

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Many fields of study, such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology, have focused on women as a topic of investigation. Women are important to families, communities, and society as a whole, thus their lives, problems, and identities are a great field for research. Haslanger (2012) said that ideas like "womanhood" are not based on biology but are made up by people in cultural and historical settings. These ideas impact how people see themselves and how society sees them, keeping gender hierarchies and inequities going through language, power structures, and institutional norms. Haslanger also talks about how gender interacts with race, class, and other identities. She stresses the importance of breaking down these ideas to make societies more fair.

One thing that this bigger study is interested in is the experiences of fatherless women, who are women who grew up without a father because of divorce or abandonment. The absence of a father figure, often described as fatherlessness, goes beyond the simple fact of whether a father is physically present in the household. Many children grow up with fathers who are alive, yet distant, uninvolved, or emotionally unavailable. This condition creates what some scholars call psychological fatherlessness, where the child feels a lack of support, guidance, and recognition from a figure who plays an important role in their emotional and social development. In contexts such as Indonesia, this situation is even more visible because fathers are often positioned mainly as providers, while the nurturing

and emotional responsibilities are left to mothers. As a result, children may experience a sense of disconnection from their fathers, even while living under the same roof.

From a psychological point of view, the absence of a father figure can leave a lasting impact. Attachment theory suggests that secure bonds with both parents are essential for children to grow with confidence and stability. Without this, children may struggle with feelings of insecurity, low self-esteem, or difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships. For young women in particular, fatherlessness has been linked to challenges in identity formation and emotional regulation, especially as they enter early adulthood. These struggles are not only reflected in behavior but are also expressed through language. The way they speak, sometimes in harsh or impolite forms, often becomes a mirror of the inner conflicts they carry, revealing both the pain of absence and the tension between their emotions and their attempts to make sense of their experiences.

A father's absence during important formative years can have a big effect on a woman's mental and emotional maturation. According to McLanahan et al. (2013), kids who don't have a father in the house are more likely to have money problems, do poorly in school, and not be able to get ahead in life. They believe that not having a father has a big and clear effect on how kids grow up. They say that when fathers aren't around, it harms the family and makes it tougher for kids to obtain help and resources. They also talk about how a family loses social capital when there isn't a father figure. This weakens the networks and connections that ordinarily give people emotional and material security. These effects make things even worse for kids who only have one parent, and they are often made worse by

how unfair society is and how things are set up. Their research shows how important it is to fix the faults in the system that make it harder for families without fathers to get by. This absence is a significant area of research since it can affect a woman's health, relationships, and self-esteem.

A woman can have a lot of mental and emotional problems if she grows up without a father. This can cause a lot of stress. The American Psychological Association (APA) believes that trauma is an emotional reaction to anything exceedingly distressing or stressful that can have long-term implications on a person's mental health. Women who didn't have a father growing up may still have emotional scars that haven't healed because they felt abandoned or lost without a father figure in their life.

Riggs and Riggs (2010) argue that it's crucial for emotional safety and strength to talk to key caregivers, especially fathers. When there isn't a father figure around, key emotional interactions like verbal affirmations, guidance, and validation often stop. Women who don't have fathers may feel abandoned and inadequate since they don't have the communication needs met. This could make it tougher for them to connect with and trust other people.

Also, their feelings about the tragedy that haven't been dealt with yet often show themselves in how well they talk to their dad when he's not around. Lawson et al. (2017) indicate that those who are still unhappy or furious over a parent who isn't there may have problems showing how they feel in other settings. One way this can show up is by avoiding people or being too pushy in interactions. Both of these things make it tougher to build meaningful relationships.

Recent studies on trauma theory indicate how problems with communication might alter how people deal with their emotions and how they bond to others. Polyvagal Theory by Porges (2011) talks about how crucial it is to talk to other people in a safe and frequent way to control the nervous system and feel protected. Women without fathers may become more defensive, for example, by being overly cautious or withdrawing, which could make it harder for them to communicate clearly. This defensive reaction to feeling ignored or rejected typically affects their other relationships as well, keeping them mired in cycles of emotional isolation and misunderstanding.

Being disrespectful to fathers, especially when they're not around or aren't taking care of their kids, can be a way to let out pent-up sentiments and talk about trauma that hasn't been dealt with. Researchers have shown that rude communication is typically linked to emotional issues, identity difficulties, and power struggles. These are all things that might happen when a person doesn't have a father.

Culpeper's (2011) papers on impoliteness says that people often say things that are rude on purpose or because they think they are rude because of conflict, perceived power imbalances, or unmet relationship expectations. Fatherless women may feel angry, dissatisfied, or rejected if they don't have meaningful conversations with their fathers. When people can talk to each other, these feelings can come out as nasty comments. This happens a lot when people want to reconnect with someone or work out problems that haven't been solved yet, but the other person becomes more emotionally distant or rejects them.

The theory of trauma helps us understand why people are unpleasant. Van der Kolk (2014) talked about how trauma might make people more emotionally reactive, which can lead to angry or impulsive verbal reactions. In this case, employing unpleasant words could be a way to protect yourself from being rejected or perceived as weak. When people say these things about fathers who aren't there or don't take care of their kids, they are typically letting out anger, anguish, or grief that they haven't dealt with.

According to Spencer-Oatey (2008), one of the most important symptoms of disrespectful communication is using speaking actions that affect the other person's social identity or self-esteem. People term them face-threatening activities (FTAs). FTAs can be used by women who don't have fathers to show that they are strong, show that they are sad, or get attention from a father who wasn't present for them emotionally or physically. These statements, which can be rude, sarcastic, or accusatory, reveal how the speaker is feeling and how the relationship isn't going well.

Thomas and Bowker (2020) did a new study on how language might reflect indicators of trauma. It found that those who are still dealing with unresolved relationship trauma may use rude language as a means to deal with it. Women without fathers who are in a relationship where they don't have much authority may find that using bad language helps them get back in charge.

When someone is rude, it might change how they think, feel, and make choices. This is especially true if they have trauma that hasn't been dealt with. People's emotional reactions to things like fights with other people have a direct

impact on the words they choose to employ, especially when things are stressful or hostile. Cognitive science can help you understand why people are rude and how it connects to the anguish that women who don't have fathers go through.

The dual-process theory of cognition by Kahneman (2011) presents a simple explanation for why people say mean things. This notion suggests that System 1, which is fast, automatic, and emotive, is where angry speech generally comes from. People can behave without thinking when they are angry or upset. Women who don't have fathers may say or do mean things without thinking when they are upset because of the emotional scars of trauma, such feeling rejected or abandoned. This can make System 1 processes stronger.

Gross and Barrett (2011) looked at how emotional control affects language output from a neurocognitive point of view. Trauma affects the prefrontal cortex's ability to control emotional responses, which often makes people more likely to act on impulse or be violent in their speech. People with unresolved trauma, including women without fathers, could make language choices that put emotional expression ahead of social norms or politeness because they can't manage their emotions.

In addition, Lucy (2016) talks on how cognitive framing affects language in her Linguistic Relativity Theory. People's perceptions and classifications of relational dynamics change after traumatic situations, which in turn changes how they use language. Fatherless women may use rude comments as a method to protect themselves or show that they are independent because they see interactions with their fathers or father figures as inherently unfriendly or unsupportive. These comments show how they feel and how they think about the relationship situation.



Cognitive load also has a big effect on how unpleasant people become. Sweller et al. (2019) say that when a person's cognitive demands go up, as when they have to deal with unresolved trauma or navigate emotionally complicated relationships, it can make it harder for them to speak intelligently. Women who don't have fathers may use unpleasant language when they're stressed out since it's hard to deal with all of their sentiments and social obligations at the same time.

One technique to deal with harsh speech that has to do with cognitive processes is to get better at managing your emotions and thoughts. Beck's Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) framework (2020) says that restructuring dysfunctional thought patterns is very important for changing emotional reactions and behaviour, including speech. People can stop being impolite by recognising and arguing against negative thoughts and beliefs that come from not having a father. This can help them develop better ways of interacting with others.

People who have conflicting views, feelings, or ideals may experience cognitive dissonance. This may be linked to making unpleasant comments, especially when there is unresolved trauma and difficult relationships with fathers. To understand how fatherless women talk when they're upset, you need to know about cognitive dissonance, which affects how people deal with their feelings, settle their differences, and talk about them.

Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance says that people want to make themselves feel better when they have conflicting thoughts. Fatherless women can feel a lot of pain within when they have conflicting feelings about their fathers, such seeing them as authority figures but also as the reason they were neglected or

left behind. Impolite speech is one way that this dissonance can show up. It can be a way for people to deal with their unresolved emotions and make their speech match their bad sentiments or opinions.

Harmon-Jones and Mills (2019) did some recent study that shows that emotional arousal is very important for increasing cognitive dissonance and changing the way people talk. When unresolved trauma makes people more sensitive, the gap between cultural expectations of respect for a parent and personal feelings of hurt or rejection gets bigger. In this case, unpleasant speech is a way for the mind to show how hard it is to deal with these opposing desires.

Cognitive dissonance also affects how women without fathers justify their linguistic choices in social circumstances. Stone and Cooper (2021) say that people often employ post-hoc reasoning to make the difference between how they act (like being impolite) and how they see themselves (like wanting to be seen as kind or understanding) less obvious. A woman without a father can, for example, cite what she thinks are her father's shortcomings or failures to explain why she said something nasty or angry.

From a linguistic point of view, Gibbons et al. (2020) looked at how cognitive dissonance affects language development, especially when there is a dispute. They found that persons who are feeling dissonance often use speech acts like sarcasm or accusations to try to control the story of the conversation. These words could help women who don't have fathers deal with problems that haven't been solved and lower the stress that comes from their inner battle. One strategy to lessen the influence of cognitive dissonance on disrespectful speech is to encourage



cognitive and emotional integration. Tice et al. (2022) say that reflective strategies that help people connect their thoughts and feelings with their desired behaviours can assist lessen dissonance. For instance, women who don't have fathers might be able to stop using language that is motivated by dissonance by changing the way they think about their fathers through therapy methods like cognitive restructuring or narrative therapy.

As part of the study's first phase, a quick interview was done with a person whose initials were used to identify them. 24 years old RN. The RN talked about growing up without a father and how it changed the way she talked to people and her mental health. Her tale gives us valuable direct knowledge about how trauma, cognitive dissonance, and linguistic expression are connected.

RN says that her relationship with her absent father is a source of sadness and bewilderment that she can't figure out. Even though she wanted to connect with and forgive her father, she was angry and bitter towards him for not being involved in her life. She is experiencing cognitive dissonance because she can't connect her feelings of being betrayed and neglected with her need for a parental relationship.

During the chat, RN thought of the few times she had been nasty to her father. She then said she was sorry for using defensive, accusatory, or harsh language in her speech. RN said that these speech patterns were caused by a combination of being emotionally drained and a strong need to convey her grievances. "I don't even know why I say the things I do to him sometimes," she remarked. "I say things I can't take back, and it's like all of my anger comes out at

once. But deep down, all I want is for him to listen to me and understand how much he hurt me.

The difference between the RN's actions and feelings shows that the assertion is true. She says she's sorry for saying harsh things that she "can't take back," yet she still acts that way, which shows that her actions and her genuine feelings are not the same. There is also a clear discrepancy in her reasons for doing things. For example, she becomes angry and lashes out, but what she truly wants is for the other person to hear her and feel sorry for her pain. This internal conflict makes her feel bad since she knows that what she's doing isn't in line with what she really wants. The phrase "I don't even know why I say the things I do" makes this contradiction even clearer. It shows that she knows about the inconsistency yet has trouble controlling it. Festinger (1957) says that this awareness of the disparity between her sentiments and actions is a key symptom of cognitive dissonance.

RN also talked on how her personal and social norms effect how she talks to people. She said that others around her made her feel that she had to treat her father as a superior, which went against how she felt rejected and depressed. This dichotomy makes her cognitive dissonance worse and makes it harder for her to have constructive interactions because her emotions often get in the way of her trying to be courteous.

The RN's interview makes it clear how vital cognitive dissonance is for understanding nasty things that women without fathers say. Her experiences are the starting point for more research in the study, which will look into how trauma and unresolved feelings change the way people use language.

Trauma, cognitive dissonance, and language expressiveness all work together to show us how hard it is for women without fathers to talk to each other. Not having a father figure when you were young might cause emotional problems that don't go away. These problems may show up as bad speech habits that are a sign of deeper mental health concerns. Cognitive dissonance occurs when people have thoughts and feelings that don't match up. This makes it tougher for them to express clearly. This shows how hard it is to figure out how emotional trauma affects language use.

By examining these dynamics, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how trauma shapes language use and cognitive processes in this context.

### **1.2 Problems of the Study**

Based on the background of the research above, the problems of the research are formulated as follows:

1. What type of impolite utterances are used which reflect cognitive dissonance?
2. How is the function of the type of impolite utterance that reflects the cognitive dissonance of a fatherless woman?
3. How do the fatherless women linguistically reduce the cognitive dissonance to achieve consonance?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

In line with the problems of the research, the objectives are:

1. To analyse critically the types of impolite utterances that reflect cognitive dissonance
2. To interpret the function of impolite utterances that reflect cognitive dissonance experienced by a fatherless woman.
3. To synthesize and interpret the linguistic strategies employed by fatherless women in reducing cognitive dissonance.

#### **1.4 Scopes of the Study**

The main goal of this study is to look at how the absence of a father affects how fatherless women talk to one other, especially when it comes to being rude. It looks at the rude things they do when they are upset, especially when they are among family. The study also looks at how cognitive dissonance affects their speech by looking at how having mixed feelings about their fathers leads to rude words. It also talks about the mental and emotional effects of not having a father figure while growing up, highlighting how trauma and unresolved issues may change the way people talk. The study's purpose is to understand more about how trauma, cognitive dissonance, and impolite behavior affect how women without fathers communicate by looking at these traits.

#### **1.5 Significances of the Study**

##### **1.5.1 Theoretically**

This study moves further in the domains of pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and psychology by shedding more light on how women without dads use cognitive dissonance and rudeness in their communication. It builds on what we already know about rudeness by examining at how psychological and emotional factors

affect the words people choose when they are upset. Also, this study contributes to the theory of cognitive dissonance by looking at how it shows up in the way people use language, especially when they are dealing with trauma or unresolved emotional concerns. These results may be useful for future research that looks into the connection between language, identity, and mental anguish.

### **1.5.2 Practically**

This study gives us useful information for:

#### **1. Linguists**

This study helps the linguists understand how unpleasant speech can induce cognitive dissonance, especially in people who are affected by the lack of a father. The results give us new information about how language use and mental health are connected, which helps us learn more about language and emotion.

#### **2. Both parents**

Since it shows how the absence of fathers affects how kids feel and how they talk to one other. Parents can learn how to communicate better to help their kids express their feelings in a healthier way by knowing how rude speech affects cognitive dissonance. Also, by recognising the role of language in emotional healing, the study helps social workers, psychologists, and teachers come up with better ways to talk to people who are suffering with the effects of not having a father figure growing up