

## “Just Became a Love Slave”: Shedding Light on Relationship Violence Against Males

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“Violence”, in general, is a word associated with conduct more often perpetrated by males, whether against females or other males. Indeed, even in the field of ‘dating’, discussions on violence often deal specifically with it being against women, so that the term, “violence against women” has arisen. However, certain data indicates that this discussion should also involve violence against men. This discourse had apparently not yet surfaced, so the authors were interested in examining and seeking out what were male concepts, regarding any violence they may have experienced whilst in relationships. The results emerging indicated the existence of a number of concepts on particular facets of masculinity, those being of masculinity of either a romantic or a hegemonic nature. Overall, the situation puts males in the position of being the subject of high expectations of power, making the behavior of their partners to be considered as being non-violence. The overall organization of the discourse emerged in various forms, however these were of the same type as the discussion which has emerged concerning violence against women, so that it may be concluded that both of these topics are of similar importance, when it comes to their discussion.

*Keywords:* males, masculinity, discourse, violence

“Kekerasan” pada umumnya merupakan kata yang diasosiasikan dengan perilaku yang lebih banyak dilakukan oleh laki-laki, entah itu terhadap perempuan atau laki-laki. Dalam ranah berpacaran sekalipun, wacana kekerasan seringkali dikhususkan untuk perempuan sehingga muncul istilah “kekerasan terhadap perempuan”. Bagaimanapun, data-data tertentu menunjukkan bahwa wacana ini juga terjadi pada laki-laki. Wacana ini tampaknya masih belum terangkat ke permukaan, sehingga para penulis tertarik untuk meneliti dan mencari bagaimana pemaknaan laki-laki terhadap kekerasan yang mereka alami selama berpacaran. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa muncul beberapa wacana maskulinitas tertentu yang bersifat romantis ataupun hegemoni. Secara keseluruhan keadaan itu menempatkan mereka ke posisi subjek dengan ekspektasi *power* yang tinggi, sehingga membuat tindakan yang dilakukan oleh pasangannya adalah bukan kekerasan. Susunan wacana secara keseluruhan muncul dalam bentuk yang berbeda, namun sejenis dengan wacana yang muncul pada kekerasan terhadap perempuan sehingga dapat disimpulkan keduanya sama pentingnya untuk didiskusikan.

*Kata kunci:* laki-laki, maskulinitas, wacana, kekerasan

“Violence” is the use of force which, whether verbal or non-verbal, is directed towards another person, or against oneself, with the aim of inflicting hurt, and which can give rise to injury or loss, whether physical, psychological, of property, or of some other form (World Health Organization/WHO, 2002a; 2002b). This conduct is generally associated with males as the perpetrators, and females as the victims. There have been several pieces of research, sets of statistics, and

field data, which have supported this statement. For example, a summary of statistics compiled by the *Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak (KemenPPPA - Ministry for the Empowerment of Women and Protection of Children)* in 2017, states that 33% of women in the European Union suffer violence after the age of 15 years, and 33.64% of Indonesian women in the age range of 15 to 64 years have suffered violence, either physical or sexual, from either partners or non-partners. This data has virtually the same overall meaning, i.e., that females are those more prone to suffering violence, particularly from

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males, so that the concept of the association mentioned previously has developed. Looking at the positive side of the statistics, above, the phenomenon of violence against women is now more prominent, and well known to the public. However, on the other hand, there is a deficiency which has emerged as the result of the raising of this topic, that being the exclusion of the cases of other types of violence.

In the discussion of violence against women, there is a firm polarization of women as being in the position of being the victims. Men are positioned as the perpetrators, being higher than women in a power relationship, whilst women, as the victims, have no power of choice at all. According to Foucault, in "Power/Knowledge" (2017), this power relationship is not static, but is actually dynamic, and accommodates to the context, and is not limited in nature, when violence is perpetrated. Although this is so, people are of the understanding that, overall, women tend to have less power than men, so that the reverse situation (women as the perpetrators and men as the victims) is not often considered. This is possibly so also because of the concept of hegemonic masculinity, which views men as being capable of defending themselves.

Looking at other statistical data, there are actually other pieces of research and statistical data which indicate that males can be victims, for instance statistical data, from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) in 2015, showed that one in four males in the USA have suffered physically abusive behavior from a partner, which percentage is not a great deal different to the data figures on female victims, that being that one in three women are victims. There is also data from Strauss, Tjaden, and Thoennes, through the fact sheets from Clark's Anti-Violence Education Program (as cited in Clark University, 2009). In these fact sheets, it is stated that between 7% and 25% of males have suffered violence from a girlfriend, or from a lifelong partner. As other evidence, research by Catalano, as cited in NCADV publications (2015), shows that 13.4% of males of Senior High School age in the USA have suffered violence from a partner.

Looking at this data, the authors moved to develop a different assumption, when viewing earlier data. The data emerging in these statistics was a recapitulation of reports previously received, and, for the authors, was like the tip of the iceberg. The part which emerges above is the smaller part, whilst the lower portion contains the bulk of the mass. It is actually possible that there are very many as yet unannounced reports, or stories, of violence against males, but there are many males unwilling to raise or report this matter, because

they subscribe to the idea of hegemonic masculinity, i.e., that males are the dominant creatures, particularly over females (Darwin, 1999).

Besides this, one must look at previous data, because actually violence is a multi-contextual phenomenon, so that it can occur in any type of relationship whatsoever, such as dating, marriage, and the parent/child relationship. For this reason, the authors decided to direct this research towards the phenomenon of violence against males, occurring within the context of relationships, because there are no laws or regulations specifically regulating dating relationships, and this shows a need for the situation to be made more public.

To explain this phenomenon, the authors took an incident from the Internet as an example (Oktaviani, 2013). In this incident, MW incurred violence from MW's partner, SD.

"The beginning of my (SD) violence towards him (MW) was; seven years ago we had a fight. I threw my purse at his face, but I didn't hit him. He got upset, threw the purse back at me, and hit me in the face. On account of that, the scuffling went on. I got more upset and often hit him. I reckoned I was more the one in charge than him, it was like I had bought him. He'd do anything for me, he'd do that. It was like he depended on me. That's what made me unbalanced." (SD)

In this article, the reason SD gave for committing violence against MW was that SD bore the financial responsibility for MW's living costs, so that what SD said was, "I thought I was more powerful than him". In this case, money was one symbol of power for SD, and shows that the power relationship in play was the opposite of the concept of patriarchy, whereby the female is in the inferior situation. Besides this, in this case, there is also a conclusion which may be drawn, i.e., violence is not something, the characteristics of which are always black and white (perpetrator - victim), but can also be transactional.

Because of this situation, the authors used three references in discussing the research: (1) post-structural feminism; (2) masculinity; and also (3) the thinking of Michel Foucault. To clarify these one by one, post-structural feminism, which emerged in the third of four waves of feminism, and is different to the radical feminism, which is of the view that women constitute the group which suffers the most widespread forms of oppression, and from liberal feminism, which stresses the fulfillment of the rights of women (Jaggar, Rothenberg, & The National Organization of Women,

as cited in Tong, 1998).

In accordance with its name, post-structural feminism does not concentrate its attention upon systematic or structural oppression, but focuses upon how the language used daily indicates the realities supported. This post-structural feminism is an important paradigm in research, and subsequent research is aimed at this paradigm. After that, this post-structural feminism was focused upon one well-known public figure, Michel Foucault, who is one of the philosophers of post-structural thinking, which emerged in several of Foucault's books, such as "The Archaeology of Knowledge" (1969), "Discipline and Punishment" (1975), "Power/Knowledge" (1980), and "The History of Sexuality" (1984). Of all of Foucault books, it is these which have become the references for the authors in conducting analysis.

Michel Foucault has several terms which may be employed to look at the phenomena of violence in dating, the first and most important being "discourse". This term "discourse" refers to the knowledge to which a person subscribes, and contains the set of norms or regulations formed by a group of people, with a certain goal, that being to comprehend a certain matter. One example of discourse is masculinity, which will also be discussed in this study.

Another term used by Foucault is "power". In other feminism doctrines, for example radical feminism, as previously mentioned, the opinion or view is held that, in a patriarchal environment, males structurally have power above that of females, so that females are structurally oppressed. However, in the view of Foucault (2017), power is something which moves (is fluid), it is not merely something which is possessed when born with a specific gender status, but something that shifts from one person to another, dependent upon the existent situation and conditions.

Masculinity is an idealist societal view, held in certain circles, concerning how, in fact, the character of a male should, and will, normally, be the converse of femininity. The two forms of the concept of masculinity used by the authors were the concepts of hegemonic masculinity, and of romantic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity refers to an idealistic picture of a male, who is seen as being dominant (over both females and fellow males), is powerful, successful and demonstrates other examples of domination (Darwin, 1999).

Meanwhile, romantic masculinity is the illustration of an ideal man, the concept of which was raised by Louisa Allen in 2007. Quite different from hegemonic masculinity, romantic masculinity is the illustration of an ideal male who demonstrates not too much dominance or hegemony over other people or groups, but

rather great capability in understanding the needs or feelings of a woman.

Considering the explanations of the phenomena and uses of the theories, within the discourse of violence towards men, the authors conducted this study in a qualitative manner, and demonstrated the nature of the discourses adhered to by the victims of relationship violence against men. This research completed that previously mentioned, concerning the phenomenon of violence, which, generally, is dominated by male perpetrators and female victims, as well as focusing upon stories of relationship violence suffered by males, and how they comprehended this matter, so that the discourses related to violence towards males, particularly in fields currently still ignored, could be raised. Besides this, via this study, two research questions were put forward: (1) what are the forms of the phenomenon of violence suffered by males during their relationships; and (2) what sorts of discursive formations bring to the fore the phenomenon of relationship violence perpetrated against males.

## Method

### Research Design

This research used qualitative research methods with a social constructivist paradigm. Within the social constructivist paradigm, the principle premise, or assumption, the authors held was that language in everyday use represents the reality seen on a daily basis (Willig, 2013). The authors combined these paradigms with post-structuralist feminist paradigms and the thoughts of Michael Foucault that on a daily basis people are influenced by the discourses followed, without realizing it. The very existence of these discourses, and/or a compilation of these discourses, will influence how a person comprehends incidents or phenomena experienced.

### Participants

The research participants comprised four people: (1) ED with his partner; (2) GA; (3) AL; and KM. ED was a participant who worked at a building project in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, whilst GA was ED's partner, a friend of one of the authors, studying in a private university. Both KM and AL were currently younger students undergoing the same course in the same faculty in the same university as that where the author studied. AL had previously separated from AL's part-

Table 1  
*Research Participant Profiles*

No	Participant	Schedule of Interviews		Duration
1	ED	Interview 1	17 January 2018, 11.23	5 minutes 5 seconds
		Interview 2	8 March 2018	10 minutes 15 seconds
		Interview 3	23 April 2018	20 minutes 52 seconds
		Interview 4	31 May 2018	39 minutes 1 second
2	GA	Interview 1	18 January 2018	39 minutes 54 seconds
3	AL	Interview 1	26 March 2018, 14.19	40 minutes 36 seconds
		Interview 2	16 April 2018, 11.11	28 minutes 23 seconds
4	KM	Interview 1	20 April 2018	22 minutes 53 seconds
		Interview 2	15 Mei 2018	56 minutes 13 seconds

ner, and recounted AL's experiences, whilst KM was still in a relationship, and it was KM's own experiences which KM related.

### Data Collection

Data collection was conducted by selecting males who had been in a relationship or were still in a relationship, were aged between 18 and 25 years, and had experienced relationship violence. The selection of participants was conducted through the broadcasting of an announcement, via social media. The participants who made contact, and who considered themselves to fit the criteria, were interviewed, and a decision was made as to whether they actually were suitable for further interviews. Participant selection was also conducted through recommendations, to which the aspirant participants had agreed.

The authors distributed informed consent forms containing explanations of the rights of the participants, and the recording process used during the interviews to be conducted with their consent. With these three participants, additional interviews were also conducted with their partners, if this was possible, to complete the picture of the story, viewed from both sides. The details regarding the frequencies and durations of the interviews are shown in Table 1.

### Research Process

**Interview with male participants.** In this process, the participants were asked the prepared questions in the interview guide.

**Interview with female participant.** Based upon the initial interviews, which the authors had conducted, it was very necessary to look at the complete picture, and this was done by interviewing also the female participant. In this way, the authors were able to obtain two different perspectives and see, in a holistic fashion, how the violence towards the male participant had oc-

curred. For this study, only GA, the partner of ED, was willing to be interviewed.

**Coding.** In this process, the authors summarized the answers obtained from the participants into small themes. Besides this, the authors also sought out matters which still needed further investigation.

**Further interviews.** Further interviews were conducted, until the data was felt to be adequate and ready for inclusion in the thematic analysis.

**Thematic analysis.** For the analysis process, the authors utilized the analysis process from Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis is one form of analysis, making identification of the patterns emerging in a conversation. The thematic analysis was conducted, using six stages, data identification, conducting of initial coding, construction of themes, review of themes, naming of themes, and commencing the analysis narration.

### The Position of the Authors

As researchers into relationship violence, one of the authors had never been involved in an 'official' relationship. What is meant by 'official' here is the type of romantic relationship, whereby friends are told openly: "She and I are an item". The author had been in a romantic relationship which very closely resembled such a relationship, but without such an announcement being made, what perhaps might be termed a "status-free (unofficial) relationship". In this status-free relationship, the author had had a romantic relationship with a colleague, who had been a close friend for two years. During this relationship, the author had realized that the author had experienced a number of behaviors which might be said to be less than satisfactory.

The author's experiences of these incidents gave rise to new insights, which had some subjectivity, which is that males also can possibly experience violence from females, who are normally considered to be victims, and who are the vulnerable parties, when there is dis-

discussion of or advocacy for, one party, related to violence.

This viewpoint assisted the author in delving into the stories, and in conducting the analysis. Through this research, the author did not wish to promote a form of generalization, nor cynicism regarding females, that females are also perpetrators of violence, but to develop the view of people concerning the phenomenon of violence, particularly relationship violence.

## Results and Discussion

Overall, the results of the discoveries made through interviews with all participants are divided into three parts: (1) Are males free from violence? This deconstructs the discourse on violence, particularly relationship violence, and reconstructs it in a more complete form; (2) Protector and Savior. This brings to the fore how the discourse on masculinity forms the discourse of the subject, so he continues enduring a violent relationship; and (3) Serving the Partner: A Commitment to 'The One'. This reveals how the discourses of hegemonic masculinity and romantic masculinity do not always emerge in the form of negative domination.

The first part answers the questions of what forms of relationship violence are suffered by males. Meanwhile, the second and third parts more completely illustrate the discourses and discursive formations within the minds of the participants.

### Is the Male Free from Violence?

**"Not violence, merely a duty."** The author was somewhat startled to hear the statement made by GA, when seeking participants for the research. The author did not know why GA wanted to admit that GA had committed violence against GA's partner, ED. Possibly it was because GA was promoting GA's self as a feminist, i.e., who saw and considered males and females as being equal, so that possibly this was an admission by GA of their conduct, and possibly because the discourse which has been accepted concerning violence tends to be the same, that is an action, either verbally or non-verbally, causes a wound, whether physical or psychological (WHO, 2002a; 2002b).

The first discussion with ED began. When the questions were put, it was noted that ED showed a response which tended towards the skeptical, and critical, in regards to the questions.

"I mean, what sort violence, eh, what sort? As for

physical violence, no way. So, I need to know what sort of violence you're talking about, what sort?" (ED 1, 3)

"As for me, apparently not, eh? It didn't feel like that." (ED 1, 4)

When the duration was totted up, this interview lasted less than five minutes. ED stated that there had been no violence within ED's relationship. Possibly from time to time there had been conflict; however the relationship was smooth, without meaningful conflict. Through this incident, the author felt there was something odd: if ED had suffered absolutely no violence, then why had GA admitted committing violence against ED?

Further to this question, it was decided by the author to interview GA, on a separate occasion. GA actually related incidents which ED had certainly not told of, in the first, five minute, interview. In the interview conducted with GA, GA stated that their first six months had been a difficult period, because they had to adapt to each other, and it was then that the violence had occurred, particularly in the form of power abuse.

"He gave up his time, could be an hour, could be more than six. What I mean is, he gave me everything he had, and I tended to abuse the power I had, so we weren't in a healthy relationship, for all that first year." (GA 1, 21)

"Yeah, that was the easiest bit. He took me every day, he picked me up every day. He was working, he organized things for me every day, and that was his problem for the first six years, eh, sorry, six months. Now if, for instance, he didn't want to pick me up, I got mad. And it wasn't clear why it was like that, was it, because he was helping me voluntarily?" (GA 1, 26)

What ED understood to be violence had also occurred with the second participant, AL. AL was one of the participants who was quite well known on campus, because of AL's relationship behavior at the beginning of the semester, as AL needed to play many roles, requiring AL to exceed his obligations as a partner. When the matter was put to AL, AL responded as follows:

"Oh, that wasn't violence, mate, I just became a slave of love." (AL)

In the interim, AL's experiences certainly could not

be classified as any form of violence; however there were conclusions which could be drawn throughout the interview. These were: (1) Both avoided conceiving of their experiences as violence; and (2) The discourse concerning the violence, which was understood to be violence, was physical activity, such as striking.

The discourses of hegemonic masculinity played roles in the way ED and AL understood incidents, whether pleasant or unpleasant, with their partners. In the discourses on hegemonic masculinity, it is the male who is considered to be dominant, with the greater power in his hands. To be the recipient of violence from the female, with who has less power, that is the reverse situation. Subscribing to these discourses, ED and AL certainly were of the opinion that there was no violent behavior.

A further discourse, that of romantic masculinity, is actually a one which is quite different to that of hegemonic masculinity, because of the construct that males are depicted as “caring”, particularly about the needs and feelings of people. One thing which caused the author to state that this discourse is not completely at variance with the concept of hegemonic masculinity, is the dominance of the male, who continues to expect great practical power. This was evident in the stories of both ED and AL.

“If there was a matter of who’d pay, personally I’d tell GA just to go, that was automatic, wasn’t it, and I’d have to pay? I made my own money, didn’t I? I was working, I could earn my own money, I had no problems. Later on, when talking about it, from the beginning I understood that GA was the type of person who can talk freely and whatever, so I’d accepted that before getting in a relationship, and I was happier with someone like that, than someone who got emotional and blew up all the time.” (ED 1, 4)

“Maybe because I always said “yes”, I always gave in to her, then when she wanted to go somewhere, I gave in, I always gave in, so the fact is she began to get used to that. So, every day I had to meet her, had to meet her whenever, whether I was at university or it was the middle of the night. Before, in fact, when we were in a relationship, I had to go there every day, to eat somewhere around the campus, or go out to the mall, and stuff like that. Often, we’d get back to her rooming house and it could be 10.30 P.M. or 11.00 P.M., something like that.” (AL 1, 18)

“I was walking there every day, at 07.00 in the morning. Seven in the morning, because she went to the

campus at 07.00. whilst I began at 08.00. But when I got there, she wouldn’t be ready, standing by, she still had to shower first, do other things, and stuff.” (AL 1, 19)

**Breaking the double standard: Physical violence towards males.** In one of the interviews with GA, GA said GA felt that ED was of the opinion that males could not suffer violence from females. Males can, and this violence is physical, and knowledge of this certainly emerged through several remarks of the participants which revealed the truth of this.

“Yes, because of that I didn’t understand, what violence was, what it was like. As for physical violence, no.” (ED 1, 3)

“Oh, it wasn’t violence, mate. I’d just become a ‘love slave’.” (AL)

“As for physical violence, no” showed the comprehension of ED regarding the discourse of violence, and the same was the case with AL, who said AL “only became a slave of love”. This knowledge showed the gap in their understanding of violence. On the one hand, they did not know if there were other situations which could be categorized as violence, and, on the other, it showed that their concept of violence was restricted to the physical kind.

Stories of physical violence by females towards males, such as were mentioned in the introduction), certainly relate something which can occur. If these stories appear in the mass media, their veracity may be questioned, but on this occasion, there were stories of physical relationship violence having been experienced by one of the participants.

The third participant was KM. KM had a partner, ID. Meanwhile, the cases of violence which occurred within their relationship were somewhat unique, because they illustrated incidents which had not emerged with previous participants.

KM had experienced several similar occurrences to those which happened to ED and AL with their partners, such as squabbles or complaining by the partner.

“The conflict was when... there was an argument, yeah? She certainly often talked about it too much. Well, if I did that, like picked her up too late, it was only a little problem, wasn’t it? And I explained why. When I was on my way, I let her know what was going on. “Sorry, Darling, there’s still traffic jams.” I sent photos, along the way. But she couldn’t accept

that, we'd argue, and then we didn't go. In the end she'd get mad, just over that sort of thing. It was the road, who could know?" (KM 1, 10)

Although this was so, there was an incident which was highlighted by KM, and this was an unusual incident for KM.

"Okay, now we get to the worst conflict, eh? When I was at her campus, she'd often look at my cell-phone, wouldn't she? Then she discovered I'd been chatting with someone I'd been close to, previously. Certainly, as far as I was concerned, this was just normal chatting. Normally, according to me, we didn't talk like people in a relationship. We just talked like friends, cool. After that, she got mad, because we were in a relationship. We were dating, and it was me who was wrong. When she knew, she got mad at me. She threw my cell-phone, that I was looking at, on the ground. We were at her campus (different one from KM's). When I tried to calm her down, she rejected that, got into the car, just wanted to go home. Later when I wanted to calm her down, so she could talk rationally, "Come on, let's talk". I knew I was in the wrong. She wouldn't accept that. When she got in the car, well, I automatically tried to block her. She shut the door, started up the car, called, "Are you going to get out of the way, are you stepping aside, getting out of the way?" I said, "No. Come on, get out and let's and talk reasonably". She didn't pay any attention, hit the gas, and collided with me. I was thrown quite far. I was hanging on to the hood, and thrown a good way." (KM 1, 10-11)

This incident showed that physical violence had occurred, which had indirectly shattered or reconstructed the discourse about hegemonic masculinity, and the practical application of its power. The hegemonic masculinity discourse indeed did not emerge in this incident. Greater power surfaced from within ID, so that ID felt able to take abusive steps, like throwing KM's handphone and crashing into KM, when KM blocked ID's way. This supports Foucault's (1980) statement about the nature of power and the influence of knowledge. The narrations and analyses in this section became the basis of viewing other phenomena, which emerged in the section dealing with further analysis.

### **Protector and Savior**

**"Just imagine I was previously with my parent."**  
The revelations in the preceding analysis, particularly

the concepts of ED, made the authors interested in revealing an apparently hidden phenomenon, one difficult to be raised. The authors again conducted a dialogue with ED, previously reading a number of new topics for discussion.

In the second conversation, the authors clarified several types of behavior displayed by GA, which GA conceived of as being violence. Such a type was GA asking ED to pick GA up each day, then, if this did not eventuate, GA would complain, then block access to all of ED's social media accounts, and reject all forms of contact with ED, so that ED had to arrive at 06.00 A.M., and sit beside GA's bed, to ask for forgiveness.

After ED related these occurrences, it was thought that perhaps the organization of ED's discursive formations, for ED, would change, and ED would be able to offer a different understanding to this research. However, it became obvious that ED responses were the same, just the normalization of GA's behavior.

"If you try to dig down into her mind, it's difficult, because she has a tendency to look at you as if there's nothing amiss. Like that." (GA 1, 25)

"Sure, there was conflict, every relationship has its conflict. It's not possible to just be quiet, but the most important thing is how we resolve that conflict. If I have a problem, for example in the morning, by that evening it's got to be finished." (ED 2, 10)

Besides these matters, ED also often conceived of GA's actions through using with term "menstruation". The authors saw this interpretation as the normalization of traditional femininity. Because all of GA's behavior or thoughts, whether violent or not, ED understood to be the results of the impacts of menstruation, which unknowingly makes females become emotional and moody, in line with the stereotype of women (Saguni, 2014), so that the absence of this behavior would be seen as inappropriate, and therefore the behavior could be understood.

Aside from this first discovery, above, the second dialogue with ED also brought forth another concept, which the authors found interesting. When the authors asked, "Didn't you ever feel under pressure when dealing with GA, ED?", ED answered that however stressed ED felt, ED imagined that this incident had occurred between ED and ED's parents, long ago, so that ED needed to be patient (quotation ED 2, 23).

"I certainly warned her, but at that time I was going through the same age things. The egos were very big.

Yeah, if you look at it, I had a high EQ and a high IQ, and the one who normally gives advice at those times is not the partner, but the parent, so I was like on the same level, like that.” (ED 2, 22)

“If, for example, you look at my experience with my parents, maybe GA felt under pressure because I was like, “Oh, righto.”, so I was like, similar.” (ED 2, 23)

“Like when I was at university, just like GA at that time. Mum and Dad would say, “Don’t get home late at night”, whilst I still wanted to be with my friends, like I wanted to be free. Maybe when GA was dating with me, maybe there was a feeling I restricted her or whatever, like I was oppressing her. So maybe GA’s feelings with me were always in transition, like that.” (ED 3, 19)

As a third party, the authors subjectively saw that this concept, from ED, of the behavior, was less than accurate, because ED was partner, not parent, to GA. However, the positioning of ED as a parent brought forth the knowledge that as a partner, it was ED who had to understand and comprehend anything which GA did, whether good or bad, and this understanding the researcher named the discourse of “Daddyism”. “Daddyism” is actually a term in *The Encyclopedia of Sex and Gender*, coined by Felwald Malti-Douglas (2007), which indicates the sexual and romantic orientation of a male towards a younger female. However, although this is the case, there is also the word “daddy” which also points to a representation of masculinity in ED, causing the researcher to give the discourse this name.

If one look again at the discourse of hegemonic masculinity, then actually dominance can be understood as having two forms: (1) domination on the hegemonic structural form (male over female) and the presence of this form of misuse of strength; and (2) domination which makes the male become a creature having the expectation of great power, so that he hopes to be able to do many things for people around him, particularly, in this research, females.

On the whole, the authors concluded that the themes, discourse and understanding shown by ED give rise to a new position for participants, which are as “protective angels”. In the concept held by the author, a protective angel is the figure of a creature that, by the construct of the author’s language, is white, clean, kind, and gentle, but, if needed, is ready to drive away or offer opposition to enemies, who may disrupt either God or man.

**“There I was wrong, so I accept whatever the con-**

**sequences may be.”** From the three informants, in the understanding of the authors, KM was the one who suffered the worst violence, because it involved physical force, not blows, but a vehicle being aimed at and colliding with KM, when KM was, at the time, attempting to calm ID, who thought KM had been having an affair.

The story apparently did stop there. KM was subjected to other violence. Besides being hit by a car, KM had KM’s cell-phone thrown to the ground, and, when KM went back to ID’s boarding house to get KM’s car, ID had scratched it, and damaged the rear-view mirror.

During this relationship, the situation of KM as the partner of ID can be seen to have vanished. KM should have been at the point where KM would end all connections with ID, because KM had repeatedly suffered incidents of violence, with ID as the perpetrator. Nonetheless, just as with ED, KM stated again that ID’s actions were still understandable.

Moving to KM’s relationship history, ID was in fact KM’s seventh partner. In previous relationships, KM suffered physical violence, in the form of slaps from KM’s partner, but nonetheless KM made statements able to give rise to a new discourse, or knowledge, in this research.

“Well, earlier on, it was just a slap, eh? I got slapped before. Being slapped isn’t too serious, is it? Because, maybe then I was wrong, so I’d accept that, whatever the consequences were.” (KM 1, 21)

On the basis of this quotation, above, the statement that slapping was not too serious a thing, which in real terms meant that physical violence in the form of the misuse of power by a woman, was not a problem for KM, so that it may be seen that the discourse of hegemonic masculinity was playing a role here.

Of further interest is the sentence in the last section, above, that when KM was at fault, even being slapped was not a problem for KM. These words point out the difference between the two participants in their understanding of their partners. For ED, whatever was the form of behavior from GA, it was not violence, provided it was not striking; whilst for KM, the understanding was that incorrect behavior, be it verbal or non-verbal (such as cursing or using crude words) was also included in the category of violence, however, KM considered it to be appropriate, particularly if KM had done something wrong.

KM related that KM often changed partners, and according to KM, the number of females with whom KM had had relationships which were considered ‘official’,



was seven, and this enabled KM to have an ‘agency’, or autonomy, as a playboy, who might actually feel no loss if KM lost, or separated from, one of KM’s partners. This could be seen from several of KM’s relationship experiences, one being when KM parted from, in particular, a woman named FR.

“The fourth was named FR. She was actually in the class behind me in Senior High, so I was in Second Class and she was still in First. Basically, she was a spoiled kid. She was the first of three kids, all of ‘em female. Her character was spoiled and firey. I like her, and we seemed to be compatible, at the time. What’s more, I knew her family, too.” (KM 2, 19)

“We hadn’t been together six months, and I broke it off, because I went back to FR, so my life has always revolved around FR. Even when we’re not an item, I’m close to her again”. (KM 2, 27)

Not only this, but KM had had several affairs and sexual relationships with a number of partners, which strengthened KM’s ‘agency’ as a playboy.

Author: “You cheated on her? How? Was that emotional cheating or...?”

KM: “In all ways. It started with the emotional, up through to sleeping together. I slept with all of the women, because I’ve got great sexual needs.” (KM 2, 22)

Author: You said, didn’t you, just now, that you slept with the previous one, if I’m not mistaken?”

KM: With all of them, I slept with ‘em all.”

Author: You have? With all of them?”

KM: With all my dates. I slept with all the others.” (KM 2, 42)

Although this was the case, the point here, in discussing the ‘agency’ (autonomy) of KM as a player, is to connect it with KM’s understanding of the situation today, which is with ID. This ‘agency’/autonomy did not emerge at all in the dialogue conducted with KM, which KM indicated was because of KM’s reluctance to conclude KM’s relationship with ID. What also emerged were new understandings, previously undiscovered with the other respondents. When asked what the basis of KM’s reluctance to end KM’s relationship with ID was, KM stated that there was always the possibility that ID would change, so that if KM surrendered, KM would have failed.

“I thought then, ‘Don’t give in here’. If, for instance,

I’d gone then, in my opinion I’d have given in, for what? When she had realized her mistakes, she wanted to change, but I couldn’t help.” (KM 1, 23)

Besides this, KM also felt that KM had a moral burden, and felt that it’s KM’s duty to save ID from ID’s past, principally because KM was close to ID’s family. In the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI - Greater Indonesian Language Dictionary)* (2019), ‘moral’ is defined as: “(teachings concerning) both the good and bad things, in the opinion of the majority, regarding conduct, duty, et cetera. In the reality of this language, the authors could see that the word selected by KM here was “duty”. The masculinity discourse made KM see himself as someone who had to be able to save ID. This discourse the authors named the “hero discourse”, which possibly would make KM, in the future, be seen as a strong person, whilst at this timepoint being seen as both gentle and loyal, though bearing unseen scars.

### **Service to the Partner: A Commitment to “The One”?**

“**Together forever.**” In this part, the authors discussed the history of relationships, which, in the thinking of Foucault, influences how the “inter-organism” relationship is formed, as well as how the division of power develops, between the partners. Regarding ED, ED is a person who was working as an architect on several projects in the Surabaya region. In the beginning, ED and GA were not in the same environment, that is the same school or the same work environment. ED initially met GA through social media, and ED’s motivation in urging that they meet was not serious, ED just wished to increase the number of women ED considered beautiful, on ED’s friend list. In relation to another story, ED actually had no desire to be partners with GA, because ED always recalled the lessons from ED’s father, that if ED wished to have a relationship, ED must first have permanent employment and an income.

“Because he had money, didn’t he? That was the great thing about him. Certainly he thought he had to support me. That was great, but also not great. So he felt like someone who... I mean on matters of gender, he was honest. But that was teaching from his father, “If you don’t have it, then don’t be weird [sic], or whose teachings was that.” (GA 1, 54)

Whilst at senior high school, ED several times had the opportunity to make contact with GA through chatting, although the relationship was broken off, to be

commenced later on, when ED would have work. When asked about ED's relationship experiences, ED stated that ED had absolutely never previously been in a relationship, throughout ED's life, except that with GA, so that, according to ED, the period before getting together with GA had been a period of seeking out which woman would be most suitable to be ED's partner.

"Well, when you chose a partner, you've chosen her from the beginning, like if from the beginning she wasn't right, forget it." (ED 4, 24)

For this reason, and after that, in ED's knowledge about being in a relationship, future times became the times to align himself. Based on dialogue with ED, at that point the knowledge emerged that ED was striving to contrast women with ED's projects, and also, at the same time, to humanize them.

"Lots of people get into relationships, so if sometimes you lose, it's like in the world of contracting, if you work and feel you're losing, you'll leave it. Just deal with it. I don't like to be called a playboy, and just change partners. Now me, I really want to be in a relationship, but I'll choose, it's not just get into a relationship, then it's over." (ED 4, 12)

When asked directly about GA's unpleasant behavior, which might be considered to be violent, ED stated that ED did not consider GA to be so bad, whatever GA's behavior, because ED had "selected" GA, and was prepared to adapt, and be responsible for whatever occurred in the future. ED felt that ED knew what GA's personality was like.

"Then, after talking it through, I could understand that GA's the type of person who tells it like it is, so I accepted that, way before we dated, and I'm happier with someone like that than someone who gets emotional and explodes." (ED 1, 4)

To change the subject, actually GA was very aware of ED's understanding, and GA also realized that GA had previously committed violence towards ED, although this had now greatly reduced. However, on the other hand, there were certain instances when GA was again abusive to ED, and had committed a number of violent acts which have previously been mentioned in earlier sections. Later GA had regretted this, but had repeated it.

Based upon the dialogue with ED, it may be concluded that it was the knowledge that GA was ED's first

and last love which was the key to the cyclical nature of the violence in the relationship between ED and GA.

Turning to KM, whose case was completely different to that of ED. In the previous section, it was stated that, on the basis of KM's relationship history, KM's position to be that of a player, and, when they were added up, KM's official relationships numbered six, before KM finally partnered with ID, and also KM admitted to having had affairs on a number of occasions. Besides these, KM also added that KM had had sexual relations with every woman who had been KM's partner.

Author: "You have, haven't you..., whatcamacalit, played around before, if I wasn't mistaken just now?"

KM: "I slept with all of 'em."

Author: "With all of them?"

KM: "With all of my partners, all of 'em, I played around with 'em." (KM 2, 42)

Although this was so, in KM's relationship with ID, KM displayed an understanding quite similar to that of ED, indeed KM's role as a player did not materialize, and moreover KM's discourse underwent a change, on the subject of having affairs.

"Yes, I've been cheated on twice. Personally, if I'm cheated on, yeah, I get mad. Who doesn't get mad, if they're cheated on, let alone if the word gets out? If it was just chatting, maybe I could still accept it, but not if it goes beyond that, even going to Bali. They slept there, so surely they slept together there, didn't they? If I see a woman like that, I get disgusted, I want nothing more to do with her." (KM 2, 33)

KM's aggregation of knowledge had previously created a discourse about masculinity, which is ongoing, which initially made KM content to go from woman to woman and be loyal. Indeed this discourse made KM always ready to accept everything which was occurring with his current partner, as was the case with ED.

"I just changed the screen, because I was insured, and I knew what her behavior was like. So, from the beginning, I'd protected my things." (KM 1, 14)

The reduction in the gaps between discourses, which had occurred for both ED and KM, showed that the dominance of the male was not always of a loss-causing nature, nor did it necessarily make the other party, the female, submissive and suffer losses, but indeed had quite the opposite effect, on the male himself, because with the expectations of the power the male had, the

male needed to play many roles with people.

**Freed from the shackles of violence: The story of a love slave.** Not all tales in this study contain stories of males who serve and look after their partners in an ongoing fashion, and thus it was with AL. AL was the second male participant who previously had been in relationships, four in his case, before AL finally ended up in one with AG, and who had suffered the phenomenon of violence, which AL himself narrated.

On the basis of statements made by AL, AL felt that AL's relationships, from the first to the third, comprised a process of what might be termed "trying it out", till finally AL began a relationship with one of AL's senior high school friends, VT. VT was a friend in senior high school, who was often top of the class, and was active in school activities.

"In senior high I had partners, too, I don't remember which one, maybe two back, but, well, we supported each other, like that. We helped each other get better results, we had more spirit, when we were together, something like that." (AL 2, 3)

It was this experience which eventually formed AL's knowledge, that being in a relationship the characteristics of which involved give and give, was transactional and mutually helpful, and made the lives of the partners better. After the relationship with VT broke up, they remained good friends, and still make contact with one another, up to the present. Moving on from this relationship, the time when AL began at university was the start of AL's adulthood, and AL wanted to have a serious relationship as a stage in AL's individual development into early adulthood. When beginning at university, AL met and approached a woman named AG, and started their relationship after a month.

If in AL's previous knowledge about relationships, AL considered that a relationship was a mutually supportive process, this was possibly contrary to the facts of the relationship in which AL became involved, with AG. In the beginning, AL claims, AL may have become a "love slave", and, in subsequent conversations, AL explained why AL had said that.

In the very early part of AL's relationship with AG, AG's abusive characteristics were actually not apparent, because at that time AL was feeling happy and, in the opinion of the authors, it was at that time AL's masculinity discourses also changed, particularly the one about romantic masculinity. Because AL considered himself to be a male who was moving into adulthood, AL wanted to be "serious", and accede to AG's requests.

"Maybe because I was in the habit of saying, "Yes", wherever she wanted to go, I'd go along with that, I always agreed, she began to get used to that. So, everyday she had to be met, I had to meet her whenever, even though I wanted to be at lectures, or in the middle of the night." (AL 1, 18)

This relationship continued, and, in time, gradually AL's role as a serious partner instead actually became a burden to AL, and disrupted AL's studies and other aspects of AL's life.

"Before, when we were an item, we had to do somewhere every day, whether to eat off-campus or go out to the mall, or whatever. Often, we got back to her boarding house around 10.30 or 11.00 at night, something like that. Then later, when she reverted to the type of person who can't go straight to sleep, sort of an insomniac, I had to be with her by 'phone or video-call. This became the norm, even though at the time I had lots of lectures to attend, I had to do this from 07.00 A.M., early in the course. That was tiring, really; at the end I was tired after lectures and doing assignments, so that often I had to sandwich in my assignments, did them in my spare time." (AL 1, 18)

AL's gender role as a male which began with accompanying AG to class, taking AG to the campus, inviting AG out, and accompanying AG before AG slept, gave rise to the reality that AG also had within AG a masculinity discourse, particularly hegemonic masculinity, the power expectations of which were reflected in the roles AL had to undertake.

One interesting matter concerning AL, which is in great need of highlighting, is the shift in AL's discourse, that is that the power expectations AL held for the seriousness of AL's relationship with AG, and the daily tasks which AL had to undertake, AL should never have had to undertake, unlike what occurred with ED, or even KM. AL stated that AL was listless, and this is seen as being flagged by AL's knowledge that a relationship also needs to be transactional, so that the romantic masculinity discourse AL had held during AL's previous relationship with VT, which had not been seen as serious by either side, had some give and take, as well as also having an appropriate proportionality of roles for the two parties, a balance with other aspects of their lives, and was not a burden on university studies or other activities. Because of this, finally AL ended AL's relationship with AG.

“Yeah, we broke up, actually at the time of the *Ujian Akhir Semester* (UAS - End of Semester Exams).” (AL 1, 23)

“I was the one who decided on that, because I thought a lot about what were the benefits, and what actually weren’t. So, I was normally the more rational one, too. Because I thought, “If you have a partner, you should take that partner in a better direction. But, I tried in the beginning, and, more towards the end, and actually it was me who was attracted. Before, after Semester 1, after we’d separated, my marks and my *Indeks Prestasi Kumulatif* (IPK - Cumulative Achievement Index) was, in my opinion, less than satisfactory, whilst it could have been higher, but, certainly because of the time I’d spent on her, it was sort of thrown away.” (AL 1, 24)

In this research, this step taken by AL showed that the victim of relationship violence, in this case a male, can end the cycle of violence afflicting them, and rebalance the aspects of their life. This also shows that males can also still comprehend that abusive conduct is something which may not be perpetrated in a relationship. These two points indicate that there are two types of news, positive and negative. The positive is that, as with other phenomena of violence, although there is the phenomenon of victims who cannot escape from the cycle of violence they are suffering, nonetheless not all victims are like that. However, the negative is, that it is necessary that the victim waits to be tortured, and to suffer big losses, and only then realizes that the behavior of the female is classifiable as violence, thus needing to be avoided.

### Shortcomings of the Research

This research gave a deep illustration of the phenomenon of violence in relationships, however is very necessary that attention is paid to the fact that Foucauldian analysis, which was the discussion for the analysis in this research, is not the sole way of viewing the phenomena of violence towards males, let alone viewing this from the Foucauldian perspective, which does not discuss power relationships on a large scale between two groups, for instance males and females, which is often important to be considered in discussing relationship inequality.

### Conclusion

Based upon the themes which have emerged in this

research, it may be seen that actually these themes indicate that violence may occur in a cyclic form. Besides this, the discourses of hegemonic masculinity, which dominated in the interviews, actually give rise to a picture that this matter causes the participants physical and emotional losses, and losses of energy and time, and, most seriously, makes them unable to escape from the cycle of violence. This is unlike the previous discourses, concerning the study of gender, that masculinity, particularly hegemonic and toxic masculinity, is the principle cause of violence.

This discourse on masculinity is closely allied with that of a patriarchal culture, such as the normalization of femininity, and discursive forms which make it possible for the holder of power to use their power to serve the perpetrator of violence.

Through this research, the authors have seen that relationship violence, in which the male is the victim, is also no less serious than relationship violence perpetrated upon the female, nor that in other settings, already examined. The violence which is perpetrated upon females is also perpetrated against males, particularly physical violence.

Because this research has shown just how severe relationship violence against males can become, it is suggested that in the future quantitative research be conducted using a survey methodology, to estimate the number of cases of violence perpetrated against males in various important settings, such as relationship and domestic violence.

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