

Beliefs About Wife Beating Among Arab Men From Israel: The Influence of Their Patriarchal Ideology

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Despite the recent increase in public and professional interest in the problem of wife beating in Arab society, in Israel, and in the rest of the Arab world, there is a serious lack of empirical research on different dimensions of the problem in those societies. This paper presents the results of a survey conducted among a systematic random sample of 362 Arab husbands from Israel, in an attempt to examine the contribution of patriarchal ideology toward explaining their beliefs about wife beating. Although about 58% of the participants indicated that there is no excuse for a man to beat his wife, 15–62% still justified wife beating on certain occasions (e.g., adultery, failure to obey husbands, disrespect for parents and relatives). In addition, although the participants tended to perceive abusive and violent husbands as responsible for their behavior, 52% still expressed understanding of that behavior and, on some occasions, 23–43% even blamed the wife for violence against her. Regression and multiple regression analyses revealed that over and above the participants' age and level of education, their masculine sex-role stereotypes, negative and traditional attitudes toward women, nonegalitarian marital role expectations, and familial patriarchal beliefs were the most significant predictors of beliefs about wife beating. Implications of the results and limitations of the study are also discussed.

KEY WORDS: wife abuse in Arab society; beliefs about wife beating; Arab men; domestic violence; patriarchy.

During the last three decades, empirical studies in different societies indicated a tendency among the public at large and even among professionals to justify wife beating and blame the victim for abuse and violence. A study conducted in the United States by Ewing and Aubrey (1987) revealed that many respondents (approximately one third or more) appeared to endorse the myth that battered women are at least partially responsible for violence against them, and that any woman who remains in a battering relationship is masochistic and emotionally disturbed. These results were supported by Gentemann's investigation of adult women in North Carolina (Gentemann, 1984), which found that "nearly all respondents reject

norms which approve of wife beating, but that a substantial minority (18.8%) accepts the idea of situations in which beatings are justified... Over 20% blame the victim for her beatings" (Gentemann, 1984, p. 109). Similar results were obtained by Mugford, *et al.* (1989), who examined attitudes toward wife beating in Australia. About 20% of the respondents in that study believed that wife assault is justified under certain conditions. Following a national survey conducted in Singapore (Choi & Edleson, 1996), a small minority of the respondents agreed (5.5%) or strongly agreed (0.4%) with the statement that "Sometimes it is alright for a husband to use physical force against his wife."

Although these studies on beliefs about wife beating in the U.S.A., Australia, Singapore, and elsewhere can enhance insight into this dimension of domestic violence, one should still bear in mind that they were conducted in societies that are considered "modern" (i.e., postindustrial and economically developed), unlike Arab societies that

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are perceived as "traditional" and patriarchal. As such, caution should be exercised in attempting to generalize their results to Arab societies.

In a study of Palestinian men from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Haj-Yahia (1998a) reports that 23–71% of the respondents tended to justify wife beating under the following circumstances: sexual infidelity, insulting the husband in front of his friends, challenging the husband's manhood, disobeying the husband, failing to meet the husband's expectations, refusing to have sex with the husband, disrespect for the husband's parents and relatives, and reminding the husband of his weak points. Further, Haj-Yahia found that although Palestinian men generally tend to hold violent men responsible for their behavior, in some cases they understand these men and even tend to blame women for being battered. Haj-Yahia (1998a) also reports that Palestinian men's patriarchal ideology provided very appropriate ground for explaining their beliefs about wife beating. More specifically, he indicates that men's tendency to justify wife beating, blame wives for violence against them, and to some extent also hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior are best explained by their nonegalitarian expectations of marriage, traditional attitudes toward women, and patriarchal beliefs about family life. Although the results regarding Palestinian Arab men set the stage for understanding wife beating in Arab society in Israel, some significant differences between those societies and their implications for domestic violence cannot be ignored (e.g., women's status, exposure to Western culture, political circumstances).

In Arab society in Israel, the problem has aroused concern only in recent years. Haj-Yahia (1991), for example, studied abuse and violence against fiancees among engaged Arab men, and further investigated their beliefs about wife beating (fully reported in Haj-Yahia, 1997, 1998b; Haj-Yahia & Edleson, 1994). In that study, 29.8% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "sometimes it is OK for a man to beat his wife"; 35.6% strongly agreed or agreed that "it would do some wives good to be beaten by their husbands"; and 30.8% strongly agreed or agreed that "occasional violence by a husband against his wife can help maintain the marriage." About 44% of the respondents in the same study strongly agreed or agreed that "there is no excuse for a man to beat his wife." Although this was a pioneer study providing basic data about different dimensions of violence in the Arab family, the results should be interpreted with special caution. In particular, because they were reported by relatively young men (aged 17–37), who had not yet lived with a female partner, they may not be generalizable to Arab men in different age brackets and family structures (e.g., married men).

Against this background, and because of the serious lack of research on domestic violence in Arab societies in general and Arab society in Israel in particular, the need to generate new knowledge and examine the relevance of existing knowledge related to these contexts becomes evident. In addition to exploring beliefs about wife beating among Arab men from Israel, this study seeks to examine the contribution of a specific theoretical approach (i.e., the patriarchal perspective) toward explaining these beliefs. Many researchers have used the patriarchal-male-dominance approach to explain beliefs about wife beating and actual wife abuse and battering (e.g., Bograd, 1984; Dobash & Dobash, 1979, 1992; Gerber, 1991, 1995; Gondolf, 1985; Yllo, 1984, 1988). Dobash and Dobash (1979) define *patriarchy* as

comprised of two elements: its structure and its ideology. The structural aspect of the patriarchy is manifest in the hierarchical organization of social institutions and social relations . . . The maintenance of such a hierarchical order and the continuation of the authority and advantage of the few is to some extent dependent upon its 'acceptance' by the many. It is the patriarchal ideology that serves to reinforce this acceptance." (p. 43).

This social structure supports gender inequality, which is rooted in the history and traditions of Western as well as Eastern societies. Moreover, attitudes and expectations reflecting the male dominance perspective prevail in the social institutions of contemporary society, particularly in the family. As a result, parents socialize their children in accordance with gender-role stereotypes (i.e., males are taught aggressive behavior, whereas women are taught to remain passive and submissive; Harway, 1993). The same role patterns are also applied in interaction with members of the opposite sex. Consequently, this approach argues that the ultimate cause of wife abuse and battering is sexism, which involves a long-standing tradition of domination of men over women.

In accordance with this approach, Dobash and Dobash (1979, 1992) contend that violence against wives is caused by the subordinate position of women in relation to men. In particular, the power differentials between men and women are maintained and reinforced in the intimate relationships that characterize the patriarchal family system. In this connection, Dobash and Dobash identified two central features that provide the foundation for patriarchy. The first is the manner in which social relationships routinely reinforce the dominant and controlling status of men. The second is sanctification of a system of social relationships that may generate violence between men and women. It is argued that the very underpinnings of such relations are sustained by an ideology embedded in the system of institutions, including religious, political,

and economic systems (i.e., patriarchal ideology). Gerber (1995) considers gender-stereotyped personality traits as the main component of men's patriarchal ideology. As such, these traits play a significant role in perpetuating men's violence against women. Gerber (1995) contends that people, according to their gender-typed personality, think that men and women have different personalities. On the basis of this approach, women are inherently characterized by high levels of "communion" (i.e., personality traits that express warmth, concern, and connection with others). In contrast, men are characterized by high levels of "agency" (i.e., personality traits that enhance one's own self through self-assertion and exerting one's will on others). Consequently, in order for a woman to be truly "feminine," many people think she must be high in communion, and to be truly "masculine," a man must be high in agency. Therefore, in the process of conforming to these cultural expectations, men exercise more power than do women in traditional relationships between the sexes. Although they usually exert power through persuasion and influence, men can also use violence, which is expressed through coercion and control (Gerber, 1995).

In Arab society, the status of women in the family has always been lower than that of men (particularly in relation to older brothers who are close in age, and in relation to husbands). Notwithstanding the changes that have taken place in Arab society in Israel, women's roles as mother and wife continue to be traditional and nonegalitarian, even among young couples. Although women play an important functional role in the home, they are still considered second-class citizens and remain invariably subject to their husband's authority. They are expected to be dependent on their husbands and obey them, satisfy their husband's needs, take care of their children, and maintain the household (Haj-Yahia, 1995, 1996; Shokeid, 1993). With regard to standards of morality, Arab society emphasizes values and norms associated with traditional notions of femininity, motherhood, wifehood, and sexuality. Moreover, the prevailing religious ideology perceives wives as the source of evil, anarchy (*fima*), and deception or trickery (*kaid*; Barakat, 1993; Moghadam, 1992). Consequently, any wife who questions the authority and power of her husband is "making a serious error" and may be considered as "asking to be beaten" (Haj-Yahia, 1996).

Notwithstanding the comprehensive theoretical discussions of this ideology regarding domestic violence, Sugarman and Frankel's extensive meta-analytic review of empirical studies conducted in Western postindustrial societies found very limited support for their hypothesis that "predicted that maritally violent men, in contrast to maritally nonviolent men, would report more positive

attitudes toward the use of marital violence, more conservative gender attitudes, and a more traditional masculine schema" (Sugarman & Frankel, 1996, p. 27). However, given the lack of patriarchy-oriented studies along the lines of research conducted in Western societies (e.g., research reviewed by Sugarman & Frankel, 1996), and given the patriarchal, traditional, and nonegalitarian approach of Arab societies toward women, marital relations, and family life, the present study examined the contribution of patriarchal ideology among Arab men toward explaining their beliefs about wife beating.

Moreover, contrary to Sugarman and Frankel's conclusion regarding the weak relationship between patriarchy-oriented attitudes and violent behavior against women revealed in studies conducted in Western societies (Sugarman & Frankel, 1996), Haj-Yahia and Edleson (1994) report a very strong relationship between these two constructs, as revealed in a study conducted among Arab men. Specifically, Haj-Yahia and Edleson (1994) found that the more rigid the sex-role stereotypes held by engaged Arab men regarding relationships between the sexes and gender roles in society, the less likely they were to use negotiation tactics to resolve conflicts with their brides. In addition, Haj-Yahia and Edleson (1994) found that the more engaged Arab men held negative, traditional, nonegalitarian, and patriarchal attitudes toward women, the more they verbally and psychologically abused their fiancees. Haj-Yahia and Edleson's results regarding the relationship between men's attitudes, beliefs, and behavior provide further empirical support for the importance of studying the relationship between men's patriarchal ideology and their beliefs about wife beating (Haj-Yahia & Edleson, 1994). However, as mentioned, because Haj-Yahia and Edleson's study was conducted among relatively young unmarried men, the results are not necessarily generalizable to older, married men.

In addition, as mentioned, there is significant empirical support for the assumption that beliefs about wife beating among Arab Palestinian men and women can be attributed to their patriarchal ideology (Haj-Yahia, 1998a,b). However, one cannot ignore the fact that Arab Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip live in a political, economic, sociocultural, religious, and educational milieu that differs from that of Arab citizens of Israel. This reality in itself may affect the relationship between patriarchal ideology and domestic violence in those contexts (Abdo-Zubi, 1992), and lend further support for the rationale for investigating beliefs about wife beating in different parts of Arab society. In this connection, this study tested the following six measures as predictors of beliefs about wife beating, on the basis of the definition of *patriarchal ideology* presented previously: (1) attitudes

toward women, (2) sex-role stereotypes, (3) sexual conservatism, (4) religiosity, (5) familial patriarchal beliefs, and (6) marital role expectations. These predictors were preferred over others, because they best characterize the patriarchal nature of Arab societies discussed in the literature (Barakat, 1993; Haj-Yahia, 1995, 1996).

On the univariate level, it was hypothesized that each of the study's predictors will correlate significantly with each of the beliefs (i.e., justifying wife beating, blaming wives for violence against them, and holding abusive and violent husbands responsible for their behavior). On the multivariate level, it was hypothesized that the respondents' patriarchal-ideology-based predictors will contribute significantly toward explaining the variability in each of the three beliefs about wife beating, over and above the relative contribution of age level and education toward explaining these beliefs.

The study, again, does not question the general merit of past research on the topic. Nor does it question the power of the ecological, integrative, and holistic approach to explain domestic violence. Rather, it seeks to illuminate the particular impact of patriarchal ideology on beliefs about wife beating in Middle Eastern Arab societies, specifically Arab society in Israel. This research may also contribute toward international, cross-cultural knowledge regarding beliefs about wife beating. Moreover, in light of increased evidence that men's beliefs about wife beating are related to abusive behavior against their female partners (Haj-Yahia & Edleson, 1994; Russell & Frohberg, 1995; United Nations, 1989), research on this topic may give human service providers and mental health practitioners in Arab societies and elsewhere appropriate knowledge that can be applied toward prevention of wife beating and intervention with men who batter.

METHOD

Sample

A systematic random sample of 500 married men was drawn from lists of households obtained from three Arab local councils, three Arab municipalities, and one mixed Jewish–Arab municipality. Out of the overall sample, 362 of the respondents completed a self-administered questionnaire (a 72.4% response rate). The average age of the respondents was 36.9 years ($SD = 10.99$; range = 20–70 years). About 30% graduated from or partially completed preparatory school; 30% graduated from or partially completed secondary school; and the rest (40%) received a certain amount of higher education. About 82% of the respondents were Muslim (although 76% of the Arabs in

Israel are Muslim), 13% were Christian (although 15% of the Arabs in Israel are Christian), and 5% were Druze (although 9% of the Arabs in Israel are Druze; Jubran, 1994). The average size of the participants' families of procreation (i.e., number of family members) was 4.94, compared with an average of about 4.71 among the general population (Jubran, 1994).

Instrument

A self-administered assessment battery based on the following items and scales was used to measure the different variables of the study.

Background Information

This included demographic data and other factors such as age, place of residence, education, years of marriage, number of children, and religion.

Attitudes Towards Women Scale

The Spence and Helmreich (1978) Attitudes Towards Women Scale (ATWS) was used to measure types of attitudes toward women among Arab men from Israel (e.g., traditional–patriarchal vs. liberal–egalitarian). In this study, a shorter, revised version of ATWS consisting of 15 items was used as a substitute for the original scale (e.g., "Women do not have the same rights to freedom as men"). Spence and Helmreich (1978) found a correlation of .91 between this measure and the original version of ATWS. Further, they reported Cronbach's alpha value of .89 for the English version of ATWS, whereas the value for the Arabic version used in this study was .84. Responses to these items were based on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Agree*) to 4 (*Strongly Disagree*).

Marriage Role Expectations Inventory (MREI)

Developed by Dunn (1960) and revised by Dunn and DeBonis (1979), MREI was utilized to measure marital role expectations. The original version of MREI consists of 71 items measuring behavior orientations (companionship–egalitarian vs. traditional–patriarchal) in eight areas of marriage. Dunn and DeBonis (1979) reported a Spearman–Brown reliability coefficient of .975 for the measure on a split-half correlation analysis. The present study used a shorter version of MREI consisting of 16 items (e.g., "I have a right to give my wife full responsibility for caring for the children when they are babies").

Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the Arabic version used in this study was .86. Responses to these items were based on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Agree*) to 5 (*Strongly Disagree*).

Religiosity

The following three-item scale constructed specifically for this study measured the level of religiosity among Arab men in Israel: (1) In general, to what extent do you consider yourself religious? (2) in general, to what extent do you practice and adhere to the laws and customs of your religion? and (3) to what extent do you identify and feel affiliated with your religion? Responses to these items were based on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Not At All*) to 6 (*To a Great Extent*), with possible scores ranging from 3 to 18. Cronbach's alpha value for this scale was .85.

Familial Patriarchal Beliefs (FPB)

Smith's instrument (Smith, 1990) was used as the basis for a four-item measure of Arab husbands' familial patriarchal beliefs (e.g., "Husbands have a right to decide whether or not their wives will work outside of the home"). Responses to these items were based on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Agree*) to 5 (*Strongly Disagree*). In this connection, Smith argues that "Findings . . . suggest indirectly that perceptual measures used . . . may be reasonably valid indicators of the degree to which husbands adhere to beliefs and attitudes supportive of familial patriarchy" (Smith, 1990, p. 265). Cronbach's alpha values were .79 for the English version of FPB (Smith, 1990), and .80 for the Arabic version used in this study.

Sex-Role Stereotyping (SEXSTR)

Burt's subscale (Burt, 1980) was used to measure sex-role stereotyping among Arab husbands in Israel. The scale consisted of 10 statements (e.g., "It is acceptable for a woman to have a career, but marriage and family should come first"). Responses to these items were based on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Agree*) to 5 (*Strongly Disagree*). Cronbach's alpha value of the English version was .80, and that of the Arabic version used in this study was .82.

Sexual Conservatism (SEXCON)

Burt's subscale (Burt, 1980) was used to measure sexual conservatism among Arab husbands in Israel. The

scale consisted of 10 statements (e.g., "I have no respect for a woman who engages in sexual relations before marriage"). Responses to these items were based on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Agree*) to 5 (*Strongly Disagree*). Burt (1980) reported Cronbach's alpha value of .81 for the English version of the subscale, and that of the Arabic version used in this study was .83.

Beliefs About Wife Beating

The Inventory of Beliefs About Wife Beating (IBWB) developed by Saunders *et al.* (1987) was the basis for the following two subscales used in the present study: (1) Justifying Wife Beating (JWB) (14 items, e.g., "If a wife lies to her husband, he is justified in beating her") and (2) Holding Husbands Responsible for Violence (HHRV; 4 items, e.g., "We should not hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior, but should try to understand them"; see Table I). Saunders *et al.* (1987) reported several steps in the development of the Inventory, and described the tests conducted to measure its dimensionality, reliability, and validity, and mentioned that "five subscales with acceptable internal validity were constructed" (Saunders *et al.*, 1987, p. 52). These subscales measured the following beliefs: justifying wife beating; wives gain from beating; types of help and services that should be given to battered women; offenders should be punished; and offenders are responsible for their violent and abusive behavior.

As mentioned, two subscales of IBWB were revised and expanded for the purposes of this study. Cronbach's alpha values for the Arabic version of JWB and HHRV were .90 and .79, respectively (see Table I). In addition, the third belief tested in this study, that is, Blaming the Wife for Violence Against Her (BWV), was measured by a short version of Haj-Yahia's (1998a,c) scale (four items, e.g., "In most cases, the wife is responsible for violence against her because of the way she treats her husband"; see Table I). Cronbach's alpha value for this scale, when used among Palestinian men and women, was .89. In this study, Cronbach's alpha for the shorter version was .88, and the factor loadings of the items ranged from .57 to .77. Responses to all items related to these three beliefs were based on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Agree*) to 5 (*Strongly Disagree*).

Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS)

The MCSDS measures social desirability, or a person's tendency to respond in culturally approved ways. A short version (16 items) of the original scale was used in this study to control for this potential tendency. Marlowe and Crowne (1961) tested the reliability of MCSDS among

Table I. Factor Loadings, Means, Standard Deviations, and Distribution of Frequencies for Each Item of the Dependent Variables ($N = 362$)

Items composing the dependent variables	Factor loading	Mean	SD	SA (1)	A (2)	UD (3)	DA (4)	SDA (5)
Dependent variable I: Justifying wife beating (Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$)								
1. A husband has no right to beat his wife, even if she breaks agreements she has made with him								
2. Even when a wife's behavior challenges her husband's manhood, he is not justified in beating her	0.76	3.26	1.34	12%	22%	17%	26%	22%
3. A husband has the right to beat his wife if she continues reminding him of his weak points	0.73	3.60	1.19	4%	20%	14%	36%	26%
4. If a wife lies to her husband, he is justified in beating her	0.71	3.77	1.23	7%	14%	9%	38%	33%
5. A sexually unfaithful wife deserves to be beaten	0.63	2.37	1.51	45%	17%	10%	15%	14%
6. Sometimes it is OK for a man to beat his wife	0.76	3.54	1.27	6%	22%	14%	29%	29%
7. Occasional violence by a husband toward his wife can help maintain the marriage	0.69	3.84	1.22	5%	15%	10%	32%	38%
8. There is no excuse for a man to beat his wife	0.49	2.50	1.31	28%	30%	15%	18%	9%
9. A woman who constantly refuses to have sex with her husband is asking to be beaten	0.71	3.54	1.34	12%	13%	11%	36%	28%
10. A husband has the right to beat his wife if she doesn't respect his parents or siblings	0.78	3.59	1.19	6%	16%	17%	37%	25%
11. A husband has the right to beat his wife if she doesn't respect his relatives	0.74	3.83	1.11	3%	12%	14%	38%	32%
12. A husband has the right to beat his wife if she insults him in front of his friends	0.79	3.23	1.34	11%	26%	14%	28%	21%
13. A husband has the right to beat his wife if she constantly disobeys him	0.81	3.37	1.27	9%	20%	16%	34%	21%
14. A woman who sometimes fails to meet the expectations of her husband deserves to be beaten	0.82	3.56	1.25	8%	16%	15%	36%	26%
Dependent variable II: Blaming the wife for violence against her (Cronbach's alpha = .88)								
1. In most cases, the wife is responsible for violence against her due to her mistaken behavior								
2. In most cases, the wife is responsible for being beaten, due to the way she treats her husband	0.72	3.10	1.31	10%	33%	14%	24%	19%
3. In most cases, the wife is responsible for being beaten due to her provocative behavior	0.57	3.51	1.17	5%	18%	18%	37%	22%
4. In most cases, the wife is responsible for being beaten due to the way she takes care of her children	0.74	3.08	1.25	10%	29%	19%	27%	15%
Dependent variable III: Holding husbands responsible for their violence (Cronbach's alpha = .79)								
1. In all cases, a violent husband is responsible for his behavior								
2. Violent husbands should not be held responsible for their behavior, since it is often caused by pressure at work and home	0.72	3.18	1.24	9%	24%	22%	28%	17%
3. Violent husbands are solely responsible for their behavior, since in most cases they should control themselves	0.52	2.43	1.21	26%	34%	18%	15%	7%
4. A husband can always control himself and does not need to beat his wife, even if she provokes him	0.62	2.11	1.12	36%	36%	14%	10%	4%
5. We should not hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior, but should try to understand them	0.50	2.72	1.22	15%	37%	19%	20%	10%

Note. SD = standard deviation; SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; UD = Undecided; DA = Disagree; SDA = Strongly Disagree.

a college sample, revealing an (Kuder-Richardson) internal consistency coefficient of .88 and a test-retest coefficient of .89. The validity of the scale was also established by the authors, when a significant correlation was demonstrated between the Marlowe-Crowne scale and the Edwards scale. Cronbach's alpha value for the Arabic version of MCSDS was .86, as used in the present study.

Participants were asked to indicate whether each statement of "personal attitudes and traits" is true or false in their case (e.g., "I have never intensely disliked anyone"). Nine items were keyed in the true direction, and seven were keyed in the false direction. A point was given for each socially desirable response, such that the higher the score, the more the participant responded in a socially desirable manner.

Culturally Adjusting the Assessment Battery and Data Collection Procedures

Because of the lack of Arabic measures and scales in this field, an adapted assessment battery, on the basis of the original versions, was developed and constructed in English in the initial phase. Next, the adapted version was translated into Arabic by two Arab scholars, and the Arabic text was then back-translated into English by two other Arab scholars. The original English questionnaire was compared with the English version of the Arabic translation, and the two versions were found to be almost identical. However, this process in itself did not ensure that the original levels of reliability and validity of the measures would be maintained. Nor did it compensate for lack of "cross-cultural equivalence" (Hui & Triandis, 1985, p. 133) that is, cultural differences between Western societies (where the measures were originally developed and obtained) and Arab societies (where the measures were applied in this study). Therefore, in the second phase of the research, Arab scholars specializing in the social and behavioral sciences worked with the principal investigator as professional and methodological judges on resolving these issues. In this way, an attempt was made to maintain conceptual equivalence, item equivalence, and construct operationalization equivalence, as discussed by Hui and Triandis (1985). By the end of this phase, a revised Arabic version of the instrument was constructed.

In the third phase, a pilot study was conducted among a group of 18 Arab men who fit the definition of the research sample. Bailey's suggestions and guidelines for conducting pilot studies (Bailey, 1982) were applied, and participants' comments were submitted to the professional judges for review and approval. On the basis of this feedback, some of the items in the instrument were reformulated and certain sections were reconstructed to ensure

the feasibility of the study. The feedback was also used as a basis for reformulating and further operationalizing some of the research hypotheses as well as for determining the most appropriate research design and data collection procedures.

After these phases were completed, three research assistants (students in the fields of social and behavioral sciences) were briefed and trained to administer the instrument. Questionnaires were distributed personally by the research assistants and left with the respondents to fill out independently at their convenience. The self-administered instrument package, and the attempt to maintain respondents' anonymity, was intended to encourage participation in the study, which dealt with a sensitive topic in Arab society. Further, the self-administered instrument package was intended to increase the validity and reliability of responses. The research assistants collected completed questionnaires from about 53.2% of the respondents within a week after distribution, and from an additional 19.2% of the respondents at a later date, bringing the total response rate to about 72.4%. To further control for social desirability, respondents who had not received formal schooling were not asked to participate in the study. Although the 103-item instrument may appear lengthy, it should be emphasized that the response rate for each item ranged from 97 to 100%.

RESULTS

This study used descriptive statistics (see Table I) and correlation coefficients as well as regression and multiple regression analyses (see Tables II, III, and IV) to examine results referring to respondents' beliefs about wife beating and test its univariate and multivariate hypotheses.

Justifying Wife Beating

Table I indicates that a substantial proportion of the respondents justified wife beating. Fifty-eight percent strongly agreed or agreed that "there is no excuse for a man to beat his wife" ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.31$), whereas about 28% strongly agreed or agreed that "sometimes it is OK for a man to beat his wife" ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.27$). Moreover, between 15 and 62% strongly agreed or agreed that wife beating is justified on certain occasions. The strongest justification was for cases of unfaithful sexual behavior, where 62% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "a sexually unfaithful wife deserves to be beaten" ($M = 1.51$, $SD = 2.37$). To a lesser extent, the respondents justified wife beating when she "insults her husband in front of his friends" (37%, $M = 3.23$,

Table II. Regression and Multiple Regression Analysis on Justifying Wife Beating

Variable	Multiple								B	SE B	Beta (β)	Partial correlation	Part correlation	Correlation	$p <$
	R	R^2	df	F(Eqn)	Sig. F	R^2 Ch	F Ch	Sig. F Ch							
AGE	.128	.016	1, 313	5.228	.023	.016	5.228	.023	.030	.050	.026	.034	.024	.128	.01
LEVEDU	.376	.141	2, 312	25.606	.0000	.125	45.244	.0000	-.701	.435	-.077	-.092	-.065	-.375	.0001
SEXSTR	.623	.389	3, 311	65.883	.0000	.248	125.932	.0000	.082	.131	.047	.036	.025	.604	.0001
ATWS	.670	.449	4, 310	63.162	.0000	.060	34.016	.0000	.321	.099	.217	.182	.130	.625	.0001
RELIGS	.670	.449	5, 309	50.393	.0000	.0001	0.072	.788	.180	.177	.046	.058	.041	.231	.001
MREI	.697	.486	6, 308	48.478	.0000	.037	21.878	.0000	.290	.094	.250	.174	.124	.660	.0001
SEXCON	.697	.486	7, 307	41.427	.0000	.0001	0.033	.856	.018	.092	.011	.011	.080	.480	.0001
FPB	.713	.508	8, 306	39.502	.0000	.022	13.871	.0002	.792	.213	.249	.208	.149	.637	.0001

Note. AGE = age; LEVEDU = level of education; SEXSTR = sex-role stereotypes; ATWS = attitudes towards women; RELIGS = religiosity; MREI = marital role expectations; SEXCON = sexual conservatism; FPB = familial patriarchal beliefs.

$SD = 1.34$), and when “she constantly disobeys her husband” (29%, $M = 3.37$, $SD = 1.27$). Wife beating was least justified when the wife “does not respect his parents or siblings” (22%, $M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.19$), “lies to her husband” (21%, $M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.23$), and “does not respect his relatives” (15%, $M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.11$).

Table II reveals that the older and less educated Arab men showed a greater tendency to justify wife beating ($r = .128$, $\beta = .026$, $p < .01$, and $r = -.375$, $\beta = -.077$, $p < .0001$, respectively). Further, results indicate positive and significant correlations between respondents’ scores on each of the patriarchal-ideology-based predictors in the study and their tendency to justify wife beating as a criterion variable. For example, the more the respondents maintained traditional and negative attitudes toward women, the more they justified wife beating ($r = .625$, $\beta = .217$, $p < .0001$); the more they maintained familial-patriarchal beliefs, the more they justified wife beating ($r = .637$, $\beta = .249$, $p = .0001$); and the more they maintained sex-role stereotypes, the more they justified wife beating ($r = .604$, $\beta = .047$, $p = .0001$).

Regression and multiple regression analyses were employed, first using the respondents’ age and level of education, and then using all six patriarchal-ideology-based predictors as one set, to find the best predictors that significantly explain Arab men’s beliefs about justifying wife beating. Table II indicates that of all eight variables, six accounted significantly for the variance in justifying wife beating (F (Eqn) = 39.502, $df = 8, 306$, $Sig. F < .0000$).

Table II indicates that 50.8% of the variance in Arab men’s tendency to justify wife beating was significantly accounted for by their age (R^2 Ch = .016, $Sig. F$ Ch $< .023$) and level of education (R^2 Ch = .125, $Sig. F$ Ch $< .0000$), as well as by their rigid masculine sex-role stereotypes (R^2 Ch = .248, $Sig. F$ Ch $< .0000$), negative and traditional attitudes toward women (R^2 Ch = .060, $Sig. F$ Ch $< .0000$), nonegalitarian marital role expectations (R^2 Ch = .037, $Sig. F$ Ch $< .0000$), and patriarchal beliefs

about the family (R^2 Ch = .022, $Sig. F$ Ch $< .0002$). Evidently, the other two predictors (sexual conservatism and religiosity) accounted for an insignificant amount of the variance in justifying wife beating, although it was found that the more Arab men espoused conservative sexual attitudes ($r = .480$, $\beta = .011$, $p < .0001$) and the more religious they were ($r = .231$, $\beta = .046$, $p < .001$), the greater their tendency to justify wife beating.

Blaming the Wife for Violence Against Her

Table I reveals that substantial percentages of Arab men tended to blame the wife for violence against her. For example, 33% of the Arab husbands participating in the study strongly agreed or agreed that “in most cases, the wife is responsible for violence against her, due to her mistaken behavior” ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.30$). The strongest support for blaming the wife was expressed in cases where she “treats her husband inappropriately” (43%, $M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.31$) and “takes care of her children inadequately” (39%, $M = 3.08$, $SD = 1.25$).

The results in Table III indicate that the older and less educated Arab men showed a greater tendency to blame battered women for violence against them ($r = .132$, $\beta = .023$, $p < .01$, and $r = -.340$, $\beta = -.044$, $p < .0001$, respectively). In addition, the results reveal positive and significant correlations between respondents’ scores on each of the patriarchal-ideology-based predictors in the study and their tendency to blame battered women for violence against them as a criterion variable. For example, the more rigid the respondents’ sex-role stereotypes, the greater their tendency to blame women for violence against them ($r = .601$, $\beta = .185$, $p < .0001$). The more they maintained traditional and negative attitudes toward women, the greater their tendency to blame women for violence against them ($r = .622$, $\beta = .287$, $p < .0001$). And the more they maintained patriarchal and nonegalitarian

Table III. Regression and Multiple Regression Analysis on Blaming the Wife for Violence Against Her

Variable	Multiple							Sig. F Ch	B	SE B	Beta (β)	Partial correlation	Part correlation	Correlation	<i>p</i> <
	R	R^2	df	F(Eqn)	Sig. F	R^2 Ch	F Ch								
AGE	.132	.017	1, 314	5.238	.021	.017	5.238	.021	-.032	.041	-.023	-.002	-.002	-.132	.01
LEVEDU	.344	.118	2, 313	21.694	.0000	.101	40.114	.0000	.211	.213	.044	.053	.036	.340	.0001
SEXSTR	.612	.375	3, 312	59.824	.0000	.257	131.215	.0000	-.188	.093	-.185	-.136	-.112	-.601	.0001
ATWS	.662	.438	4, 311	53.008	.0000	.063	36.662	.0000	-.207	.062	-.287	-.217	-.171	-.622	.0001
RELIGS	.664	.441	5, 310	46.723	.0000	.003	1.306	.825	-.154	.115	-.085	-.086	-.061	-.183	.001
MREI	.684	.468	6, 309	40.637	.0000	.027	14.838	.0000	-.138	.060	-.196	-.118	-.092	-.596	.0001
SEXCON	.684	.468	7, 308	31.511	.0000	.0001	0.030	.850	-.078	.062	-.077	-.066	-.040	-.387	.0001
FPB	.704	.496	8, 307	30.262	.0000	.028	14.714	.0002	-.227	.112	-.136	-.108	-.072	-.544	.0001

Note. AGE = age; LEVEDU = level of education; SEXSTR = sex-role stereotypes; ATWS = attitudes towards women; RELIGS = religiosity; MREI = marital role expectations; SEXCON = sexual conservatism; FPB = familial patriarchal beliefs.

expectations of marriage, the greater their tendency to blame battered women for violence against them ($r = .596, \beta = .196, p < .0001$).

Regression and multiple regression analyses were conducted, first with regard to the respondents' age and level of education, and then with regard to all six patriarchal-ideology-based predictors as one set, to find the best predictors that significantly explain Arab men's beliefs about blaming battered women for their experience with violence. Table III reveals that of all eight variables, six accounted significantly for the variance in this criterion variable (F (Eqn) = 30.262, $df = 8,307$, $\text{Sig. } F < .0000$).

Specifically, Table III reveals that 49.6% of the variance in Arab men's tendency to blame women for violence against them was significantly accounted for by their age (R^2 Ch = .017, $\text{Sig. } F$ Ch $< .021$) and level of education (R^2 Ch = .101, $\text{Sig. } F$ Ch $< .0000$), as well as by rigid masculine sex-role stereotypes (R^2 Ch = .257, $\text{Sig. } F$ Ch $< .0000$), negative and traditional attitudes toward women (R^2 Ch = .063, $\text{Sig. } F$ Ch $< .0000$), nonegalitarian role expectations (R^2 Ch = .027, $\text{Sig. } F$ Ch $< .0000$), and familial patriarchal beliefs (R^2 Ch = .028, $\text{Sig. } F$ Ch $< .0002$). Consequently, the other two predictors (sexual conservatism and religiosity) accounted for an insignificant amount of the variance in blaming women for violence against them. Nevertheless, it was found that the more conservative the sexual attitudes of Arab men ($r = .387, \beta = .077, p < .0001$) and the higher their level of religiosity ($r = .183, \beta = .085, p < .0001$), the greater their tendency to blame battered women for violence against them.

Holding Husbands Responsible for Their Violence

Table I reveals that although the Arab men showed a general tendency to blame a battered woman for violence against her, they also tended to hold the violent hus-

band responsible for his behavior. For example, 66% of the Arab husbands participating in the study strongly agreed or agreed that "in all cases, a violent husband is responsible for his behavior" ($M = 2.34, SD = 1.21$). In addition, 60% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "violent husbands are solely responsible for their behavior, since in most cases they should control themselves" ($M = 2.43, SD = 1.21$). However, Table I also reveals a tendency to understand the violent husband instead of just blaming him. For example, 52 and 33% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that "we should not hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior, but should try to understand them" ($M = 2.72, SD = 1.22$), and "since [the violent behavior] is often caused by pressure at work and home" ($M = 3.18, SD = 1.24$), respectively.

Table IV reveals that the younger and more educated the respondents, the more likely they are to hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior ($r = -.140, \beta = -.020, p < .01$, and $r = .314, \beta = .040, p < .0001$, respectively). In addition, Table IV reveals significant negative correlations between the respondents' scores on each of the patriarchal-ideology-based predictors and their tendency to hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior. For example, the more the respondents expressed traditional and negative attitudes toward women, the less likely they were to hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior ($r = -.583, \beta = -.273, p < .0001$). The more conservative the sexual attitudes of the respondents, the less likely they were to hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior ($r = -.394, \beta = -.061, p < .0001$). The more religious the respondents, the less likely they were to hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior ($r = -.172, \beta = -.065, p < .0001$). And the more nonegalitarian and patriarchal their expectations of marriage, the less likely the respondents were to hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior ($r = -.581, \beta = -.178, p < .0001$).

Table IV. Regression and Multiple Regression Analysis on Holding Husbands Responsible for Their Violence

Variable	Multiple								B	SE B	Beta (β)	Partial correlation	Part correlation	Correlation	$p <$
	R	R^2	df	F(Eqn)	Sig. F	R^2 Ch	F Ch	Sig. F Ch							
AGE	.140	.02	1, 306	6.096	.014	.02	6.096	.014	-.001	.030	-.020	-.002	-.002	-.140	.01
LEVEDU	.317	.100	2, 305	17.029	.0000	.081	27.435	.0000	.215	.261	.04	.048	.037	.314	.0001
SEXSTR	.577	.332	3, 304	50.466	.0000	.232	105.653	.0000	-.167	.079	-.179	-.122	-.094	-.569	.0001
ATWS	.621	.386	4, 303	47.559	.0000	.053	26.260	.0000	-.218	.060	-.273	-.206	-.162	-.583	.0001
RELIGS	.623	.388	5, 302	38.347	.0000	.003	1.305	.254	-.136	.106	-.065	-.074	-.057	-.172	.001
MREI	.634	.402	6, 301	33.682	.0000	.013	6.725	.01	-.111	.056	-.178	-.114	-.088	-.581	.0001
SEXCON	.635	.404	7, 300	29.004	.0000	.002	0.961	.328	-.053	.054	-.061	-.056	-.043	-.394	.0001
FPB	.640	.409	8, 299	25.881	.0000	.006	2.800	.095	-.212	.127	-.124	-.096	-.074	-.534	.0001

Note. AGE = age; LEVEDU = level of education; SEXSTR = sex-role stereotypes; ATWS = attitudes towards women; RELIGS = religiosity; MREI = marital role expectations; SEXCON = sexual conservatism; FPB = familial patriarchal beliefs.

Regression and multiple regression analyses were employed, first using the respondents' age and level of education, and then using all six patriarchal-ideology-based predictors of the study. Results of the analysis presented in Table IV reveal that respondents' age and level of education, together with three of the six main predictors, accounted most significantly for the variance in beliefs about holding violent husbands responsible for their behavior [F (Eqn) = 25.881; df = 8, 299; F (sig) = .0001]. Table IV indicates that 40.9% of the variance in this belief was best explained by the respondents' age (R^2 Ch = .020, Sig. F Ch < .014) and level of education (R^2 Ch = .081, Sig. F Ch < .0000), as well as by their negative and traditional attitudes toward women (R^2 Ch = .053, Sig. F Ch < .0000), nonegalitarian and patriarchal marital role expectations (R^2 Ch = .013, Sig. F Ch < .01), and rigid masculine sex-role stereotypes (R^2 Ch = .232, Sig. F Ch < .0000). The other three predictors (sexual conservatism, familial patriarchal beliefs, and religiosity) only accounted for an insignificant amount of the variance, beyond the predictors in Table IV, in explaining beliefs regarding the responsibility of violent husbands for their behavior, although they correlated negatively and significantly with this criterion variable ($r = -.394$, $\beta = -.061$, $p < .0001$; $r = -.534$, $\beta = -.124$, $p < .0001$; and $r = -.172$, $\beta = -.065$, $p < .0001$, respectively).

In addition to these findings, which are highly consistent with the univariate and multivariate hypotheses of this study presented earlier, several points are noteworthy. First, the results indicate that the more Arab men justify wife beating, the more they blame the wife for violence against her ($r = .823$, $p < .0000$) and the less they tend to hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior ($r = -.800$, $p < .0000$). In addition, the more they understand the violent husbands, and the less they hold the husbands responsible for their violent behavior,

the more they blame the wife for her victimization ($r = .762$, $p < .0000$).

Second, the results reveal positive and significant correlations among the six main patriarchal-ideology-based predictors of the study. For example, the more negative and traditional the respondents' attitudes toward women, the greater their tendency toward sexual conservatism ($r = .621$, $p < .0000$), rigid and masculine their sex-role stereotypes ($r = .721$, $p < .0000$), and nonegalitarian, patriarchal expectations of marriage ($r = .753$, $p < .0000$). Further, the correlations found among these predictors indicate that the more religious the respondents, the greater their tendency toward sexual conservatism ($r = .439$, $p < .0000$), hold rigid and masculine sex-role stereotypes ($r = .651$, $p < .0000$), hold nonegalitarian expectations of marriage ($r = .620$, $p < .0000$), and hold patriarchal beliefs about family life ($r = .716$, $p < .0000$).

Third, Tables II, III, and IV suggest that the tendency to respond in culturally approved ways was not among the variables that accounted significantly for the variance in justifying wife beating, blaming women for violence against them, and holding violent husbands responsible for their behavior. Thus, if the respondents were inclined to respond in a socially desirable manner, that tendency only accounted for an insignificant amount of the variance in the three criterion variables of the study.

DISCUSSION

Results of this study underscore the importance of considering patriarchal ideology in research on beliefs about wife beating in Arab society in Israel. The findings clearly indicate that the tendency to justify wife beating, blame wives for violence against them, and hold violent husbands responsible for their behavior was greater

among older Arab husbands and those with lower levels of education. More important, these tendencies are best explained by husbands' traditional and negative attitudes toward women, rigid and masculine sex-role stereotypes, sexual conservatism, religiosity, familial patriarchal beliefs, and nonegalitarian marital role expectations.

On the basis of these results, age and level of education can logically be defined as the main independent variables of the study, and the six patriarchal-ideology-based predictors as the intervening variables. These findings are highly consistent with the argument that approval of wife beating and lenient treatment of violent men are manifestations of patriarchy (Dobash & Dobash, 1979, 1992; Gerber, 1995; Gondolf, 1985). In addition, the results are consistent with Haj-Yahia's findings concerning beliefs about wife beating among engaged Arab men, where nonegalitarian and patriarchal expectations of marriage were found to be the best predictors of such beliefs (Haj-Yahia, 1997, 1998b). Moreover, these results support the findings of similar studies conducted in other Arab societies (Haj-Yahia, 1998a,c).

The present findings also point to certain cases in which Arab men tend to justify wife beating. The strongest justifications for violence against wives were cases in which the wife is perceived as "sexually unfaithful," "challenging her husband's manhood," or "insulting her husband in front of his friends." Other situations such as "wife's disobedience," "the wife doesn't meet her husband's expectations," and "the wife refuses to have sex with her husband" were also viewed by Arab men as cases that justify wife beating.

Further, although a majority of the respondents tended to believe that the violent husband is responsible for his behavior, there was also a clear tendency to express lenient and understanding attitudes toward violent husbands. Moreover, the results suggest that on some occasions, Arab men may tend to hold the wives responsible for violence against them. In particular, women are most likely to be blamed for violence against them when they are perceived "careless" (as wives and mothers), "provocative," and "behaving in a way that is not appropriate for a woman."

The results obtained for the three beliefs examined (i.e., justifying wife beating, blaming wives for violence against them, and holding the violent husband responsible for his violence) can be attributed to the patriarchal orientation of Arab culture on issues related to family life, marital relations, and gender roles in the family and society at large. As argued earlier, notwithstanding recent changes, this culture still perpetuates the husband's superiority and dominance, whereas the wife remains (and is expected to be) inferior and submissive. This orienta-

tion emphasizes rigid gender role segregation, nonegalitarian marital relations and roles, and family and marital power imbalance (Barakat, 1993; Haj-Yahia, 1995, 1996). This reality provides a cultural framework for internalizing and reproducing female subordination or, as Kandiyoti (1987) described it, "corporate control over female sexuality, sex-segregated networks of sociability with extensive informal support systems, and a life cycle involving continued valuation of women's nurturant roles combine to produce a specific experience of one's gender" (p. 333). In patriarchal and male-dominance-oriented societies, as is the case in all Arab societies, women are not expected to contest these "gender arrangements," particularly as reflected in their relationships with men. On the contrary, they are expected to accommodate their relationships with the opposite sex, which reflects excessive selflessness, where they sacrifice themselves for the patriarchs in their lives (i.e., father, brothers, or husband) and thereby become emotionally and personally vulnerable (Haj-Yahia, 1995).

Therefore, not surprisingly, a substantial proportion of the Arab men justified wife beating, blamed battered women for their victimization, and claimed that the violent husband is not responsible for his behavior in the following cases: when the wife is perceived as sexually unfaithful; when she is perceived as challenging her husband's manhood and male vanity; when her behavior is perceived as provocative or when she does not express any shame for her behavior; when her husband's "honor" is threatened; when she is perceived as violating the stereotyped gender roles of a "good wife," "good mother," and "good daughter-in-law"; or when she does not have a sense of modest conduct in her contact with her husband, her children, and other men. These conclusions are consistent with the findings of Haj-Yahia's research from Palestinian society (Haj-Yahia, 1998a,c), as well as with the findings of Choi and Edleson (1996) from Singapore; Gentemann (1984) and Greenblat (1985) from the U.S.A.; and Mugford *et al.* (1989) from Australia. Nevertheless, results of the present study indicate that the tendency to justify wife beating in Arab society is considerably more prevalent than in Singapore, the U.S.A., or Australia. This can be attributed to the very strict and rigid patriarchal nature of Arab society in comparison with Western societies. It is assumed that this characteristic has implications for women's status in many spheres (e.g., economic, political, religious, and legal). It is further assumed that women's status in these spheres has implications for domestic violence.

It was assumed that the systematic random sample of respondents in this study is representative of Arab husbands in Israel in terms of religious affiliation, place of

residence, education, and age. However, because a self-administered instrument package was utilized in this study, illiterate husbands and those with poor reading skills were not included in the sample. This in itself may have detracted from the generalizability of the results to Arab men at all levels of education. In addition, because of the small size of some of the sample groups (e.g., Druze and Beduin), it was difficult to compare husbands of different religious faiths and residing in different regions of the country. It would, therefore, be worthwhile for future studies to examine larger subsamples of Arab men of different religious faiths, from different areas of the country, and at all levels of education to allow for comparison of the groups. Further, this study relied on scales developed in Western, postindustrial societies. Although considerable efforts were made to culturally adapt these scales to Arab society, further research is required to ensure that the original reliabilities and validities are maintained.

Although a relatively large number of patriarchal-ideology-based predictors were examined in this study, numerous additional variables deriving from patriarchal ideology deserve examination in future research. Such variables include perceptions and feelings about "the honor code," perceptions of factors believed to threaten the family's honor, perceptions and feelings about male and female seduction, hostility toward women, perceptions of women's liberation in the family and society, and perceptions of male chauvinism. Further, the patriarchal-ideology-based factors considered in this study disregarded the structural aspect of patriarchy. Therefore, future research on beliefs about wife beating in Arab society in Israel should examine patriarchy-structure-based variables as reflected in "the low status women generally hold relative to men in the family and economic, educational, political, and legal institutions" (Yllo & Straus, 1990, p. 383). In this regard, the following dimensions may be of special interest (Yllo, 1984; Yllo & Straus, 1990): the economic dimension (e.g., percentage and status of women in managerial and administrative occupations), the education dimension (e.g., percentage of female postsecondary enrollment), the political dimension (e.g., percentage of women in local and urban municipalities), and the legal dimension (e.g., equal or unequal pay laws, fair or unfair employment practices). Moreover, although the patriarchal-ideology-based predictors in this study were found to explain a relatively large percentage of the variance in justifying wife beating, blaming wives for violence against them, and holding husbands responsible for their violence (50.8, 49.6, and 40.9%, respectively), constructs from other theories (e.g., social learning theory, role theory, social exchange theory, family stress theory, symbolic interactionist theories, attri-

bution theory, and frustration-aggression theory) can be incorporated in future research in an attempt to develop a more comprehensive and integrated theory of domestic violence. In line with discussions on this theory (e.g., Carlson, 1984; Dutton, 1988, 1994; Edleson *et al.*, 1985; Edleson & Tolman, 1992; Heise, 1998), future research on domestic violence in Arab societies should be based on an integrated and ecological perspective and consider intrapersonal, interpersonal, familial, sociocultural, structural, historical, political, and sociolegal constructs. These constructs, which are discussed comprehensively and well-developed in Western societies, would contribute substantially toward explaining domestic violence and beliefs about wife beating in the unique context of Arab society in Israel.

Moreover, the results of this study may provide a basis for conducting similar research in other Middle Eastern Arab societies, which may be more traditional and conservative than Arab society in Israel. In the same vein, it would be worthwhile to examine Arab populations in North America and Western Europe, who may have absorbed less traditional values than their counterparts in Israel and especially in the Arab world. In addition, such studies may facilitate investigation and enhance understanding of the impact of different levels of patriarchal orientation on issues-related domestic violence in Arab societies, which are characterized by divergent political, sociocultural, economic, religious, and educational contexts. Further, it would be interesting to investigate the beliefs of Arab professionals (e.g., physicians, nurses, police officers, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, women's activists) about battered women and violent husbands, as well as the extent to which their treatment of domestic violence cases is affected by such beliefs.

Taking into consideration the possible relationships between patriarchal orientations toward women, beliefs about wife beating, and actual violent and assaultive behavior against women (e.g., Haj-Yahia, 1991; Haj-Yahia & Edleson, 1994; Klein *et al.*, 1997; Russell & Frohberg, 1995), results of the present study have serious implications for prevention and intervention efforts in Arab society as well as in other societies. In particular, there is an urgent need for community campaigns to counteract the social acceptability of violence against women, as well as for efforts to debunk beliefs conducive to blaming battered women for their victimization. Such campaigns should also aspire toward changing some of the most significant factors that influence beliefs about wife beating, such as beliefs and attitudes that legitimize male dominance; traditional attitudes toward women; rigid, masculine sex-role stereotypes; familial patriarchal beliefs;

nonegalitarian expectations of marriage; and other aspects related to patriarchal ideology and structure.

Further, in line with the findings of Klein *et al.* (1997), and the reports of the United Nations (1989, 1993), there is a need for local and nationwide public education campaigns that aspire to develop a message that can motivate the general public as well as professionals to become actively involved in efforts to counteract wife beating in Arab society. Klein *et al.* (1997) maintain that attempts to develop this message must be based on a clear understanding of what would motivate the target audience to become involved in such campaigns because some message may be effective among one sector of the target population and not among others. For example, messages may emphasize the violent husbands' sole responsibility for their behavior, the incidence and prevalence of wife beating, or the devastating impact of domestic violence on the wife, children, and marital relations. These messages may work well for individuals with a daughter, sister, relative from the extended family, or friend who is a victim (or perpetrator) of domestic violence. However, these same individuals may not necessarily be motivated by appeals emphasizing the devastating impact of the problem on the legal, medical, social service, and mental health systems.

Finally, besides attempting to identify motivating factors, advocates of community education campaigns to combat wife beating in Arab society must examine some of the cultural, professional, political, economic, religious, and organizational barriers to intervention among different target audiences in this society. In addition, attempts should be made to develop messages that address those barriers and to promote action aimed at counteracting domestic violence in general and negative beliefs and myths about wife beating in particular. Klein *et al.* (1997) present a comprehensive discussion of the messages that should be developed for different audiences in the attempt to promote community education campaigns aimed at combating wife beating. In addition, the United Nations' reports describe campaigns that have been conducted in different countries (United Nations, 1989, 1993). This material can be applied toward developing similar campaigns in Arab societies.

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