

**The association between sexual abuse and psycho-social attributers  
among Israeli Arab females: Family support and religiosity as  
moderators and maladaptive daydreaming as a mediator.**

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**Abstract**

The increasing interest in incest and its psychological consequences has been evident in the professional literature in recent years and teaches us that the phenomenon is more common than the society is willing to recognize and admit. The vulnerability to children within the family goes far beyond their impact on those affected in all areas of their lives and predicts the development of harmful traumatic reactions. The aim of the study was to deepen the knowledge about the psychological and social consequences of sexual exploitation in Arab families in Israel, including Self-esteem, social anxiety, social relationships, loneliness and depression and anxiety. The research model and its hypotheses were based on the assumption that sexual abuse victims suffer from severe psychological and social consequences on several levels: mental, social or interpersonal. It was hypothesized that sexually abused women would tend to activate their imagination and become unusually daydreaming compared to women who had not been sexually assaulted, and that abnormal daydreaming could mediate between incest trauma and its psycho-social consequences. I also

assumed that family and religious support would moderate the consequences of incest.

The study involved 195 Arab women living in the State of Israel, of whom 99 were victims of Arab sexual assault, recruited through specialized centres for the treatment of survivors of childhood sexual abuse serving the Israeli Arab society , and a control group of 95 Arab women from the community. The subjects were asked to answer a questionnaire that measures demographic variables, delusions of imagination, abnormal daydreaming, social anxiety, general functioning questions, emotional loneliness, self-esteem, social relationships, life satisfaction, depression, anxiety, somaticity, religiosity and family support. The findings showed that women who suffered sexual abuse reported less self-esteem and lower levels of social relationships and more on social anxiety, loneliness, depression and anxiety than non-sexually abused women did. The findings also showed that religiosity and family support cannot mitigate the consequences of sexual trauma in the family. It was also found that women with sexual trauma in the family would be more likely to become daydreams than women who were not sexually abused. In addition, it was found that women who were victims of sexual assault and experienced unusual daydreaming reported worsening psychosocial consequences compared to women who were victims of sexual assault who were not reported to have abnormal daydreaming.