the legal apparatus, but there is not even a possibility of dialogue regarding them. Precise, fair, and expert reform of this legal system is one of the obvious necessities for building a balanced support system. One of the main issues highlighted in this research is the inconsistency and lack of proportion between components of the traditional and modern legal system in Iran. While a part of laws and official procedures—especially in sections such as personal status, inheritance, custody, and divorce—still have roots in traditional and patriarchal structures, in practice and in facing social transformations, other parts of the legal and policy-making system have adopted radical approaches in favour of women and against men in a compensatory manner. This duality has caused contradiction and legal chaos and has not kept any of the parties to the dispute safe from experiencing legal and structural violence. Furthermore, non-adaptation of the legal system with realities of the transformed family and society of Iran (such as increase in women's employment or transformation of power relations within family) has caused legal, psychological, and social

crises in man-woman relationships to increase and the possibility of compromise and emotional-legal resolution of problems to become more difficult. Lack of flexible mechanisms, transparent laws, and fair procedures has made the system ailing and inefficient both from the aspect of 'being traditional' and from the aspect of 'inability to respond to modern transformations.' Furthermore, the country's legal and supportive systems lack clear definitions and criminalisation for types of psychological, emotional, economic, and sexual violence against men, and a statistical, research, and data processing system in this field does not exist either, which itself is a fundamental obstacle in scientific policy-making and real prevention. Another serious void is in the lack of specialised definitions, conceptual frameworks, and explicit criminalisation of 'violence against men' in the country's legal and policy-making system. Currently, laws are mainly focused on the axis of violence against women or children and even in the country's statistical and research system, data related to types of violence (psychological, emotional, economic, or physical) against men are very few and scattered. This lack of definition and terminology-making has caused many forms of injury and humiliation men experience (such as continuous humiliation, economic exploitation, forced isolation, or even verbal and psychological violence) to remain outside the circle of attention of law, media, and even support services and victims to be practically defenseless. Without a clear and comprehensive definition of crime and instances of violence against men, possibility of registration, pursuit, condemnation of violence perpetrators, supporting victims, or even compiling prevention and empowerment policies is almost not provided. Reforming this situation is a basis for realising gender justice and creating real balance in the country's legal-social system. Non-definition and clear criminalisation of non-physical violences (such as psychological, economic, emotional) against men is an important void in Iran's legal and judicial system. In current laws, even statistical and research registration regarding types of violence against men is very little and this matter has confronted identification, prevention, and effective policy-making with obstacles.

This research, by employing Grounded Theory methodology, instead of imposing pre-prepared theories, has gone to raw data and lived narratives of participants to extract an indigenous and grounded theory from the heart of these experiences. This qualitative approach has provided the possibility of deep understanding of complexities, contradictions, and multifaceted dimensions of the phenomenon. Research findings have been organised within the framework of Strauss and Corbin's Paradigmatic Model, which is summarised as follows:

Core Category: 'Perception and Experience of Violence'

The beating heart of this research is understanding this point that violence against men is a phenomenon beyond overt physical abuse. The core category showed that violence experienced by men is understandable in four main dimensions:

- A Masculine and Invisible Matter: Violence tied to norms of masculinity and normalised as part of 'being a man' (such as enduring economic pressure or suppressing emotions) and basically not identified as violence.
- A Psychological-Emotional Matter: Violence against men is not limited only to physical and overt realm, but has psychological, emotional, affective, and even symbolic aspects which manifests in the form of suppression of feelings, humiliation, isolation, and chronic pressures. These dimensions are often accompanied with men in family relationships, work environment, and even legal relations, and lack of structural or cultural support leaves irreversible effects on individual and society's mental health.
- A Comparative Matter: Men often define their suffering in comparison with women's legal and social status and feel they have been discriminated against in an unequal system (especially in family laws and *Mehrieh*).
- A Socio-Cultural Matter: Violence arising from the heart of stereotypes, social expectations, and lifestyle changes (such as pressures resulting from modernity and individualism).
- A Legal-Juridical Matter: Experience of injustice and void of support in facing a legal system they consider partial.

These core categories show that violence against men, more than being an 'event,' is a continuous and erosive 'process' intertwined in various layers of individual and social life.

Contextual Conditions: Beds Favourable for Violence Emergence

The research showed that violence does not occur in a vacuum, but takes root in specific contexts. These contextual conditions were identified at three main levels:

1. **Socio-Cultural:** Gender socialisation which links masculinity with aggression and emotional needlessness, change of expectations in modern family, and decline of social trust create a space prone to tension and violence. Furthermore, cultural stereotypes and religious beliefs regarding masculinity, power, or invulnerability of men is one of the main obstacles in the voice of male victims of violence being heard. These stereotypes prevent expressing vulnerability, demanding help, and referring to the support system.
2. **Institutional (Legal-Juridical):** Participants emphasised severely on 'unilateralism of laws' in favour of women (especially in the field of divorce, *Mehrieh* and custody, division of assets) and considered these laws not only unjust but itself as a kind of structural violence and lever of pressure against men.
3. **Modernity and its Transformations:** Factors such as extreme individualism, weakening of ethical and religious values, and uncontrolled effects of virtual space were recognised as contexts that make relationships fragile and increase violence potential.
4. **Economic Context and Contextual Aspects:** Violence against men is tied with economic contextual factors as well. Pressures resulting from unemployment, bad livelihood conditions, job instability, inflation, and economic deprivations make the environment prone to emergence of various forms of violence (physical, psychological, emotional). Such problems often in silence and without finding a structural solution lead to isolation and even emergence of chronic psychological injuries in men and their families.

Causal Conditions: Sparks that Ignite the Fire

Alongside general contexts, the research addressed identifying direct and immediate stimuli that key the violent action. These causes were classified in three main categories:

1. **Individual Causes:** Including psychological problems (such as personality disorders, denial of mental illness, obsession, suppression of emotions), personality characteristics (stubbornness and approval-seeking, bullying and thuggery, obstinacy, criminality), sexual issues (such as dissatisfaction or instrumental use of relationship), and identity crises in men (feeling of failure and incompetence).
2. **Interpersonal and Social Causes:** Unresolved communicative conflicts, effort for control and applying power from the side of each of the parties, and emotional stimulation and arousal, family causes (authoritarian spouse, insecure emotional attachment and being abandoned by lover or family, low resilience, emotional deprivation).
3. **Ethical and Value Causes:** Infidelity and violation of marital commitments was identified as one of the most powerful and destructive causes of emergence of severe psychological and even physical violences.

Intervening Conditions: Factors that Change the Path

This research showed that occurrence of violence is not a definite matter and factors can modify, intensify, or facilitate its path. These intervening conditions were analysed at individual (such as low self-confidence, dependence), familial (defective upbringing patterns, unequal power structure), economic (poverty, unemployment, financial dependence), and legal (inefficiency of judicial system, lack of support institutions) levels. For example, a man with strong economic and family backing may have more resilience against his wife's economic violence, while a man lacking these resources breaks down quickly.

Strategies: Actions and Reactions in the Field of Violence

One of the most key parts of this research was analysing men's method of facing violence. Strategies adopted were located in a wide spectrum from passivity to active activism:

- **Passive Strategies:** This category, which unfortunately had high prevalence, included silence and concealment (due to fear of reputation (*Abrou*) and stigma of weakness), endurance and acceptance (with justification of preserving family entity or due to helplessness), isolation and withdrawal, and in acute cases, self-destruction (such as addiction or suicide attempt). These strategies, although reducing tension in the short term, lead to psychological and physical erosion of the victim in the long term.
- **Active Strategies:** This category included aggressive strategies (such as mutual verbal or physical aggression which intensifies the cycle of violence), defensive strategies (such as leaving the situation or effort for self-defense), and most importantly, problem-solving strategies (such as dialogue, negotiation, and referring to counsellor or elders). Choosing a strategy depended on factors such as individual's personality, violence intensity, and resources available to him.

Consequences: Multidimensional Wounds of Violence

The research examined devastating effects and results of violence at various levels in detail:

1. **Individual Consequences:** These consequences included psycho-emotional injuries (depression, anxiety, severe reduction of self-esteem, feeling of emptiness, ruin, depression, stress), physical-somatic (from injuries resulting from conflict to psychosomatic diseases, addiction and self-destruction, reduced mental health, male mortality, brain cognitive function disorder) and sexual (reduced desire) injuries.
2. **Familial Consequences:** Violence quickly leads to collapse of emotional relationships, divorce, reduction of dialogue in family, family collapse, increased tension in home environment, and destructive effects on children's mental health.
3. **Social and Economic Consequences:** Social exclusion and isolation, loss of men's social credit, loss of support network, increase in crime and expansion of insecurity in society, homelessness and rough sleeping (*Karton-khabi*), social exclusion, prison, execution, and occupational injuries (disruption in professional work and activity)

and economic (heavy losses resulting from divorce, economic loss resulting from crimes) were other important results of violence.

4. **Identity and Vulnerable Groups:** Violence against men links to identity dimensions as well: men possessing sexual and identity orientations non-aligned with dominant norms of society (LGBTQ+) not only face rejection and humiliation within family and social environments, but even the legal system considers them lacking support or even criminal, and violence against them finds a doubled aspect. This issue causes discursive poverty, lack of supportive law, and criminalising attitude to intensify the cycle of violence for these groups.

Pinnacle of Research: Offering Solutions

This research has not sufficed merely with describing and analysing pain and in its final chapter, relying on all previous findings, offers a comprehensive and multifaceted roadmap for preventing and combating violence against men. These solutions acknowledge that the solution is not one-dimensional and requires coordinated action at various levels:

1. **Educational and Awareness-Raising Solutions:**
 - **Redefining Masculinity:** Promoting new and healthy models of masculinity including expressing emotions, requesting help, and establishing equal relationships, through media, educational system, and cultural products.
 - **Life Skills Training:** Teaching skills such as anger control, effective communication, and problem-solving to both genders from young ages to old age.
 - **Training for Specialists:** Making judges, lawyers, counsellors and social workers, psychologists, police aware regarding reality and complexities of violence against men to prevent stereotypical judgments.
 - *Implementation of these solutions requires cooperation and responsibility of institutions and apparatuses such as Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science, Voice and Vision [State Media] and media, Ministry of Health, Welfare Organization, Police and Social Emergency, and universities.*
2. **Supportive and Therapeutic Solutions:**

- Creating Support Centres Special for Men: Establishing safe houses, crisis telephone lines, and specialised counselling centres for violence-stricken men so they have a safe space for expression and treatment available.
 - Strengthening Self-Help Groups: Creating platforms for men to share their experiences and benefit from support of their peers.
 - *Creating/Developing support centres under supervision of Welfare Organization, Ministry of Health, Police and Social Emergency; allocating crisis telephone lines by Social Emergency Organization; supporting vulnerable groups with cooperation of universities and scientific associations.*
 - *Implementation of these solutions requires cooperation and responsibility of institutions and apparatuses such as Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science, Voice and Vision and media, Ministry of Health, Welfare Organization, Police and Social Emergency, and universities.*
3. Structural and Institutional Solutions:
- Reviewing Laws: This is the most important and sensitive suggestion of the research. The research demands fair and expert review in laws (such as *Mehrieh*, *Nafagheh*, *Tamkin* [obedience/submission], and custody) which have potential for instrumental use as lever of pressure and violence. The goal is not weakening women's rights, but creating balance and real justice for both genders.
 - Creating Fair Judicial Procedures: Training judges for impartial dealing with domestic violence cases where the man is the complainant.
 - Policies Based on Reality: Compiling macro social policies that recognise both genders as potential victims of violence.
 - Creating Civil Associations with Social and Cultural Approaches: For improving the general atmosphere of society and for facilitating the communicative space of society and government.
 - Developing Social and Psychological Work in schools, garrisons, and workplaces with responsibility of Education [Ministry], Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Cooperatives and Labour, Welfare Organization.

- *Reviewing laws with initiative of Islamic Consultative Assembly [Parliament] and cooperation of Judiciary, Parliament Research Centre, and family specialised committees; compiling fair policies by Country's Social Affairs Organization and Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution; encouraging and facilitating activity of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with cooperation of Ministry of Interior and Municipality.*
- *Implementation of these solutions requires cooperation and responsibility of institutions and apparatuses such as Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science, Voice and Vision and media, Ministry of Health, Welfare Organization, Police and Social Emergency, and universities.*

Final Conclusion

This research is, more than anything, a scream for 'Breaking the Silence' and an invitation to 'Inclusive Gender Justice.' Findings clearly show that violence against the male gender in Iran is an undeniable, complex, and painful reality which due to cultural and structural obstacles, has remained hidden from the eyes of the scientific and policy-making community. Ignoring this phenomenon not only leads to continuity of male victims' suffering but makes our understanding of the general dynamics of violence incomplete and one-dimensional and prevents realisation of a safe and healthy society for everyone.

This research proves that moving towards a society free from violence depends on putting aside simplistic binaries and understanding this reality that patriarchal structures and gender stereotypes, in different ways, harm both genders. That same culture that gives the man power of domination, deprives him of the right to express weakness and request help. That same system that places the woman in economic subordinate position, may place unbalanced legal tools at her disposal in the family field.

This research is a starting point, not an ending point. It is hoped that its findings can open the door for more serious dialogues and broader researches in this field and guide policymakers, activists, and the general public to this understanding that pain has no gender and effort for realising human dignity entails hearing the voice of all those who suffer in silence. This work is a step in the path of shining light on the hidden half of violence, in hope that a day comes when no human, regardless of his/her gender, is forced to hide his/her wounds in darkness.

In the end, it must be emphasised that as long as a statistical, research, and regular and specialised monitoring system for forms of violence against men does not take shape and scientific and data-based policies are not on the agenda of responsible institutions (Statistical Centre of Iran, Parliament Research Centre, Universities), the cycle of violence against men cannot be dismantled. The issue of violence against men is not merely weakness of discourse, but a structural, institutional, legal, and research void. Only with serious and coordinated transformation at the level of structure, law, culture, education, and media can steps be taken towards realising gender justice and reducing violence.

11.2. Theoretical Model of Research

Based on qualitative findings and analysis of participants' narratives, the Grounded Theory of this research can be formulated under the general title 'Systematic Humiliation in the Absence of Supportive Discourse.' This theory states that violence against men in Iranian society is not merely a collection of disjointed acts, but a dynamic and cyclical socio-psychological process wherein a Core Category is placed under influence of a collection of conditions (Causal, Contextual, Intervening), leads to specific Actions and Reactions (Strategies), and ultimately brings about Multi-level Consequences which themselves help strengthen initial conditions and perpetuate the cycle.

In the following, components and elements of this theoretical model and relationships between them are described in detail:

11.2.1 Core Category (Main Phenomenon): 'Systematic Humiliation, Ignoring, and Powerlessness'

This is the core and beating heart of the theoretical model. Violence against men in this research is not merely physical abuse, but a deep experience of 'Systematic Humiliation, Ignoring, and Powerlessness.' This phenomenon is a pervasive feeling wherein the man sees his identity, value, and agency in various arenas (familial, social, legal) subjected to attack and erosion. He not only suffers injury, but this injury is not recognised by society and structures (Ignoring) and this itself doubles his suffering.

11.2.2. Causal Conditions

These are sparks that directly bring into existence or intensify the phenomenon of **Humiliation and Powerlessness**. These conditions are:

- **Identity and Functional Crises of Man**
 - Failure in performing traditional roles (like breadwinning)
 - Failure in performing modern roles (like emotional accompaniment)
 - Challenges in sexual performance
- **Communicative and Power Conflicts**
 - Effort for control from woman's side
 - Unresolved differences
 - Power war in relationships

- **Violation of Ethical Commitments and Values**
 - Infidelity as one of the most devastating stimuli directly targeting male identity and his trust
- **Instrumental Use of Legal Levers**
 - Employing *Mehrieh*
 - Employing *Nafagheh*
 - Threat of lawsuit as a means for control and applying pressure
- **Relationship**
 - These causal conditions lead directly to the core category (feeling of humiliation and powerlessness)
 - For example, infidelity (causal condition) directly fuels deep feeling of humiliation (core category)

11.2.3. Contextual Conditions

These are more general conditions and beds wherein the phenomenon occurs and gives shape to it. These beds make the ground prone to occurrence of violence:

- **Socio-Cultural Bed**
 - **Hegemony of Traditional Masculinity**
 - Pressure for suppressing emotions and displaying permanent power
 - **Value Changes and Lifestyle**
 - Individualism
 - Weakening of family institution
 - Increased expectations
- **Institutional Bed (Legal-Juridical)**
 - **Unilateralism of Laws**
 - Feeling of injustice and void of legal support for men
 - **Inefficiency of Support System**
 - Lack of specialised institutions for supporting victimised men
- **Economic Context**
 - Disordered economic situation
 - Unemployment
 - Livelihood pressures making men more vulnerable
- **Relationship**

- Contextual conditions act like a catalyst or a container
- They are not direct cause of violence, but provide space for 'Causal Conditions' to have impact and determine its intensity
- For example, a 'Communicative Conflict' (causal condition) in the bed of 'Unilateralism of Laws' (contextual condition) can quickly lead to legal threat and intensifying feeling of powerlessness

11.2.4. Intervening Conditions

These are factors that intervene at the moment of phenomenon occurrence and influence the individual's way of reaction (Strategies). These conditions can facilitate or make the path difficult:

- **Individual Resources**
 - Level of self-confidence
 - Psychological resilience
 - Mental health
- **Social and Family Capital**
 - Existence of support network (family, friends)
 - Upbringing patterns
- **Economic Capital**
 - Financial independence or dependence
- **Level of Awareness and Knowledge**
 - Awareness of rights
 - Communication skills
- **Relationship**
 - Intervening conditions are placed between phenomenon (feeling of humiliation) and strategies (reactions) and determine which path the individual chooses
 - For example, two men who both faced wife's infidelity (causal condition); a man enjoying family support (positive intervening condition) might choose 'Problem Solving' strategy, while a man who is isolated (negative intervening condition) might take refuge in 'Self-Destruction' strategy

11.2.5. Strategies

This section addresses specific actions and reactions men adopt in facing the phenomenon of **Humiliation and Powerlessness**. These strategies are placed in two main spectra:

- **Passive and Introjective Strategies**
 - **Silence and Concealment**
 - Due to fear of stigma and maintaining reputation
 - **Endurance and Tolerance**
 - With aim of preserving family or due to helplessness
 - **Isolation and Withdrawal**
 - Cutting connection with others
 - **Self-Destruction and Injury to Self**
 - Taking refuge in addiction
 - Severe depression
 - Suicide attempt
- **Active and Projective Strategies**
 - **Aggressive**
 - Mutual verbal or physical aggression (reproduction of violence)
 - **Defensive**
 - Effort to prove oneself
 - Leaving situation
 - Giving ransom (effort to keep opposite side satisfied through material or emotional means)
 - **Problem Solving**
 - Dialogue
 - Negotiation
 - Requesting help from counsellor or elders
- **Relationship**
 - These strategies are direct response to the main phenomenon formed under influence of intervening conditions

11.2.6. Consequences

These are results obtained from employing strategies and appear at various levels:

- **Individual Consequences**

-
- Psychological collapse (depression, anxiety, reduced self-esteem)
 - Physical injuries
 - Sexual and masculine identity crisis
 - **Familial Consequences**
 - Emotional or legal divorce
 - Collapse of family structure
 - Injury to children
 - **Social Consequences**
 - Social isolation
 - Weakening of social capital
 - Mistrust in legal institutions and opposite sex
 - **Reproduction of Violence Cycle**
 - Most importantly, a man who has been victim of violence and chooses aggressive strategy transforms into agent of violence himself
 - A man who chooses passive strategy, by his psychological erosion, provides ground for a new round of vulnerability
 - **Relationship**
 - Consequences are not merely end points
 - They act as a Feedback Loop and directly help strengthen contextual and causal conditions
 - For example, a man's 'Psychological Collapse' (consequence) can lead to his 'Functional Crisis' at work (new causal condition) and 'Mistrust in Opposite Sex' (consequence) strengthens 'Cultural Bed of Mistrust' (contextual condition) at macro level
 - This is that very thing that perpetuates the cycle of violence

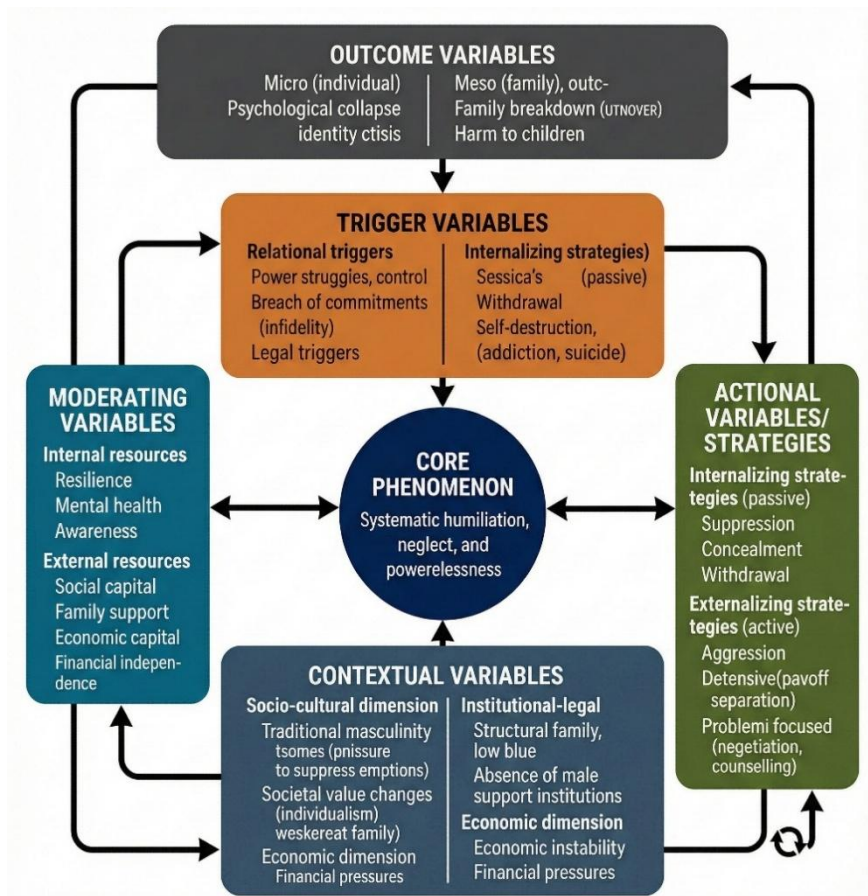
11.3. Summary Table of Theoretical Model Components

To complete the discussion, a table is presented here displaying all model components in a summary and structured manner:

<i>Model Component (Role in Process)</i>	<i>Pivotal Question it Answers</i>	<i>Description and Key Instances from Research</i>
Core Category (Phenomenon Nucleus)	'What experience is placed at the centre of this phenomenon?'	Lived experience of ' Systematic Humiliation, Ignoring, and Powerlessness. ' This feeling is the main essence of violence against men and leads to erosion of their identity and value.
Causal Conditions (Sparks and Direct Stimuli)	'What factors directly cause emergence of this 'Humiliation'?'	Functional and Identity Crises: Inability to perform expected roles / Relational Conflicts: Infidelity, controlling-ness, conflict over power / Legal Pressures: Instrumental use of levers like <i>Mehrieh</i> and <i>Nafagheh</i> .
Contextual Conditions (Bed and Governing Atmosphere)	'What macro conditions make occurrence of this phenomenon possible or intensify it?'	Socio-Cultural: Pressure of 'Traditional Masculinity,' weakening of family values / Institutional- Structural: Family laws considered unilateral, lack of supportive institutions / Economic: Unemployment, inflation, and severe livelihood pressures.
Intervening Conditions (Reaction Moderating Factors)	'What factors determine how a man reacts to this 'Humiliation'?'	Individual Resources (Internal Defense Shield): Level of resilience, self-confidence, awareness / Capitals (External Defense Shield): Existence of support network, financial independence.
Strategies (Actions and Reactions)	'What do men do in practice to face this 'Humiliation'?'	Passive Strategies (Reaction to Inside): Silence, isolation, endurance, self-destruction / Active Strategies (Reaction to Outside): Aggression, divorce, negotiation, counselling.
Consequences (Results and Outcomes)	'What are the results of these strategies at various levels?'	- Individual Level: Psychological collapse, depression, identity crisis / Familial Level: Emotional or legal divorce, injury to children / Social Level: Mistrust in marriage, social isolation.
Feedback Loop (Cycle Continuity Mechanism)	'How do these consequences cause repetition of the whole process again?'	Example 1: Psychological collapse (Consequence) causes intensification of functional crisis (Causal Condition) / Example 2: Increase in divorce (Consequence) strengthens social mistrust (Contextual Condition).

11.4. Overall Schema of Model and its Relationships:

In summary, a theoretical investigation into Violence Against the Male Gender in Iranian Society shows that violence against men in Iran is a 'Vicious Cycle of Humiliation' rooted in a bed of unilateral laws and traditional masculinity norms, ignited by stimuli like infidelity and power conflicts, moderated by individual and social resources, leading to reactions of the genre of silence,



aggression, or effort for survival, and finally, by destroying individual and family, reproduces itself for a new round. The way to break this cycle is intervention at all these levels, especially in 'Contextual Conditions' (like law reform) and 'Intervening Conditions' (like creating supportive institutions).

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This book offers a critical reappraisal of the social challenges confronting men and boys, particularly those relating to violence, social harm, and the construction of masculinity. Challenging entrenched stereotypes and conventional assumptions, it examines the broader social and gender inequalities that shape these issues.

The aim is not to question or minimise the undeniable reality of violence against women, but to enrich our understanding of violence by completing a wider and more nuanced picture. In doing so, the book argues for a genuinely inclusive conception of gender justice—one that safeguards the rights, dignity, and security of all people, irrespective of sex or sexual orientation.



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ISBN: 978-87-93926-40-0

