

EXPLORING DOMINANT MASCULINITY

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Handbook of educational activities to understand
the impact of dominant masculinity in sexual
and gender-based violence

For over 12 years old

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INTRODUCTION

WHY THIS HANDBOOK?

This handbook is an educational tool for social change with a pack of activities designed to provide resources to the facilitators of Nuoret Kotkat to run activities for raising awareness and challenging how over 12 years old understand sexual and gender-based violence and to tackle masculinities in the context of sexual and gender-based violence.

The handbook is a follow up of the seminar I Act: Exploring masculinities held by IFM-SEI in cooperation with the Council of Europe's Youth Sector and founded by the European Youth Foundation.

Before using the activities, we suggest going through the handbook to familiarise yourself with the topic, the terms and the activities. Sexual and gender-based violence is a sensitive topic and it is important to be well-prepared before running activities with youth.

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE STARTING

1. Sexual and gender-based violence is a sensitive issue. When working with young people is important to consider that there may be survivors, meaning that some activities and discussions could trigger memories and thoughts from previous experiences. As facilitator, you are responsible for people's reactions. Ensure that participants feel as safe and supported as possible to take part in the activities. Beforehand, explain the content of the activity and offer them to take a break if they need it. Highlight that during the workshop participants should not share personal experiences of sexual violence or similar. We are not talking about our own lives in the activities but discussing the topic. If any participant feels like sharing something personal, we encourage them to do it after the session, in a safe space and with the facilitators.
2. You should do everything you can to prevent sexual violence but be aware that you will not be always able to avoid incidents. The perpetrators will try everything to commit sexual violence as it is a pre-mediated action.
3. This handbook is a follow up project of an IFM-SEI training course. We are not providing professional advice. The aim of the handbook is to reflect on the topic and think how to work with young people.

DEFINITIONS

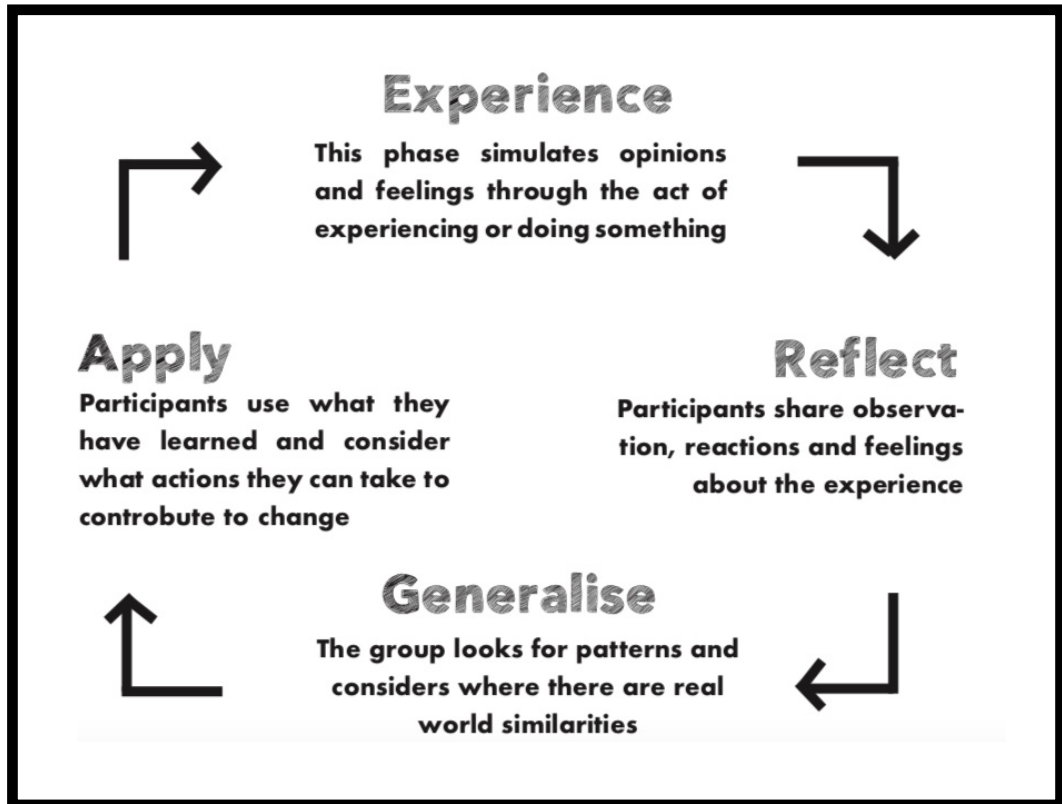
This section aims to provide a definition of the terms used in this handbook, so everyone understands the terms in the same way. There may be disagreements with the definitions below, thus, we encourage to give feedback to improve.

- » **Androgynous** is the combination of masculine and feminine characteristics into an ambiguous form
- » **Bystander.** Person who observe an unappropriated behaviour.
- » **Active bystander:** take an action to help to end the situation.
- » **Passive bystander:** do not give importance to the situation and do not feel the responsibility of acting
- » **Cis** is a term for people whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth
- » **Complicit masculinity** which is a form of masculinity that does not include all of the qualities of hegemonic masculinity but does not challenge it, either. (R.W.Connell)
- » **Cross dressing** is the act of wearing items of clothing not commonly associated with one's sex
- » **Drag** refers to the performance of masculinity, femininity, or other forms of gender expression
- » **Gender socialization.** is the process by which we learn our culture's gender-related rules, norms, and expectations.
- » **Hegemonic masculinity.** A social construction practice that shows how men are in a dominant position in society and over other genders, including other men, making a society inequal in gender. Constantly proving their heterosexuality, independence, competitiveness, risk-taking, self-discipline, physical toughness, aggression, violence, emotional control, being the primary provider and taking the initiative, marginalizing other ways of being a man. (Hinojosa, R., 2010)
- » **Perpetrator.** Person who commits the act of sexual violence
- » **Rape culture.** An environment in which rape is prevalent and in which sexual violence is normalized and excused in the media and popular culture
- » **Sexual and gender-based violence.** Any unwelcome sexual act, intention of obtain sexual act, including verbal or physical actions directed against individual or groups of individuals on the basis of their gender. (OHCHR, 2014)
- » **Sexual harassment.** Unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature which can be verbal or physical (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission)
- » **Spectrum.** Used to classify something in terms of its position on a scale between two extreme points
- » **Subordinated masculinity** is a form of masculinity in which a person lacks many of the qualities of hegemonic masculinity while also expressing qualities opposite to hegemonic masculinity. For example, it may involve acting in a feminine way, being overly emotional, or not being heterosexual. (R.W.Connell)
- » **Survivor.** An empowering term to call the victim meaning that the person has experienced sexual violence and survived.
- » **Trans** is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth
- » **Victim.** Person who experience or has experienced sexual violence or other harassment.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE

The activities will be applying the experiential learning cycle as an approach which is a concept developed by Kolb, D. A. Although not always the four phases are obvious, when planning the activities this four-stage cycle is in mind. (See figure 1)

Figure 1. Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle by IFM-SEI



ACTIVITIES

- » Each activity indicates the estimated duration.
- » The activities can be adapted to the group, combined and divided to have breaks in between.
- » Some activities include theory to support the facilitator in implementing the activity.
- » You can use silent discussions if the group is quiet. In silent discussions, write the topics on flipchart paper and the participants answer them individually, writing down their opinion. Safe space and starting with easier workshops might make the group feel more confident to discuss.

LET'S TALK ABOUT MASCULINITIES

(40 MIN)

Objectives:

- » Reflect how masculinity is seen in the society
- » Understand what hegemonic masculinity is

Materials:

- » List of statements
- » Posters with agree/disagree
- » Flipchart

STEP BY STEP

1. *Word race.* 2 teams – each team forms a line behind a flipchart. Teams are presented with a word and have 90 seconds to write as many words as possible that they associate with the original word. Each participant writes a word, then hands the pen to the next person in the line. No censorship – whatever word comes to mind.

After a couple of warm-up words (food, music, transport etc.) this is done with the word “masculinity”.

2. *Agree/Disagree.* Place in one side of the room/space a poster with “Agree” and in other side “disagree”. Read the statements aloud, give time the participants to place themselves and ask why they are in that side. Participants can also place themselves in between.

Statements:

- » Women or other genders are better taking care of children than a man.
 - » It is OK for a woman to carry condoms.
 - » Men need to have sex more than women or other genders
 - » A person being emotional in public is not masculine.
 - » It is OK for a man to show their weaknesses.
 - » To proof someone's manhood, the person should defend the reputation with force if they have to
 - » Men are expected to take care of their family
 - » It is OK for a women or other gender to be stronger than man
3. *Debriefing.* After the reflection in every statement and the word extracted from the race, discuss with the participants what they think masculinity is and the difference with hegemonic masculinity (check the chapter of definitions)

Aim:

- » Understand the concept of social construction gender and the different concepts of gender

Objectives:

- » Participants understand the difference between sex and gender
- » Participants know the different aspect of gender (identity, social role, expression)
- » Participants understand masculinity as a form of behaviour and social position
- » Outlining a working definition for hegemonic masculinity
- » Outline different aspects of our societies that reinforce (hegemonic) masculinity

Materials

- » Moderation cards (green, red, yellow), markers, pin boards with the terms *sex*, *gender identity*, *gender role* and *gender expression*, pins or tape

STEP BY STEP

1. Ask participants to think/draw/write down or pick up from the surroundings something that represents their personal experience with masculinity. It can be anything, e.g. a piece of clothing, a book, a poem or short video. It can also be something that stands for or symbolizes something, for example, a hobby or an abstract idea. Please consider, that you will be sharing your “thing” with the whole group.
2. **Explaining sex and gender.** (see Theory 2) The facilitator pins the broad terms *sex*, *gender identity*, *gender role* and *gender expression* to a pin board or wall. In the following exercise more cards will be added under those categories.

- » Then they shortly ask the group what they think the different categories mean. The answers will be classified.

Afterwards they explain the missing parts, highlighting especially that *the meaning of sex and gender have been created through social interaction. People attach meaning to the things around them and behave based on those meanings. These meanings can be different based on society and the situation around. Example: the value of the currency.*

3. **Sharing session: The thing about masculinity** The Participants share their “thing” they chose from the step 1 with the group: Why does that specific thing symbolize masculinity for you?
 - » During the sharing, the facilitator writes down key words about masculinity on moderation cards: green, red and yellow. (See theory 1)
 - » If necessary, split the group in smaller groups so the sharing process won't take too long

4. Debriefing.

- o How do you feel?
- o What do you think about the 3 different terms (hegemonic, complicit and subordinated)?
- o What is considered to be especially masculine (hegemonic masculinity)?
- o How do people around you or yourself support and reinforce those traits (complicit masculinity)?
- o What is considered especially un-masculine (subordinated masculinity)?
- o How can we improve the situation?
- o Would you like to add something?

Theory for the activity:

Theory 1. Beforehand the facilitator pins the head categories to a wall or pin board:

- » Hegemonic masculinity (green)
- » Complicit masculinity (red)
- » Subordinated masculinity (yellow)

This understanding of masculinity comes from Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell. The facilitator explains that in her understanding masculinity refers to a certain set of behaviours and tactics (to establish power and domination) and to a social position. This can also be explained on the fly when certain keywords are presents (e.g. differentiation from “girly” activities).

The group comes back together, present their results and categorizes them.

The facilitator explains that hegemonic masculinity refers to a dominant masculinity in a certain time and space, so for example the result inside right wing organizations, amongst rich people or in another part of the world might be very different.

Theory 2. Sex refers to the physical characteristics of the reproductive system:

- » Hormones
- » Chromosomes
- » External genitals
- » Internal genitals
- » Secondary gender markers

The focus should be to explain that despite its seeming factuality the distinction into exactly two sexes (*male* and *female* – pin them at the board) are mere interpretations of those physical traits. Other cultures and times did have other understandings. Also, one should highlight, that although *intersex* people (pin it) quite obviously do not fit into a dichotomy, newer research suggests that neither do most people who would not be classified *intersex*. The opposite is *endosex* or *dyadic sex* (pin it).

Gender identity refers to how a person understands themselves, e.g.:

- » Man
- » Woman
- » Transgender
- » Non-binary
- » Intersex
- » Agender
- » Two-Spirit
- » ...

One should highlight, that the terms *cis* (pin it) and *trans* (pin it) do not necessarily refer to identities, but mostly to social positions.

Gender role refers to the expectation people have for us based on our assumed gender.

Gender expression finally on the one side refers to how we express ourselves to highlight our gender identity or role and on the other side how others perceive us:

- » Clothing
- » Hobbies
- » Behaviour and habitus
- » Speech
- » Make-up
- » Hair length
- » ...

Those traits could be classified as *masculine*, *feminine* or *androgynous* (pin it), but reality is much more complex – also (as we will learn) the terms masculinity and femininity refer to much more than just a way of expression. *Drag* and *cross dressing* (pin it) are also forms of gender expression.

GENDER SOCIALIZATION

(30 MIN)

Aim: Introducing the concept of gender socialisation

Objectives: Understand how stereotypes and socialisation is related to the concept of gender

Material

» Flipchart, pens

STEP BY STEP

1. Word race. 2 teams – each team forms a line behind a flipchart. Teams are presented with a word and have 90 seconds to write as many words as possible that they associate with the original word. Each participant writes a word, then hands the pen to the next person in the line. No censorship – whatever word comes to mind.

After a couple of warm-up words (food, music, transport etc.) this is done with words “man” and “woman”.

Discuss:

- a. What is different in the lists that relate to men and the lists that relate to women?
- b. What do the participants think about this? Why are some words there?
- c. Why are some words on one side and not the other?
- d. Circle stand out words – go for descriptive stuff such as “brave” or “caring”, rather than bits of anatomy

Bring up stereotypes / socialisation

2. Defining gender socialization. On two different flip charts ask for people’s associations with words “gender” and “socialisation” - and come up with one definition of *Gender socialisation*.

THE MAN BOX

(30 MIN)

Aim:

- » Exploring the process of “male socialisation” and its effects on individuals, their relationships and society as a whole.

Objectives:

- » Introducing the concept of the “man-box”
- » Provide opportunities to understand how the “man-box” limits opportunities and experiences for boys and men and impacts on women and girls

Materials

- » Flipcharts, Pens, Laptop, Projector, Blue tack, manbox, paper, ball of wool, “manbox” sticky notes

Preparation required

- » Build + decorate manbox

STEP BY STEP

1. Tony Porter: A Call to Men. Show TED talk:
https://www.ted.com/talks/tony_porter_a_call_to_men?language=en
Discuss
 - o What do people think? Initial comments?
 - o How did Tony's experience impact on him?
 - o Are people aware of similar messages within organisations/societies?
 - o How is breaking out of the man box beneficial to men?
2. Give each group of 3-5 people a cardboard box, sticky notes and pens. Ask them to write down expectations on how to “be a real man” (normative masculinity) in their society. Write these in the form of characteristics (e.g. strong, wealthy, always horny). Put the sticky notes on the cardboard box, then read some of the sticky notes from each group out loud

What happens if you do not live up to these expectations?

- » Do you think that it is possible to live your whole life within the box and never step outside of it?
 - » How would it feel to always make sure to be all of those things?
 - » We know that most people fall completely or partly outside of this box. And some would like to be more outside of the box but fear the repercussions. How can we make it easier to be outside of the box and show people that they are brave for standing outside of it despite the norms?
3. Experiencing the man box. All stand in a circle. Take a ball of wool, hold on to one end and throw the ball to someone else. Each time someone pass on the wool they are asked to name a message that society is giving boys and young men about how to be a man. This can be personal or depersonalised. When everyone has had the wool talk about how it would feel to be caught in the middle of the net. Then ask for things we can do to either break free from/challenge the man box or one reason why it is beneficial for men to challenge this and then free the throw.

STATISTICS QUIZ

(30 MIN)

Aim:

- » Exploring the process of “male socialisation” and its effects on individuals, their relationships and society as a whole.

Objectives:

- » Present statistics on gender-based violence

Preparation required

Update statistics to the latest year

https://www.stat.fi/til/rpk/2018/15/rpk_2018_15_2019-06-06_tie_001_en.html

STEP BY STEP

1. Statistics quiz. Ask questions, give 4 possible answers. Participants can go to one corner of the room based on what they feel the answer is. Discuss and share why they chose their answer and reflect on the correct answer.

Statistics

1. How many victims of domestic violence and intimate partner violence were reported in 2018 in Finland?
 - a. 500
 - b. 2200
 - c. **9900**
 - d. 5100
2. Among adults, what is the per cent of women were victims of domestic violence and intimate partner violence in 2018 in Finland?
 - a. 45,6
 - b. 98
 - c. **76,5**
 - d. 37,2
3. From all the victims of domestic violence, what per cent were minors in 2018 in Finland?
 - a. 5,7
 - b. **24,4**
 - c. 52,1
 - d. 18,2
4. Of all suspects, what per cent were men?
 - a. **77,6**
 - b. 12,4
 - c. 54,2
 - d. 49,3
5. The per cent of victim who had been the victims of domestic violence and intimate partner violence more than once in 2018 is...
 - a. 10
 - b. **20**
 - c. 30
 - d. 40
6. From the 20 percent of the victim who had been victims of domestic violence and intimate partner more than once (from the previous question) how much of the per cent were women?
 - a. 5
 - b. 20
 - c. **84**
 - d. 56

Suggested questions for discussion:

1. Do you think other genders besides woman and man are included in this statistic?
Do you think other genders should be included?
2. What do you think about the numbers and percentages?
3. Do you think all the victims report?
4. Do you think all victims are taken seriously? Do you think some victims have less voice in situations like this?
5. Do you think all men report? Why?
6. How do you think people who do not identify as men or women might feel about this classification?
7. Do you think violence from men against other men are considered?
8. What could we you as youth organisation do to reduce these numbers?

MASCULINITY AND RAPE CULTURE

(45 MIN)

Aim: Exploring the process of “male socialisation” and its effects on individuals, their relationships and society as a whole.

Objective: Provide information on how masculinity is reflected in the media

Material: Adverts Appendix 3

Preparation required: put together presentation with adverts relating to rape culture

STEP BY STEP

1. Masculinity and rape culture. Show adverts.
 - o What messages are the adverts giving about being a man?
 - o How do the adverts display women?
 - o What do the adverts say about the relationship between men/women?
 - o Are these messages harmful or harmless? Why?
2. How do our organisation challenge harmful gender roles? In groups, discuss the following:
 - » Can you identify attitudes / beliefs about masculinity that could potentially be harmful within your organisations? If so how?
 - » Think of ways that these attitudes could be challenged, both in day to day life / activities, and via specific workshops / campaigns / programs.

Aim:

- » Exploring how masculinities are related to power and control, both on a societal and an individual level.

Objectives:

- » Introducing the link between gender stereotypes and gender inequality
- » presenting a definition of domestic abuse and coercive control
- » gain an understanding of how victim blaming, and perpetrator excusing are used to maintain power in an intimate relationship

Competences to be developed

- » Knowledge about dynamics of domestic violence and how it relates to maintaining power and control
- » **Skills:** Ability to identify victim blaming / perpetrator excuses. Ability to reflect on own privilege and how it impacts on our relationships.
- » **Attitude:** Awareness of how gender socialisation legitimises power of “masculine men” over others. Awareness that domestic and sexual violence are men’s issues and inherently related to male dominance.

Materials

Flipcharts, pens, moderation cards, Duluth power & control wheel printed (Appendix 2)

Preparation required

Print Duluth power & control wheel, research statistics and data around domestic abuse, write moderation cards for temperature line

STEP BY STEP

1. Master & servant. Group up in pairs. Assign person A and person B. Explain that for the next 2 minutes, person B needs to do anything that person A tells them to do. Person A need to make sure that they are keeping person B safe from any harm. After 2 minutes, switch within the pairs and allow this to happen again:

Discuss:

- » How did it feel to be the master?
- » How did it feel to be the servant?
- » Were there any feelings of revenge for the second master?
- » What is like to be powerful / powerless?

2. Prepare moderation cards with different behaviours / feelings etc. written on them – one word per card, and hand them to participants. Explain that we will be talking about healthy vs controlling relationships and ask participants to put their card on an imaginary line on the floor, from healthy to controlling, based on where they feel the behaviour or emotion falls on that spectrum.

Then ask everyone to have a look at the line and ask if anybody disagrees with any of the words that have been put down, have a conversation about those, and, if appropriate, move the cards to a different position based on the conversation.

3. What is domestic abuse. Explain that the society we live in promotes men exercising power and control over women (and other men), which is replicated on an individual level:

Provide definition of domestic abuse: “Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.”

Why do you think people abuse their partners?

- » List responses on flipchart.
- » After a few responses (if nobody mentions it) write “power and control” on the board

Explain that the main purpose of abuse is to maintain power and control over the victim. Many abusers don’t use physical violence because they can control their victim through other means (provide Duluth power & control wheel).

4. Debriefing.

- » What do you think about the power & control wheel?
- » How can we detect these situations?
- » What can we do to avoid or stop these situations of power and control?

Moderation cards:

Honesty, Trust, Jealousy, Consent, Boundaries, Power, Control, be supportive, Compromise, Manipulation, Judging, Intimidation, Insecurity, Dominance, Love, Appreciation, Pride, Shame, Worry

APPENDIX I

- 1 Corona beer ad "As a child I used to dance ballet"**
https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/corona_beer_ballet
- 2 Angostura avoid the friend zone ad**
<https://redforgender.wordpress.com/2012/11/27/rum-rape-culture/>
- 3 Belevedere vodka rape ad**
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kashmirhill/2012/03/23/social-media-idiocy-of-the-day-belevedere-vodkas-rape-joke/>
- 4 Dolce and Gabbana controversial ad**
<https://jsardeafolioblog.wordpress.com/2016/04/24/controversial-ad/>
- 5 Axe fat man at gym ad**
<https://hannahkane95.wordpress.com/2014/01/28/advertisement/>

APPENDIX 2

Duluth Power and Control wheel

