

Relational conflict between male and female



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Relationships between women and men are not simply impossible or difficult. Misunderstandings of social beings are inevitable to occur; when men expect women to think and act as men and women expect men to think and act as women, conflicts becomes inevitable. This does not mean that men and women live in absolutely different realities (Corner, 2008). We can also not conclude that all the conflicts that visit relationships between men and women are solely from lack of knowledge of their differences. This paper endeavors to dig into an understanding of the various relational conflicts that springs from perception differences (Patterson, 2007). The greatest challenges that are facing majority of men-women relationships are failure to be aware of their identities and failure to accept their differences so as to live skillful and full lives. For congruent and cohesive coexistence, men and women must understand their differences and similarities.

2. 1 Background of Man-Women Relationship

For many centuries the differences between women and men were socially defined. The lenses of sexism were used to distort the relational differences in which men assumed superiority over the women and maintained their position through domination (FGU). When the goals of equality between men and women became a public demand, people started losing the awareness of the importance emanating from the differences. The vision for equality between the two sexes has narrowed all the possibilities of discovering what truly is in existence within women and men (Corner, 2008). The understanding of the differences that exist can serve as a very important tool in facilitating reconciliation between the two sexes when a conflict erupts. If the different sexes were to understand themselves, then they

would with ease devise mechanisms of dealing with their sexual differences conflicts that tampers their congruent relationships.

Dr. Michael G. Conner (2008), a clinical medical and family psychologist has purported that men and women are equal but different. He has supported his allegation by stating that even though men and women have equal rights to opportunities and protection under the law they are different in their physical and psychological making. Men and women differ in their perception to some life concepts and consequently diversified approaches.

2. 2 Why the Concern on Relational Conflicts?

Relationship between men and women is not always productive; conflicts between the two sexes prompt one to ask ‘ what are the sources of the conflicts?’ we do not refute the fact than men conflict with fellow men as women conflict with fellow women, but our area of concern is a desire to know why the conflicts between men and women differs from the conflict of the same sex. Science has endeavored to explain the biological reason behind the differences. McCarthy (2008) did a research that was meant to identify whether the behavioral difference between men and women has any biological explanation. He identified that the behavioral difference is as a result of the distinct mind between the two sexes. He pointed out that female’s and male’s brain appear to be constructed from strikingly different blueprints. The recent neurological studies have identified that the differences in the circuitry that wires the brain and the chemicals that transport messages inside the brain is so vast that one has to conclude that there are two types of brains. People act and react from their perception

towards a given situation hence behavior. This acts as a source of conflict between men and women.

2. 3 Approach and Intervention

This paper shall explain the various sources of conflicts between men and women derived from their perception differences and explain the intervention measures that can be employed to overcome the conflicts. The hypothetical intervention applicable in overcoming relational conflicts emanating from perceptual differences include: Empowerment; doing away with the ignorance, Communication; sharing perceptions hence overcoming the challenge of relational conflict, learning to be listeners of each other, acceptance of the fact that perception differs, being flexible over conflicting issues and learning to negotiate over issues in dispute.

A research was conducted to identify whether reaction differences between male and female is biological or a result of socialization process. It involved two months old male and female infants prior to the socialization process. The research identified that female infants are more responsive to sounds of a person in distress than male infants. Male infants were more responsive to objects as opposed to female infants who were more responsive to faces (Yarborough, 2006).

3. 1 Differences of perception that acts as sources of conflict between men and women

3. 1 Processing of information

There are fundamental differences in the manner in which women and men process information. Women can process information more extensively and

different pieces of information than men can do; men have a tendency to digest one thing at a time. A study was conducted to find out the truth of this allegation. Men and women were taken to a room for some few minutes and then later were asked what they observed. Almost all men could just remember the general appearance of the room, while the women remembered distinct details such as the position of a flower vessel, the photos on the walls, the cleanliness of the table clothes, the model of television among other details. Such a pronounced capacity to information processing has acted as a major source of conflict between the two sexes (Gilligan, 1982). For example, a woman may be talking to the husband while watching the television and still noticing what the children are doing. She may ask the husband a question who is engrossed on the TV and simply because it's hard for him to engage in a serious conversation while watching the television, he may not give the right answer. The wife may think that the husband is ignoring her leading to relational conflict. Research has identified that relationship between boys and girls to be sour many times. Many girls perceive the conversations with boys very boring. This is because girls can process diverse information at the same time but the boys can only deal with one thing at a time. The boys find the conversations as time wasting since they become confused during the talks, they would rather engage in sport activities rather than engage in a conversation with some girls who may be engaged in three topics at the same time.

3. 2 Reading of sexual cues

Research has identified that men are more responsive to sexual cues than women. This means that during a conversation men can read sexual cues

more readily than women. Men have been found to be more sensitive to sexual signals than women. This difference acts a source of relational conflict between men and women. During a conversation between a husband and wife, the husband may expect the wife to read in between the lines his expression of desire for sex but the woman may not see from such a viewpoint. The man may conclude that the wife is not interested or is repelling him (Yarborough, 2006).

3. 3 Appearance

Men and woman differ to a great extend in their perception towards appearance. They mostly appear to be fashion phobic. Mostly this emanates from hoe they are perceived by the other men. Men fear that they would appear to be too foppish or narcissistic if they are too overly concerned about clothing (Booth, Crouter, & Clements, 2001). Those selling fashion to women have to approach men from a different perspective. Women and fashion are inseparable. When a woman has the most recent wearing she is adored and envied by fellow women. She is moralized to ask and need more to maintain the glory and celebrity. Their men partners do not seen to understand why their women spend all they have to be fashionable hence a source of conflict (Yarborough, 2006).

3. 4 Keeness to Details

Studies have identified that women and men differ in their thinking: Men are macro thinkers while women are micro thinkers; this means women attention are to details in al issues that they deal with while the men are concerned about the end product. For example a woman will concentrate on all the adverts on various types of oils that are in the market to ensure that she

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applies the right oil to different parts of the body. She will buy different types of hair shampoos, hair oil, hand oil, face oil, legs oil, and body oil. A man will just use one type for the whole body (Sabbatini, 1997). The keenness to details have caused many relationship breakages between men and women as men feels women are too inquisitive in attempt to ensure all things are okay. A woman on the other hand feels a man is irresponsible hence she can not cope with such levels of recklessness.

Researches have identified that women's two spheres of brain communicate better than they do in men. The studies have identified that women pull in information from both halves. This distinct feature allows women to give more sophisticated emotional responses (Sabbatini, 1997). This makes women to be better in reading subtleties and in talking on emotions.

Relational conflicts crops up when a woman is facing an issue that she feels the male partner should feel with her and consequently offer the appropriate moral and emotional support, but simply because men have different perception on emotional issues he may fail to respond as expected stirring a woman to think that the man cares less hence a source of conflict (Ligate & Tucker, 2005).

3. 5 Response to threats

Men and women respond to challenges and threatening situations differently. There are many studies that show that many women responds to fears and threats by running away from the threat while men confront the situation. Many researchers have argued that this is a question of socialization, while others have argued that it's an innate trait emanating from inborn perception characteristic. Conner (2008) has argued the physical

differences between men and women are the reasons behind their differences in perception hence dissimilar approaches to threats. Men have greater upper body strength with build muscles and thicker skin; this propels them to believe in themselves. The relational conflicts emanates from a situation where the two sexes are faced with threatening situation that requires an endorsement of the two to face the challenge, if a woman flees the man fail to understand the reason for the reaction perceiving such a move as an act of betrayal (Kuriansky, 2001).

3. 6 Approach to problems

Women and men approach a problem with similar goals but with dissimilar considerations. Even though men and women can solve a problem equally well their approach to the problem varies to a great degree. A woman believes in sharing and discussing a problem so as to explore, deepen and strengthen the relationship with the person she is interacting with. For women, their greatest concern is ' how the problem is solved' rather than the final solution. The approach that will be used to approach a problem is a determinant of strength or the weakness that will exist in a relationship between the parties involved. Men have a very different approach to a problem. A man will approach a problem as an opportunity to prove his competence as well as his strength to solve problems and commitment to relationships (Berry, & Traeder, 1995). The manner of solving a problem is not of concern as arriving at the solution efficiently and effectively. Men have a tendency to dominate or assume authority in the process of problem solving. They are often destructed and are less concerned with quality of relationship while solving a problem. The different approaches to problem

solving are a source of conflict. If a woman attempts to dominate, men feel they are abused and may not take it on a light note. Women may also feel offended if a man cares less on the relationship in problem solving.

4. 0 Applied Hypothetical Intervention

4. 1 Overcoming Relational-Conflicts between Men and Women

Men and woman differs in one way or another, this paper has explained why men and women differ, the issue of perception: women have shared ways of dealing with diverse situations which differs from men's approach; these differences are brought about by difference in the way women perceive things being different from the way men view things. As it has been clearly showed in this paper the differences in approaches makes men and women conflict. Men can not live differently from women, they have to co-exist amidst their differences, this calls for adoption of strategies that will facilitate a comfortable or conducive coexistence.

4. 1. 1 Overcoming Ignorance

One of the greatest causes of the relational conflict between men and women is ignorance: Conflict is inevitable for somebody will feel unfulfilled or offended if a partner or a colleague seems not do things the way you want them done. The reason as to why people feel offended is because they do not know that men and women have diverse perception (UNESCO, January 2002). There is a need to create awareness; as a mitigation measure, social psychologist should put pen to paper on perception differences and use all the available channels of communication to Create awareness. Couples facing relational conflicts should be helped to understand themselves and

understand their partners, if somebody understands how his / her partner sees and approaches diverse concepts, he / she will make efforts to see the concept in question from their point of view (Cameron, 2000). Lack of flexibility to accommodate a partner emanates from the ignorance; one wonders why can't the partner understand a concept that seems so simple?

4. 1. 2 Use of Communication

Conflicts are worsened by lack of communication between the conflicting parties. If both sexes in a relational conflict were to learn the art of communication; the perceptions diversities could easily be overcome. Many conflicting partners engage in looking for a ' way to avoid a conflict', hence the act functions as a part time solution to the problem; partners avoid sharing their views which they make out as contrasting with their partner's (Booth, Crouter, & Clements, 2001). Conflicting perception and approaches to relational conflicts between men and woman can easily be dealt with by handling a conflict in such a way that will bring growth and constructive solution; accepting the truth about the diverse perception and agreeing on the mode of settling conflicting issues. Councilors should advice people to learn to speak out their hearts, what is their feeling towards a given concept, and why they feel that a desired approach to a given challenge is varied and most workable. Such a strategy calls for flexibility where the partners consent that either could be right hence each should be given an opportunity to support his/ her take. Conflicting partners should not avoid discussing an issue in conflict for such a move worsens the already heated conflict. Both men and women should always take the responsibility of fixing an issue in

question at home, workplace or social gatherings (Academic leadership. Com 2010).

4. 1. 3 Listening, Acceptance, Accommodation and Flexibility

If men and women accept the reality of their perception differences they will get into a position of accommodating each other. Our diversity in perception should not act as a source of conflict rather as an opportunity to learn. It's only when one learns to listen to the other sexes' point of view will he/she have a wider perception, of course it again requires flexibility, consequently accommodate the partner's ideas. In this endeavor both people have to learn to be compromisers. If a situation presents itself that has diverse ways of approach according to the different perceptions, after the sharing of the diverse perceptions, one of the partners will have to compromise their belief so as to avoid conflicting by endeavoring to see things from their partner's point of view. Negotiation is also very important in arriving at a consensus over an issue in conflict (Phobias-help. com, 2010). After the partners agree that they can never think the same, they should negotiate for a common ground. This is achievable by avoiding competition of ' whose idea wins' for such will extrapolate a conflict.

5. 0 Conclusion

Conflicts in the society are inevitable, but with the right intervention measures they can be reduced. Relational conflicts between men and women have been so pronounced some times leading to loss of life and property. Many marriages have been broken since the parties involved could not bear the diversity of perception. Men and women continues to conflict

because of their dissimilar takes over issues of life. Studies have identified that men and women have different biological makings that causes perceptual differences. The perceptual differences act as sources of conflict.

For fruitful coexistence between different sexes there is a need of acceptance of our diversified perceptions in order to develop mutual existence mechanisms. People should employ all the available resources that will facilitate understating acceptance and mutual relationships between sexes. If the parties in conflict were to accept their differences and face them together without pointing figures at each other and ensure that communication between them is kept on toes overcoming the challenges would not be a big deal. There is no solution that can never be reached if people would learn to be listeners, flexible and accommodating of their partners (Corner, 2008).

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