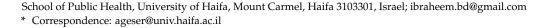*Article*

Exploring the Link between Masculine Perceptions, Violence, Social Media Influence, and Weapon Carrying and Use: A Qualitative Inquiry into Arab Adolescent Boys and Young Men in Israel

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Abstract: Within the Arab community of Israel, the influence of masculine perceptions, violence, the carrying of weapons, and their subsequent use are growing concerns that significantly impact public safety. The omnipresence of social media further complicates this narrative, potentially reshaping traditional notions and behaviors associated with masculinity. This study endeavors to delve deep into the relationships between masculinity, violence, and weapon carrying and use and the role that social media plays in shaping these dynamics among Arab adolescent boys and young men in Israel. By employing a qualitative constructivist lens, the research integrated content analysis, digital ethnography, and rhetorical semiotic analysis. The participants included 40 Israeli Arab Muslim and Christian adolescent boys and young men. A recurrent theme was the belief in "Maktub", signifying preordained events, pointing to a profound cultural relationship with fatalistic views on violence. Participants' backgrounds in relation to violence influenced their stance on weapon carrying. There was a prevalent mistrust towards law enforcement. Social media's role was pronounced, with genre preferences acting as indicators of violent inclinations. Culturally sensitive interventions are imperative, and it is essential to construct an early childhood educational program that includes positive male role models while collaborating with epistemic authorities.

Keywords: Arab adolescent boys and young men in Israel; weapon carrying and use; social media influence; masculine image; violence

1. Introduction

1.1. Rising Violence and the Prevalence of Firearms in Arab Society in Israel: An Alarming Trend

Violence in Israel and worldwide, and particularly in the Arab society in Israel, is a top priority for Israel's Arab citizens' agenda and is considered a major problem that undermines public order and threatens the safety of society and the individual. Some claim that, among other things, violence in Arab society derives from modernization, exposure to diverse information, and the influence of technologies such as the internet. Young men in Arab society are in the midst of a cultural transition from traditionalism to modernism, a transition that has influenced their lifestyle and generated significant gaps between the younger and older generations (Chernichovsky et al. 2020).

Between 2013 and 2019, 471 Arab citizens were murdered in homicides within Israeli–Arab society, not including victims of police shootings. Of these, 328 (70%) were murdered with a firearm. This statistic is three times higher than the figure for non-Arab society: 350 murder cases, of which 78 (22%) were with a firearm (State Comptroller 2021). This period also saw a significant rise in the number of shooting incident files opened in the Israel Police Northern and Central Districts. Most of these incidents took place in the Arab sector in both districts (State Comptroller 2018). From 2017 to 2020, the number of calls to the Police Emergency Service to report gun felonies increased from 7231 to 10,169—a 40%

increase over four years—while during this period, the Israeli population grew only by an annual average of 1.87%. The sharpest increase was recorded in the Northern District, where the number of calls doubled (Knesset Research and Information Center 2021).

In 2022, 112 Arab citizens of Israel lost their lives under circumstances related to violence and crime. Of these, 101 were shot to death with a weapon (e.g., handgun or assault rifle). Thirteen of the victims were women, and sixty-nine were less than 30 years old (Abraham Initiatives 2023).

Arab citizens were suspects in 82% of the murder felonies committed in Israel in 2019 in which a weapon was used and in 56% of the cases of attempted murder and illegal weapon felony (Knesset Research and Information Center 2020). Although the number of weapon felonies committed by Jewish people has remained constant in recent years, the number of these cases among non-Jewish people increased from 1645 cases in 2015 to 2205 cases in 2019—a 34% increase (Knesset Research and Information Center 2020).

1.2. Clashing Values: The Interplay of Modernization, Tradition, and Violence in Arab Society in Israel

In exploring the multifaceted dimensions of violence within the Arab society in Israel, it becomes imperative to contextualize the phenomenon within the broader spectrum of modernization. This society, emblematic of a global struggle, is entrenched in a state of delayed or pseudo-modernization (Afary and Anderson 2005), where traditional values and modern influences are in constant flux, yet not fully integrating to realize a complete transition (Haj-Yahya et al. 2022; Zoabi and Savaya 2016). This juxtaposition is markedly evident in domains such as marriage and romantic relationships, where traditional matchmaking and family-based decisions may clash with individualistic romantic pursuits influenced by modern ideals. The transition in Arab society in Israel has seen significant changes, such as a rise in the average age at first marriage and a decrease in the number of children, which reflects a shift towards modern values in personal and family life (Azaiza 2013). Similarly, housing arrangements reflect a transition from extended family living to nuclear family setups, albeit with lingering communal ties. The shift from extended family living to a more nuclear family setup and the changing dynamics of social support within the family indicate a movement towards individualism, albeit within the bounds of traditional collectivist values. This transition is further exemplified by the increasing openness to concepts like self-help despite cultural hesitations about seeking external help (Azaiza 2013). Internal migration patterns, driven by economic and educational aspirations, further underscore the tension between traditional communal life and modern urban living (Azaiza 2013). These manifestations of incomplete modernization, characterized by a selective adoption of modern values overshadowed by enduring traditional norms, invite a deeper examination of their implications on societal behavior, including the propensity towards violence. This discussion necessitates a critical engagement with the literature that addresses these nuanced modernization processes within the Arab society in Israel to unravel the complex interplay between traditional values and modern influences in shaping societal dynamics and behaviors.

The reasons for the increase in violence in Arab society are varied (Ali 2014). One of the main reasons is financial distress. Studies conducted in Israel (Benbenishty et al. 2006) reveal that physical violence and delinquency are connected to poverty, lower education, and low economic status. The *2018 Poverty Report* (National Insurance Institute 2019) indicates that about 53% of Arab families are beneath the poverty line, a figure that reflects the risk of violent response among this population. Another reason is the tolerance for the authoritarian hierarchy deriving from the patriarchal structure of society, which facilitates violent action toward women and children, who are inferior in status to the father of the family.

Another significant cause of the increase in violence in the Arab population in Israel is the concept of honor in Arab society (Ali 2014), a byproduct of Muslim culture. Thus, for example, an Arab proverb states that chil, wa'chiel wa'barud (the soldier, the gun, and

the horse) symbolize protection, confidence, and masculinity. In modern society, the car has replaced the horse, but the gun remains. In other words, according to this conception, a man without a gun, without a weapon, cannot be a man. Every happy occasion and celebration in Arab society is accompanied by "marked in the air", a custom rooted in the Arab narrative for centuries. Aside from marking the celebration, it signals to others "not to mess" with the family's honor because its members have weapons. Cohen (2012) analyzes the issue of honor in his article "Honor and its Expression in Arab Proverbs". The main motif analyzed by Cohen is the vendetta or revenge killing. A person usually accepts the loss of a loved one if the death is natural, despite the associated pain, sorrow, and undermining of the family's strength. However, the murder of a loved one will lead to revenge, as described by the proverb: "Iza dachal iblis chimi il-watis" ("If the devil comes in, the furnace heats up") (Hadad 2019).

The impact of honor and vendetta perceptions has also begun seeping into the world of young men, who are the target audience of this study. Young Arab men in the State of Israel live in a developing society that is undergoing an accelerated process of modernization, which is also associated with processes of Israelization (Al-Haj 1996). However, these young men are also undergoing an opposite process of becoming closer to religion in the form of Islamization and Palestinization (Samoha 2004). Living under the shadow of these contradictions makes it difficult for young people to formulate their identity, leading to confusion between living a modern lifestyle influenced by Israelization and sticking to traditional Arab–Islamic norms and values (Agbaria et al. 2014). Some claim that these modernization processes are changing the culture and the patriarchal family structure and are influencing a transition from a collectivist to an individualist cultural orientation (Azaiza 2008). These changes have an impact on health and welfare as well (Azaiza 2013). In addition, the accelerated modernization (Chernichovsky et al. 2020) of Arab society is characterized by a gradual transition. The many changes (economic, geographic, social, and political) taking place in Arab society due to exposure to Western values and norms position this society as a "transitional culture" undergoing constant change. In Arab society, these processes are reflected in various areas of life, including family behavioral patterns, education, ties with Jewish society, residential area, level of education, and employment rate (Manna 2008). Modernization is accelerating the dismantling of the hamula (clan) structure and the transition to the nuclear family structure, thus undermining the authority of the head of the extended family. For example, in the past, the venerable heads of the clans had the authority to settle disputes and establish behavioral norms. Today, the authority of these leaders has been undermined, and the traditional community fabric has been weakened. In view of the undermining of the customary authority of these venerable leaders, families have begun competing in an attempt to improve their status, and violence serves as a tool in this competition (Zussman et al. 2016). In addition, the modernization processes in Arab society make it very difficult for parents to supervise children, especially in today's technological era that has deepened the gaps between the older generation, which for the most part lacks technological abilities, and the younger generation (Khoury-Kassabri 2008).

Arab Israeli adolescents adopt Western values faster than their parents, leading to generational gaps, potential parent–child conflicts, and a higher risk of involvement in violence (Massarwi and Khoury-Kassabri 2017). They experience more victimization via serious physical violence and threats than Jewish adolescents, with higher rates of perpetrating serious physical violence in schools and being accused of violent crimes. These differences are attributed to socioeconomic and cultural disparities between the Arab and Jewish populations in Israel (Massarwi and Khoury-Kassabri 2017).

Arab Israeli young men are forming a disproportionately large segment of the Israeli Arab population. This group is characterized by a lack of higher education and employment prospects, a situation that poses a risk for civil and political unrest, particularly in the form of increased crime. Over the past decade and a half, there has been a noticeable improvement in the education levels of young Arab Israeli women, a trend that has not been mirrored among their male counterparts. Additionally, projections indicate that there

will soon be more women of marriageable age than men in this community, a shift that is expected to challenge traditional marriage norms and further destabilize the conservative structure of Arab society, potentially leading to higher crime rates (Weinreb 2021).

1.3. Firearm Accessibility and the Surge of Shooting Incidents in Arab Society in Israel: A Growing Concern

The shooting incidents in Arab society derive from the presence of a large number of readily available weapons (State Comptroller 2021). According to the *State Comptroller*'s report, crime is on the rise in Arab society in several areas, including the increasing scope of shooting incidents. The *State Comptroller*'s report indicates that this rise is continuous and ongoing: an increase of 19% in 2018 and 8% in 2019, for a record of 9200 shooting incidents in one year.

In a survey conducted in Arab society about topics of concern to Arab citizens, crime was in third place—73.5% of the respondents were either worried or very worried about crime (Ali and Lewin-Chen 2019). Moreover, 90.8% of the respondents either agreed or tended to agree with the claim that it is easy to obtain a firearm in Israel (compared to 33.8% of the respondents in Jewish society), and 19.8% felt that the use of firearms in the area in which they live has increased in recent years (compared to 22% in Jewish society). These data point to the prominence of firearms in Arab society and indicate that this situation has turned life for Arab citizens into a constant state of emergency (Ali and Lewin-Chen 2019).

According to a survey conducted in 2020 (Abraham Initiatives 2021), respondents in Arab society felt a lack of personal security due to the violence in their communities at a significantly greater rate compared to respondents in Jewish society. Among the respondents in the Arab society, the rate of those who feel a lack of personal security was about 37%, which decreased significantly compared to 2019, when it was about 61%. The issues that worried the Arab citizens the most were types of violence and crime that endanger human life. However, there was a decrease in the proportion of those who were worried and very worried about all the phenomena examined compared to 2019. About 76% (compared to about 84% in 2019) of the Arab respondents were worried or very worried about violence. In addition, 74% of respondents were worried or very worried about crime, compared to about 84% in 2019. Two-thirds of the Arab citizens were afraid or very afraid of being harmed by violence, a decrease relative to the findings of 2019 (73.9%) but still more than in 2018 (59.3%).

1.4. Understanding Patterns of Violence through Social Sciences: Employing Bourdieu's "Habitus" and Anthropological "Cultural Scripts" in Arab Societies

Scholarly perspectives grounded in social sciences like sociology, anthropology, and psychology can provide a holistic lens through which these patterns of violence can be understood. Bourdieu's concept of "habitus", for instance, can illuminate how violence becomes an ingrained societal norm, manifesting in physical actions (Bourdieu 1977). Similarly, the anthropological idea of "cultural scripts" can expound upon the deeply ingrained behaviors associated with masculinity and honor in Arab societies (Goffman 1979).

1.5. How Do Social Media and Perceptions of Masculinity Influence Carrying and Using Weapons among Young Arab Men in Israel?

For Israeli Arabs, civilian gun carry is historically linked with communal violence and occupation, as well as with the contemporary increase in illegal weapons (Aharoni et al. 2022). The significant increase in violence and the use of weapons in Arab society in Israel has led to the need to investigate and examine how the masculine image as perceived by young Israeli Arab men influences whether they carry weapons. Further, it is important to examine if social media has an impact, whether positive or negative, on how carrying weapons is perceived among young Arab men in Israel.

In 2019, 81.8% of Arabs were internet users, a steady increase since 2017 (70.9%), mainly due to the growing use of smartphones. Their patterns of internet usage were email services (60%), paying bills, making appointments online (34%), using the internet to

complete online forms (31%), and internet use for social purposes (73%), a figure higher than the usage by the Israeli Jewish people (61%) (Haj-Yahya et al. 2022).

The usage frequencies (daily/total) of digital services in Israel in 2023 (Wiener and Stegman 2023) by young (18–24 years old) Israeli Arabs were as follows: YouTube (61/100), WhatsApp (74/100), Facebook (48/100), Instagram (68/96), Facebook Messenger (15/87), TikTok (40/87), Snapchat (16/83), Telegram (7/61), iMessage (17/52), Pinterest (18/48), Twitter (18/48), LinkedIn (none/39), Discord, Reddit, Signal, Roblox, and Tumblr (13 for Discord, 14 for Signal, and none for the others/each 35% and below).

Social media usage by Arab youth in Israel highlights its role in expressing cultural identity, political participation, and empowerment. For them, social media helps them share experiences, recognize cultural and socio-political differences, and contribute to the broader discourse on democracy and cultural autonomy within the Palestinian society in Israel (Khamis 2018).

Social media presenting songs and video clips played a multifaceted role during the Arab Spring, serving as media for capturing personal experiences, shaping public opinion, and mobilizing the masses. Musicians and artists were at the forefront, propelling and shaping public demonstrations and policy initiatives with their creations. Nationalist songs, folk songs, and dance genres played a crucial role in rallying crowds and expressing collective sentiment. Video clips, especially those circulated on social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, often featured presentational music videos by young activists (McDonald 2019).

The transformative role of music and video clips during the Arab Spring as media of expression and mobilization contrasts sharply with the portrayal of masculinity and gender dynamics in Arab music videos, where recent studies highlight the perpetuation of patriarchal values and the objectification of women, underscoring the complexity of cultural expressions in the Arab media landscape. A recent study on violence in social media in Arab music videos investigating the representation of hegemonic masculinity revealed the prevalence of patriarchal values, female subordination, and violent behavior, reflecting the deep-rooted cultural norms of hegemonic masculinity in the Arab media landscape (Hamdan 2021). Another study that analyzed the most popular Arabic music videos on YouTube (1991–2019) revealed that females are sexually objectified compared to males (Kozman et al. 2021).

War and occupation in the West Bank affect gender norms, particularly men's roles and masculinities, introducing the concept of "masculinity nostalgia", a longing for traditional gender roles and norms disrupted by conflict (MacKenzie and Foster 2017). This nostalgia is tied to identities such as father, breadwinner, and landowner, which the occupation has compromised. It emphasizes how these shifts in gender roles affect not only individual identities but also broader peace and security dynamics, suggesting that yearnings for peace are intertwined with desires for a return to patriarchal gender orders (MacKenzie and Foster 2017).

The evolution of resistance and recognition among Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, transitioning from physical graffiti (Wall 1.0) to social media activism (Wall 2.0), demonstrates how social media has become a crucial platform for articulating political claims, mobilizing support, and connecting globally (Li and Prasad 2018).

In the context of Palestinian resistance, termed "Intifada 3.0", activists utilize the internet and social media for political activism, connecting dispersed communities and challenging Israeli control and narratives (Tawil-Souri and Aouragh 2014). However, online activism alone may not lead to significant political change, given the surveillance, censorship, and digital occupation by Israeli forces that cyber-activists face. The concept of "cyber-colonialism" highlights how digital spaces become arenas for ideological and territorial conflicts, underscoring the intricate relationship between online activism and the tangible realities of occupation and resistance (Tawil-Souri and Aouragh 2014).

The increasing use of TikTok was evident during the Israeli–Palestinian conflict of May 2021. Pro-Palestinian posts successfully engaged audiences by employing a combination of

persuasive arguments, demonstration of evidence, appeals to authenticity and affiliation, and creative expression. These elements, along with the effective use of personal stories and emphasis on the immorality of the opposing side, contributed to the higher engagement levels of pro-Palestinian content on TikTok during the conflict (Yarchi and Boxman-Shabtai 2023). Digital activism enabled ordinary Palestinian TikTok users engaged in "playful activism" to participate in political events, transforming TikTok's design and play-based affordances into powerful tools for political expression and democratic participation (Cervi and Divon 2023). TikTok serves as a prime example of how young Palestinians are shifting from performative to playful activism on social media. It enables young Palestinian users to craft engaging and creative content that conveys narratives and political messages. This form of activism appeals to the young Palestinians, potentially raising awareness about Palestine among those previously uninformed and fostering solidarity (Cervi and Marín-Lladó 2022).

By utilizing a constructivist approach, this study seeks to investigate how young Israeli Arab men perceive the connections between the male image and violence and carrying and using weapons and to examine the influence of social media on these perceptions.

Adopting a constructivist approach for this study is fundamental, given the inherently subjective nature of the research questions. Constructivism posits that individuals construct their understanding and knowledge of the world through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences. In the context of this study, young Israeli Arab men's perceptions of masculinity, weapon carriage, and the role of social media are inherently subjective, constructed through their unique experiences, societal interactions, and cultural backgrounds. By utilizing a constructivist lens, the study acknowledges that these perceptions do not have a singular "objective" truth. Instead, there are multiple truths shaped by individual experiences and societal norms. This approach facilitates a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the multifaceted influences that shape young men's views on masculinity and violence, recognizing that these views are co-constructed through personal, societal, and media-driven experiences.

This study aims to enrich the existing body of literature on violence and its portrayal within the young Israeli Arab men's society. Furthermore, it may offer practical insights that can serve as a foundation for creating effective intervention programs addressing violence. These programs should illuminate the diverse facets of violence prevalent among young men in the Arab society in Israel.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research Design and Procedure

This study explores the connection between perceptions of masculinity, violence, the impact of social media, and weapon carrying and use among Israeli Arab adolescent boys and young men. It employs a qualitative constructivist approach (Chandra and Shang 2017), using a combination of methods to ensure research triangulation: personal interviews, digital ethnography (Hammersley and Atkinson 2019; Shkedi 2007), and rhetorical semiotic analysis (Cullum-Swan and Manning 1994).

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences Ethics Committee for research with human subjects at the University of Haifa (approval no. 404/20). The studies were conducted in accordance with the local legislation and institutional requirements. Written informed consent to participate in this study was provided by the participants and the participants' legal guardian/next of kin.

2.2. Sampling and Data Collection

The participants were recruited through purposive sampling (Green and Thorogood 2018), such that the researchers preselected interviewees who best represented the population under examination. In this study, these were interviewees who could offer insights regarding violence and carrying weapons among adolescent boys and young men in Arab

society. Participants, both with and without violent backgrounds, were recruited identically. The participants included 40 Muslim and Christian adolescent boys and young men from the Arab society in northern Israel, divided into two groups of 20 interviewees: adolescent boys aged 15 to 18 and young men aged 19 to 25. In each age group, ten interviewees had no violent or criminal background and ten interviewees had a violent or criminal background (Table 1).

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of the interviewees (N = 40).

Interviewees	*n*	Age (Mean, Median, Min, and Max)	Religion (%)	Residence (%)
Adolescent boys without a violent background	10	16.0, 16.0, 15.0, 17.5	Muslim: 8 (80.0) Christian: 2 (20.0)	Sakhnin: 10 (100.0)
Adolescent boys with a violent background	10	16.7, 17.0, 15.0, 18.0	Muslim: 9 (90.0) Christian: 1 (10.0)	Sakhnin: 7 (70.0) Arraba: 2 (20.0) Nahef: 1 (10.0)
Young men without a violent background	10	21.3, 21.0, 19.0, 24.0	Muslim: 7 (70.0) Christian: 3 (30.0)	Sakhnin: 7 (70.0) Dier Hanna: 2 (20.0) Nazerath: 1 (10.0)
Young men with a violent background	10	22.4, 22.0, 20.0, 25.0	Muslim: 10 (100.0) Christian: 0 (0.0)	Sakhnin: 6 (60.0) Deir El-Asad: 1 (10.0) Ba'na: 1 (10.0) Dier Hanna: 1 (10.0) Akko: 1 (10.0)

One of the researchers, who is Arabic-speaking, recruited potential study participants initially by posting invitations on his Facebook page and by calling or sending WhatsApp messages to friends who knew potential participants or could offer referrals. The researcher then expanded the participant pool through snowball sampling, leveraging information from already-interviewed participants. For adolescent participants, the researcher sought consent from their parents for the children's participation in the interviews. This process led to the recruitment of Arab adolescent boys and young men with self-disclosed histories of violence or crime, along with those who reported no such backgrounds. In addition, snowball sampling was used (Green and Thorogood 2018; Jacob and Furgerson 2012; Saks and Allsop 2019; Strauss and Corbin 1998) so that contacting each interviewee generated connections with additional interviewees. Adolescent boys and young men who met the defined criteria (i.e., with or without a background of violence) were chosen as informants in the study and interviewed.

The interviews were conducted using semi-structured protocols between January 2021 and April 2021. The interviews were conducted face-to-face in the interviewees' homes or nearby cafes. These sessions were recorded and later transcribed. Additionally, a field diary was maintained to examine the reliability of the data collected from the interviewees and oversee the analysis of findings to ensure the study's validity. All interviewees were asked to sign an informed consent form. Participants younger than 18 were asked to sign an informed consent form with their parents. Each interview lasted 40 min and was recorded and transcribed (Seidman 2006). Efforts were made to obtain high-quality recordings to avoid difficulties in the rest of the research process (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006). In addition, the research process was documented in a field notebook, facilitating both an examination of the reliability of the data collected from the interviewees and control over the analysis to ensure the study's validity (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

During the interviews, the interviewees were asked to use their smartphones to show pictures and videos that expressed what they saw as a male image. The pictures and video clips shown during the interviews came from the participants' social media (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok). Most of the songs chosen by the interviewees during the study came from YouTube.

2.3. Research Tools

The research tool was the personal interview (Green and Thorogood 2018) conducted according to a semi-structured protocol (Strauss and Corbin 1998) that was based on a literature review that discusses Arab society and issues relevant to the study's objectives (Strauss and Corbin 1998). In addition to the interviews, we also collected digital ethnography (about 55 photos from Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Google). After sorting and arranging the photos by interviewee group and by topic, we constructed a protocol based on semiotic rhetorical analysis and then conducted the analysis. Table 2 shows the interview protocol, and Table 3 depicts the criteria used to analyze the thematic and semiotic rhetorical analysis and the digital ethnography analysis.

Table 2. Protocol of interview with the adolescent boys and young men; examples from the semi-structured questionnaire.

Self-image (what is a man?)
Please describe in your own words who you consider to be masculine (what traits does he have, how does he look?)
In your immediate environment, is there a group of boys that meets your definition? In what way?
Are there men in your neighborhood/town that meet your definition? Why do you think they meet your definition?
In your opinion, what is the ideal image of a man?
What is the ideal image of a man in the opinion of adults in Arab society?
Impact of social media on the male image (sample questions)
What social media network do you use? Which one do you use most?
In your opinion, what characterizes each network?
If I ask you to show me a picture of a male image from social media, what picture would you choose? Can you show it to me and tell me about it?
Will the same picture/s appear on your friends' social media? What other "masculine pictures" do you think your friends would show me?
Weapons: Environment, perceptions, and norms
As you know, many young men carry weapons today. What are the circumstances that led them to carry a weapon?
Some young people claim that young men see carrying a weapon as an act that expresses power and force in a way that differs from older people's perception of carrying a weapon. What do you think about that?
Conversations in the family (sample questions)
Does the subject of carrying a weapon come up in conversations at home with your parents? If so, how?
Discussion in the interviewee's environment (school/community center)
Are violence and carrying weapons in Arab society topics discussed in your environment? Where did these discussions take place?
Discussion about carrying weapons in the Arab sector on social media
In your opinion, what is the impact of social media networks on violence and carrying illegal weapons?
In your opinion, does social media content (anti-violence videos, older people's posts, pictures, articles, etc.) have a positive/negative/neutral impact on young men with respect to violence and carrying illegal weapons?
Complete this sentence: I think that violence on social media is a topic that . . .

Table 3. The criteria used to analyze the thematic analysis, semiotic rhetorical analysis, and digital ethnography analysis of pictures and songs.

Pictures
What is the ideal male image when it comes to physical appearance, clothing, hairstyle, and accessories?
What is the picture's background—scenery and physical environment?
Is the character carrying a weapon?
What is the biographical background of the character?
Songs
Why did you choose these songs?
From what time period is the song?
What is the song's background story? Who are its characters? Is there a plot?
Who is the main character in the song?
What is the song's message?
Television shows
What genre do you watch? Suspense, action, or documentary?
What is the show about?
What is the show's male image?
What are the insights with respect to the men in the show?

2.4. Analysis

The findings were analyzed in two phases that supported and complemented each other. The first phase analyzed the texts of the interviews and the other maps and catalogs of the pictures and songs provided by the interviewees. The interviews conducted during the study were analyzed using thematic content analysis (Green and Thorogood 2018), and the pictures and songs were analyzed using digital ethnography (Hammersley and Atkinson 2019; Shkedi 2007) and rhetorical semiotic analysis (Cullum-Swan and Manning 1994). The following sections describe the analysis phases:

2.4.1. First Phase: Thematic Analysis

1. Becoming familiar with the collected data by repeatedly listening to the interviews and reading the notes and transcripts. This repeated listening and reading helped the researchers "feel" the data in order to assign meaning. It also contributed to understanding the interviewee's approach and expressions regarding aspects of violence, carrying weapons, and the use of weapons. In this phase, the researchers even conducted descriptive summaries of each interview in the database;

2. Identifying topics (themes) that emerged from the data to identify prominent patterns and issues regarding violence in Arab society and carrying illegal weapons and identifying the prevalence of various topics to conduct the analysis precisely. The thematic analysis considered the informants' words and descriptions as a reflection of knowledge concerning their beliefs, thoughts, and feelings while identifying thought patterns and connections between the interviewees' perceptions and their views regarding violence, weapons, and the male image;

3. Thematic coding of the topics that came up in the interviews; data segments were added to the groups according to topic;

4. Integrative organization of themes. At first, the themes were organized according to the division into two main sub-groups—adolescent boys and young men (with and without violent backgrounds). Subsequently, the researchers sought the similarities and differences in both groups.

2.4.2. Second Phase: Digital Ethnography

After the pictures and video clips were collected, the pictures and songs in each interview were analyzed separately, and their association with the male image and violence underwent rhetorical semiotic analysis (Cullum-Swan and Manning 1994). The final stage entailed integrative analysis of all content collected from the participants with and without violent backgrounds. Finally, the visual and vocal findings underwent comparative analysis.

2.5. Credibility and Validity

The study was validated using triangulation, including in-depth interviews, digital ethnographic analysis, and rhetorical semiotic analysis. Triangulation increases the reliability and validity of a study (Archibald 2016). In this case, triangulation included collecting various types of data to obtain the adolescent boys' and young men's perspectives on the issues of violence, carrying a weapon, and male image (Carter et al. 2014) in order to gain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon (El-Falaky 2015).

The protocols were based on a literature review and a pilot conducted using several participants from the target population groups. The participants were offered the option to be interviewed in either Hebrew or Arabic; however, all the interviews were conducted in Arabic. All interviews, pictures, and songs were coded and cataloged.

3. Results

The results are presented as follows: (1) findings from the thematic integrative analysis of the interviews, and (2) findings from the integrative analysis of pictures and songs collected during the interviews.

3.1. Findings from the Thematic Integrative Analysis of the Interviews

3.1.1. Patriarchal Culture

Regardless of the interviewees' age and background, the interviews indicated that a belief in fatalism (n = 38/40) serves as the infrastructure for the ongoing intact operation of the social order. Fatalism is related to the male patriarchal cultural beliefs regarding a family's good name and the belief that things are *Maktub* and happen according to the will of Allah. Interviewee No. 26 (a young man without a violent background) stated: *"Many parents and children believe that everything is 'Maktub', that everything that happens is not their fault, but rather was determined in advance. Therefore, most people in the Arab world go with the flow regarding the growing violence and do not give it much thought or attention"*.

Even though the presence of violent discourse was prominent among all interviewees regardless of whether they had a background of violence, one of the noticeable differences between these groups was evident in the interpretation given to the cultural aspect. Interviewees with a violent background tended to focus on the operative significance of proving their manliness through violent acts: *"There are problematic adults for whom a man is someone who was successful in carrying out a vendetta"*. This sentiment was expressed by Interviewee No. 33 (a young man with a violent background), who explained that a vendetta is a known and common custom in the Arab world according to which a family member has the right and even the duty to avenge the death of someone who was killed or murdered by killing the killer or the murderer or someone in the murderer's family.

The interviewees with violent backgrounds (n = 19/20) described the cultural values embodied in the songs they grew up on—songs with violent lyrics that are played in social gatherings such as weddings. Interview No. 36 (a young man with a violent background) expressed this as follows: *"We are a violent society. Our songs contain violence, there is violence at our weddings, in the streets. . . the vendetta is an important value for us and for adults, and whoever does not believe in all these things is treated as though he is not a man"*.

Unlike the interviewees with violent backgrounds, interviewees without violent backgrounds (n = 16/20) preferred to translate the traditional cultural values to growth activities such as starting a family, investing, and succeeding in school and career. Thus, according to

Interviewee No. 27 (a young man without a violent background): *"In my opinion being a man means being loyal to the place you grew up in and to success in life. . . to succeed at the university and to start a family, to show respect for small children, the elderly, women, the family, the place where you grew up, to safeguard and cultivate this place, to be a good person and not a bully, not to say bad things about others and not to curse twenty times a day"*.

In addition, all the interviewees (n = 40/40) directly connected honor and manliness while distinguishing between various types of honor in the patriarchal culture: family honor, parental honor, personal honor, male honor, and more. These types were reflected in the lifestyle chosen by the interviewees. Thus, for example, Interviewee No. 18 (an adolescent boy with a violent background) describes how he connects honor to manliness: *"Your word and your honor are most important. Whoever has honor and is a man of his word, is a man to them, and that is what they taught us"*. He claims that one's "word" is important. In other words, if a man promises something, this is his "word of honor" that proves his manliness, even if, under certain circumstances, he will not be able to fulfill his promises. Honor appeared as a positive quality among the interviewees without violent backgrounds (n = 20/20). According to Interviewee No. 28, *"to be a man is to be respectable, it is to love and respect the environment, to love the other and those who are different, to honor and to forgive. . . to always try to help and to give as soon as you can, this is even written in the holy books"*. The adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds saw honor as a trait related to dispute resolution. Interviewee No. 18 stated: *"In my opinion a man is someone honorable who stays away from trouble and is the major factor in making peace between young men"*.

3.1.2. Male Image, Perception of Weapons, and Lack of Trust in the Authorities

Most of the interviewees (n = 33/40) claimed to have experienced incidents in which a gun was pointed at them or someone in their vicinity. The interviews with adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds (n = 15/20) indicated that for them, a weapon is a symbol or a status. According to Interviewee No. 36 (a young man with a violent background), *"Nowadays whoever carries a weapon is admired by quite a few young men"*. The interviewees explained that the desire to carry a weapon stems from the need to be perceived by society as a man. According to Interviewee No. 18 (an adolescent boy with a violent background), *"This originates mainly from problems. They think that if I carry a weapon then I am a man. They understand manliness differently. For them this is something big"*. Even adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds (n = 16/20) similarly believe that a weapon is a symbol of power and manliness for them. According to Interviewee No. 6 (an adolescent boy without a violent background), *"The definition of a 'man' for most of the friends that are my age and that I live with is 'wow', someone with a gun"*.

The interviews also revealed a similar attitude toward the issue of responsibility and leadership. Adolescent boys and young men with and without violent backgrounds (n = 29/40) had a positive outlook regarding leadership abilities and strengthening the sense of responsibility and involvement. Interviewee No. 22 (a young man with a violent background) stated: *"I see many people who are role models for me. I see that they are successful in their lives, they are leaders, and they do the right things to achieve their goals. These are the people I view as men"*.

Some interviewees expressed a lack of trust in government authorities, attributing the state's inaction on violence in Arab society to a lack of interest and racism. According to Interviewee No. 23 (a young man without a violent background), *"You hear more gunshots; you hear about more incidents, including the first murder in 20 years or something like that. If the victim had been a young Jewish man, the murderer would already have been tried and would be in prison right now. There is a sense that what is happening in our society is good for the state"*. According to Interviewee No. 6 (an adolescent boy without a violent background): *"16 people have been killed since the beginning of the year and the police do nothing and it's all their fault (the police) because they know who the perpetrators are. If one Jewish person was murdered, they would do whatever possible to find the murderers"*.

3.1.3. Perceptions of the Impact of Social Media and Conversations with Parents on Societal Violence

In the interviews, minors (with and without violent backgrounds) explained that they believe there is an active discourse on social media about violence and carrying weapons. They even believe that social media discourse encouraging violence is even more influential to teenagers.

Interviewees older than 18 and without violent backgrounds claimed that some of the discourse is designed to reduce violence and carrying of weapons among young Arabs. They believe that social media can sometimes prevent violence through opinion leaders. On the other hand, minors with violent backgrounds believe that "antiviolence posts by adults or people holding public positions cannot prevent violence".

When the interviewees were asked whether they talk with their parents about violence and carrying weapons in Arab society, most replied that they do not talk to their parents about these topics on a regular basis. Only when violent incidents occur or when they hear about shootings or violent incidents do these topics come up.

3.1.4. Personality Traits

When the interviewees were asked what they believe to be the personality traits of a man, both groups (with and without violent backgrounds) mentioned the same characteristics (taking responsibility, control or lack of control, and self-confidence) though in different contexts. For interviewees without violent backgrounds, taking responsibility meant staying out of trouble. Interviewee No. 3 stated: *"In my opinion, being a man means being a responsible person who knows how to allocate his time to beneficial things"*. Interviewee No. 28 stated: *"A man should be responsible, should know how to tell right from wrong . . . It is very important to stay out of trouble and not get into trouble"*. Interviewees with violent backgrounds believed that "taking responsibility" sometimes entails taking the law into their own hands to protect themselves and their families. According to Interviewee No. 16: *"To be a good person, who only trusts himself, takes responsibility in life, does not trust others, protects himself, a person who prays and is a believer"*.

Adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds considered the trait of "self-control" to be significant in dealing with violence. According to Interviewee No. 29: *"Knowing how to control yourself and not get dragged into trouble is a special quality that unfortunately not too many people have"*. Interviewees with violent backgrounds mentioned they do not value restraint, believing some situations necessitate a response. According to Interviewee No. 31: *"When someone tries to damage your honor, that is already crossing a red line (in other words, whoever's honor was hurt will have a hard time restraining himself)"*.

Adolescent boys and young men differed on weapons; those without violent backgrounds saw it as a sign of insecurity, while those with such backgrounds viewed it as a symbol of power. According to Interviewee No. 3 (an adolescent boy without a violent background): *"Manliness is not measured by how many weapons you have. Manliness is measured by your opinions; it is to be responsible. Someone carrying a screwdriver or brass knuckles will not do well in life, he is insecure. Anyone who carries a weapon will eventually link up with the Mafia and crime organizations and will ruin his life"*. On the other hand, according to Interviewee No. 32 (a young man with a violent background): *"Nothing can stop someone who wants to carry a weapon, who sees this as his goal—not a law and not the price of the weapon. He will go without food and sell his underwear to get a gun. That feeling of over-exaggerated self-confidence has become a goal for whoever is carrying a weapon"*.

3.2. Findings from the Integrative Analysis of Pictures and Songs Collected during the Interviews

3.2.1. Pictures of Leaders and Politicians

A total of 9 of the 55 collected pictures were of politicians and leaders (n = 9/55). Four of the nine pictures discussed below were submitted by a group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds (n = 4/20) and depicted belligerent dictatorial politicians:

- Vladimir Putin, president of Russia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Putin (accessed on 1 March 2024);
- Saddam Hussein, former president of Iraq: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saddam_Hussein (accessed on 1 March 2024);
- Bashar al-Assad, president of Syria: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bashar_al-Assad (accessed on 1 March 2024);
- Ali Salam, mayor of Nazareth: https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q15929932 (accessed on 1 March 2024).

The interviewees described these men as having a strong, belligerent, and dominant character. Interviewee No. 33 stated that Ali Salam *"does not care about anyone, he does what is good for the people around him, he is a real man, says what's on his mind without taking anyone into account"*. Interviewee No. 34 said this about Putin: *"Putin is the most powerful man in the world. He is a very strong man who does not care what anyone else thinks. He does what he believes in and makes the whole world tremble in fear. Even America is afraid of him. He is like a power shovel that runs over and pushes aside anyone who gets in his way"*.

The group of adolescent boys and young men with non-violent backgrounds submitted pictures of five politicians (n = 8/20):

- Sami Abu Shehadeh (his picture appeared three times), Member of Knesset: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sami_Abu_Shehadeh (accessed on 1 March 2024);
- Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammed_bin_Rashid_Al_Maktoum (accessed on 1 March 2024);
- Mazen Ghnaim, Member of Knesset: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mazen_Ghnaim (accessed on 1 March 2024);
- Barack and Michelle Obama: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelle_Obama (accessed on 1 March 2024);
- Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of Turkey: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recep_Tayyip_Erdo%C4%9Fan (accessed on 1 March 2024).

Examination of these specific pictures, their attributes, and their connection to what the interviewees said indicated that the interviewees' choices stemmed from attributes that have nothing to do with violence. Indeed, the interviewees appear to have chosen these pictures because they evoke inspiration. The image of Member of Knesset Sami Abu Shehadeh, for example, was mentioned by three interviewees (n = 3/40) as an ideal male image. According to Interviewee No. 22, Sami Abu Shehadeh *"is without a doubt one of the only men in the male arena. He appropriately represents Palestinian Arabs in Israel. . . I relate more to quiet characters, the kind of men I like, successful, who can be used as an inspiration"*. Interviewee No. 29 also mentioned Member of Knesset Sami Abu Shehadeh: *"I like how he sticks to his principles as a proud Palestinian Arab and is not shy about standing tall and does not stutter in front of those who attack him"*.

3.2.2. Pictures of Famous Singers

Tamer Nafar

One picture: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamer_Nafar (accessed on 1 March 2024) very prominent among the group of adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds was of singer Tamer Nafar (the interviewees also talked about his songs). This group (n = 20) chose Tamer Nafar as an ideal male image six times (n = 6/20), whereas the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds (n = 20) did not mention Nafar at all as a male image.

Tamer Nafar is an Arab Israeli singer, poet, and actor from the city of Lod. He considers himself a "Palestinian citizen of the State of Israel". He is known for being a political and social activist and a political artist who expresses his thoughts through his songs. His texts are written and performed in Arabic, English, and Hebrew. They reflect and support the Arab–Palestinian (Israeli) struggle, the struggle to advance women's rights and LGBTQ rights, and alternative art created in a conservative society. His fan base is not limited

to the Middle East; he performs throughout Europe, North America, and Asia. He is the founding member of DAM, the first Palestinian hip-hop group. DAM is marked by a unique combination of East and West, Arab rhythms, and Middle Eastern melodies, together with urban hip-hop and profound electronic sounds.

As noted in his songs, Tamer Nafar addresses topics such as gender and violence toward women, as well as the Israeli occupation and the dialectics of the identity of young Arabs. He criticizes the "establishment and the oppression of the state", but also directs social criticism toward his own society. When Interviewee No. 1 was asked to show a picture of a male image from social media, he chose Tamer Nafar, stating: *"Tamer Nafar is a singer from Lod. He is a rapper and sings about politics and about what is happening with the young generation. He is an ideal and brave man. . . what he sings is suitable for all ages. He sings about problems we have here as young people, and he is a character I love and admire. . . he is a brave person. He manages to talk to us in a language we understand. He is kind of an educator, father, brother, and I really love him"*.

Mohamed Ramadan

Mohamed Ramadan: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohamed_Ramadan_(actor_and_singer) (accessed on 1 March 2024) is a 33-year-old Egyptian singer and actor and one of the most famous celebrities in the Arab world. He is very provocative due to his singing style and his boastful and wasteful lifestyle. He regularly poses next to luxury cars and wears very expensive brand names. His famous songs include "Number One", "MAFIA", and "Ana Al Malik" (I am the King). He recently took a photograph together with Omer Adam (an Israeli singer) in Dubai, causing major turmoil in the Arab world. He and the style of his songs are the subject of a great deal of criticism. Two adolescent boys (15–18) submitted Mohamed Ramadan's picture in their interviews—one with a violent background and the other without (n = 2/20).

3.2.3. Pictures of Athletes

Out of 55 pictures submitted during the interviews, 6 were of athletes. The group of adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds chose athletes' pictures five times (n = 5/20), whereas the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds chose only one picture of an athlete (n = 1/20). According to the interviewees, the common denominator of these athletes is their perseverance and the difficult road they traveled until reaching the top. Five out of the six pictures were of Muslim athletes.

Among both interviewee (with/without violent backgrounds) and age groups (15–18 and 18–24), each athlete whose photo was chosen was seen as an ideal male image.

Examination of the chosen photos, their attributes, and the connections to what the interviews said about them revealed that the athletes were chosen because of their determination and the difficult road they traveled before reaching the top. Among some interviewees (n = 3/20), the athletes' origin or religion was a significant factor in their choice, as in the case of footballer Mohamed Salah, boxer Khabib Nurmagomedov, and iconic boxer Muhammad Ali.

3.2.4. Pictures of Characters from Television Shows and Movies

Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal—*"Al Hayba"*

Among the pictures submitted by the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds, the picture of Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74OH6CN2U80&list=PLJ0WU3XQoz4_u3swAcgwqtX5xGFP6erKL&index=7 (accessed on 1 March 2024) stood out. Al Jabal is a character in *"Al Hayba"* (*"Façade"*), a drama series that showcases the life of an organized crime family on the Syrian–Lebanese border and combines action and family drama. Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal, who portrays the head of a clan of arms traffickers, copes with family conflicts, power struggles, and a complicated love life.

Within the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds, six interviewees (n = 6/20) stated that, in their opinion, Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal is a manly character. When asked who they thought was the ideal manly character their friends would pick, the name Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal came up 18 times as an ideal male character (n = 18/20). Two interviewees (n = 2/20) among the group of adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds said that, in their opinion, Jabal is a manly character. Eight interviewees (n = 8/20) in that same group claimed that their friends show his picture as representative of an ideal male image.

From examining Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal's character in the show and watching five of its episodes, it is evident that Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal's character encourages the use of weapons and arms, rebels against the law, and encourages murder. In addition, the character speaks with profanity and violence and engages in negative behavior: driving dangerously, smoking, and using and selling drugs.

Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal's character has become a visual and behavioral role model for teenagers. Jabal Sheikh Al Jabal's hairstyle and beard style are popular. Moreover, the way he holds his cigarette and his tough gaze have become viral on social media, with many teenagers uploading photos to social media showing themselves in similar poses.

Moataz and Abu Shehab—*"Bab Al-Hara"*

Moataz: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wael_Sharaf (accessed on 1 March 2024) and Abu Shehab https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samer_al-Masry (accessed on 1 March 2024) are two characters from the show *"Bab Al-Hara" ("The Neighborhood's Gate")*, a popular show that ran for nine seasons. The show tells the story of a neighborhood in Damascus between the two world wars, a period during which Syria and Lebanon were under French rule. The show is broadcast during the month of Ramadan and showcases Arab cultural customs and Islamic customs.

Moataz and Abu Shehab are among the show's most prominent characters. Moataz is a young, agitated man, someone "you do not mess with". He protects his home and his family and wants to kill the French people who hurt his father. Abu Shehab is the strong man in the neighborhood who holds the title *Akid/Agid* (leader/colonel). He looks out for security in the neighborhood and organizes a revolt against the French authorities.

Among the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds, 3 out of 20 (n = 3/20) claimed that, in their opinion, Moataz is a manly character. Two of the three interviewees were minors. Among the group of adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds, 5 out of the 20 (n = 5/20) claimed that, in their opinion, Moataz is a manly character. The five interviewees were minors. Two interviewees (n = 2/20) from the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds claimed that, in their opinion, Abu Shehab is a manly character.

Based on their outward appearance, Moataz and Abu Shehab are practically identical. They both wear traditional clothing, carry a *Shabariya* (dagger), always look tough, and always win battles or fights within the neighborhood or against other neighborhoods.

3.2.5. Thematic Analysis and Semiotic Rhetorical Analysis: Songs

As part of the interview protocol, the interviewees were asked questions related to their musical preferences and the songs they like:

- What, in your opinion, are the most popular songs? What are your friends' most popular songs?
- What are the characteristics of the men in these songs?
- What are the messages of these songs?

The findings are shown according to genre categories. The rhetorical semiotic analysis combines examples and selected quotes from the interviews.

When asked about their favorite genre, eighteen out of the twenty interviewees in the group of adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds (n = 18/20) indicated that they like music that criticizes society and songs without violent discourse/

background. When asked what genre their friends like, their answer was identical (their friends like the same style). Among the group of adolescent boys without violent backgrounds, nine out of ten interviewees (n = 9/10) claimed that their friends like to listen to *Mahraganat* (Egyptian festivals) and *Deheyeh* (traditional Bedouin dance) music. All twenty interviewees (n = 20/20) in the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds said that they liked to listen to *Mahraganat*. In response to the question "what do your friends like to listen to?", all twenty in this group (n = 20/20) stated that their friends also like *Mahraganat*. These preferences are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Interviewees' musical preferences.

Genre	Interviewee Group	No. of Interviewees	What Their Friends Like to Listen to
Mahraganat (Egyptian festivals)	Violent background No violent background	(n = 19/20) (n = 0/20)	(n = 20/20) (n = 9/20)
Modern Arab and social criticism	Violent background No violent background	(n = 0/20) (n = 18/20)	(n = 0/20) (n = 12/20)
Deheyeh (traditional Bedouin dance)	Violent background No violent background	(n = 14/20) (n = 2/20)	(n = 11/20) (n = 9/20)
Folklore songs	Violent background No violent background	(n = 14/20) (n = 12/20)	(n = 9/20) (n = 7/20)

Mahraganat (Egyptian Festivals) Genre

Mahraganat, otherwise known as festival music, is the most popular music in the Arab world today (El-Falaky 2015). This new musical genre developed from Egyptian folk music that was popular mainly in street performances or weddings in low-income neighborhoods in the Egyptian periphery. The songs focus on cultural customs and include sexual descriptions, profanities, use of weapons and drugs, and a great deal of violence. Due to the internet, this music entered the mainstream and underwent some refinement. According to the authorities, *"Mahraganat* is more dangerous than the coronavirus", a statement quoted in the local press.

The *Mahraganat* genre was very popular among interviewees with violent backgrounds. Nineteen out of the twenty interviewees (n = 19/20) in the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds claimed that *Mahraganat* is their favorite genre. All twenty interviewees in this group (n = 20/20) also claimed that this was their friends' favorite genre.

According to Interviewee No. 32, "In folklore songs the man is strong, respectable, you can fall in love with his character... in *Mahraganat* songs the man looks completely different. He speaks with a deep and coarse voice, talks a lot about drugs and fights, a lot of violence, the opposite of folklore songs".

Interviewee No. 3 also commented on the *Mahraganat* genre: "In love songs, the men are romantics, lovers and gentlemen. The *Mahraganat* songs, on the other hand, have no class at all. They use a lot of inappropriate foul language, talk a lot about hashish, drugs, and alcohol. You'll hear the words 'drugs' and 'alcohol' a lot. The men are lowlifes, and the songs encourage the use of drugs and alcohol with a lot of violent lyrics".

Two songs from this genre serve as examples: "El3ab Yalla" (let's play), a song mentioned during the interviews, is a popular song with close to 200 million views on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YVydzZHU6U (accessed on 1 March 2024). In the song, the singer appeals to young people: *"If you want to be a man of principle, stop with the drugs, Satan will come to you and say: 'drink yalla, smoke yalla, light it yalla... play it play it yalla'"*. The song "Bent El Geran" ("The Neighbor's Daughter") is a duet by singers Hassan Shakosh and Omar Kamal: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHBaHQau8b4 (accessed on 1 March 2024). The young men who indicated that they like *Mahraganat* music also mentioned this song during the interviews. The song is very popular in the Arab

world, became phenomenally successful, and was viewed more than 560 million times on YouTube in less than two years.

The song opens with the words: "Local sugar is placed on cream, your heel is curved and the perfume ('Oud' brand) is worthwhile, and then you'll come to me and see that I'm okay. You are for no one else. There is no one like me. The neighbor's daughter caught my eye and I do not have the strength for anyone else around. . ." The words of the chorus are as follows: "When you left me, I hated my days and the years of my life. I get in trouble and cannot find myself. I drink alcohol and smoke hashish". This last line of the chorus went viral and caused a great deal of controversy among adults.

Modern Arab Social Criticism Genre

Modern Arab social criticism music is a musical genre that has appeared in recent years. The music is rhythmic, and the words are everyday spoken words that combine Arabic, English, and Hebrew. The writer is usually also the performer who expresses himself freely and without concerns. The music does not discuss romance and love but speaks critically about life here and now and is deeply critical of society.

Among the group of adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds, eighteen out of twenty interviewees (n = 18/20) stated that this is their favorite genre, and twelve interviewees from the same group (n = 12/20) also said it is their friends' favorite genre. On the other hand, among the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds, not a single interviewee (n = 0/20) mentioned this genre as his favorite or as his friends' favorite.

Two popular songs from this genre were selected as examples: "Johnnie Mashi" and "Salam Ya Sahbi", both sung by singer Tamer Nafar. According to Interviewee No. 28, "Tamer Nafar's songs are quite beautiful. He also sings about our distress as young people, about things that are difficult for young people to say. He has a lot of songs that reflect our lives, and I can really relate to them".

"Johnnie Mashi" by Tamer Nafar is a well-known social criticism song that discusses cultural and social customs and criticizes the establishment and government oppression: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAIZOUn94-s (accessed on 1 March 2024). The criticism is also turned inwards toward Arab society and social customs. Nafar opens the song with these words: "Spoiled Arabs/Forex Arabs/The talk of the town is only Rolex, my grandpa has super powers, he had 15 children, and I'm at the pharmacy buying Durex, it's beyond my ability, why bring children into this cursed world". Nafar criticizes the 1948 Arabs and the trading frauds on the stock market. He calls Israeli Arabs "spoiled brats" and "Forex Arabs"—an expression deriving from the term "Foreign Exchange". He then sings about a neighbor in Lod who became rich from the distress of others, and he does not shy away from criticizing women in his society who dare to wear miniskirts. Nafar complains that he is stuck between neighbors like these (*"Girati"* in Arabic) and "Miri" (a reference to Miri Regev, currently Minister of Transport). He criticizes the society in which he lives with the words: *"We are living in the movies of Mia Khalifa (porn star) and on the ideology of Baghdadi Khalifa".*

From a semiotic perspective, the video clip depicts Nafar appearing at events and parties. He sings and dances with the crowd—young men and women who come to see him and listen to his songs. At many of his concerts, Nafar dances with the audience, and he and the crowd are dressed in modern clothing.

The song "Salam Ya Sahbi" ("Hello My Friend") by Tamer Nafar is based on a true story and is dedicated to a friend of Tamer Nafar who was murdered: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rK3q73cG-8 (accessed on 1 March 2024). The song describes the last moments beside a friend who was shot to death, thus telling the story of young Arab men who end up in a violent world of crime and their efforts to survive. The topics raised in the song deal with the patriarchal culture and the weapon is depicted as a symbol of the male image. In addition, the song emphasizes the absence of discourse with parents and mostly the lack of trust in the state and its authorities.

Every sentence in the song includes criticism of the government's policy, of the police, and of Arab society. The speaker seeks to address and shake up Arab society. He sings: *"What is this gathering for? Let him breathe. Relieve my stress. Where is the ambulance? Call them and lie. Say that a Jew got shot. Who shot him? They were masked? Who are we kidding? For only Arabs tend to aim at each other"*. He goes on: *"Remember the teacher in math class? He told us that 9 plus 9 equals 18. We told him bring us a double 9 and we'll get you an M16"*.

Tamer Nafar, the main character in the video, is wearing a black shirt with a picture of a Palestinian keffiyeh. The video was filmed in Lod, the singer's hometown.

Deheyeh Genre

Deheyeh is a traditional Bedouin dance in which the dancer stands and sings, and a group of men stand around him, clapping their hands. In recent years, *Deheyeh* has gained popularity and become a hit among young people, mostly teenagers. *Deheyeh* is very popular at weddings and other events, including events sponsored by local Arab authorities. Its music is popular, and the words are extremely violent, encourage the use of weapons, and honor the heads of crime organizations. The songs deal with such topics as weapons as symbols of masculinity, fatalism, cultural customs, gender differences, male honor, exposure and encouragement of violence on social media, control and lack of control, responsibility, and leadership.

YouTube videos of this genre have attracted millions of views. Interviewee No. 40 stated as follows: "Most of the time I listen to *Deheyeh* songs, Bedouin songs. Usually, two singers are singing, or one is responding to another. They sing about a lot of topics like politics, religion, manliness and sometimes weapons, drugs and the like".

The complete absence of women is conspicuous in the *Deheyeh* songs and dances. Since Bedouin women are prohibited from being in the presence of men in *Deheyeh* dances, the YouTube *Deheyeh* videos depict a man dressed in the traditional clothing of a Bedouin woman. With his face and body covered by women's clothing, he dances and walks around the guests.

One of the most popular singers in this genre today is Muayen Alasam, a young Arab man from the Bedouin diaspora who is nicknamed "King of *Deheyeh*". His songs are popular, and they encourage and commend the use of weapons. Muayen Alasam has millions of fans in Israel and the Arab world and is thought to have revolutionized the *Deheyeh* genre. Two examples of his *Deheyeh* songs are given below.

In the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds, 14 interviewees (n = 14/20) said that they listen to *Deheyeh* songs, including Muayen Alasam's songs. When the interviewees in this group were asked about their friends' favorite genre, eleven (n = 11/20) reported that Deheyeh is also their favorite genre.

In the group of adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds, two interviewees (n = 2/20) claimed that *Deheyeh* is their favorite genre, and nine interviewees (n = 9/20) said that *Deheyeh* is their friends' favorite genre.

One of Muayen Alasam's most well-known songs on YouTube is "M16 Deheyeh", a song he wrote and performed that is characterized by violent discourse: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_GUaqC3lX8 (accessed on 1 March 2024). The song deals with violence, carrying a weapon, and lack of control. It calls for murder and gaining the courage to act to achieve one's objectives without concern over the consequences. The song's message is to carry an M16 and not be afraid to use it.

"M16 Deheyeh" begins with the words: "The moment they shoot the M16 your heart will tremble with fear; shoot him boy, shoot and blow his brains out; drain his blood into the big coffee pot; put the weapon on your shoulder and the shot will hit the target; in the morning drink the dead man's blood; the shots will turn the night into day and will light up the darkness; the shots will take down the men one by one… the Russian-made AK-47 is meant to blow heads off…".

From a semiotic perspective, the video features a group of young men standing in a circle and clapping hands while dancing the *Deheyeh*. The video was made during a

Bedouin wedding in the south of Israel. The accompanying band has two singers and an organ player. The singer, Muayen Alasam, is the main character. He is shown standing in the middle of the dance floor and singing "M16 Deheyeh". The groom is also seen in the middle of the dance floor, dancing while holding an M16 rifle. Women or teenage girls are not present.

The video also features ten or more young boys dancing with the adults. A small boy stands next to the band members, clapping his hands and calling his friends to come and stand next to him, thus emphasizing the impact of this song on the younger generation.

"Hashish Deheyeh" is another popular song by Muayen Alasam: https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=4XUz1d7e-nM (accessed on 1 March 2024). The song's video clip is also popular and appears on YouTube in several versions and with several background pictures. The "Hashish Deheyeh" is about drugs. The song glorifies hashish and cannabis and praises drug dealers. For example, its lyrics include the following: "How much fun it is to roll hashish. . . if it was legal and legitimate, we would make grass in front of everyone. . . back up, my son, back up, how much fun it is to roll a hashish cigarette. . ."

Folklore Songs and Folk Songs Genre

Songs about weapons have always been a part of Palestinian folklore. They were usually about resisting the enemy and protecting honor and the land. The songs also deal with weddings, religious rituals, and love of land and homeland. They encourage fighting, and they also include romance and fairytales.

The folklore genre was mentioned by both groups of interviewees. In the group of adolescent boys and young men without violent backgrounds, twelve interviewees (n = 12/20) said that folklore was their favorite genre. In the group of adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds, fourteen interviewees (n = 14/20) stated that folklore is their favorite genre.

According to Interviewee No. 13: "The men in these songs went through a lot of ups and downs in their life and dealt with the good and the bad in life. These men are the ones who protect their family and their land. They are happy people despite everything". Interviewee No. 8 stated the following: *"Dabke, Mijuyez* and *Deheyeh* are songs from the past that are still popular today. They are passed on through the generations. We always heard them at home, and we grew up with these songs".

Here are two examples of folk songs (*Dabke*) collected during the interviews: (1) popular *Dabke* song—"Folk *Dabke*": https://youtu.be/Xpz66rP6Imc (accessed on 1 March 2024). The *Dabke* in Palestinian folklore is a traditional group dance customarily danced at weddings, parties, and crowded events. The music and singing of *Dabke* are popular, and the dance is considered a "national dance" among Israeli Arabs. The *Dabke* songs focus on everyday topics in Arab society: politics, holidays and celebrations, wars and history, eulogies, stories, and fairytales. They also include content that deals with fatalism, cultural customs, patriarchy, honor of man and society, love of land and homeland, responsibility and leadership, use of weapons, and the like. The song in the above link begins with the words: *"May God forgive me now, because today the control is in the hands of women"*. This points to the continued existence of a patriarchal society and the ongoing struggle against the advancement of women. (2) Folk song—"Yamma Mwel El Hawa": https://youtu.be/j-DyQBS4rBM (accessed on 1 March 2024). "Yamma Mwel El Hawa" is a Palestinian folk song that deals with group loyalty, honor, and resistance to the occupier. The song was written around the time of the British Mandate. One of its most famous lines is: *"It is better to be stabbed and die than to live under the control of the lowly"*. The song has several versions and is customarily sung during national events and political demonstrations.

4. Discussion

The findings shed light on the intricate dance between modernization and traditionalism within the Arab society in Israel, highlighting how this interplay significantly influences perceptions and behaviors related to violence.

Exploring cultural psychology suggests that behavioral and perceptual patterns are not merely a result of individual inclinations but are deeply rooted in the cultural narratives and scripts that societies foster. The shaping of such narratives often falls under the jurisdiction of epistemic authorities (Lebel and Masad 2021). In Arab societies, these authorities may manifest as religious leaders, elders, or other community figures who play a pivotal role in interpreting and meaning making. This perspective allows us to understand why certain cultural items, although not part of the mainstream modern culture, still hold substantial sway over the perceptions and actions of young Arab men.

4.1. The Concept of "Maktub"

A key aspect that emerges is the deep-rooted traditional belief in fatalism, as signified by the concept of "Maktub" (predestined), which underscores a cultural nexus viewing events, including violent acts, as dictated from above and preordained. Adopting the traditional fatalistic view based on the concept of "Maktub", which disconnects cause from effect, could potentially justify violent behavior. The belief in "Maktub", understood through Bourdieu's concept of habitus, suggests that such beliefs are deeply ingrained, structured dispositions evolved within Arab society, conditioned by historical, societal, and religious influences, and manifesting in individual and collective action (Bourdieu 1977). This fatalistic worldview, embraced by a majority of the study participants, regardless of their age or background (with or without violence) underscores the challenges of initiating change in societal behaviors and attitudes towards violence. The interviewees' notion aligns with the teachings in the Quran, which states:

> "No calamity 'or blessing' occurs on earth or in yourselves without being 'written' in a record before we bring it into being. This is certainly easy for Allah. 'We let you know this' so that you neither grieve over what you have missed nor boast over what he has granted you. For Allah does not like whoever is arrogant, boastful". (Iron Surah, Verse 22, 23, the Quran)

The referencing of religious texts, especially the Quran, indicates that these cultural scripts (Goffman 1979) play a role in shaping individuals' perceptions and actions. Consequently, despite ongoing modernization in Arab society in Israel, which remains in a state of pseudo-modernization where modern influences are not yet fully integrated (Afary and Anderson 2005; Haj-Yahya et al. 2022; Zoabi and Savaya 2016), a dominant belief persists: individual free will is not deemed a significant virtue, with the predominant view being that God dictates a person's fate (Dwairy 2006; Haj-Yehia 2004).

4.2. Honor and Masculinity

The perception of honor is another significant factor contributing to the rise in violence within Arab society (Ali 2014). In this study, "honor" was a prominent and relevant topic in both groups of interviewees. The study's findings revealed that this term is directly related to manliness. "Honor" was mainly mentioned in four contexts: "manly honor", "family honor" ("*Ard*"), "honoring parents", and "personal honor". In the group of interviewees with violent backgrounds, "honor" emerged as an important term that defines traditional manliness, and often the prevalent perception is that "a man without honor is not a man". Another perception that came up in the interviews is that "manly honor" is often achieved by imposing power on the environment while projecting a tough and invulnerable outer appearance ("everyone is afraid of him"). This kind of image is characterized by being a man of your word, keeping promises, and lacking qualities such as softness, hesitation, or weakness. In addition, these interviewees indicated that "harming a man's honor" could elicit a violent response.

The perception of honor, deeply ingrained as intrinsic to manliness, reflects how entrenched beliefs, cultivated over generations, shape Arab men's self-view within their society (Bourdieu 1977). This notion of honor, frequently mentioned across multiple contexts, underscores its role as a deeply rooted cultural narrative, highlighting its pervasive influence on behavioral norms and societal expectations (Goffman 1979).

The contrasting attitudes towards honor and masculinity further exemplify the dichotomy between traditional and modern values. While some participants adhered to traditional norms of honor, associating it with family reputation and vendettas, others leaned towards modern interpretations of honor, emphasizing personal achievements and social contributions. This bifurcation illustrates the pseudo-modernization state (Afary and Anderson 2005) of the Arab society in Israel, where the push and pull between past and present create a complex mosaic of identities and beliefs (Haj-Yahya et al. 2022; Zoabi and Savaya 2016).

4.3. Weapons, Loyalty, Mistrust in Authority, and Social Dynamics

Notably, the role of weapons as symbols of power and masculinity was pronounced, especially among those with a background of violence. The perception of firearms not just as tools but as extensions of one's manhood reflects the intertwining of modern capabilities with traditional notions of power and protection. Living under the shadow of the processes of Israelization (Al-Haj 1996) and the opposite process of becoming closer to religion in the form of Islamization and Palestinization (Samoha 2004), these contradictions make it difficult for young Arabs in Israel to formulate their identity, leading to confusion between living a modern lifestyle influenced by Israelization and sticking to traditional Arab–Islamic norms and values (Agbaria et al. 2014).

This intertwining is further complicated by a pronounced mistrust in authorities, highlighting a critical gap between the state and its Arab citizens, exacerbating feelings of marginalization and fostering a reliance on self-regulation and protection.

The study found that weapons are considered legitimate even if they are illegal because they are a symbol of protection and because their objective is to protect the group and its existence. This finding came up in the context of "us and them", mostly among Arab adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds. These adolescent boys and young men mentioned closed groups that do not allow other adolescent boys and young men to join. They also said that tattling about violence within closed groups is considered an act of disloyalty.

The findings further pointed to a lack of trust in the law enforcement authorities. On the one hand, most of the interviewees criticized the reality of Arab society and the rising violence within this reality. On the other hand, many cast responsibility onto the police and the state authorities. Some participants argued that violence and murders in Arab society are handled with disrespect and a sense of helplessness. Some even claimed that the state is deliberately not handling this situation and is transmitting a subliminal message to the effect that the authorities and the state have no problem with "them killing each other".

These findings are in line with previous studies pointing to a lack of trust between the Arab population in Israel and the police (Abraham Initiatives 2020). The study's findings were also in line with arguments claiming that eradication of violence in Arab society is caught between "institutionalized conspiracy" and "cultural crime" in that the state and the law enforcement authorities are not doing enough to handle the pandemic of violence and the leaders of Arab society are failing to cope with the crime challenge (Ali 2014).

The research highlights the importance of group belonging (Erikson 1994; Kiesner et al. 2002) in Arab adolescent boys and how it can normalize violence linked to factors like encroachment, debts, and insults (Horowitz and Frankel 1990).

Interviewees with violent backgrounds viewed crime and arms trafficking as financial opportunities, explaining how criminals entice young men in Arab society into violent crimes and weapon concealment for money (State Comptroller 2018). This can be explained by the accelerated modernization (Chernichovsky et al. 2020) of the Israeli Arab society,

especially adolescent boys and young men, to cope with the many changes (economic, geographic, social, and political) taking place due to exposure to Western values and norms.

4.4. Social Media's Role in Shaping Masculinity and Violence

Social media emerges as a double-edged sword, amplifying traditional notions of masculinity while also offering platforms for alternative narratives. The discourse on social media around violence and weapon carrying illustrates the potent influence of digital spaces in shaping and challenging traditional norms. This digital influence, combined with conversations (or the lack thereof) with parents about violence, underscores the pivotal role of familial and societal dialogues in navigating the complexities of modernity and tradition.

Personality traits associated with masculinity, such as responsibility and self-control, were discussed in varying contexts, highlighting the diverse interpretations of what it means to be a man in a society caught between tradition and modernity. The divergence in views between those with and without violent backgrounds offers insights into the potential pathways for fostering a culture of non-violence and responsible masculinity.

The study revealed that the use of social media is common among the interviewees (with or without violent backgrounds) and that social media allows young men to remain constantly aware of what others are doing. Thus, social media has a considerable effect on how these adolescent boys and young men perceive the image of masculinity, violence, and the use of weapons.

The analysis of the pictures collected during the interviews indicates that ideal male images that are belligerent in nature (dictators and politicians such as Putin and masculine characters from shows such as *Al Hayba* and *Bab Al-Hara*) were popular among interviewees with violent backgrounds.

The findings of this study also indicate that adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds favor the *Mahraganat* (Egyptian festivals) and *Deheyeh* genres. The songs in these genres contain sexual descriptions and profanities and encourage listeners to carry weapons and use drugs. On the other hand, interviewees without violent backgrounds tended to prefer social criticism and political songs, such as those of singer Tamer Nafar.

The expected impact of the violence present in these pictures and the popular songs can be learned from the *edutainment* approach (MacBlain 2018; Gesser-Edelsburg and Singhal 2013), according to which various media (such as television, cartoons, and cinema) create different models of identification (positive or negative) for their viewers, reinforce or undermine opinions, and lead to behavioral changes, in line with Bandura's social cognitive theory (Bandura 2004a, 2004b). Therefore, according to Bandura's social cognitive theory, the choice of belligerent role models by adolescent boys and young men with violent backgrounds reflects and indicates their lifestyle.

4.5. Lack of Parental Involvement and the Influence on Violence

Modernization in the Israeli Arab society (Chernichovsky et al. 2020) is accelerating the dismantling of the hamula (clan) structure and the transition to the nuclear family structure, thus undermining the authority of the head of the extended family and changes in family behavioral patterns.

Most of the interviewees indicated that they do not discuss violence with their parents and that such conversations only take place at home around the time of shooting incidents and violent incidents. In addition, they stated that parents' involvement and direct discussion about violence and the use of weapons are important to them. This indicates that the accelerated modernization in the Israeli Arab society, lack of parental involvement, and the absence of such discussion can increase the impact of negative role models that encourage violence and aggressive discourse.

In synthesizing these findings, it becomes evident that the journey of modernization in Arab society in Israel is fraught with tensions and contradictions. The delicate balance between embracing modern values and preserving traditional norms is a testament to the society's resilience and adaptability. As Arab society in Israel continues to navigate this

transitional phase, understanding the nuanced interplay of factors influencing perceptions and behaviors related to violence becomes crucial. This understanding illuminates the challenges faced and highlights opportunities for culturally sensitive interventions that honor the past while embracing the future.

4.6. Sumud and Arab Masculinity

While the concept of "Sumud" did not emerge directly in the interviews conducted for this research, its principles are inherently connected to the fabric of Arab masculinity, especially within conflict settings. Sumud, a culturally embedded construct of steadfastness and perseverance, serves as a meta-cognitive framework enabling Palestinians to navigate the complexities of military occupation, political conflict, and chronic adversity. It embodies both a value and an action, manifesting through individual and collective endeavors to safeguard family, community, identity, and dignity while steadfastly remaining on their ancestral land (Hammad and Tribe 2021). In the context of Arab masculinity, particularly in conflict-ridden environments, Sumud intertwines with the traditional constructs of masculinity, where honor, resilience, and the protection of community and family are paramount. Arab men, through the lens of Sumud, might perceive their roles not merely in terms of physical strength or dominance but as embodying the resilience and perseverance necessary to uphold their cultural and familial duties amidst adversity. This understanding of masculinity, influenced by Sumud, emphasizes a form of resistance that is not only physical but deeply rooted in cultural identity, dignity, and the collective well-being of the community. Thus, Arab masculinity in conflict settings can be viewed through the prism of Sumud, where the endurance of hardship and the commitment to collective resilience become integral components of their self-perception and societal roles.

In the context of this research, the intersection of Arab masculinity with their self-perception in a conflict setting can be nuanced. The study reveals how traditional notions of masculinity, deeply intertwined with the concepts of honor and power, shape these individuals' behaviors and attitudes towards violence and weapon carrying. In a conflict-ridden environment, the manifestation of masculinity is often associated with the ability to assert dominance and control, either through physical strength or the possession of weapons, as a means to protect honor and assert one's status within the community. This traditional view of masculinity is further complicated by the pervasive influence of social media, which not only propagates but also glorifies these attributes, thereby reinforcing aggressive and violent behaviors as emblematic of manhood. Consequently, Arab masculinity, in this setting, is not merely a personal identity but a societal expectation that dictates specific roles and behaviors, often leading to a cycle of violence that is both a cause and effect of the ongoing conflict.

4.7. Study Limitations

Because this study is a qualitative constructive study, it cannot serve as a representative sample of the entire population. In addition, its reliance on a small sample size constrains the extent to which the findings can be extrapolated to the broader Israeli Arab adolescent boys and young men population. Consequently, the results may not fully represent the diverse experiences and behaviors of Israeli Arab adolescent boys and young men as a whole. Nevertheless, it integrates diverse tools such as interviews, semiotic analysis, and digital ethnography of videos and pictures. It also provides an in-depth look at the phenomenon of violence and its expression in young men in Israel's Arab society.

An additional limitation is that the study examined adolescent boys' and young men's involvement in topics of violence and carrying weapons. The sensitive nature of this topic may have caused interviewees to be less open for fear of providing information that might incriminate them.

In this study, the responses from Christian participants did not significantly differ from those of their Muslim counterparts, indicating a predominantly Muslim-driven perspective shared across the board. This phenomenon can be attributed to the overwhelming majority

of the sample being Muslim, coupled with the significant Muslim representation in the Arab population at large. Such a demographic composition likely exerts considerable social influence on Christian Arabs, leading to a convergence in viewpoints and attitudes on various issues. This homogeneity in responses underscores the pervasive impact of the majority's cultural and social norms, which can transcend religious boundaries and shape the perspectives of minority groups within the same societal context.

5. Conclusions

The findings of this research shed light on intricate interconnections between masculinity, violence, social media influence, and weapon carrying and usage among Israeli Arab adolescent boys and young men. The implications derived from this study are multifaceted:

(1) The study underscores the significance of the interplay between social media and cultural narratives in influencing expressions of violence in Arab society. The pervasive role of cultural scripts and epistemic authorities in molding behavior implies that interventions aimed at reducing violence need to be firmly anchored within the cultural milieu of Arab society. The effectiveness of standardized intervention programs, traditionally suitable for liberal populations, could be limited within communities deeply rooted in conservative discourse. This highlights the need for interventions that are not just broadly applicable but specifically catered to the unique cultural and foundational beliefs of the community, offering a nuanced understanding while addressing detrimental norms.

(2) The influence of epistemic authorities in sculpting cultural narratives suggests their potential pivotal role in dialogues and intervention outcomes. The respect and influence these figures hold within the community imply their involvement might heighten the likelihood of impactful and enduring change. Their endorsement could facilitate more natural assimilation of evolving norms and behaviors, potentially enhancing the efficacy of interventions.

(3) The inherent nuances of communities that prescribe standardized lifestyles and behavioral patterns (Lebel 2016) highlight the complexities involved in devising intervention approaches. Strategies targeting the mere integration of these individuals into the wider society may not fully address the intricacies of their experiences. The emphasis seems to shift towards the importance of fostering communication and comprehension, bearing in mind the preservation of the community's fundamental values alongside the advocacy for beneficial change.

(4) The relevance of early childhood education in fostering positive male role models emerges prominently. Educational programs with an emphasis against violence could have a place within both formal and informal education systems. Additionally, the potential need for resources to oversee violence within these programs might influence the overall educational environment, steering it toward a more conducive and positive direction.

(5) The study suggests a nuanced relationship between adolescent boys and young men and their trust in state authorities. The importance of personal safety for Arab citizens and the potential benefits of having governmental assistance tools accessible to Israeli Arab adolescent boys and young men and families in physical and digital realms emerge as influential factors. Furthermore, the study highlights the possible significance of awareness, information, and spokesmanship within Arab society in shaping these trust dynamics.

(6) The study hints at potential areas of exploration for subsequent research endeavors. Notably, there appears to be a scope to investigate differences based on variables like religion (encompassing Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and Druze people) and geographic regions within Israel (north, center, and south). Additionally, delving into the opinions and perceptions of professionals in Arab society, such as teachers and psychologists, might offer valuable insights for understanding and addressing issues related to violence and weapon carrying.

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