



"Beneath The Surface: Unveiling Domestic Violence Against Men"

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Abstract

"Beneath the Surface: Unveiling Domestic Violence Against Men" presents a groundbreaking exploration into the often overlooked phenomenon of intimate partner violence experienced by men. While domestic violence has traditionally been framed as a gendered issue with women as the primary victims, this anthology provides a comprehensive examination of the experiences of male survivors. Through a combination of personal narratives, scholarly analyses, and expert insights, this collection sheds light on the complex dynamics of abuse, the societal barriers faced by male victims, and the urgent need for inclusive approaches to prevention and intervention. By amplifying the voices of male survivors and challenging entrenched stereotypes, "Beneath the Surface" seeks to spark dialogue, foster empathy, and drive meaningful change in addressing domestic violence against men.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Intimate partner violence, Male survivors, Gender stereotypes and Masculinity

Introduction

In a world where domestic violence is often portrayed as a gendered issue, with women primarily seen as victims and men as perpetrators, there exists a profound silence surrounding a significant reality—domestic violence against men. "Beneath the Surface: Unveiling Domestic Violence Against Men" seeks to shatter the silence and shed light on an often overlooked aspect of intimate partner violence. Domestic violence knows no gender boundaries. While it is widely acknowledged that women experience domestic abuse at alarming rates, the experiences of men in abusive relationships are often marginalized, trivialized, or dismissed altogether. Societal stereotypes and gender norms dictate that men should be strong, stoic, and impervious to harm, creating a stigma that discourages male victims from seeking help or even acknowledging their own victimization.

This anthology aims to challenge these stereotypes and confront the misconceptions surrounding domestic violence against men. Through personal narratives, scholarly analyses, and expert insights, "Beneath the Surface" delves into the complexities of male victimization, exploring the psychological, emotional, and social dimensions of abuse. Moreover, this collection seeks to foster empathy and understanding, highlighting the diverse experiences of male survivors and the unique barriers they face in accessing support and resources. By amplifying their voices and validating their experiences, the article aims to dismantle the barriers that prevent male victims from seeking help and receiving the support they deserve.

As we embark on this journey to unveil the hidden realities of domestic violence against men, it is crucial to recognize that addressing this issue does not diminish the importance of combating violence against women. Rather, it broadens our understanding of intimate partner violence and underscores the need for inclusive and gender-sensitive approaches to prevention and intervention. Globally, domestic violence against men remains a pervasive but often overlooked issue. While precise prevalence rates can be challenging to determine due to underreporting and stigma, research indicates that male victims of domestic violence exist across various cultures and societies. Despite this reality, societal stereotypes and gender norms often perpetuate the myth that men cannot be victims of intimate partner violence. Consequently, many male survivors face significant barriers in seeking help or disclosing abuse, fearing judgment or disbelief. Furthermore, cultural factors and legal frameworks in



different regions may contribute to disparities in reporting rates and access to support services for male victims. Despite these challenges, efforts to raise awareness and improve data collection are slowly shedding light on the prevalence of domestic violence against men worldwide. It is imperative to address this issue comprehensively, acknowledging the experiences of all survivors regardless of gender and working towards creating inclusive support systems and legal protections for male victims.

Domestic Violence Against Men in India

In India, domestic violence against men is a complex and under-researched phenomenon. While there is limited data available, anecdotal evidence and emerging research suggest that male victims of intimate partner violence exist within the country. However, prevailing societal attitudes and cultural norms often contribute to the underreporting of such cases. Traditional gender roles and expectations may discourage men from speaking out about abuse, fearing shame or emasculation. Additionally, legal and institutional responses to domestic violence in India have historically focused primarily on protecting women, further marginalizing male survivors. Despite these challenges, there is a growing recognition of the need to address domestic violence against men in India. Non-governmental organizations and advocacy groups are increasingly working to raise awareness about male victimization and provide support services for survivors. However, there remains a significant gap in research and data collection efforts, hindering our understanding of the true prevalence and impact of domestic violence against men in India. Moving forward, it is crucial to foster a more inclusive and gender-sensitive approach to addressing intimate partner violence, one that recognizes and supports all survivors regardless of gender.

Societal Stereotypes and Gender Norms

Societal stereotypes and gender norms play a significant role in perpetuating the myth that men cannot be victims of domestic violence, thereby contributing to underreporting and lack of support for male survivors. In many cultures, there exists a deeply ingrained belief in the idea of men as inherently strong, dominant, and immune to victimization. These stereotypes not only reinforce the expectation that men should be able to protect themselves from harm but also create a stigma around male vulnerability and victimhood. As a result, men who experience domestic violence may feel ashamed or embarrassed to admit that they are being abused, fearing that they will be perceived as weak or unmanly. Moreover, societal expectations of masculinity often discourage men from expressing emotions or seeking help, further isolating them from support networks.

Additionally, gender norms that dictate gender-specific roles and behaviors within relationships can further complicate the experiences of male survivors. Men may be expected to conform to traditional notions of masculinity, which prioritize stoicism and emotional toughness, making it difficult for them to acknowledge or disclose their experiences of abuse. Furthermore, cultural narratives that portray men as aggressors and women as victims can make it challenging for male survivors to have their experiences taken seriously or receive the support they need.

These misconceptions and stereotypes surrounding male victimization contribute to underreporting of domestic violence against men and a lack of recognition of their needs within support systems and policy frameworks. As a result, many male survivors face significant barriers in accessing the help and resources they need to escape abusive situations and heal from their trauma. Addressing these societal attitudes and gender norms is crucial for creating a more inclusive and supportive response to domestic violence, one that recognizes the experiences and needs of all survivors, regardless of gender.

Male Victims' Reporting Barriers

The challenges of underreporting and stigma faced by male victims of domestic violence are



multifaceted and deeply rooted in societal attitudes and gender norms. One significant barrier to reporting abuse is the fear of being perceived as weak or emasculated. From a young age, men are socialized to believe that they should be strong, stoic, and capable of handling any situation without showing vulnerability. As a result, admitting to being a victim of domestic violence can be seen as a violation of these masculine ideals, leading to feelings of shame, embarrassment, and emasculation.

Moreover, male victims may fear disbelief or ridicule from others if they disclose their experiences of abuse. There is a pervasive societal notion that men cannot be victims of intimate partner violence, which can lead to skepticism or dismissiveness when men do come forward with their stories. This disbelief can be especially pronounced if the perpetrator is female, as it may challenge traditional gender roles and assumptions about power dynamics within relationships.

Additionally, men may hesitate to seek help or report abuse due to concerns about not being taken seriously by law enforcement or support services. Many domestic violence shelters and service providers are designed primarily to serve female victims, which can leave male survivors feeling excluded or unwelcome. Fear of being judged or treated unfairly based on gender can further discourage men from seeking help or disclosing their experiences of abuse.

Furthermore, there may be legal and institutional barriers that prevent male victims from accessing the support they need. Laws and policies related to domestic violence often prioritize the protection of women, which can make it difficult for men to access resources such as shelters, counseling services, or legal aid.

Conclusion

Addressing the challenges of underreporting and stigma faced by male victims of domestic violence requires a multifaceted approach. This includes raising awareness about the prevalence of male victimization, challenging societal stereotypes and gender norms that perpetuate the myth that men cannot be victims of abuse, and creating more inclusive and accessible support services for all survivors, regardless of gender. It is essential to create an environment where male victims feel safe and supported in coming forward with their experiences and seeking help to escape abusive situations.

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