



Forms of masculinity and positions on VAW among young Palestinian and Jewish men and women in Israel

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Study team

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Research question

How do young people Palestinian and Jewish young men and women understand masculinities and VAW?

The Socio-Political Context

Palestinians and Jews in Israel. Palestinians in Israel count slightly more than 1,900,000, constituting 21% of the Israeli population. They became an indigenous minority in their homeland, following the colonization of Palestine in 1948. The Jewish majority dominates the political, military and economic spheres of the country. While Palestinians were granted citizenship, they face lasting institutionalized racial discrimination and marginalization.

Palestinian and Jewish masculinities. These masculinities are shaped by the intersections with the sociopolitical context. The military Zionist discourse categorizes not only between Jewish men and women, but also between Ashkenazi Jewish men and between Mizrahi (Arab Jews), and religious Jewish and Palestinian men. This solidifies the unequal ethnic and national power relations, which, in turn shape masculinity formation processes, gender relations and VAW in each group in different ways.

Gaps in the literature about Palestinian and Jewish masculinities (age group 18-24)

- **Young Palestinian adults.** No studies were conducted on masculinity, VAW or on the interrelationship of both among this age group of Palestinians in Israel. Thus, no empirical knowledge available for professionals, academics and policy makers.
- **Young Jewish adults.** No study examined the interrelationship of masculinity and VAW among this population, too. One study explored, separately, the perceptions of VAW, which showed a high exposure rate to domestic violence, and difficulty in identifying different levels of violence.

Thus, this study constitutes the first opportunity of its kind to explore masculinity formation processes and its relationship with positions on VAW among Palestinian and Jewish young men and women, living in a sociopolitical context characterized by unequal power relations.

Study methods

Sample, data collection and analysis

- **Data collection.** 35 individual semi-structured interviews.
- **Sample.** Purposeful sample comprised of:
 - Young Palestinian men (N=8) and of women (N=7).
 - Young Israeli-Jewish men (N=10) and of women (N=10).
- **Interview questions:** Explored participants' understandings of masculinity in general and of own masculinity, and of VAW, and elicited responses to hypothetical VAW vignettes, as well.
- **Data analysis:** Thematic analysis. Two researchers in each study read and reread the verbatim transcripts to ensure reliability. Analysis continued until saturation.

**The study findings among
young adult Palestinian men and women
in Israel**

1. Forms of masculinities among young Palestinian men and women in Israel

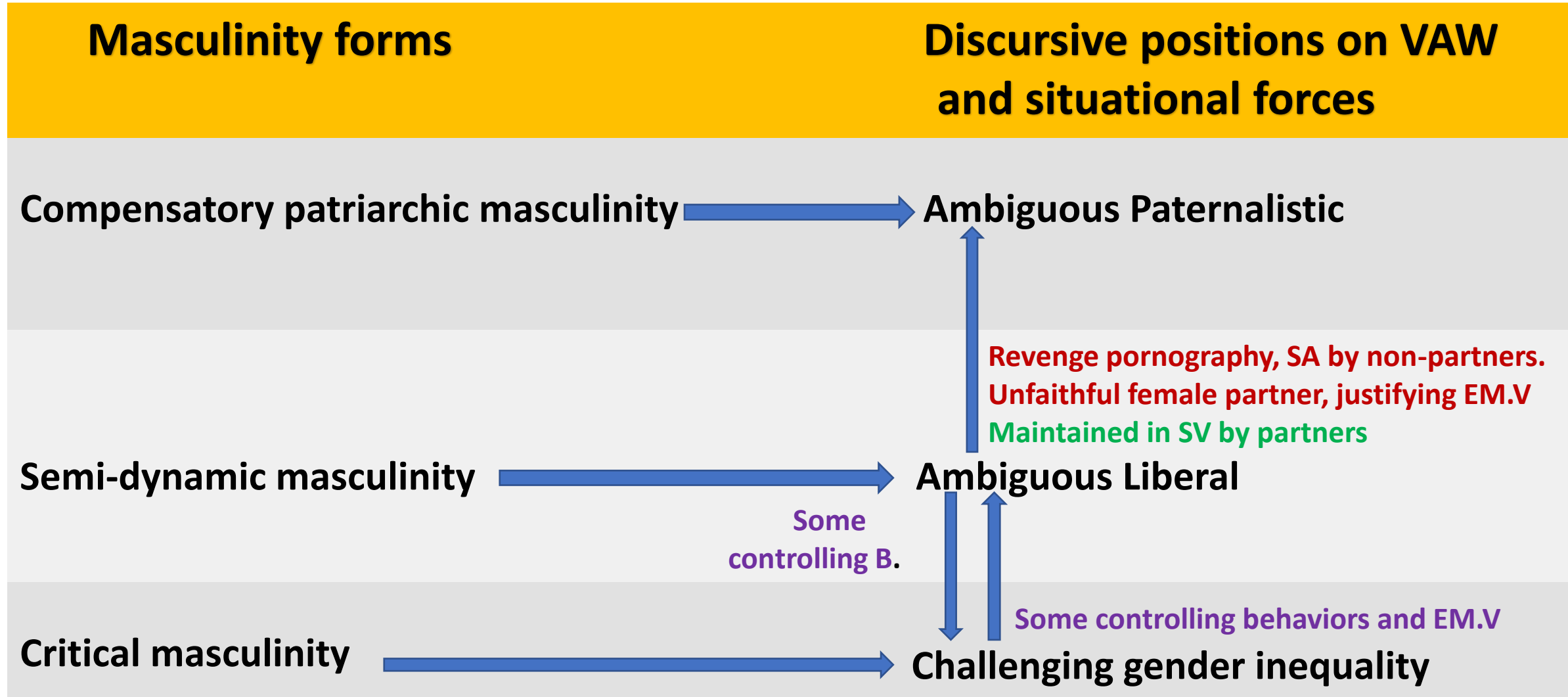
- **Compensatory patriarchic masculinity (Hegemonic).** Holds into rigid gender practices and roles. It compensates for Palestinian men's subordinated status in Israel in relation to Jewish men, resisting, by this, the destruction of authentically perceived Palestinian identity.
- **Semi-dynamic masculinity (New man).** Advocates for some flexibility in gender practices and roles by employing gender relation management strategies, consisting of reinterpreting, modifying, contextualizing, negotiating and intervening (supporting equal opportunities for women) without destabilizing gender inequality and compromising the Palestinian cause.
- **Critical masculinity (Transformative).** Explicitly, identifies gender discrimination among Palestinians, emphasizing that it intensifies their political subordination. It calls the Palestinian society to prioritize VAW, and offers equal alternative gender relations that would also politically empower all Palestinians, citizens of Israel.

2. Positions on VAW among young Palestinian men and women

While all participants verbalized a rejection of VAW, their discursive positions varied along a continuum of:

- **Paternalistic ambiguous Discourse.** Ambiguous stance on IPV, subordinated sexuality and advocating for men's full control and hegemony.
- **Liberal ambiguous discourse (contradictory).** Ambiguous stance on IPV, SA and advocate for limited women's autonomy. Mostly acknowledge gender inequality while simultaneously infusing with it women's individual choice and partial responsibility, intergenerational violence, and relationship issues etc. In few instances, gender inequality was left out, attributing VAW to wrong behaviors triggered by anger and arguments, mutual jealousy and etc. (**Gender blindness**).
- **Challenging gender inequality.** Gender inequality is, exclusively, the base of VAW. It emphasize respecting women's bodies and autonomy.

Figure 1. Masculinity forms, positions on VAW and situational dynamics among young Palestinian adults





Study findings among young adult Israeli Jewish men and women

1. Forms of masculinities among young Israeli Jewish adults

Consistent with the study findings about Israeli Jewish adult men masculinities:

Hegemonic masculinity. Shaped by and aligned with the Zionist ideology and 'the state's militaristic nature. Women are vulnerable in need of men's protection.

The New Man. Incorporate perceptions of hegemonic and egalitarian ideals such as emotionally expressive masculine performance.


Hybrid masculinity. Hold egalitarian beliefs about women's equality and autonomy, while promoting gender blindness shaped by global neoliberal values and of Anglo-American liberal feminism.

Masculinity of the Other. Palestinians, Mizrahi and religious Jewish men are reactionary and violent in contrast to the Ashkenazi secular Jewish men.

2. Positions on VAW among young Israeli Jewish adults

- **Othering VAW discourse.** VAW exists among Palestinians, Mizrahi Jews and religious Jewish men while attributing gender equity and modernism to the Ashkenazy secular Jews.
- **Ambiguous neoliberal discourse.** Blames victims and confuses VAW with individual choice.
- **Empathetic discourse towards violent men.** Attributes the cause of IPV to men's insecurities and lack of emotional self-control
- **Rejecting violence discourse:** Respect women's bodies and autonomy.

Figure 2. Masculinity forms, positions on VAW and situational dynamics among young Jewish adults

Forms of masculinity	Discursive positions on VA and situational dynamics
Masculinity of the other 	The othering of VAW
The hegemonic masculinity	Ranging from rejecting VAW to being reluctant and Paternalistic
The hybrid masculinity	The ambiguous neoliberal The empathetic position.
The New Man	Rejecting VAW The ambiguous neoliberal

A blend

The contradictory discursive positions:

- **Same discursive positions exist in different masculinity forms and different positions exist in the same masculinity form, except the othering of VAW
- **Rejecting IPV, SA and controlling behaviors in some situations, and justifying them in others (sexual violence by non-partners).
- **Condemning violent acts and abusers and blaming

1.

Conclusions

- A verbal consensus in condemning and rejecting violence against women is discernable among young adult study participants, desiring intimate relationships built on negotiations, mutual understandings and compromise.
- A divergence from the consensus was manifested in the identification and the naming of vignettes as VAW, in the ways they reasoned it and attributed responsibility, resulting in fluidity in the positions taken and contradictions.

2.

Conclusions

- Positions were shaped by the combination of masculinity forms and situational dynamics. The situational dynamic and cues (Types and levels of violence and female's partner assumed transgressions). These situational dynamics resulted in a discursive position switch, demonstrating the significance of these dynamics.
- The contradictions constitute barriers for promoting anti VAW masculinity, while simultaneously may produce a unique space or opportunity for transformation by tailoring specific interventions that target them.

Thank you

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