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A Research Paper

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Abstract

This research paper provides a conceptual framework of violence, in general, and domestic violence, in specific, as one of the recurring themes of drama. In so doing, it encapsulates a general overview of violence and domestic violence in terms of universality, definition, multidisciplinary and forms being the basis upon which a lot of playwrights build their thematic view. The current research seeks to examine the concept of violence in general and domestic violence in specific. Generally, Domestic violence occurs all over the whole world. Violence is a universal phenomenon. It tackles various misbehaviors which mark disordered societies. Violence is approached in light of psychology, economy, culture, gender and literature. The mechanism of domestic violence differs among societies and families. Some societies views domestic violence as legal, and some other societies refuse this attitude. Definitions, types, causes and effects of domestic violence are discussed in this research paper. There will be a reference to four major forms of violence [physical, sexual, psychological, and verbal]. Domestic violence proved to be of paramount significance in various plays.

ملخص

تقدم هذه الورقة البحثية إطاراً مفاهيمياً للعنف بشكل عام ، والعنف الأسري بشكل خاص ، كأحد الموضوعات المتكررة في الدراما. يعطي هذا البحث نظرة عامة على العنف والعنف الأسري من حيث الشمولية والتعريف وتعدد الصور والأشكال كونها الأساس الذي يبني عليه الكثير من الكتاب المسرحيين وجهة نظرهم الموضوعية. يسعى البحث الحالي إلى دراسة مفهوم العنف الأسري بشكل عام وخاص. فعلى النطاق الواسع، يحدث العنف الأسري في جميع أنحاء العالم حيث ان ظاهرة العنف تعتبر ظاهرة عالمية. تتعلق ظاهرة العنف بالعديد من السلوكيات السيئة التي تميز المجتمعات المضطربة. ويتم معالجة ظاهرة العنف في ضوء مجالات عدة منها علم النفس والاقتصاد والثقافة والجنس والأدب. تختلف آلية العنف الأسري بين المجتمعات والأسر. بعض المجتمعات لديها حقوق قانونية لممارسة العنف الأسري مع الأفراد وأسرههم ، وبعض المجتمعات الأخرى ترفض هذا الموقف. وتناقش هذه الورقة البحثية تعريفات وأنواع وأسباب وتأثيرات العنف الأسري. وتلقي هذه الورقة البحثية الضوء على أربع أشكال من العنف [الجسدي والجنسي والنفسي واللفظي]. تم تخصيص الجزء الأخير من الورقة البحثية لتقديم عرض مفصل لأحد الأشكال الرئيسية للعنف وهو العنف الأسري. وقد ثبت أن العنف الأسري له أهمية قصوى في مختلف فروع الأدب في شتى العصور.

1. Introduction:

This research paper provides a conceptual framework of violence, in general, and domestic violence, in specific, as one of the recurring themes of drama. In so doing, it encapsulates a general overview of domestic violence in terms of universality, definition, multidisciplinary and forms being the basis upon which a lot of playwrights build their thematic view.

2. Violence: A Universal Phenomenon:

Violence is a worldwide and complicated phenomenon with social, psychological, biological and environmental roots. Human race lives under the threat of violence. Violence has lifelong consequences. It affects physical and mental health and social functioning. Also, violence slows economic and social development. When violence occurs, it causes misery; harms families across generations and impoverishes communities. Violence does not regard age, class, income, race, culture or ethnicity.

Violence is against human security and dignity. It is found everywhere around us, whether in the media, the streets or the home. With regard to violence, McKie (2005: 76) argues that media is mostly believed to be concerned with war, civil unrest and criminal acts in public spaces. It is common to hear or read headlines such as ‘gun panic sets in’ and ‘crime rates soar’.

In the main, violence is an extreme form of aggression such as assault, rape or murder. It intertwines many causes, including frustration, exposure to violent media, violent acts in the home or neighborhood and a tendency to see other people's actions as hostile even when they are not. Certain situations also aggravate the risk of aggression, such as drinking, insults and other provocations and environmental factors like heat and overcrowding.

Violence is an unavoidable human experience influencing all aspects of life. It takes different forms. Kappler (2012: 21) echoes the preceding idea from a constructivist, systemic and interactive point of view, arguing that there are new alternatives and solutions for violent conflict resolution, perhaps conducive to certain optimism regarding an improvement of the situation. Relating to origins of violence, some theories (e.g. learned behavior, loss of control, cycle of violence, etc.) approach the causal models for violence (dynamic, developmental, multidimensional, etc.).

Victims of violence are exposed to health harm and maybe life loss. Many victims of violence are too weak, scared or young to protect themselves. Violence is overtly noticed in workplaces, homes,

neighborhoods and some medical and social institutions. Moreover, it may affect women leading them to become homeless or impoverished. Many acts of violence are never recorded because they do not come to the attention of authorities.

3. Violence Defined:

Violence can be defined as an exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse; actions or words that are intended to hurt people; or behavior or treatment in which physical force is exerted for the purpose of causing damage or injury. All of the definitions state that violence must be intentional and it traditionally includes physical, verbal and psychological injuries, rendering violence as an overarching phenomenon which includes a constellation of various misbehaviors.

Violence is defined by the World Health Organization (henceforth, WHO) as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation", but acknowledges that the inclusion of "the use of power" in its definition expands on the conventional meaning of the word. This definition involves intentionality with the committing of the act itself, irrespective of the outcome it produces. However, generally speaking, anything that is excited in an injurious or damaging way may be described as violent even if not meant to be violence (by a person and against a person).

Kappler (2012: 21) contends that the definition of violence provided by the WHO, emanating from the public health sector, takes a constructivist (i.e. hierarchal) review of violence. Furthermore, the type and the nature of violence are determined by the aggressor's intention, the means used to put it into practice or to manifest an intention as well as the consequences for the victim, group or society. The WHO- definition is both oriented towards the aggressor, responsible for the action, and towards the victim who suffers the consequences. Hence, it implements neither a moral nor a systemic approach.

The same idea of intentional aggression is reiterated by Shengold (1999) as he views violence 'as a loss of control of aggressive impulse leading to action' (qtd in Motz, p. xii). Violence can be directed against individuals or objects. It causes physical harm in case of individuals as one may fail to understand one's own and other people's states of mind. In

addition, it may hinder the developments in different fields. So, violence is a social and health problem for all who experience and witness it.

Kneer and Nassehi (2000: 38) argue that "the systemic concept of violence is situated at a more abstract level, focusing solely on the actions and not on its actors. From this perspective, violence can be defined as all thoughts or acts which – beyond a spontaneous action – constitute an endeavor against any vital structure for purposes of destruction. Such phenomena may be reflexive or exteriorized, endogenous or exogenous. In essence, this definition avoids moral aspects, such as elements of blame, concentrating both on the interactive responsibilities and the consequences produced by the action." (qtd. in Kappler, 2012: 21)

4. Violence: A Multidisciplinary Perspective:

Violence is a multi-faceted problem whose explanation requires insights from various disciplines to have an integrated view of its nature. Hence, this section discusses the relation between violence on the one hand and psychology, economy, culture, gender, and literature on the other hand. Though literature is taken for granted as the most significant element in the current study, it was laid off to the last subsection as literature is the melting pot of all these areas.

4.1 Violence and Psychology:

The causes of violent acts performed by human beings are often a topic of hectic discussion in psychology. Based on the idea of human nature, psychologists do agree that violence is inherent in humans. Since violence is a matter of perception as well as a measurable phenomenon, psychologists have found variability in whether people perceive certain physical acts as "violent". For example, in any country where execution is a legalized punishment, the executioner is not typically perceived as "violent", though such country may be described, in a more metaphorical way, as acting violently.

Likewise, the notion of the aggressor-victim relationship is related to the conception of violence. Therefore, psychological research has demonstrated that even when more force is used in self-defense than in the initial violence, individuals may not see it as violent. The use of violence is often a source of pride and defence of honor, especially among males who often mark violence as an evidence of manhood. In some conflicts, men may disagree on their status. Similarly, in such environments of great conflicts and inequalities, people may resort to more violence in an attempt to advance.

4.2 Violence and Economy:

Violence is inherently viewed as a feature distinguishing societies with low socioeconomic status. In countries with high levels of violence, economic growth can be slowed down, personal and collective security eroded, and social development impeded. Families edging out of poverty and investing in schooling their sons and daughters can be ruined through the violent death or severe disability of the main breadwinner. Communities can be caught in poverty traps where pervasive violence and deprivation form a vicious circle which stifles economic growth. (Wikipedia) Unemployment, and hence low income, is one of the major causes lurking behind the risks which poor families are exposed to. Employment can act a protective effect for family members, especially for women since it raises women's self-esteem and morality so as to cope with abusive acts.

4.3 Violence and Culture:

Violence represents a cultural product forged by conduct, aimed at obtaining control and domination over other people. Nonetheless, from a systemic point of view, violence is not based or oriented toward people, but simply is oriented toward itself. In other words, violence could be simultaneously a cause and a consequence. Furthermore, a violent culture produces violent actions in order to foster and reproduce a violent culture. In fact, violence is a purely social and cultural process, in contrast to aggressiveness which represents a necessary and useful human impulse linked to self-defense and survival.

Corsi (2003: 20) asserts that the aggressive is born and the violent is made. With this evocative declaration, aggressiveness is portrayed as a drive representing a feature selected by nature, enhancing the biological efficiency of its carrier. Similarly, there are also features that work to inhibit aggressiveness, such as facial expression of fear, thereby limiting and regulating its scope. In other words, human beings have aggressive potential by nature, but they become peaceful or violent according to their individual life history and to the culture they belong to. (qtd. in Kappler, 2012: 22)

4.4 Violence and Gender:

Gender-based violence is violence that is directed against a person on the basis of gender: women, girls, men and boys. It has been widely acknowledged that the majority of people affected by gender-based violence are women and girls as a result of unequal distribution of power in society between women and men. Furthermore, women and girls as victims of violence suffer from specific consequences as a result of gender discrimination. People may think that there is no violence against men, but they can become targets of physical or verbal attacks. Hence, being violent, and experiencing violence, is not confined to one sex.

The question of the role played by gender in violent acts performed daily is debatable. Real life experiences show that violence does not acknowledge gender differences though it is generally believed that men are more violent. In this regard, Dutton (2007: 31-32) contends that gender differences exist not only in the general level of violence committed in intimate relationships but also in the greater tendency of males to use violence in response to perceived abandonment. In other words, comparisons of genders find that males are generally not more abusive than females.

Denfeld (1997: 11) clarifies that while some women may be violent it is still the case that 'violence is presented as the antithesis of womanhood'. Violence is said to challenge women's supposedly natural feminine and mothering tendencies to protect children. Women convicted of, or involved in, violent crimes are viewed through the gendered workings of social practices and power in intimate relationships.

The sexual content of verbal abuse of a female is a way of embarrassing her into submission by calling out the cultural insults for a loose woman. All forms of emotional abuse are coercive techniques designed to generate submission. Sociobiology and feminism analyze abuse in terms of gender. Sociobiologists and feminists agree that males attempt to coerce intimate females. Dutton (2007: 48) adds that witnessing violence in one's own home between one's parents has an impact on behavior in intimate relationships that goes beyond the impersonal violence of television. Based on surveys conducted in this regard, Dutton asserts that males or females who had observed their parents attack each other were three times more likely to have assaulted their spouses.

Card (2002: 146) shows that women can and do use violence, and strategies of power and control in a range of relationships that can include a

range of abuses: 'Although women and girls are the most usual victims, some women abuse both children and husbands, who are reluctant to admit it and who encounter disbelief when they do. Assault is not a function of bodily strength or muscle power but of such things as resentment, lack of scruples, and willingness to use weapons'. Given the practices of social relations and oppression that weave across the home, workplace and society more generally, violence may be used by women to achieve control in self defence, or to avoid (further) violence to children or relatives. In many cases, women are compelled to become involved in violence or to ignore abuses of others (Mathews et al., 1991).

Breckenridge (1999: 159) argues that violence is generally characteristic of patriarchal societies. Violence against women occurs in a society in which men hold the major positions of power. When women earn less money than men and are financially dependent on male partners, they are often trapped in abusive relationships because of emotional and material ties. Few men are so materially dependent that they cannot leave an abusive spouse. While they may choose not to do so, they are more likely to experience having the option to leave. In contrast to women's socialisation, which discourages their expression of aggression, boys and young men are socialised to accept aggression as a way of maintaining dominance and control within peer groups (Campbell, 1993). Families, schools and peer cultures inculcate in boys fear and discomfort about showing vulnerability and teach them to react with anger to feelings of hurt or humiliation. Aggressive women are seen as 'unfeminine'; aggressive men are seen as 'manly'. Men's violence, therefore, is supported by a culture which has traditionally sanctioned male dominance in both public and private spheres. Women's violence, however, is more akin to the risky violence of the oppressed as they make a claim for self-determination.

Women can be just as violent as men. A review of available data on gender and violence led the Department of Health in England to conclude that 'The idea that women are at least as abusive as men is both wrong and dangerous and can lead to the belief that there is no need to provide dedicated services to protect women and their children against domestic violence' (Department of Health, 2000: 13). (qtd in McKie, 2005: 78)

In the main, domestic violence stops women from fulfilling their potential, restricts economic growth and undermines development. Efforts should be made to reach an agreement and set universal standards of behaviour through the elaboration of human rights in order to protect human

life and dignity in our fast changing world. Experience and continuous threat of violence can leave women isolated. It can also encourage feelings that they are responsible for the abuse; that in some way or another they have provoked violence. Yet, many women may seek to retain immediate family networks, especially if such networks provide order and security for children and vulnerable or sick relatives.

When researchers measure only physically violent acts and do not examine contextual factors, it is assumed that husbands and wives are engaging in comparable behaviours. What is often not taken into consideration is the use of other forms of violence (marital rape, verbal abuse, financial deprivation, threats and intimidation); the degree of severity of violence; the effect of violence on the victim; and the different motivations of men and women in perpetrating violence. Breckenridge (1999: 154-8) indicates that women's violence is not equivalent to men's violence in the following ways: men's violence is more severe; women's violence is often a response to frustration and stress, here as men's violence is most often an attempt to dominate and control; women's violence is more likely to occur in self-defence within relationships where the partner is also violent; women's violence is often a reflection of dependence (i.e. their position as wives and mothers), whereas men's violence is a reflection of dominance. Ho and Venus (1995) show that a survey of women who killed their husbands revealed that there was a history of marital violence in 70 percent of the cases, and that over half of husband killings occurred in response to an immediate threat or attack by men. Marital separation and sexual jealousy are significant precipitants for men who kill their female partners. But women are more likely to kill their husbands to obtain release from a lifelong prison of violence

When comparing severity of violence performed by men and women, earlier studies found men and women to be equally violent in terms of the acts perpetrated. Breckenridge (1999: 155) mentions that "when Strauss (1993) reanalysed data from the National Violence Survey of 1985, he found that, although men and women had been equally violent, men were six times more likely to inflict severe injury. Other studies have shown that male aggression towards females is more coercive and controlling than female aggression towards males, even when the severity of violence is the same (Cascardi & Vivian, 1995)."

4.5 Violence and Literature:

Violence proved to be a recurrent theme in American literature especially in the twentieth century as it tends to shock readers and shake their beliefs and commitments. Indeed, the issue of violence acquires distinct position in American society due to its historical significance highlighted by the series of wars experienced by American people. Dramatists, poets and novelists regarded their writings as an outlet to express their anxieties, distortion, bafflement, and lack of peace, and to provide moral solutions to such awkward issues. Violence generates images of destruction, discord, annihilation, depredation, conflict, threat, and uneasiness. In this regard, Ogunyemi (2006) argues that:

Violence occurs when writers attempt to use their literary works, ethos or canon to express the need for a change in the socio-political system they found themselves. Violence is also perpetrated in art when writers use their works to expose various levels of economic stagnation, environmental degradation, and problem of identity among other social and political vices. (p. 3)

Chughtai, in his article *Communal Violence and Literature*, inquires "With every aspect of life disturbed by this earthshaking event, how could poets and writers possibly sit on the side without saying a word? How could literature, which bears close ties to life, avoid getting its shirtfront wet when life was drenched in blood?" (p. 445). A review of American literature shows that violence creates a window through which contemporary American culture at large could be explored, providing clues to the aspects of American culture that fuel a thirst for violence and incite violent acts.

In poetry, poems by Hart Crane, Sylvia Plath, John Wain and W. B. Yeats attempted to discern the causes and results of violence culminated in anger, frustration, despair and suicide. Still, haunted by the idea of destruction, poets realized that violence could be a source of creativity and change.

Novels such as George Orwell's *1948*, Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano* and *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Richard Wright's *Native Son*, Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, Willa Cather's *My Ántonia*, Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*, Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* discussed various social, economic, political, and religious issues basically caused by violent and brutal acts.

In drama, plays like Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *The Glass Menagerie*,

Edward Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, The American Dream and The Zoo Story, August Wilson's Fences and The Piano Lesson, David Mamet's Oleanna, Anna Deavere's Los Angeles, and Rebecca Gilman's Boy Gets Girl showed different forms and features of violence.

In sum, the preceding discussion offers an overview of violence with special reference to violence as a multidisciplinary perspective as it touches upon all dimensions characteristic of its nature: psychology, culture, economy, gender and literature. The following section goes beyond the mentioned perspectives of violence to illustrate different forms of violence which forged the skeleton of social drama.

5. Forms of Violence:

To forge the skeleton of social drama, the phenomenon of violence receives different evaluations based on the classification of its aspects. Generally speaking, violence takes many forms, including family violence, sexual violence, peer and group violence, abuse of power, community violence, hate crimes and hate speech. Family violence, often referred to as domestic abuse, encompasses child abuse, child maltreatment, spouse abuse, and wife battering. Sexual violence includes rape, date rape, marital rape, intimate partner abuse, and child sexual abuse. Peer and group violence include workplace violence, school violence, gang violence. Abuse of power includes mistreatment of children, students, elders, people with disabilities, and others who are smaller or less powerful than the abuser. (wikipedia) Community violence includes assaults, fights, shootings, homicides, and most forms of peer violence. Hate crimes and hate speech, which target victims based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, religious belief, or sexual orientation Media violence, shown on television, in film, and in video games.

Moreover, violence can be divided into four categories: self-directed, non-physical, collective and interpersonal. *Self-directed violence* is subdivided into suicidal behaviour and self-abuse. *Non-physical violence* includes those acts which result from a power relationship, including threats and intimidation, neglect or acts of omission, in addition to more obvious violent acts. *Collective violence* is subdivided into structural violence and economic violence. *Interpersonal violence* is divided into two subcategories: Family and intimate partner violence – that is, violence largely between family members and intimate partners, usually, though not exclusively, taking place in the home. (wikipedia)

Violence as a common human experience shows that different forms of violence can be aligned into four basic forms: physical, sexual, psychological and verbal. First, *physical violence* (also referred to as physical assault) is an act of a person involving contact of another person intended to cause feelings of physical pain, injury, or other physical suffering or bodily harm. In most cases, children are the victims of physical abuse, but adults can also be victims. Physical abuse may involve more than one abuser and more than one victim.

Physical abuse creates an atmosphere of fear, shame, uncertainty and lack of trust, thereby placing a barrier between women and those around them, and isolating them from potential sources of support. Possessive and controlling behaviour results in economic and social deprivation by limiting access to clothes and other material goods, transport, education and social activities, further increasing feelings of isolation and reinforcing the dominance and importance of the abuser. Abrahams (2007: 20) Without outside support to check the reality of perceptions, isolation turns thoughts inward to review what is happening, resulting in an inversion of reality. The sense of guilt and shame works to increase isolation and ability to trust oneself or others.

Second, *sexual violence* is 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. Sexual violence is forcing undesired sexual behavior by one person upon another. When that force is immediate, of short duration, or infrequent, it is called sexual assault. The offender is referred to as a sexual abuser. The term also covers any behavior by any adult towards a child to stimulate either the adult or child sexually. When the victim is younger than the age of consent, it is referred to as child sexual abuse. Concerning child sexual abuse, Cling (2004) concedes that:

[p]erpetrators differ in their approaches to children, so that some child sexual abusers engage in extensive grooming before assaulting children sexually, whereas others simply attack their child victims without preliminaries. Children's symptoms are more severe when sexual abuse is by parent figures, when it is penetrating, when it is accompanied by aggression, when there are multiple abusers, or when it is repeated over months or years.(p. 51)

Sexual violence acts like a chain reaction, one incident yields to another. In other words, it is not usually confined to a single episode – repeated incidents, which increase in frequency and intensity over time, are the most common pattern. Once the first physical or sexual incident, however minor, has taken place, there will inevitably be the anticipation and fear of further violence, resulting in growing feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. In the same regard, Abrahams (2007: 18-19) supports the idea that certain forms of violence are interconnected, and hence they can not be easily distinguished. He assures that other forms of violence– constant criticism and belittling, possessive and controlling behaviour, isolation, access to money and other resources – may be combined with physical or sexual abuse, or be used alone, but equally create feelings of anticipatory fear and anxiety. The unpredictable nature and timing of violence cause sense of physical or mental safety to vanish. As a result the sexually abused were unable ever to be at ease, or to trust what was going on around them.

Sexual rape is another form of sexual violence. Rape, as a crime, can be defined as a violation against a man—the man to whom the female victim of the rape belonged, as either a daughter or a wife. Thus, the crime of rape was really a property crime against the controlling man whose property was distorted by the rape. Early American rape statutes incorporated the common-law definition of rape, and were known as carnal knowledge statutes (Shapo, 1975). Thereby, rape is defined as intercourse by force and against the woman's will. The response of the victim indicates if sex is only rape or not. If the woman resists to the utmost resistance during the entire rape, this means that sex is only regarded as rape. Cling (2004) mentions that:

Gradually, rape became a more prosecuted crime as the standard of rape changed from resistance to consent. Thus the prosecution of not just stranger rape, but also acquaintance and date rape, was facilitated... Usually, there are no witnesses to a rape. In fact, the acquaintance and date rape variety often take place in a car or home, where the victim thinks she is safe from such assault. (p. 17)

Furthermore, sexual harassment is one more feature of sexual violence with significant personal and professional consequences. Specifically, victims of sexual harassment develop psychological and somatic symptoms which mirror those of victims of other forms of sexual assaults. Victims often report depression, anxiety, irritability anger, uncontrolled crying, fatigue, headaches, weight loss, gastrointestinal and

dental problems, confusion, shame, guilt, embarrassment, denial, and isolation. Sexual harassment in the workplace received similar attention as it is generally considered as a feature of sexual violence. Cling (2004: 117) mentions that United States Merit Systems Protection Board (USMSPB) conducted extensive surveys in which federal employees were asked if they had experienced any of the following unwanted behaviors while on the job: sexual teasing, jokes, remarks or questions, sexual gestures or looks, leaning over, deliberate touching, pinching or cornering, letters or telephone calls, pressure for dates or sexual favors, or actual or attempted assault or rape.

Third, *psychological violence* is a form of violence characterized by a person subjecting or exposing another to behavior which results in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, or disorder. Such form of violence is often associated with situations of power imbalance such as abusive relationships, bullying, and workplace abuse. Psychological abuse does not always lead to physical abuse, but physical violence in domestic relationships is nearly always preceded and accompanied by psychological violence. Some parents may emotionally and psychologically harm their children because of stress, poor parenting skills, social isolation, and lack of available resources or inappropriate expectations of their children. Most victims of psychological violence within intimate relationships often experience changes to their psyche and actions.

Fourth, *verbal violence* is described as a negative defining statement told to the victim, or by withholding any response, thereby defining the target as non-existent. If the abuser does not immediately apologize and retract the defining statement, the relationship may be a verbally abusive. In couple relationships, the verbal abuser responds to the partner's "separateness," i.e., independent thoughts, views, desires, feelings, expressions (even of happiness) as an irritant or even an attack.

Verbal violence is inescapable in daily life due to people's usual stresses and persistent problems. In couple or family relationships, verbal abuse grows intense and frequent over time. Verbal abuse may cause depression or disorder. The person targeted by verbal abuse over time succumbs easily to any stress related illness. Furthermore, verbal abuse creates emotional pain and mental anguish in its target. It includes various acts including countering, withholding, discounting, blocking and diverting, accusing and blaming, judging and criticizing, trivializing, threatening,

name calling, ordering, denial of anger or abuse, abusive anger and damnation.

Other minor forms of violence are like child violence, youth violence and intimate partner violence. Child violence is the abuse and negligence which occurs to children under 18 years of age. Child maltreatment is a global problem with serious lifelong consequences. Youth violence refers to violence occurring between youths, and includes acts ranging from bullying and physical fighting, through more severe sexual and physical assault to homicide. Intimate partner violence refers to behaviour in an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours.

6. Domestic Violence Defined:

Domestic violence (also known as domestic abuse) can be defined as a pattern of abusive behaviors by one or both partners in an intimate relationship such as marriage, family, friendship and cohabitation. Domestic violence enshrines four basic forms: psychological, physical, verbal and sexual. In addition, the causes of domestic violence may be social, psychological, behavioral or mental. One of the most prominent features of domestic violence is marital conflict (or spousal abuse) habitually illustrated through husband-wife relationship. Yet, the present study does not confine itself to this relationship; it also tackles other relationships.

In case of domestic violence, one party dominates and controls the other. Also, abusers use many different forms of violence against their victims. Digest (2000: 1) deems that, for many, 'home' is where they face a regime of terror and violence at the hands of somebody close to them – somebody they should be able to trust. Those victimized suffer physically and psychologically. They are unable to make their own decisions, voice their own opinions or protect themselves and their children for fear of further repercussions. Their human rights are denied and their lives are stolen by the ever-present threat of violence.

Domestic violence can be defined as behaviors used by one person in a close relationship to control the other. Partners may be married or not married; heterosexual, gay, or lesbian; living together, separated or dating. Also, violence can be criminal and includes physical assault (e.g. hitting, pushing, shoving, etc.), sexual abuse (i.e., unwanted or forced sexual activity and stalking). Although psychological and financial abuses are not criminal behaviors, they are forms of abuse and can lead to criminal

violence. Domestic violence is notably used for only one purpose: to gain and maintain total control over others. Abusers make use of fear, guilt, shame, and intimidation to wear their preys down and keep them under their thumb. (<http://www.domesticviolence.org>)

Williamson (2000: 80-81) cites a group of healthcare professionals who acknowledged that domestic violence does not just occur between intimate partners who are married, but also between cohabiting partners. Many also acknowledged that issues of elder abuse and child abuse could be incorporated within a definition of domestic violence, although in most cases they were more reluctant to incorporate child abuse than elder abuse. Commenting on this view, Williamson contends that domestic violence is considered problematic due to the age of the ‘perpetrators’ and ‘victims’ involved. Yet, all of the participating women who had children discussed at length how they perceived the domestic violence they had experienced to impact on their children, both through direct abuse and the witnessing of domestic violence itself.

Domestic violence can be overtly felt when its signs are visible and apparent for all in cases of physical, verbal and sexual violence. Also, domestic violence may be felt in case of psychological violence. Bergeron (1992: 80-81) assures that abuse may be overt or covert. Whipping, beating, scolding, yelling, desertion, sexual violation, public humiliation and shaming family members are overt abusive acts. More subtle covert forms of abuse, such as emotional abandonment, denial of basic human rights and freedoms, emotional incest and continual verbal criticism, can also have devastating effects on the child.

Digest (2000: 2) posits that domestic violence includes violence perpetrated by intimate partners and other family members. It is manifested through: *Physical abuse* such as slapping, beating, arm twisting, stabbing, strangling, burning, choking, kicking, threats with an object or weapon, and murder. It also includes traditional practices harmful to women such as female genital mutilation and wife inheritance (the practice of passing a widow, and her property, to her dead husband’s brother). *Sexual abuse* appears in coerced sex through threats, intimidation or physical force, forcing unwanted sexual acts or forcing sex with others. *Psychological abuse* which includes behaviour that is intended to intimidate and persecute, and takes the form of threats of abandonment or abuse, confinement to the home, surveillance, threats to take away custody of the children, destruction of objects, isolation, verbal aggression and constant humiliation.

In respect of the causes of domestic violence, there are many different theories related to the causes of domestic violence. These theories include psychological theories which consider personality traits and mental characteristics of the perpetrator, as well as social theories which consider external factors in the perpetrator's environment such as family structure, stress, and social learning. As with many phenomena regarding human experience, no single approach appears to cover all cases. Personality traits include sudden bursts of anger, poor impulse control, and poor self-esteem. Many cases of domestic violence against women occur due to jealousy when the woman is either suspected of being unfaithful or is planning to break the relationship. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domestic_violence) Stress may be heightened when a person lives in a family with increased pressures. Social stresses due to inadequate finances or other such problems in a family may further increase tensions. Psychiatric disorders are sometimes associated with domestic violence, including borderline personality disorder, antisocial personality disorder, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, drug abuse, and alcoholism. Domestic violence also occurs in same-sex relationships. Gay and lesbian relationships have been identified as a risk factor for abuse in certain populations.

Abusers usually use a variety of techniques to control their victims. These techniques include threats, blame, torture, repudiation, frightening, dominance and humiliation. Domestic violence may occur as a result of threats and blame achieved by verbal abuse. Moreover, physical injury may be one of the most important causes of domestic violence which mostly leads to a kind of psychological violence. These causes may lead to the destruction of family relationships, isolation, pain, mental disorders and depression. Throughout the history of American drama violence was a recurring theme especially in dramas by Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Edward Albee, Eugene O'Neill, and Thornton Wilder.

The first form of domestic violence is psychological violence. This form of violence has both emotional and mental negative influences. It is manifested by humiliating the victims who become usually worried and withdraw from many situations. In addition, the victims may suffer from isolation and unhappiness. They get away from their friends and partners and they may lose contact with others. Physical violence is the second form of domestic violence and it is one of the most important forms of violence because its signs are markedly visible. This kind of abuse causes injuries, pains and bodily harms to the victims. This appears in some features like hitting, pushing, burning, choking, pulling, and using tools of murdering.

The third form of domestic violence is the verbal abuse. This form is related to the use of language. The abusers of this form of violence use bad expressions to curse and abuse their victims depicting features of disrespect, indignity, insult, criticism and blaming to the victims. The last form of domestic violence is the sexual one. It can be defined as forcing the other side to participate in an undesired sexual relationship. This is considered as an aggressive activity because it may cause harms to the other side. Sexual violence also appears in marital rape, coercion, seduction and sexual harassment.

In sum, this research paper approached the phenomenon of violence from a universal viewpoint showing that it has to do with various misbehaviors which mark disordered and dismantled societies. It provided different definitions for violence. It was clear that gaining a full and panoramic understanding of the phenomenon of violence would be missed unless it is approached in light of other ancillary disciplines including psychology, economy, culture, gender and literature. Furthermore, the paper explored the dominant features of violence forms: physical, psychological, sexual and verbal. The last section of the paper was dedicated to provide a detailed display of one of the major forms of violence: domestic violence, which proved to be of paramount significance in various branches of literature.

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