PATRIARCHAL UPBRINGING IN THE 21ST CENTURY: THE IMPACT EMOTIONAL ABUSE RELATED TO PARENTAL STYLES HAS ON THE GENESIS OF GENDER INEQUALITY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF UNRESOLVED TRAUMA IN CHILDREN

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SUMMARY

Background: Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) (physical, sexual, and psychological/emotional) is a type of structural discrimination that violates the basic human rights of females on a global scale. Cultural norms that glorify male dominance, power imbalances, and abuse of authority are the most encountered reasons for VAWG. Emotional abuse, which can start in childhood, is widely recognised as the most prevalent form of VAWG. However, although victims of emotional abuse usually suffer terribly, perpetrators often evade accountability. Emotional abuse is underestimated in part because it is normalized by victims who are mostly women and girls. The normalization of VAWG is contributing to the propagation and perpetuation of biased perceptions of sexism. The intergenerational transmission of parenting styles - which is an important contributory factor for child development - often includes gender-stereotyping norms, or patriarchy. Hitherto, limited focus has been directed towards the consequences that emotional abuse related to patriarchal upbringing has on children. Aim - to investigate if emotional abuse related to patriarchal upbringing influences the perception of sexism and gender stereotyping across genders, and the development of unresolved trauma in children.

Methods: Participants were recruited via social media platforms to complete online questionnaires assessing parental emotional abuse, control, trauma, misogyny, and perceptions of sexism. Parametric analyses were conducted on the 188 participants (158 women and 30 men) recruited. Trauma and perceptions of sexism were statistically analysed using correlation and multiple linear regression.

Results: Our findings show that parental emotional abuse and control in females predicted for unresolved traumatic experiences (16.6%). Misogynistic culture and male gender predicted for hostile sexism (9.9%), whereas emotional abuse predicted for benevolent sexism (40%).

Conclusion: Emotional abuse related to patriarchal upbringing contributes to the genesis of gender inequality and unresolved trauma in children. Given that parental styles are transmitted from one generation to the next, to reduce sexism and improve mental health outcomes, the patriarchal parental cycle must be broken.

Key words: emotional abuse - patriarchal parental style - hostile sexism - benevolent sexism - gender-equality – unresolved trauma

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INTRODUCTION

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) (physical, sexual, and psychological/emotional) is a public health problem and a type of structural discrimination that violates the basic human rights of females on a global scale (Usta et al. 2016, Javed & Chattu 2021, World Health Organization (WHO) 2020). Sexism exacerbates gender-inequality (Brandt 2011) and is the main driver behind VAWG (Chakraborty et al. 2020, Javed & Chattu 2021). Statistics on cases of intimate and familial VAWG hitherto show gendered differences in abuse and intentional violence whereby males are more frequently reported as perpetrators and females are more frequently reported as victims (Walby et al. 2017). The recent report on VAWG by WHO (2021) estimates that a third (30%) of women,

15 years of age or older, worldwide have been subjected to male violence. Gendered structural inequality was found to increase women's vulnerability to violence (Stark 2009). Gender-inequality prevails because of the hegemony of patriarchal norms in most, if not all, social contexts.

Patriarchy - a term of Greek etymology – literally means, *'The rule of the father'*. Patriarchy extends beyond the household to a broader context to prejudice the male as the leader of the society (Taylor 2020). Although the primitive concept of patriarchy is increasingly being addressed (i.e., through educational initiatives and the subsequent evolution of mindsets), male privilege, power imbalances and a pervasive sense of male entitlement that permeates societies worldwide continues to exist unabated (Javed & Chattu 2021, Taylor 2020). Patriarchal norms are present in every country and are included in every tradition albeit to varying degrees. Some cultures

have completely normalised the persistent issue of patriarchy to such an extent that it is strictly prohibited to defy this social structure (Usta et al. 2016). Moreover, these social norms have not changed throughout the ages and continue to be transmitted from one generation to the next (Usta et al. 2016). Theorists posit that men use the ideology of familial patriarchy to legitimize abuse against females (DeKeseredy & Kelly 1993).

Reports on VAWG from several prominent organizations include different types of physical (i.e., domestic, honour-based, forced marriage) and sexual (i.e., rape, pornography, female genital mutilation) abuses (Crown Prosecution Service [CPS] 2019). However, emotional abuse is often excluded and remains under the remit of, *'Other types of violence and abuse against women'* (Office on Women's Health [OWH] 2018). Irrespective of its categorization, multiple studies have shown that emotional abuse is the most harmful and destructive form of abuse (Mullen et al. 1996; Ramos et al. 2020). Moreover, due to its intangible nature and its acute and chronic effects, emotional abuse is often overlooked (Engel 2002, National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children [NSPCC], 2021). Underreporting by victims and the underestimation of its consequences make detection of emotional abuse even more problematic (OWH 2018; WHO 2020).

Emotional abuse and trauma

Emotional abuse of women resulting from gender-stereotyping behaviours is mostly a manifestation of any non-physical behaviour using control (including coercion), over-pressure, or fear-induction (OWH 2018). Behaviours can include creation of insecurity, verbal assault (i.e., vindictive teasing), mental torment and torture, name-calling, and terrorisation of the female (OWH 2018). Other gender-degrading behaviours can include humiliation and denigration (i.e., making women feel worthless, undesirable, flawed or existing simply for other people's gratification), overprotection, victim-blaming or scapegoating, destructive modelling (i.e., justification of male violence for 'punishment' of women's 'bad' behaviour), isolation through locking up, and prevention of socialization (Engel 2002; KAFA 2010; NSPCC 2021; OWH 2018; WHO 2020). These mental abusive actions undermine, control, and subjugate women (Garbarino et al. 1987; Usta et al. 2016; Harrower & McIlveen 1998; Pearl 1994; Taylor 2020).

Emotional violence, which may or may not occur during childhood, can be transient in nature, however it is analogous to smallpox in the sense that once the 'pathogen' has been eliminated, it leaves permanent scars (Harrower & McIlveen 1998) and, cliché though it may be, emotional scars that can't be seen are indeed the deepest. Childhood emotional abuse has both short- and long-term mental effects which often manifest in adolescence and may be transmitted into a subsequent

generation (Harrower & McIlveen 1998; Kaplan et al. 1999; NSPCC 2021). Adult-onset depression and/or anxiety are often preceded by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) (Suffren et al. 2021). Moreover, emotional abuse is a stronger predictor for these mental health conditions compared to other types of ACE, such as sexual and physical abuse (Briere & Runtz 1990). A study by Karakurt and Silver (2013) revealed that the consequences of emotional abuse are more commonly seen in adolescence and experienced by both genders but are more prevalent in females compared to males.

Emotional nurturing and unequal upbringing of genders

Women experience emotional abuse due to multitudinous cultural factors and perpetual cycles, such as patriarchy. Patriarchy can be evident in nurturing styles (Usta et al. 2016). Family, traditionally known as the school of life, has always been appraised as the main source of children's life lessons and conducts (Xia et al. 2018). However, though the household is perceived as a sanctuary from external hostilities (Harrower & McIlveen 1998), scholars have shown that in some cases, the home is not as safe as expected (Harsha et al. 2020). Gender stereotypical preferences start during the period of childhood nurturing by parents, such as in gendered-like or gendered-do type of activities (Eccles et al. 2000). Hereafter, parental control falls under the purview of emotional abuse when females are made to feel ashamed, guilty, or afraid for not following patriarchal parental upbringing. The Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region is an apt example of how the toxic culture of patriarchal upbringing is being applied on a daily basis when nurturing and socialising their children (Joseph & Slyomovics 2011). Lebanon is one example of how the cultural norm in the MENA region is normalising female emotional abuse on a national scale.

The adverse effects of patriarchal nurturing on emotional wellbeing

Walters and Stinnett (1971) formulated a social theory based on their study which suggested the crucial impact of nurture on children's social outcomes. This study revealed that children who received parental support and affection reported better social and emotional development; whereas children who received parental rejection and reprimands reported lower emotional and social development. A more recent study defined the two-dimensional characteristics of parenting-style as demandingness (control) and responsiveness (support). These characteristics were foundational for the development of a perfectionistic rearing (Hibbard & Walton 2014).

The frequent practice of harsh parenting – particularly coercive behaviours and negative emotional expressions - in childhood has long-term repercussions

and can harm a child's social, emotional and brain development (Suffren et al. 2021). When emotional maltreatments are being applied on females, it renders them vulnerable to unresolved traumatic experiences (Dutra 2009; Munch et al. 1997). Consequently, this damages a woman's "behaviours, cognition, affective, social and physiological functioning" (Kaplan et al. 1999; Koteit 2016; Neigh et al. 2009; Nicholas & Bieber 1996). For instance, emotional, social, and environmental stressors can individually or cumulatively be deeply traumatic and can subsequently increase a female's risk of developing mental illness (Johnstone & Boyle 2018; Koteit 2016; Neigh et al. 2009; NSPCC 2021).

Perceptions of sexism and misogyny linked to stereotyping emotions

Schachter and Singer (1962) proposed the two-factor theory of emotions whereby people can experience the same event but develop different emotional reactions to that event i.e., not all people develop the same feeling in the same circumstances. Interestingly, components of emotion can be enhanced or diminished due to social or cultural rules (Niedenthal & Ric 2017). Management of emotions, whether this is expressing or suppressing, is not valued equally across cultures, and peoples' strategies on how to manage emotions must be evaluated in terms of cultural values and norms (Niedenthal & Ric 2017). This is a major causal factor of females' experiences of emotional abuse (Niedenthal & Ric 2017). When conforming to social and traditional expectations, women manage their emotions to comply with nurturing style to avoid the social ramifications that may arise from defiance. As a result, perceptions of sexist attitudes towards women can develop and undermine equality between genders (Glick et al. 2000). *Misogyny* - a word of Greek etymology that means the hatred (*misos*) of women *(gune)* - is a phenomenon that perpetuates sexism against females. Misogyny is employed in society in many direct and indirect ways (Taylor 2020). Perception, as defined by Schiffman and Kanuk (2013), is the *process by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world*. Perceptions on sexist beliefs is researched in two-dimensional attitudes towards women: hostile and benevolent sexism. Ambivalent sexism is a theory developed by Glick and Fiske (1996, 2011) to define a framework of a sexist perception that combines both sexist attitudes, the hostile and the benevolent, that are ostensibly diametrically opposed. Hostile sexism is antipathy against women (i.e., misogynistic attitudes towards women). It can be observed through controlled and aggressive behaviours (Chen et al. 2009, Glick & Fiske 1996), as well as, through sexist ideologies (Brandt 2011). In contrast, benevolent sexism seems to be a positive evaluation of the female gender whereas in fact this type of sexism damages gender equality in a broader sense. Benevolent sexism may therefore have harmful consequences as it indirectly subjects a woman's will and independence to a man's over-protective behaviours i.e., a woman can only feel safe and secure in the presence of a man (Chen et al. 2009; Glick & Fiske 1996). A comparative study by Chen et al. (2009) between US and China revealed that hostility towards women is mostly endorsed by males and this is more common in countries that follow gender-role ideology, such as China. Conversely, benevolent sexism is more common in females, especially those affected by masculinity norms i.e., Chinese women (Chen et al. 2009). Both sexist attitudes were found to be linked to traditional gender stereotypes (prejudice and beliefs) playing thereafter an important role in gender inequalities (Mastari et al. 2019).

Aims of this study

Harassment, derogation, and misogynistic violence against women are normalized (Taylor 2020), and this results in the under-reporting of emotional abuse. The scale of emotional abuse resulting from patriarchy is often underestimated in part due to under-reporting. Parental rearing is a strong predictor of psychological wellbeing and attitudes in children whereby the emotional nurturing style applied by parents is a powerful factor that affects mental health and perceptions of gender equality. Increased attention is being devoted from researchers and mental health practitioners alike to the profound impact that emotional abuse has on psychological wellbeing. The causes, consequences, and prevalence of emotional abuse have been the focus of research over the past two decades (Bernstein et al. 2003; NSPCC 2021; Koteit 2016). However, research on the emotional impact that patriarchal parental rearing has on children and adolescents in the modern era (a population which generally has higher literacy levels compared to previous generations) is limited.

Therefore, this investigation will attempt to answer the following research questions.

Do patriarchal parenting styles (including the enforcement of control):

- Result in emotional abuse that can contribute to experience unresolved traumas, and
- Influence the development of biased perceptions of sexism from childhood on both genders?

Hypotheses

- **H1:** Emotional abuse in patriarchal parental style will more likely correlate with control over female children than over male children which will more likely yield to traumatic experiences in women.
- **H2:** Patriarchal parental style and misogynistic attitudes will more likely correlate with perceptions of hostile sexism in men compared to women.
- **H3:** Female victims of emotional abuse resulting from patriarchal parental style will more likely normalize benevolent sexism.

METHODS

Participants

The original sample size of the study was n=286. Male and female participants aged 18 years or older were recruited via different social media platforms (LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook). Scales that were empty, not fully completed, or contained missing data were removed from the study (n=72). One participant (n=1) who identified their gender as non-binary was also removed because they did not meet the inclusion criteria of the study. In addition, following statistical analysis, the graphical representation of the results revealed that 25 individuals were outliers and were subsequently removed. The final sample size of the study was n=188, 158 (84%) of which were female participants and 30 (16%) of which were male participants between the ages of 18 to 63 (mean age= 25.37; SD=5.52) at the point of data collection. Demographics, as depicted in Table 1, show that most participants were of Christian religion (72.4%) and had grown up in Lebanese society (88.8%). It should be noted that Christians represent nearly 40% of the Lebanese population (Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures Project 2011). Participants were predominantly of university education level and above (82.9%); significant proportions of participants were either employed (44.5%) or students (40.8%).

Procedure

Participants were asked to complete an online survey powered by Qualtrics. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board at the University of Roehampton, London. Consent and debrief forms were provided to participants. To complete the survey, participants had to consent to take part, and anonymity was maintained throughout. Data were collected and securely stored. Data filtering and analysis were completed using SPSS.

Measures

The online survey included questions pertaining to demographic data, social and religious conservatism, and six validated scales relevant to the purpose of this study which are described below. Demographics included information about participants and their parents such as age, gender, and education level. Additional questions representing social (Everett 2013) and religious conservatism (Hirsh et al. 2013) were included to assess personal beliefs on patriarchal culture. The additional questions reflect respondents' perspectives on the imposition of control on women by environmental and societal forces. They were included with demographic details as the answers to these questions characterize respondents' beliefs and ways of thinking (Table 2).

Table 1. Demographic details of participants and their parents (N=188)

Participants	N	%
Gender		
Male	30	16.0
Female	158	84.0
Religion		
Christian	134	72.4
Muslim	36	19.5
Jewish	1	0.5
Other	14	7.6
Missing	3	-
Country raised in		
UK	6	3.2
Lebanon	166	88.8
Other	15	8.0
Missing	1	-
Education level		
High school or equivalent	19	10.2
College course	11	5.9
University graduate	156	82.9
Missing	2	-
Current social status		
Student	69	40.8
Employed	90	44.5
Other	27	14.4
Missing	2	-
Are/were you a victim of parental emotional abuse?		
Yes	30	17.3
No	120	69.4
I don't know	23	13.3
Missing	15	-

Parents	Mother (n=189) *		Father (n=187) *	
	N	%	N	%
Age				
32-35	1	0.5	0	0.0
36-50	63	33.7	26	14.0
51+	123	65.8	160	86.0
Missing	2		1	
Current parental employment status				
Employed	65	34.6	125	67.6
Not working	123	65.4	60	32.4
Missing	1		2	
Education level				
High school or equivalent	18	9.8	19	10.6
College course	108	59.0	108	60.3
University graduate	57	31.1	52	29.1
Missing	6		8	

Age: range 18-63;   X= 25.46;   SD= 5.54

* For each question pertaining to parents, participants provided responses for mother and father, except one participant who provided responses for biological mother and stepmother

Table 2. Distribution of responses from questions on social norms and beliefs taken from religious and conservatism scales (N=188)

	N	%
How often do you share same the beliefs with your parent(s)?		
Always	24	13.9
Frequently	86	50
Occasionally/Rarely	56	32.6
Never	6	3.5
Missing	16	-
Open-minded society		
Threat to religion & traditional values	19	11.2
More understandable to women's needs & rights	150	88.8
Missing	19	-
Belief		
Personal	150	78.2
Parental	22	12.8
Missing	16	-
Orientation		
Liberalism	112	65.1
Religiousness & political	60	34.9
Missing	16	-
Values		
Traditional	39	22.5
Women empowerment	134	77.5
Missing	15	-
Relationship		
Patriarchy	41	24.3
Feminism	128	75.7
Missing	19	-
Women's sexual life		
Pre-marital virginity	32	18.5
Freedom of choice	141	81.5
Missing	15	-
Patriarchy		
Must; should apply to treat women's honour more favourably	52	33.3
Unfair; should not be applied for it limits women's power	94	60.3
Unfair; however, must be followed to preserve traditional values	10	6.4
Missing	32	-

Independent Variables

Index of Parental Abuse

The Index of Spouse Abuse (ISA) scale (Hudson & McIntosh 1981) was used, but the name was changed to Index of Parental Abuse (IPA) to reflect the purpose of this study (i.e., the impact of parental emotional abuse on participants). The ISA scale is of 25 items subdivided into two categories and is of high internal consistency (α_{IPA}=0.92). One category is composed of 15 questions to measure emotional and verbal abuse (EVA). The other is composed of 10 questions to measure control in parental behaviour (CB). Both categories have high internal consistency (α_{EVA}=0.90 and α_{CB}=0.79). The total score was calculated, and responses were coded as follows: 1=yes and 0=no.

Control Imbalance

Control Imbalance (CI) scale (Nobles & Fox 2013) contains a set of eight familial relationship-oriented domains used to ask participants to rate the amount of control subjected by parents over them. The scale is used to cover different areas of control such as money/financial, decisions on various levels, as well as an overall control over the respondent. Response options included no control (1), little control (2), control (3), and total control (4). Total was calculated to be used in statistical analysis; higher scores marked more control being subjected by parents over participants. The scale was reliable showing high internal consistency (α=0.86).

Misogyny

Misogyny (Mis) is a 12-item scale designed to measure the cultural attitudes of hatred for females (Richard Centres 1963). A response favouring women is scored a value of 1, a response indicating no favouritism is given a value of 2, and a response favouring men/not favouring women is given a value of 3. Internal consistency was relatively low yet acceptable (α=0.68).

Positive Image Scale

Positive Image Scale (PIS) (MIDSA 2011) is a scale that uses 9 items to measure honesty. PIS is used to ascertain how responses correlate with social desirability and is included in multivariate analyses as a control variable. The scale showed low yet acceptable internal consistency (α=0.650).

Dependent Variables

Trauma Symptom Checklist

Trauma Symptom Checklist (TSC) (Briere & Runtz, 1989) scale consists of 32 items and is used to evaluate childhood trauma in adulthood. The scale contains five categories for dissociation, anxiety, depression, sleep disturbance and post-emotional abuse trauma-hypothesized (PEAT-h) to measure maltreatment histories. The scoring ranged from 0 for never to 3 for very often. The higher the total score, the more traumatic the experience is. This scale demonstrated very high internal consistency (α=0.94).

Ambivalent Sexism Index

Ambivalent Sexism Index (ASI) (Glick & Fiske 1996) is a scale that consists of 22-items used to assess participants' perceptions of both types of sexism: hostile and benevolent. The scale ranges from 1 (disagree strongly) to 4 (agree strongly), with no midpoint. ASI is an overall measure of sexism that showed high internal

consistency (α_{ASI}=0.81). Hostile sexism contains 12 items subcategorized into: dominative paternalism, competitive gender differentiation, and heterosexual hostility. Benevolent sexism contains 10 items subcategorized into protective paternalism, complementary gender differentiation, and heterosexual intimacy. The total score for each subcategory was calculated separately. Hostile and benevolent subcategories were individually analysed and showed acceptable internal consistency (α_{Hos}=0.79; α_{Ben}=0.68).

Statistical analyses

Descriptive statistical analyses were carried out on the total scores of each scale. Mean and standard deviation values were calculated, as well as skewness and kurtosis to determine if the data followed a normal distribution. Skewness and kurtosis revealed that the data is symmetrical for most of the scales, except for IPA scale where it was slightly positively skewed. Therefore, parametric tests were computed to analyse the data whereby Pearson's correlation coefficient and multiple linear regression were used. Correlational analysis was firstly conducted to ascertain if there was any relationship between variables. Multivariate regression analysis was utilised to predict significant relationships between the independent variables of patriarchal parental styles and gender and the dependent variables of unresolved trauma and sexism in participants.

RESULTS

A comparison between participants and their parents revealed that the former had higher educational attainment than the latter (82.9% of participants vs. 30.1% of parents (31.1% mothers and 29.1% fathers) were university graduates). Of the participants who responded, 17.3% reported they are/were victims of parental emotional abuse. Although a slightly higher percentage of mothers (31.1%) were university graduates compared to fathers (29.1%), a considerably higher percentage of fathers (67.6%) were in employment compared to mothers (34.6%) (Table 1).

The intergenerational transmission of beliefs, including patriarchal, can be influenced by the degree of agreement between parents and their children. Participants were therefore asked to answer how often they share the same beliefs as their parents. Almost two-thirds of participants (63.9%) reported either 'always' or 'frequently' and only 3.5% reported 'never' (see Table 2).

The results of the Conservative and Religious questionnaire (Table 2) revealed that approximately one tenth (11.2%) of participants saw open-minded society as a threat to religion and traditional values rather than being more understandable towards women's human rights. A tenth of participants also described their beliefs as parental (12.8%) rather than personal (78.2%). However, over a third (34.9%) of respondents favoured religiousness and political orientation (i.e., 'authoritarianism' as would be expected in patriarchal norms) over liberalism (65.1%) (i.e., 'autonomy' as would be expected in individualistic norms), representing almost a three-fold increase. In relation to the question, 'traditional values vs women empowerment', 22.5% of respondents favoured the former whereas 77.5% favoured the latter. Regarding the subsequent question, 'Patriarchal vs feministic relationships', a similar, *yet not identical*, percentage of respondents preferred the former (24.3%) over the latter (75.7%). In relation to a woman's agency over her sexual life, 81.5% of participants agreed that a female should have freedom of choice, *yet* over a third of participants (33.3%) endorsed the patriarchal belief of treating a woman's honour more favourably. Interestingly, 6.4% of participants agreed that patriarchy is unfair for women, *yet* they still believed in its ongoing application.

Standard deviation and mean values are reported in Table 3. Of note, the largest SD (40.64) and mean (60.49) values are for the trauma scale. This can be explained by the polarization of scores due to the presence or absence of trauma symptoms. Pearson's correlation coefficient values were computed to assess the relationship between the total score of each scale used in the study. Results of the analyses presented in Table 3 show there was significant correlation between emotional abuse and control imbalance (r=0.17, *p*<0.05). There were also

Table 3. Pearson's correlation coefficient values between scales.

	G	CI	IPA	TSC	Mis	Hos	Ben	PIS
Gender (G)	1	0.05	0.06	0.21**	-0.11	-0.17*	-0.05	0.17*
Control Imbalance (CI)		1	0.17*	0.21**	0.06	0.03	0.09	0.07
Index of Parental Abuse (IPA)			1	0.35**	-0.04	-0.01	-0.16	-0.23*
Trauma Symptoms Checklist (TSC)				1	-0.01	-0.09	-0.05	-0.03
Attitudes toward women (Mis)					1	0.27**	-0.09	-0.02
Hostile Sexism (Hos)						1	0.49**	0.06
Benevolent Sexism (Ben)							1	0.14
Positive Image Scale (PIS)								1
M	-	16.28	7.54	60.49	20.30	24.50	25.27	31.87
SD	-	4.98	5.37	14.64	3.00	6.25	4.99	5.71

*p<0.05;   **p<0.01

significant correlations between: trauma and [1] gender (r=0.21, p<0.01), [2] emotional abuse (r=0.35, p<0.01), and [3] control (r=0.21, p<0.01). Hostility was found to be correlated with [1] gender (r= -0.17, p<0.05) [negatively], and [2] misogyny (r=0.27, p<0.01). Benevolent sexism correlated with hostile sexism (r=0.49, p<0.01). Positive image scale correlated with gender (r=0.017, p<0.05) and negatively correlated with emotional abuse (r=-0.23, p<0.05).

Regressions were conducted to determine if [1] emotional abuse and [2] control (both of which are elements of patriarchal parental style), and [3] gender were independent predictors of unresolved trauma [H1]. The positive image scale (PIS) was included as a predictor in all regression models as a control variable. The regression indicated that the model explained 16.6% of the variance, with emotional abuse (β=0.32) being the strongest predictor of traumatic experience, F(4)=7.610, p<0.001. Gender (b=5.53, p=0.073), control (b=0.46, p=0.032), and emotional abuse (b=0.82, p<001) contributed significantly to the model (Table 4).

Table 4. Multiple linear regression analysis for variables predicting unresolved trauma

Independent variables	B	b	t	p
(Constant)		41.68	5.83	<0.001
Gender	0.14	5.53	1.81	0.073
CI	0.16	0.46	2.16	0.032
IPA	0.32	0.82	4.06	<0.001
PIS	0.01	0.02	0.09	0.926

Dependent Variable: Trauma Symptom Checklist
Predictors: Gender, Control Imbalance (CI), Index of Parental abuse (IPA), Positive Image Scale (PIS).
Note. R^2=16.6% (N=163) F(4)=7.610; p<0.001
B standardized coefficient (Beta weight); b: unstandardized coefficient to predict the pure effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable;
p = Significance

A multiple regression was carried out to investigate whether patriarchal nurturing styles and misogynistic attitudes could significantly predict participants' hostile perception of sexism between genders [H2]. The results indicated that the model explained 9.9% of the variance and that the model was a significant predictor of perception of hostile sexism, F(1)=7.759, p<0.001. As depicted in Table 5, misogyny (b=0.47, p=0.004) and male gender (b=-3.37, p=0.014) contributed significantly to the model, with misogyny being the best predictor for hostile sexism (β=0.232). Regression analysis revealed that endorsing hostile sexism was predicted by misogynistic attitudes towards women and in male gender.

Final regressions were carried out to investigate whether patriarchal nurturing styles and misogynistic attitudes could significantly predict participants' benevolent perception of sexism between genders [H3]. As depicted in Table 6, the results of the regression indicated

Table 5. Multiple linear regression analysis for variables predicting hostile sexism towards women

Independent variables	B	b	t	p
(Constant)		17.95	4.99	<0.001
Mis	0.23	0.47	2.91	0.004
Gender	-0.20	-3.37	-2.48	0.014

Dependent Variable: Hostile sexism scale.
Predictors: Attitude towards women (Mis), Gender.
Note. R^2=9.9 % (N=145) F(2)= 7.759; p<0.001

Table 6. Multiple linear regression analysis for variables predicting benevolent sexism towards women

Independent variables	B	b	t	p
(Constant)		26.92	38.68	<0.001
IPA	-0.20	-0.18	-2.42	0.017

Dependent Variable: Benevolent sexism.
Predictor: Index of parental abuse (IPA).
Note. R^2=40 % (N=143) F(1)= 5.859; p=0.017

that the model explained 40% of the variance and that the model was a significant predictor of perception of benevolent sexism, F(1)=5.859, p=0.017. Emotional abuse (b=-0.18, p=0.017) contributed significantly to the model (Table 6).

DISCUSSION

Implication of results

The dissonance in participants' ways of thinking about feminism and women's equality illustrates an important point: people admit they *want* gender equality, yet they choose (consciously and/or unconsciously) to *cling* onto cultural and traditional values (including patriarchal values which denigrates women). It is expected that the higher the level of education in a population, the lower the levels of irrational and illogical thinking there are amongst them. The results of the study show that participants are generally more highly educated than their parents. Most participants in the study are university graduates; yet the responses of the conservatism questionnaire revealed that most participants were confused about gender equality and women empowerment, especially in traditional contexts related to patriarchal norms.

It is reported that people who value their parent's opinions, especially in relation to life events and serious decisions, are more likely to share the same beliefs as their parents since mothers and fathers are considered reliable sources of information and advice (Ackard et al. 2006). Research has shown that the educational status of parents, embedded in a sociocultural scaffolding, is an important predictor of sexist attitudes (de Lange et al. 2015). Moreover, a person's socio-cultural background influences more significantly the development of sexist attitudes than socio-economic status does (Mastari et al. 2019). The patriarchal mindset links back to the influence that parental morals have on the current generation. In support

of this, a study by Finzi-Dottan et al. (2006) revealed that emotional abuse starting in childhood has adverse effects on personality structure and beliefs which manifests as immaturity, diminished perceptions of self, and the undermining of women. Another study by Harsha et al. (2020) revealed that low literacy levels in parents is a significant risk factor in the promotion of abuse in children.

The results of our study also show a clear discrepancy between educational attainment and employment status between genders in parents. This finding betrays that, being a university graduate *as a mother* does not increase the employability of women in Lebanon, the society of which continues to apply patriarchal norms and the country that most participants indicated that they were raised in. In a patriarchal social structure, employment rates are disproportionately higher in fathers than in mothers. Such a society elevates the father – in his capacity as 'man of the house' – to the role of breadwinner and relegates the mother to roles encompassing domestic activities (Stark 2009). The study reinforces and perpetuates the normalization of gender inequality in the workforce and undermines the value of females in society at large.

Development of traumatic experiences in female children

Patriarchy-based childrearing includes controlling behaviours by parents which is more commonly enforced on females than on males (Hadjar et al. 2007). Control is a patriarchal method used by men to dominate women and to preserve and promote male supremacy (Hadjar et al. 2007). Gendering is a type of structural inequality that increases a woman's vulnerability to coercive control (Stark 2009); this could be a contributory factor to emotional violence being more prevalent amongst females than amongst males. Emotional violence can increase a person's risk of deve loping unresolved trauma (Dutra 2009; Ramos et al. 2020). Further analyses on gender-stereotyping experiences reveal that patriarchal parental control and emotional abuse may facilitate the development of unresolved trauma in children, more significantly in females. In our study, female gender correlated with and was a significant predictor of emotional traumatic experiences (i.e., unresolved symptomatic traumas were more prevalent in females). This dynamic provides an answer to the first research question of the study regarding the adverse consequences that patriarchal parenting styles have on the emotional wellbeing of children, especially females. As demonstrated by the regression model, emotional abuse was the strongest predictor of traumatic experiences, and this was more notable in women than in men. Hypothesis 1, therefore can be accepted.

Perceptions of sexism

Perceptions of sexism vary between genders when a patriarchal parental style is adopted. The second research question of this study focuses on the role that patriarchal parenting styles play in the development of biased perceptions of sexism. Patriarchal parenting styles consolidate gender-stereotyping perceptions that undermine women's values and promote sexist attitudes and behaviours against women and girls (Finzi-Dottan et al. 2006).

Perceptions of hostile sexism are characterized by aggressive attitudes and beliefs against women and girls and are endorsed by men in misogynistic cultures. Misogyny and male gender did, indeed, correlate and predict for hostile sexism in the study. The results showed that a significant proportion of male participants continue to endorse hostile sexism in the modern era where education is expected to attenuate inequality between genders. The endorsement of hostile perceptions by men against women in the contemporary world can be linked to the theory of the interdependence perspective of sexism and power (Cross et al. 2019). This theory postulates that the reasoning behind men's intransigence to support hostile sexism is their fear to relinquish hegemony over social resources (Glick & Fiske 1996, 2001, Glick et al. 2000), particularly to career women and feminists (Sibley & Wilson 2004). The theory can also explain men's fea r of losing social power, which is linked to the *competitive gender differentiation* model, a component of hostile sexism. This model is frequently endorsed by parents who implement biased nurturing styles because in patriarchal societies parents, by and large, denigrate the role of motherhood in feminism and enforce the domestic role of females to perpetuate gender essentialism within what is considered a normal family structure (Campo 2009). "Stay-at-home motherhood", a concept derived from feminist orthodoxy, highlights domestic roles must only ever be carried out by mothers because this is necessary for the healthy development and well-being of children (Manne 2001). This reinforces domestic male hostility against women and girls. Moreover, a significant proportion of male participants in this study show agreement and support to the dominance of masculinity in broader society. Patriarchal upbringing plants the seeds of misogyny in the fertile minds of children from a young age. The findings of this study demonstrate that patriarchal parental style and misogynistic attitudes correlate and predict the development of hostile perceptions about females, more notably in the male gender. This is consistent with the second hypothesis on hostile sexism in men whereby patriarchal culture is being normalized, protected, and preserved. Therefore, the second hypothesis can also be accepted.

In a patriarchal world in which hostile sexism is rampant and women are brutalized, survival must take precedence; therefore, protection (i.e., benevolent sexism) is prioritized over gender equality (Barreto & Ellemers 2005; Chen et al. 2009). In such a patriarchal world where VAWG is overtly being battled, protection of

women by men can be a surreptitious way to preserve patriarchal roles. A patriarchal parental style characterized by encouraging protective behaviours from males to females (i.e., 'the strong to the weak') can render children vulnerable to developing benevolent sexism. Benevolent sexism, in the context of a patriarchal system, can be described as 'the lesser of two evils.' In modern societies, which are considerably more highly educated than previous generations, blatant expressions of sexism (i.e., hostile sexism) are often rejected. Benevolent sexism is, by and large, insidious, and stealthily evades detection. Additionally, benevolent sexism is often covered by a veneer that coats it in a positive way. This type of gender-discrimination generates perceptions of sexism by discretely propagating and perpetuating patronizing beliefs about women. Hegemonic masculinity towards women is being framed in an innocuous and benign manner, such as showing women their need for care and protection by men (Connelly & Heesacker 2012). As a result of this gendered upbringing, women can yearn for protection and seek this attribute in their potential partners or spouses; this in and of itself can disempower women and girls. The consequences of benevolent sexism, however, can be just as egregious as more overt expressions of gender-based discrimination, if not more. Therefore, when benevolent sexism is being applied, people are less likely to recognise it (Barreto & Ellemers 2005). Benevolent sexism is more likely to be perceived when a person, regardless of gender, survives an emotional experience from a patriarchal parental upbringing. This type of gender discrimination is reliant on gender stereotypes and tropes that define the roles of men as protectors and providers. This might explain why a substantial proportion of women would comply with traditional gender roles and accept and condone benevolent sexism. Interestingly, the study by Barreto and Ellemers (2005) on sexism showed that perceptions of hostile sexism were evaluated negatively across genders and benevolent sexism were evaluated positively in both males and females. The reason can be that this manipulative way of expressing sexism diverges from an aggressive prototype of a sexist predator to a passive modus operandi of a protective guardian. Results of the study show that benevolent sexism is indeed predicted by emotionally abusive experiences in childhood; however, this is irrespective of gender. Thus, the outcomes are inconsistent with the third hypothesis, and therefore this hypothesis is rejected.

Limitations and future research

Notwithstanding these encouraging findings, the study contained several limitations, and the results should therefore be interpreted with caution. The study design was cross-sectional, thus causal inferences could not be made. To overcome this limitation, future research can adopt a prospective cohort design in which participants receiving patriarchal parental upbringing can be followed up during the course of their lives, from childhood through adolescence to adulthood, to monitor and measure views on sexism and the development, if any, of unresolved trauma. Data obtained from 188 participants was included in the analyses which is a relatively small sample size, therefore, the findings of our study are not generalizable and representative of the general population. Moreover, most participants (with greater number being Christians, who represent nearly 40% of Lebanese populations) were recruited from Lebanon so the findings may not be relevant to other countries. Future studies with larger sample sizes and participants recruited from countries worldwide should be carried out, so that the results would be more representative and generalizable and international comparisons can be made. Only 30 out the 188 participants (16%) in the study were males, therefore this gender was underrepresented; this is another major limitation. Future research can utilize crowdsourcing to increase the number of male participants in the sample. In relation to selection of participants, subjects who responded were more likely to have a higher baseline interest in gender inequality compared to those who did not participate in the study and therefore this may represent a selection bias. Future research could incentivise people with varying baseline levels of interest in gender inequality to participate (i.e., by offering them an Amazon gift voucher upon completion). Subjects who responded to historical questions, especially those in relation to emotional abuse and traumatic experiences, may not have remembered the information correctly or accurately; this recall bias is another major limitation.

There is growing research and clinical interest in the impact that emotional abuse has on gender inequality, mental health outcomes, and deviant behaviours (Temple et al. 2013; Harsha et al. 2020). Raising awareness of the role that emotional abuse related to patriarchal parental style plays in gender inequality and on the development of unresolved trauma may be an effective preventative public health initiative. Testimonies from survivors who harness the colossal power of storytelling can inspire a cultural revolution to banish sexism in all its different guises and improve the mental health and wellbeing of victims, potential or otherwise. A future intervention study can be carried out on participants who apply patriarchal parental style that measures sexism and trauma before and after exposure to a talk delivered by survivor (which can be held online, scaled up and disseminated to audiences worldwide). Such an intervention can help to humanize survivors and, through identification (parents themselves have been victims of patriarchal upbringing) facilitate emotional engagement. This may help reduce gender inequality and promote positive mental health outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The intergenerational transmission of patriarchal parental styles continues to influence perceptions of sexism and the perpetuation of gender inequality. This study, which is the first of its kind, on the impact that emotional abuse related to patriarchal parental styles has on victims revealed that female participants reported higher levels of loss of autonomy and unresolved trauma compared to males. Patriarchal upbringing and societal misogyny more broadly are associated an increased likelihood of developing perceptions of hostile sexism in males compared to females. Both males and females, however, are likely to normalize benevolent sexism resulting from emotional abuse related to patriarchal nurturing. To promote gender equality and reduce the development of unresolved trauma resulting from emotional abuse, the patriarchal parental cycle must be broken.

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