

**Combating Violence against Egyptian Women
Empowerment and Domestic Violence**

Final Report

**Sahar El-Sheneity
Mulki Al-Sharmani**

**Social Research Center
The American University in Cairo**

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1. Report Goals

The aims of this report are twofold. First, a proposed framework for studying empowerment that is adaptable to the Egyptian context is introduced drawing from but also adding to the international scholarship on empowerment. We analyze women's empowerment using a pilot sample of Egyptian women that was surveyed in the summer of 2007 (June-August 2007) based on the proposed framework. Second, using the survey data we will also examine the relation between women's empowerment and their exposure to domestic violence. We will limit our analysis to domestic violence (and in particular spousal violence) since the data generated from the survey focused on this type of violence. In addition, the analysis in this report will be solely based on the ever married women in the sample since it is a much larger category (N: 2,372) than the single women (N: 134)

2. Background and Study Significance

Violence against women is a universal problem that has triggered a worldwide attention, resulting in efforts to combat the problem through international conventions, government policies, academic research, and advocacy work. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, defines violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.” (UN 1993). This broad definition encompasses a wide range of violence that could take place against women at home and/or various domains of the public space (e.g. workplace, market, etc.). In addition, the perpetrators of violence against women (VAW) are diverse including spouses, family relatives, acquaintances and co-workers, unknown individuals, armed factions, and state institutions. The international literature on VAW shows that the most wide-spread form of violence against women is intimate partner violence (IPV), i.e. violence inflicted on a woman by a spouse or a partner (Heise et al 1999; WHO 2002; Kishor and Johnson 2004; WHO 2006).

There are three main points that can be drawn from this literature. First, the bulk of this literature has focused on investigating the prevalence of IPV, its risk and protective factors, and its health impacts on the victims and their children. However, there has been less much less study of the dynamics of IPV, the women's coping strategies, the mechanisms of help-seeking and the obstacles to this process, and the multilayered ways in which VAW can be combated. Secondly, the methodology and data collection techniques used in VAW studies have been contested in regard to their adequacy and/or ethical foundations. Third, the connection between women's empowered status (which has been variably measured) and the likelihood of their exposure to violence has been one of the main questions driving much of the recent literature.

The ecological model is the most widely used theoretical framework to analyze violence against women and its relation to their empowerment/disempowerment. The model

outlines several intertwined circles of factors that could contribute to violence against women or protect them from it (Heise 1998, Heise et al 2002). These circles consist of individual, household, community, and societal factors. Individual factors that are hypothesized to protect from VAW include: a woman's high level of education, delayed marriage, a woman's employment, her control of economic resources, her mobility, and her involvement in household decision-making. Positive household factors include high household wealth, compatibility between husband and wife in education and economic resources, living in a nuclear household, having fewer children, and gender equity in family relations. Community factors (positive and negative) include urban versus rural, poverty and/or development level, and community norms and practices regarding gender relations and equity. Lastly, societal factors refer to the norms and policies in the society at large that could contribute to or protect from VAW.

One of the assumptions underlying the ecological model is that factors that are assumed to lead to a woman's empowerment will also most likely protect her from being prone to suffer from intimate partner violence. Numerous studies, nonetheless, have shown that the association between women's empowerment and their exposure to IPV is complex. That is, it is not necessarily education, work, and access to assets that protect women from intimate partner violence, but rather what these resources and skills enable women to do such as establishing a support network, accessing community-based and state institutions that can protect women from IPV, and developing a confident and proactive selfhood (Schuler et al 1996; Koenig 2003; Kishor and Johnson 2004, Amoakohene 2004, Flake 2005). Furthermore, some of these studies showed that it is the existence of multiple protective factors (individual, community, and societal) that act as a buffer against IPV, whereas the existence of individual protective factors (e.g. a woman's involvement in decision-making, mobility, access to resources) in the absence of other protective factors (e.g. supportive community norms and practices, protective state policies and institutions) is sometimes inadequate and in some cases even counter-productive (Schuler et al 1996; Koenig 2003).

Since Egyptian couples who live together tend to be married, hereafter we will refer to IPV in the Egyptian context as spousal violence. Both the 2005 and the 1995 Egypt Demographic Health Surveys, which are based on representative samples, report that a third of Egyptian women suffer from spousal physical violence (Al Zanaty et al 2005; Al Zanaty et al 1995). Other studies that used smaller samples report spousal physical violence that range between 11%-30% (Hassan et al 2004; Jeyaseelan et al 2004; Yount 2005; Tadros 1998). In addition, much of this literature shows a negative association between women's exposure to spousal physical violence and empower-related factors such as high educational level of wife, employment of wife, educational compatibility between spouses, household wealth (Al Zanaty et al 2005, Al Zanaty et al 1995, Yount 2005). However, there is variation among the studies in the significance of the reported association between spousal violence and different variables of women's empowerment.

This report wishes to contribute to both the literature on empowerment of Egyptian women and their experiences of domestic violence. It will do so by providing a field-based analysis of how empowerment of women can be measured and explained using a

framework that takes into account the multidimensionality and processual nature of empowerment. In addition, we will report on our measurement of domestic violence and the risk and protective factors that are associated with it.

3. Women's Empowerment

Since ICDP (1994), the concept of women's empowerment has gained lots of attention in population research. Empowerment applies to women as well as other disadvantaged or socially excluded groups, but women's empowerment encompasses some unique elements (Kabeer, 2000; Malhotra and Schuler, 2005): 1) women are a cross-cutting category of individuals that overlaps with all these other groups, 2) household and interfamilial relations are a central locus of women's disempowerment in a way that is not true for other disadvantaged groups, 3) women empowerment requires systematic changes in not just any institutions, but fundamentally in those supporting patriarchal structures.

Section 3.1 introduces different definitions, dimensions and conceptualizations of empowerment. Section 3.2 discusses how these definitions and concepts have been operationalized in measuring empowerment in the international literature, while Section 3.3 discusses these measurements in the Egypt.

3.1. Defining Empowerment

Kabeer (2000) defines empowerment as “the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them.” This widely recognized definition implies that: 1) empowerment is a process; a change from a condition of disempowerment, and 2) it involves the idea of human agency and choice; because choice necessarily implies available alternatives.

Among these choices, Kabeer distinguishes between first order choices that are strategic life choices and second order ones that have less impact on people's lives. Examples of strategic choices include: livelihood, living arrangements, marriage-related decisions, fertility-related decisions, etc...

In her definition, empowerment has three dimensions: *resources, agency and achievements*.

Resources encompass various human and social resources that enhance the ability to make choice; they form the conditions under which choices are made. Thus some resources can provide enabling or disabling environments for the empowerment process.

Agency is the ability to define one's goals and act upon them; this is the heart of the process through which the process is made. It encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their activities; that is their “power within”. This includes both positive and negative meanings of power; the term “power to” defines their

life choices and pursue them and “power over” which defines the capacity to impose ones' goals over others against their wishes.

Achievements are the outcomes of choices. Kabeer (2000) points out that choices are central to the concept of power. She points out that there are three qualifications of choice that need to be measured in order to make it relevant to the notion of empowerment. One set of qualifications is the conditions of choice, which refers to the distinction between choices made in the absence, or high cost, of alternatives and those made from the vantage point of alternatives. A second set of qualifications is the consequences of choice, which is sought to distinguish between first order choices and other less strategic choices. The third set of qualifications relates to transformatory significance, distinguishing between choices with potential of challenging and destabilizing social inequalities and those that reproduce these inequalities.

When discussing the dimensions of empowerment, Malhotra and Schuler (2005) emphasize *agency* as the defining criterion for empowerment and refer to examples where access to resources does not lead to greater control over these resources. They ensure that, while *resources* are often critical in ensuring that women are empowered, they are not sufficient.

The framework developed by Alsop and Heinsohn (2005) had two components: *agency* and *opportunity structure*.

Agency is defined as the actor's ability to make meaningful choices; that is the actor is able to envisage options and make a choice. *Opportunity structure* is defined as the formal and informal contexts within which actors operate. Working together, these two factors give rise to different *degrees of empowerment* (DOE): the existence, use and achievements of choice.

These DOE can be measured by assessing 1) whether the person has an opportunity to make a choice, 2) whether s/he actually uses the opportunity to choose, and 3) once the choice is made, whether it brings the desired outcome.

3.1.1. Domains of Empowerment

When defining empowerment, one has to note that empowerment is a complex process that involves different spheres; each of which has multiple domains by itself. Failing to recognize each of these domains and how they interact together could lead to misleading results. Acknowledging that there are multiple domains of women's lives, one can realize that empowerment is multi-leveled and can be divided into the following four levels (Sen and Batliwala, 2000): 1) family/household, 2) community, 3) market, and 4) state level.

The *domestic* level within the *family/household* refers to gender-biased division of resources and labor; biased access to health, and/or education; restrictions on physical mobility; weaker role in decision making, perception to women's reproductive capacity and sexuality as family property over which women do not have control.

Community level refers to class biases that are particularly oppressive to women; social beliefs, norms, and practices that are biased against women's reproductive and sexual autonomy.

Market level is segmented and gender-discriminatory for land, labor, credit, technology and other resources.

The *state* level relates to the institutional and legal systems or practices on the state level, poorly funded or poor quality government programs and health services.

These levels do not function independently; they are actually closely interrelated.

Alsop and Heinsohn (2005) mention that the complexities of measuring empowerment are dealt with by conceptualizing three different domains: *state*, *market* and *society*. *Society* level includes both *family* and *community* levels. They mention though that in some contexts, it may be necessary to remove or add to these domains.

Since power relations operate on different levels, so does empowerment. Malhotra and Schuler (2005) mention that exactly how these levels are determined varies from one discipline to another. Most disciplines use different levels of aggregation and refer to *micro* and *macro* levels. There is clarity at the highest and lowest ends but much less clarity at the *intermediate* level. That is *micro* level usually includes *individual* level while *macro* level includes *state* level. But where does *family*, *community*, and *market* levels fall seems to differ from one field to another.

Kabeer (2000) mentions that the process of empowerment entails changes at different levels and in different dimensions: change can occur at the level of the individual, in their inner sense of self or in their access to material resource; it can occur in relationships within the family and household; or it can reflect alteration in position in the wider hierarchies of economy and state (Kabeer, 2000).

3.1.2. *Multidimensionality*

Women may be empowered in one area of life while not in others. Thus it should not be assumed if a development intervention promotes women's empowerment along a particular dimension that empowerment in other areas will necessarily follow. It may or it may not (Malhotra and Schuler, 2005).

This multidimensionality means that women may be empowered within familial spheres without similar gains in political sphere. In terms of practical measurement, however, it is difficult to neatly separate the dimensions.

For example, many aspects of economic or social empowerment overlap considerably with familial dimensions, as in the case of control over domestic spending or savings, or the limitations on mobility or social activities.

Empirical research shows that some dimensions may be more closely interlinked than others. Kishor (2000a) showed that only women's life time exposure to employment and family structure was correlated with the survival and immunization of their children in Egypt. Jejeebhoy (2000) also found that decision-making, mobility, and access to resources were more closely related to each other than to child-related decision-making, freedom from physical threat from husbands, and control over resources.

Because of this multidimensionality, researchers must be cautious in constructing indexes or scale variables related to empowerment; this may mask different aspects of interventions on distinct aspects of empowerment. A single indicator is not usually sufficient to measure even a specific dimension of empowerment (Malhotra and Schuler, 2005)..

3.2. Measuring Empowerment

Measuring empowerment is not an easy nor straight forward task due to the complexity of the process and its multi-dimensionality. One has to be cautious though that the concept of empowerment only has meaning within its specific local contexts.

At the same time, operational definitions should be consistent for the purpose of international comparisons.

In Household-level studies, there is a tendency to measure agency rather than the process of empowerment itself due to the lack of measurement over time.

There has been a focus on measuring the household decision-making process, financial control and social or familial constraints. There have also been some trials to measure exogenous measures that influence household bargaining power such as assets at marriage, and non-labor income as well as intra-household allocation and control of resources.

The emphasis on such measures in the empirical literature corresponds with the measurement of resources and agency in the conceptual literature on the basis of a *de facto* operational assumption as discussed by Kabeer (2000).

Complexities of Measurement

Indivisibility of components

There are several complexities embedded with measurement of empowerment. One of which is that the three dimensions to be measured: *resources*, *agency* and *achievement* are indivisible in determining the meaning of an indicator and hence its validity as a measure of empowerment. Thus, there is the need to cross-check the evidence provided by an indicator in order to establish that it means what it is believed to mean.

Empowerment is context-specific

Behaviors and attitudes that signify empowerment in one context often have different meanings elsewhere. Context can also be important in determining the extent to which empowerment at the household or individual level is determinant of development outcomes. For example, if investments in the health care system are strong, then women's role as the intermediate for their children's health through better education or decision-making power in the household will be less important than when this is not the case.

Difficulties in measuring a process

Empowerment is a process but processes are difficult to measure. Problems with measuring a process lies within the use of direct measures as opposed to proxy indicators, the lack of availability and use of data across time, the subjectivity inherent in assessing a process and the shifting relevance of indicators over time.

Several authors have argued that empowerment as a process can only be measured through proxy indicators, like education and employment. However, an increasing body of research has argued that the commonly used proxy variables are conceptually distant from the dimensions of gender stratification that are hypothesized to affect outcomes of interest in these studies and may be in some cases irrelevant or misleading. The relevance of a proxy measurement may depend on geographic region (Jejeebhoy, 2000), the outcome being examined (Kishor, 2000a), or the dimensions of empowerment that are of interest (Malhotra and Mather, 1997).

Ideally, the best hope of capturing a process is to follow it across at least two points in time, but women may be empowered in certain dimensions in a short period of time while other dimensions may evolve over decades. There is an enormous problem with regard to the availability of data across time.

The shifting meaning of indicators over time is another problem with measuring a process. Once a behavior becomes the accepted norm, there is little reason to expect that it would be influenced by an individual actor's level of empowerment. For example, once children immunization becomes a universal practice, like it is in Egypt now, there is little influence of the level of empowerment on that outcome; all children will be immunized regardless of the level of empowerment of their mothers.

Thus, individual empowerment should be measured as a function of the distance between the individual's behavior and the community norm.

Other issues

Another issue is related to the question of values attached to these indicators and how they complicate the attempts to conceptualize and measure women's empowerment.

Also, the need to measure women's own perception of their values within the family and how they are as critical to their sense of empowerment as their perceived value by other family members.

In general, most studies capture some possible slice of empowerment rather than empowerment itself. Most studies conclude that enabling factors such as education and employment, positive marriage or kinship conditions, programmatic interventions, etc.. lead to women having more choice, options, or power over their life conditions (Malhotra and Schuler, 2005).

3.3. Empowering Egyptian Women

In Egypt, like other Arab countries, there has been more focus on measuring empowerment on the *macro*, rather than *micro* level. This has led to a body of research focusing on provisions and utilization of services, and project assessments, but very little research focusing on the *individual* level and the mechanisms through which the utilization and improvement of services could be attained.

Govindasamy and Malhotra (1996) studied the relation between women's position and family planning in Egypt. They used Egypt Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 1988 data.

Mainly, Govindasamy and Malhotra tried to study if women's control over their fertility can be achieved without empowering them in other critical spheres. Specifically, they questioned whether education and employment lead to fertility control. The argument is usually stated that exposure to education promotes an ideology of independence and egalitarian marital relationships, resulting in women's greater desire for and ability to practice fertility control. Employment is assumed to increase the opportunity costs of having children, increase women's value and power in the family, giving women greater incentive and ability to practice fertility control.

Kishor (2000a) used Egypt Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 1995 data to study the links between female empowerment and the survival and health of their infants. In her research, the author noted that one needs to distinguish conceptually between variables that provide direct *evidence* of empowerment, and those that are *sources* of empowerment or those that can be expected to provide an appropriate *setting* for empowerment. According to such conceptualization, most indicators that are commonly used as proxies for female empowerment (like education and work) would fall into one of the latter two categories rather than the first.

Kishor (2000a) used factor analysis and extracted three factors; one for each of the above axes of empowerment. In her indicators, she distinguished between control over *current* and *past* lives. The latter included *indicators* related to the choice of husband and wedding arrangements. Indicators of control over *current* lives mainly include control over household resources besides other decision-making, gender roles and perception indexes.

Results showed that *sources* of empowerment include age at first marriage, education, media exposure, work-related variables and ownership of assets. Favorable *settings* include higher level of parents education and having a high level of communication with

husband, while unfavorable settings include high age and educational differences between spouses, living with in-laws and marrying a relative.

Kishor (2000b) used the same data to examine the extent to which the effects on contraceptive use, generally attributed to education and employment, are explained by more direct measures of women's empowerment. Results showed that women empowerment is important in explaining both the need for and use of modern contraceptives, net of any education or employment effects.

Again, Rastogi and Nguyen (2005) used the same DHS 1995 data to study the relation between women status and contraceptive use. They created some indexes of female autonomy: physical mobility index, perceived gender role index, decision-making index, and financial autonomy variables. They studied their relation with modern contraceptive use. Their results showed that decision-making index is the most important dimension of female autonomy in predicting women's use of modern contraceptives. None of the financial autonomy variables were significant.

3.4. Theoretical Framework

Building on the previous review of how empowerment is conceptualized and measured, especially in the framework proposed by Kishor (2000a) for the Egyptian context, a proposed framework for studying empowerment is outlined in Figure 1 (Annex: Section A).

In this framework, *direct indicators* of empowerment are those indicators that provide *evidence* that a woman is empowered; that is they are the outcomes of the empowerment process. These are the indicators that we will use to define empowerment; they are opt to reflect practices that signify empowerment. That is women will have different degrees of empowerment according to these indicators.

We plan to define a set of indexes of empowerment using these indicators. The weights of these indicators within each index will determined by the data and not predetermined.

Indirect indicators are the *sources* of empowerment; that is they are the intermediate step in the process that could lead to empowerment. These are either individual sources relating to one's own characteristics or non-individual ones relating to the woman's surroundings. The latter are *indicators of enabling environments*; those that determine the favorable *settings* that could lead to women's empowerment.

Indicators that are not directly related to the woman's own characteristics are related to her own spouse, family socioeconomic status, or community. In the latter, we want to measure how common it is for women in her community to utilize different services and institutions. The more common it is, the more enabling is her environment. We also try to measure the common gender norms.

Each of the above group of indicators can operate on two levels; the *household* level; that is it related to relations and interactions within the household, and the *community or state* level; which is related to the interaction of women within their local community (neighborhood) or with state institutions. So a woman might be more empowered on the household level than she is on the community or state level or vice versa.

In Kishor's (2000a) framework, it is believed that both the *indirect* indicators of empowerment and the *enabling* environments interact with each other positively. It is difficult to determine which is the cause and which is the effect. The more enabling the environment is, the more prevalent the indirect indicators of empowerment are, and vice versa. That is why in the proposed framework we define them all as indirect indicators. We distinguish though between individual sources and other sources of empowerment.

In the empowerment literature, positive gender values are commonly used as an *evidence* of empowerment. In our framework, we propose using gender values as a *source* rather than an evidence of empowerment. Our belief is that having positive gender values does not always translate into the application of such values in ones life; it could be more of an aspiration rather than an implementation.

Moreover, the proposed framework takes the utilization of services by other women in the community and how it could relate to women's empowerment.

A description of the proposed *direct* and *indirect* indicators is given in Annex (Section A).

4. Research Instrument

The research instrument used in the pilot study consists of three questionnaires: 1) Household Questionnaire used to collect data on background information of the household and select eligible women for individual interviews, 2) Individual Questionnaire for ever married women aged 15-60, and, 3) Individual Questionnaire for never married women aged 25-60.

The Ever Married Questionnaire

It covers a variety of topics ranging from respondent's background and demographic characteristics, nuptuality, health status, daily lives, ownership of assets, access to and utilization of resources, work, violence and gender related values.

Measuring Violence: Advantages and Disadvantages of Instrument

The violence instrument focuses on the measurement of domestic violence (particularly spousal violence), since the literature shows that this is the most prevalent form (Al Zanaty et al 1995, Ammar 2006, Yount 2005). Nonetheless, sexual harassment in the street and the workplace is also measured albeit in a limited way in Sections 4 and 7 (questionnaires attached).

We measure domestic violence through the questions in Section 8. The first three questions in the section investigate the communication pattern between the respondent and her husband (whether they discuss different issues pertaining to their life, how they resolve disagreements and conflicts). Then the remaining questions in the section inquire about respondents' experiences of physical violence, the perpetrators, the frequency of violence, the reasons for violence, the respondent's attitude towards it, the reactions of the respondent, and if and how she seeks help. Respondents are also asked whether they have been exposed to specific forms of emotional violence such as the threat of physical violence and divorce and what the outcomes were.

There are a number of advantages in the violence measurement used in this survey. For instance, respondents are asked about the reasons for their exposure to physical violence, unlike the case in the 2005 and 1995 EDHS. Furthermore, respondents' attitudes towards spousal violence are investigated from multiple angles. First, we attempt to identify the attitudes of respondents towards spousal violence within the context of their own experiences of violence rather than depending solely on hypothetical scenarios as is the case in the 2005 and 1995 Egyptian DHS. Then, in Section 9 of the survey, the respondent is asked (in Question 9015) about her attitude towards spousal violence in general. In other words, asking about the respondent's attitude towards her particular experience of spousal violence as well as her general views on the issue in two different sections allows us to have a nuanced and multilayered understanding of respondents' attitudes.

Second, the instrument asks about respondents' instant reactions to spousal violence as well as specific actions that they may have undertaken to seek long-term solutions. For instance, in questions 8008 and 8010, respondents are asked whether they did nothing, insulted their spouse, yelled at them, hit them back, talked to their family, talked to their in-laws, or left the house when they were subjected to spousal physical violence. Respondents are also asked whether they thought of seeking divorce and if they had not done that, what the reasons were. This list of possible reactions and help-seeking actions allows us to differentiate respondents according to the actions they take when they are exposed to spousal violence and the constraints on their ability to do so.

Another advantage of this instrument is that although it does not include a wide range of emotional forms of violence, it focuses on two that are significant in our local context (i.e. threat of physical violence and threat of divorce). Moreover, the outcomes of exposure to such forms of emotional violence are investigated.

A fourth strength is the use of multiple measures of VAW. That is, apart from the questions on domestic violence which are found in Section 8, there are multiple questions located in other sections that are either: 1) designed to investigate other forms of violence such as sexual harassment in workplace and other public domains (e.g. Section 4: Questions 4025 and 4026; Section 7: Questions 7046, 7061), or 2) can generate further data on domestic violence (Section 2: Questions 2094, 2133; Section 4: Question 4018; Section 6: Question 6011).

However, we are aware of a number of limitations in the instrument. The questions on spousal violence in section 8 do not include any on sexual abuse. In addition, physical violence is broadly defined as beating, but no specific acts of physical violence are listed. This could contribute to the problem of underreporting. Another drawback is there is no measurement of exposure to current physical or emotional violence. Also, the outcomes of physical violence are not investigated.

5. Sampling Design

The pilot study conducted by the Social Research Center (SRC) aimed at piloting the suggested tool in three different settings in Egypt. These settings were chosen to be as representative as possible of the nation. Multistage stratified sampling scheme was applied. First, Cairo was chosen as a representative of Urban Governorates, Sharkeyah as a representative of Lower Egypt, and Menya as a representative of Upper Egypt.

The designed total sample size was 2400 observations equally split across the three settings as follows:

- 1- Four *sheyakhas* were selected from Cairo. Two *sheyakhas* whose socioeconomic standards and services were below average and two above average were selected and 200 households were selected from each *sheyakha*,
- 2- In Sharkeyah, the sample was distributed between urban and rural to be as close as possible to their distribution in the Egypt Census 2006. Accordingly, the sample was split to 600 observations from rural areas and 200 from urban ones,
- 3- In Menya, the sample was also distributed between urban and rural to be as close as possible to their distribution in the Egypt Census 2006. Accordingly, the sample was split to 600 observations from rural areas and 200 from urban ones.

Within each of these areas, a systematic random sampling scheme was applied. Interviewers first collected data on the household, then used the household roster to select eligible women for ever and never married interviews. One ever married and one never married woman was selected from each household whenever applicable. In cases where the household had more than one woman eligible for the ever or never married interviews, interviewers were asked to select only one woman for each interview using Kish table for random selection. Table B.1 gives the distribution of the sample successfully interviewed. A total of 2,402 households, with a total of 12,726 individuals, 2,372 ever married women and 130 never married women of age 25-60 were successfully interviewed. Table B.2 gives the distribution of the sample according to urban or rural residence as well as the distribution of urban and rural regions in Lower and Upper Egypt according to the Egypt 2006 census.

Since measuring work and its relation with women's situation and living conditions is one of the primary goals of this pilot study, we adopted a screening approach for working

women in two areas in Cairo; namely in *Wayly* and *Basateen*. In these two areas, households were screened for working women. Interviewers went to randomly selected households as described by the scheme mentioned before. Here, they asked if this household had a working woman or not, if not, no interview was conducted for that household. This scheme implies that the 387 women successfully interviewed in these areas are all working ones.

Representation of the Sample

As mentioned earlier, the proposed tool was piloted in three settings in Egypt. The settings were chosen to be as representative as possible of Egypt, but *this sample is not a national sample*. Thus one needs to be careful in interpreting results drawn from the data. *No national numbers* could be drawn from this sample. We need to be careful also when applying any statistical techniques to this sample since it is not self weighted and does not represent overall Egypt. Also, the screening-for-working-women technique that was applied in half the sample in Cairo makes this part of the sample “a random sample of working women” in these areas, but not a “random sample of women” in these areas.

6. Profile of Ever Married Respondents

Figure B.1 gives the population pyramid for the sample. It could be seen that the sample in screened areas in Cairo is the oldest in general; it has the highest percent of women in the age group 40-49 (about 41%). It is followed by non screened Cairo. The sample of rural Sharkeyah and rural Menya are the youngest (about 37% and 34% are in the age group 20-29 respectively).

Table B.3 shows the background and demographic characteristics of ever married women interviewed in the study. 84% of respondents in Cairo are currently married. In Sharkeyah, 91% of respondents are currently married compared to 88% in Menya. The percent of divorced women is the highest in Cairo (5%), followed by Menya (2.38%) then Sharkeyah (1%). The image is complemented when we see that the percentage of women marrying more than once in rural Menya is high (about 8%) compared to Sharkeyah and screened areas of Cairo, and those ever divorced constitute 8% of the sample in rural Menya. This implies that a high percentage of divorced women in rural Menya gets remarried. The same pattern is seen in non screened areas of Cairo where 11% are ever divorced and in urban Sharkeyah (6%).

The percentage of ever widowed in all areas is very close to that of the currently widowed women. This is an indication that widowed women do not tend to remarry as much as divorced women.

In terms of fertility, 34% of women in screened areas of Cairo have two children and 30% have three, compared to 18% and 23% in Sharkeyah, and 13% and 15% in Menya. On the other hand, 20% of ever married women in non screened areas of Cairo have 5 or more children, compared to 25% in Sharkeyah, while this percent rises to 39% in Menya. When taking into consideration that the sample distribution shows that working women

in screened areas of Cairo are older in general (Figure B.1), there is an indication that working women in this area have the lowest fertility among the sampled areas.

The least percentage of school attendance shows in rural Menya where only 41.5% of respondents ever went to school. Among those who go to school, 20% have only been to primary education. This makes the total of those with no education or primary education in rural Menya 79%.

In all regions, once a girl passes the primary education, the percentage dropping out of education decreases. This is shown in the percent having preparatory education, which is always lower than those with secondary education. For example, 28% of respondents have secondary education in Cairo compared to 6% with preparatory. This pattern also applies to Sharkeyah and Menya, but the percent having higher education in Cairo (39%) is phenomenally higher than in the two other areas (6% in Sharkeyah and 3% in Menya). This is attributed to the higher percent of women with university education or higher in screened areas (67%).

Traditions and norms play their role in girls' school attendance and dropouts. 27% of respondents in Menya said that they have not attended school or dropped out because it is the norm that girls do not attend school in their family. Affordability of expenses was also the most commonly mentioned reason for not attending or dropping out of school (21% in Cairo, 18% in Sharkeyah and 26% in Menya). Not liking school was the main reason for dropout in non screened areas in Cairo and in Sharkeyah (25% in both areas).

7. Dimensions of empowerment: Findings

According to the framework (Annex: Section A), all the indirect indicators are assumed to have a positive correlation with the direct ones; that is sources are actually utilized and translate into evidence of empowerment. We would like to investigate the multidimensionality of empowerment using the proposed indicators to understand how such indicators (both direct and indirect) correlate together to represent the different dimensions of empowerment. For this purpose, factor analysis was used to investigate such a correlation structure.

7.1 Evidence of empowerment

Following the proposed framework, a set of variables representing direct and indirect indicators were created. All variables representing the direct indicators of empowerment were first checked for collinearity using principal components and variables causing collinearity were dropped. Since we have many indicators to measure evidence of empowerment, factor analysis was used for data reduction to create indexes of evidence of empowerment rather than analyzing each indicator on its own. All non collinear variables were entered together - both on household and community or state level - in a factor analysis using principal component factor method. Rotated factor loadings were examined and those higher than 0.4 were considered for interpretation. Variables with

very high communalities were dropped. The first twelve factors were retained. They explain 63% of the total variance (N: 2356). Table C.3 gives the factor loadings while Table C.4 gives their description.

Autonomy

The analysis of the data shows that autonomy is represented in several factors. For example, Factors 1 and 12 represent dimensions of autonomy that mainly relate to mobility and freedom to make non strategic choices. Having the freedom to open a savings or bank account, not needing a permission to do leisure activities, to use health services as well as other services, nor to borrow money are all correlated and could be used as an evidence of empowerment in Factor 1. Factor 12 highlights the ability to go to health services.

Involvement in decisions related to children's education as well as involvement in decisions regarding buying household durables and assets are all correlated as shown in Factor 7 and could be used as an evidence of empowerment as well.

Involvement in decisions related to living arrangements at time of marriage and not being consulted in sons' and daughters' marriages are all correlated as well (Factor 8).

Participation in elections (both with and without the need for permission) as well as self dependence in deciding on who to vote for are correlated (Factor 11).

The dimension of financial autonomy is represented in Factors 5 and 10. Factor 5 focuses on having a bank or savings account and managing it, as well as work-related autonomy, which refers to involvement in the decision to work and having non-financial benefits of work. Factor 10 focuses on managing household budget; namely being able to freely buy things for herself and having the freedom to seek medical consultation.

Autonomy and marital status

Factor 6 highlights the correlation of variables related to widowhood. It mainly focuses on self dependence after widowhood, having an inheritance and being able to claim it as well as receiving social insurance easily whenever applicable.

Similarly, Factor 9 shows the correlation structure for ever divorced women. This lies in their self dependence after divorce, not relinquishing any of their rights to get the divorce, and receiving satisfactory alimony from ex-husband.

Factor 2 shows that women who are getting help with carrying out daily housework tasks are more advantaged than those who are not being assisted.

Utilization of the justice system

Factors 3 and 4 relate to the utilization of the justice system (formal and informal) both for marital and non marital problems. They both highlight the correlation between taking an action to solve such problems, satisfaction with the outcome and feeling treated with justice.

Looking at the previous factors, the complexity of the empowerment process is evident. While some factors (Factors 3 and 4) could be used to represent evidence of empowerment on the community level, Factors 6 and 9 (widowhood and divorce) represent a mixture of evidence both on the household and community levels.

The non financial and work- related autonomy factors also highlight such complexity since they represent a mixture of decision making and mobility. This is attributed to the association between higher levels of mobility and the freedom to make the decisions of being mobile to different places. Seeking permission for mobility means the lack of ability to be in charge of oneself and to make the decision to go out independently.

To sum up, evidence of empowerment is represented by three main dimensions: *autonomy* which is reflected in respondents' involvement in decision making on different levels as well as their mobility and financial autonomy; *having means to solve their problems* (utilizing the justice system with a satisfactory outcome is an example).

7.2 Sources of empowerment

Gender values

When analyzing sources of empowerment, indicators relating to opinions on spousal relation and reactions to different marital problems were created. Another set of indicators representing the differences in responses to the same problem for both husband and wife were created. For example, if a woman said that wife should be patient if her husband is infertile while the husband should react differently (like marry someone else for e.g.) if his wife is infertile then this is defined as a difference in response.

Averages of variables representing positive gender values and beliefs about marital relations were computed for women living in the same area to represent the dominant gender values. There was an extremely high correlation between what women expressed and the average computed for women in their own neighborhoods. This high correlation would cause mathematical problems. Thus, we decided to use the variables reflecting the woman's opinion only in further analysis but the existence of such relation stresses the importance of dominant beliefs about gender values and marital relations.

All proposed indicators relating to opinions on spousal relation and reactions to different marital problems as well as differences in responses for some problems were entered in factor analysis using principal component factor method. The first seven factors were retained. They explain 55% of the total variance (N: 2369). Table C.5 gives the factor loadings while Table C.6 gives their description.

Opinions on spousal relation are reflected in Factors 1 and 2, while attitudes towards possible exit routes to marital problems are reflected in factors 3-5 and 7. Factor 6 represents a mixture of both.

Factor 1 mainly highlights the respondent's views on stereotyped norms about marital relations and gender roles that give husbands more advantages in spousal relations. These stereotypes include: husband's right to prevent his wife from working, working women giving part or all of their earnings to their spouses, wife must bear another child if the husband desires one and husband having the final say in sons and daughter's marriages. It also shows that these views are also correlated with opposing female circumcision.

Factor 2 concerns health and fertility related behaviors like women's taking care of their health and not bearing too many children, using contraceptives and seeking medical consultation when sick.

Factor 3 focuses on women's responses in particular situations of marital conflicts such as spouse's beating of children, his unemployment, or his failure to devote adequate time to the family.

Factor 4 highlights attitudes and reactions towards other marital problems like husband's marriage to someone else, flirting with other women or abandonment.

Factor 5 shows the correlation between respondent's difference in responses towards husband's not respecting wife's family and vice versa, possible reactions if he does not take her opinion into consideration in decision making and not giving her enough money.

Factor 6 stresses the correlation between respondents' difference in attitudes towards husband's infertility compared to wife's infertility and possible reaction to domestic violence.

Factor 7 shows the correlation between difference in responses towards unsatisfactory sexual relation within marriage.

Before using these factors in further analysis, we need to stress that positive gender values are not always associated with implementation of such values in one's life. They sometimes reflect aspiration of such values being implemented rather than actual implementation. On the other hand, negative gender values are usually associated with implementation of such values. It is for this reason that the proposed framework assumed that these values are a potential source of empowerment rather than an evidence contrary to what is commonly assumed in the literature.

Other sources

The other sources of empowerment are mainly: *Background variables* including region of residence, socioeconomic status of the household (described below), father's education, respondent's marital status, education, relation to husband, his education, spousal age and educational difference, and current living arrangements. It is assumed that living in enabling communities (regions), households with better socioeconomic status are sources

of empowerment. Also, fathers and spouses with higher education, spousal compatibility in terms of age and education, as well as living on their own are also sources of empowerment. No assumption is made in our analysis in terms of husband being a relative because it could act both ways depending on the other controls.

Demographic variables are current age, age at first marriage and number of children. The assumptions regarding age and number of children are not straight forward. It is argued in the literature both ways; empowerment increases with age and it could be argued that older women become less economically independent and thus are less empowered compared to middle aged women. The same assumption applies to having children (with special value given to having boys) since having more children can be a source of empowerment in certain regions and settings while having too many could be a burden and affects economic participation leading to less empowerment. As for age at first marriages, our assumption is that women marrying too young are less empowered.

Other variables like employment status, working for cash, work period, sector of employment (namely government or private), reading papers and using internet, participation in social activities, ownership of assets, and ease in accessing the formal justice system are assumed to have a positive relation with empowerment.

All the above variables of sources of empowerment (except for those relating to opinions and values) will be entered in analysis directly rather than in factors. This will help give better evidence for policy makers.

Living conditions

Women's living conditions is measured by their region of residence and the status of their households. The latter is usually measured via the wealth index as represented by ownership of assets, and amenities in the household. Variables on the ownership of assets as well as housing unit characteristics (type of sewage, fuel, toilet facility, water source, and persons per room) were all entered into factor analysis using principal components factors method. The first factor explained 21% of the total variance. It was retained after rotation and scored to create an index of household socioeconomic status.

To explore the relation between household socioeconomic status (SES) and region of residence, the generated index was regressed on region. Table C.7a gives the results ($R^2 = 0.71$) while Table C.7b gives the distribution of Regions according to their SES. They show that all regions differ in their SES level and that the one associated with the highest SES is the screened area of Cairo. This is expected since this area was originally selected on the basis of its SES. Regression results as well as Table C.7b show that non-screened areas of Cairo have the second highest SES, followed by urban Sharkeyah, then rural Sharkeyah. The latter has a large span across different levels of SES. Menya comes last both urban and rural. This ranking of regions according to the SES index is expected and follows the well known ranking in Egypt where areas in Upper Egypt are more deprived than those in Lower Egypt and Urban Governorates. Both region and SES index will be used in our analysis of violence.

To sum up, positive gender values are outlined by three main dimensions that reflect attitudes rather than actual implementation: *opposing stereotypes* about gender roles within the family; *positively reacting to different marital problems*; having a *non-gendered attitude* towards spouses' reaction to the same problems; and having *positive* attitudes towards *fertility-related* behaviors.

The correlation between region of residence and SES is high. The sampled regions are sorted according to the index created to measure the socioeconomic status of household with screened areas of Cairo having the highest SES, followed by non screened areas, then Sharkeyah while Menya has the lowest SES.

7.3 Relation between sources and evidence of empowerment

Now that factors reflecting evidence of empowerment have been identified and sources of empowerment discussed, we would like to explore the relation between sources and evidence of empowerment. That is we would like to profile women having these sources and see if they are empowered or not.

To achieve this goal, Factors 1 and 7 of the evidence of empowerment were chosen to represent the autonomy dimension of empowerment, while Factors 5 and 10 were chosen to represent the financial autonomy and work related dimensions of empowerment. Each of these factors was then regressed on the variables representing sources of empowerment. Variables that were insignificant in all regressions were dropped from the final model. Table C.8 shows the regression results. Region was included in all models since the sample is not self weighted as mentioned earlier due to the screening of working women in parts of Cairo.

As previously mentioned, Factor 1 of evidence of empowerment relates to mobility and making non strategic choices, while Factor 10 relates to managing household budget. The performance of the models for these two factors was not satisfactory, both in terms of obtaining interpretable results and the low R-squared. This basically tells us that the sources suggested here explain a low percent of the variability in these two factors.

When it comes to Factor 7 of evidence of empowerment (involvement in strategic choices) and Factor 5 (Financial and work related autonomy), the models perform better and more subtle interpretations are possible.

Looking at the results, one can not detect a pattern that is clearly interpretable. One region is associated with higher levels in one dimension of empowerment but with lower levels in other dimensions.

For instance, it could be seen that there are significant differences among regions but the pattern changes from one factor to the other. For the factor on involvement in strategic decisions (children's education and buying household durables and assets), and looking at t-test for equality of parameters, it is observed that rural Menya is the lowest, followed by

screened areas of Cairo and urban Menya then rural Sharkeyah and non screened areas of Cairo. Urban Sharkeyah is associated with the highest coefficient.

On the other hand, the factor on financial and work-related autonomy, and looking at t-tests for equality of parameters, we find that urban Sharkeyah was significantly lower than the other regions. All the other regions (except for rural Sharkeyah) were higher than non screened areas of Cairo. That is screened areas of Cairo and all Menya showed better financial and work-related autonomy than non screened areas of Cairo and rural Sharkeyah. Urban Sharkeyah was the associated with the lowest level of this factor.

Most variables in the model change pattern and significance depending on the dimension of empowerment under investigation. For example, SES is significant only in financial and work-related autonomy and has a positive association with the factor, while age is positively correlated with involvement in strategic decisions. Late age at first marriage (25+) is negatively associated with Factor 7 which focuses on involvement in strategic choices (lower than those married at earlier ages), while being married at age 25-29 is positively associated with Factor 5 relating to financial and work-related autonomy (higher than those married at any other age group).

Higher levels of education are positively correlated with higher scores for financial and work-related autonomy compared to being not educated or having preparatory education. Preparatory education is the highest in Factor 7 which focuses on involvement in strategic choices. This result does not have a clear interpretation but it could be attributed to the small number of respondents having preparatory education in our sample (only 6.5% of ever married respondents had preparatory education). When examining them across different variables, this could lead to structural zeros (empty cells) and affect the parameter estimates.

The only variable that was significant in all models is working for cash; working for cash is associated with an increases in the score of Factor 7 (involvement in strategic decision) by 0.314 and in Factor 5 (financial and work-related autonomy) by 0.497. Some of the indexes on gender values were significant in Factor 7 but not Factor 5.

Caution is needed here in interpreting this result. First, the process that we are trying to measure is complex by its nature and finding a model to explain the variability in the factors of evidence of empowerment is not an easy task; this is clear in the low explanatory power of all the regression models introduced. Second, the sample size affects this analysis since some cells have very few observations and generalizing the results is not applicable. Third, this is not a national sample as mentioned earlier and is used for profiling rather than making inference about the population.

To sum up, our findings show that there was no consistent relation between sources and evidence of empowerment (with the exception of working for cash). This tells us that the empowerment of women entails a complex process that goes beyond simply having the skills and resources commonly associated with an empowered status. Perhaps, we can draw from this that any policy interventions aiming at empowering women need to adopt

an integrated approach. That is it needs to take into account the multidimensionality of the process as well as the dynamics through which resources can operate.

8. Spousal Violence: Findings

8.1 Prevalence

The instrument included questions on different types of violence, like harassment in the street, work place and domestic violence. Only 2.74% of all respondents reported harassment in the streets when asked about things that bothered them when they go out to run their daily errands. When explicitly asked about harassment in the streets, about 1% of respondents said that they are frequently harassed, 6% reported they are sometimes harassed while 7% said that they are rarely harassed. This leaves about 86% of respondents never harassed in the streets.

When working women were asked about harassment on their way to work, 6% reported experiencing it, but when it comes to workplace, 1% of women in workplaces having male colleagues reported being harassed.

The above findings reveal that the low prevalence of harassment in the street or workplace. Some percents reported are even too small to analyze. In this report we will analyze the data generated on domestic violence; specifically on spousal violence.

On the whole, 25% of respondents have ever been beaten since their last marriage mostly by their husbands (93%), which brings spousal violence to 23%. Table D.1 shows the characteristics of women exposed to spousal violence. The percentage of physical violence reported in our data falls within the range of the reported figures in the existing literature (e.g. 32% exposed to physical violence since age 15 in 2005 EDHS, and 24% during the preceding 12 months in Yount 2005).

When it comes to emotional violence; that is threatening with beating or divorce, about 8% of respondents experienced such form of violence, with non working women in Cairo being the highest (14.5%) and urban Menya being the lowest (2%). It is to be noted that the reported percentage of emotional violence in this study is much lower than the percentage reported in 2005 EDHS (18% were exposed to emotional violence since age 15).

8.2 Profile of Women Exposed to Spousal Violence

Table D.1 gives the profile of women exposed to spousal violence. It is notable that the highest prevalence of physical violence was in non screened areas of Cairo (32%), followed by rural Sharkeyah (27%) and urban Menya (26%). The lowest prevalence of

violence was for working women in the screened areas of Cairo (14%) followed by rural Menya (19%).

As shown in Table D.1, a higher percent of women with primary or preparatory education seem to experience both physical and emotional violence. For instance, respondents with preparatory education experienced the highest prevalence of physical violence in the sample (36%) compared to 17% for respondents with secondary education and 10% for those with university level or higher. Also, respondents with primary or preparatory education reported the highest level of emotional violence (12% and 16% respectively).

When it comes to work, about 23.5% of working women were exposed to physical violence which is almost the same percent for non-working women. There were no clear differences also in terms of exposure to emotional violence where 9% of working women were exposed to it compared to 8% of non-working women.

Also, there were no differences in the percent of women exposed to both physical and emotional violence in terms of living arrangements nor being related to their spouses.

When looking at the profile of women exposed to spousal violence in terms of their marital status, separated and divorced women had the highest prevalence (46% and 43% respectively). Also, those marrying before the age of 20 had the highest prevalence (about 26%) and those having no children had the lowest prevalence (11%). The latter result is interpretable when we look at the reasons for exposure to spousal violence since child care and child raising issues is one of the commonly stated reasons for exertion of violence (14%) (Figure D.2).

8.3 Frequency

19.5% of respondents who were victims of spousal physical violence reported that they were always beaten, while 29% reported being sometimes beaten by their spouses. 24% of respondents who reported being subjected to threats of beating from their husbands said that they always received these threats, while 50% of the respondents sometimes received these threats. 29% of respondents who reported threats of divorce also said that they suffered this form of emotional violence on a continuous basis, while 34% sometimes received divorce threats from their husbands. 54% of the respondents who reported receiving threats of divorce discontinued the actions that triggered the husband's threats. Also 37% of the women who were threatened to be beaten by their husbands discontinued the actions that instigated these threats.

Figure D.1 displays the frequency of physical violence in different sampled regions. Respondents in rural Sharkeyah were seemingly beaten more frequently than those in the other areas.

8.4 Reasons for Violence

Figure D.2 shows the reasons for exerting violence against women who were ever beaten since their last marriage. It could be seen that answering back to their husbands is the most common reason in all areas. Child care and child raising issues as well as in-laws related problems were the second common reason across all areas.

8.5 Respondents' Attitudes towards Violence

Since rural areas in Egypt have a more dominant patriarchal system, acceptance of violence is expected to be higher in these areas. As shown in Table D.1, in rural Sharkeyah, 34% of respondents believe that their perpetrators had the right to use violence against them compared to 25% in rural Menya. Only 7% of women in screened areas of Cairo expressed this opinion.

On the other hand, respondents' general views on spousal violence against women reflected a more proactive position. For example, close to 60% of women who reported experiencing spousal physical violence said that that a wife should take an action if her husband beats her and about 81% of these women thought that a wife should seek help if her husband is frequently beating her.

Looking at Table D.1, it is observed that levels of acceptance of violence decrease as SES increases even though the prevalence does not follow the same pattern; the highest level of acceptance is at the lowest level of SES (33%) while the lowest is at the highest SES (4%).

The percent of women accepting the exertion of violence against them is very close for all levels of education except for university level and higher where this percent is extremely low compared to all other educational levels (3%). The percent is slightly lower for working women (20%) compared to non working ones (24%). The same was true whether spouse was a relative or not. The percent of divorced women accepting violence is the lowest (4%) compared to those with other marital statuses while married women are the highest (24.5%).

A larger percent of respondents who were married for the first time at the age of 15-19 accepts the exertion of violence against them (27%) followed by those married at 20-24 (22%) compared to those married at other age groups.

Tolerance of violence does not have a clear pattern with the number of children but those having no children show a considerably lower level (12%) than those with one (27%) or two children (23%).

8.6 Responses to Violence

Respondents were asked what they did when they are beaten to explore their help-seeking behavior. Figure D.3 displays the results. The most common reaction in all areas was simply "do nothing" while the next common reaction was to leave the house.

Those who do react to violence total to 36% of exposed respondents where such reaction is defined as taking some positive action towards this exertion of violence. Doing nothing or just yelling at their husbands or beating them back was considered a non-positive action. Thus positive reaction to violence includes telling their families, husbands families, leaving the house or doing other action of this kind.

The profile of those who positively reacted to violence shows that 44% of exposed respondents in non screened areas in Cairo react to violence followed by rural Sharkeyah (43%) while the least reaction is in rural Menya (19%). It is observed that those having university education or higher (51%); separated or divorced (55% and 58% respectively); having fewer children (41% for those having no children and 44% for those having one child); whose spouse is not a relative (38%) show a higher percent of reaction to violence. However, the data also shows that respondents at the lowest as well as highest levels of SES reported higher levels of response to violence (41% and 44% respectively). This finding needs further research for an interpretation.

There is no clear difference in the percent reacting to violence for working (37%) and non working women (35%), and those married at different age groups.

About 27% of the sampled women who were ever beaten by their spouses said that they have thought of asking for divorce because of the exertion of violence against them. In Cairo, 54% (73% in screened areas) of those who said that they did not think of divorce reported that this use of violence is not a big deal, while 35% said that they have resigned to their fate. The percentage of women who reported that their experience of spousal violence was not a big deal was 75% in rural Sharkeyah and 74% in rural Menya (almost the same like screened areas of Cairo).

Those who thought of divorce from screened areas of Cairo are 48%, and from those having the highest SES (42%). 59% of respondents with university education and higher and 35% of those living in extended families (mostly with in-laws) reacted to violence. When it comes to the effect of children on stabilizing the marital relation, we see that 44% of those having no children and 44 % of those having one child thought of divorce. The percent is lower for those having more children.

We also see that a higher percent of those married at older ages thought of divorce as a response to their exposure to violence; 45% of those married at the age of 25-29 and 47% of those married at 30 or older did think of seeking divorce because of the violence exerted on them.

The percent of working women who said that they had thought of seeking divorce because of the violence exerted on them was 32% compared to 26% for non working women.

75% of divorced women said that they thought of divorce because of the use of violence against them. The image is complemented by the fact that among divorced women who were ever beaten by their last spouse, 12% said that spouse's ill-treatment and 23% said

that spouse's beating them was the main reason for divorce. Ill-treatment could be used as an indication of emotional violence.

On the other hand, 50% of separated women exposed to violence said that they thought of seeking divorce.

8.7 Violence and empowerment

In this section we would like to explore the relation between prevalence, attitudes, reaction to violence and empowerment. The question raised here is whether empowered women are less subject to violence and whether their attitudes and reactions are related to their empowerment level or to their expressed gender values.

Table D.2 displays the % of women exposed to violence, their attitudes, and reaction according to the developed factors of empowerment and factors relating to gender values. An ANOVA was performed on each of the topics under investigation (prevalence, attitude, and reaction) according to the quartiles of the developed factors (each separately) to investigate if there are significant differences among factor quartiles in terms of each of these issues. The table gives the percents for those factors that showed significant differences.

Autonomy

The factor on financial autonomy (Factor 10) focuses on managing household budget; namely being able to freely buy things for herself and having the freedom to seek medical consultation. This factor is inversely related to exposure to spousal violence with those at the lowest level of this factor having the highest level of exposure (26.5%). The same relation shows for exposure to emotional violence (10.34%).

Gender values

There is an inverse relation with the factor which stresses the correlation between respondents' difference in attitudes towards husband's infertility compared to wife's infertility and possible reaction to domestic violence (RMP 4). Those at the lowest level of this factor (i.e. exhibiting more gendered views on these issues) had the highest level of exposure (28%).

The factor concerning attitudes towards health and fertility-related behavior (HEALTH) was directly related to exposure to spousal violence with respondents at the highest level of this factor reporting experiencing the highest level of exposure to physical violence. This relation is not clear and needs further investigation. Also acceptance of violence was highest for women having higher levels of this factor.

Women who have the highest level of opposing stereotypes about marital relations have higher percent reacting to violence (45%) compared to those at lower levels of that factor.

The factor that focuses on women's responses in particular situations of marital conflicts such as spouse's beating of children, his unemployment, or his failure to devote adequate

time to the family (RMP 1) is directly related to thinking of divorce or reacting to violence except for those at the last quartile which is lower than those at the first quartile for both thinking of divorce and reacting to violence. This relation is not clear and needs further investigation.

Utilization of justice system

It could be seen that the relation between the factors of satisfaction with the justice system (both formal and informal) to solve marital or non marital problems (Factors 3 and 4) and exposure to violence is direct with those at the lowest levels of these factors having the lowest level of exposure to spousal violence.

Other factors

Women with higher levels of the daily help factor (i.e. those getting help with carrying out daily tasks) reported higher level of reaction to violence.

There is no clear pattern in thinking of divorce or reacting to violence in the other factors.

9. Risk factors of violence

We have explored in previous sections the profile of women exposed to both physical and emotional violence as well as their empowerment profiles. We have seen that region of residence, SES, education, being separated or divorced, having children, and marrying at younger ages are all related to exposure to violence. Financial autonomy is found to be inversely related to exposure to physical violence, whereas utilization of the legal system (both formal and informal) is directly related.

So far, we have explored the relation between each of these factors and exposure to physical violence by their spouses. As mentioned earlier, physical violence is defined as ever being beaten since last marriage. Thus spousal physical violence is defined as ever being beaten by husband since last marriage

In this section we will explore the relation between exposure to such violence and all these factors collectively. Our aim is to know what factors will stand out as significantly related to exposure to violence when all the other factors are included in the model (controlled). This will help outline the significant variables underlying the risk of exposure to both physical and emotional violence. Logistic regression is to serve for this purpose. Two models are fit; one for exposure to spousal physical violence and the other for exposure to emotional violence as defined by being threatened with beating or divorce since last marriage. Variables that were insignificant in both models were dropped from the final analysis. Table E.1 gives the results of the logistic regression. Results show that all the fitted models are significant.

Background variables

The relation between exposure to physical violence and *region* shows that women residing in Cairo (both screened and non-screened) and urban Sharkeyah were not significantly different from each other and that they had the highest level of exposure. Those living in rural Sharkeyah were 39% less likely to be exposed to physical spousal violence, while those living in Urban Menya were 49% less, and those residing in Rural Menya were the least likely to be exposed to violence (68% less than those in Cairo and urban Sharkeyah).

When it comes to emotional violence; that is being threatened with beating or divorce, those living in Menya (both urban and rural) are less likely to be exposed to emotional violence by 88% and 66% respectively compared to those living in other areas.

Looking at the effect of women's living condition (SES), results show that an increase in the SES index by one unit is associated with a decrease in the odds of exposure to physical violence by 23%.

Working for cash is associated with a 45% increase in the odds of exposure to physical violence.

At this point, we would like to note the changes observed in the patterns of the variables of region and working for cash when entered individually (Table D.1) versus when entered collectively (Table E.1). When region was examined separately, women in screened areas of Cairo reported lower levels of exposure to spousal physical violence, whereas when the variable was entered collectively with others, the same area became insignificantly different from non screened areas of Cairo and urban Sharkeyah. These three areas had the highest risks of exposure when all the other variables were controlled.

Also, the variable of working for cash showed no differences in terms of exposure to spousal violence when entered separately (Table D.1), On the other hand, working for cash was associated with an increased risk of exposure to physical violence by 45% when entered with other variables collectively (Table E.1).

These apparently contradictory results on the relation between exposure to violence on one hand, and region and work on the other call for further in-depth ethnographic research.

The association between having higher levels of education and lower risks of exposure to violence is evident. Respondents having secondary education and higher are less likely to be exposed to physical violence compared to those with other levels of education (47% less for those with secondary and 70% for those with university level or higher).

Having lower levels of education is associated with increased risk of exposure to emotional violence, with respondents having preparatory education experiencing the highest level (above 3 times those with no education). It is worth mentioning again the fact that only 6.5% of the interviewed respondents had preparatory education and thus the number of observations within cells was too small when multiple variables were factored in. This affects the results for this category.

Divorced women are more than 2.5 times likely to be exposed to violence than those with other marital statuses. This is interpretable when we look at the main reasons for divorce that were given by ever divorced women, we find that 9.5% of the respondents reported beating as the main reason for divorce. An additional 22% expressed husband's ill-treatment as the main reason of divorce. These reasons are 10% and 15% respectively for currently divorced women. Ill-treatment could be an indicator of violence (physical or emotional) that is not explicitly mentioned.

Divorced women also show the highest risk of exposure to emotional violence (above five times more than those with other marital statuses). An increase in the factor of

satisfaction with the justice system is also associated with 16% increase in the risk of exposure. This has the same interpretation like in physical violence.

The other background variables like ownership of assets and work period and sector were not significant in both models of physical and emotional violence and were dropped from the final models.

Demographic variables

When it comes to the relation between the number of children and exposure to spousal physical violence, we observe that respondents having *one or two children* are almost two and a half times as likely to be exposed than those having no children, while those having *three or more children* are twice as likely to be exposed to spousal physical violence. As mentioned earlier, this is complemented by the fact that child care and child raising issues were the second commonly mentioned reasons for spousal violence.

Other demographic variables like current age and age at first marriage were not significant in either models and were dropped from the final models.

Utilization of the justice system

On the other hand, positive utilization of the justice system (formal and informal) is associated with an increase in the odds of exposure to physical violence. A unit increase in the index of satisfaction with the justice system for marital and non marital problems is associated with an increase of 26% and 12% in the odds of being beaten respectively. This direct relation could be explained as the respondents seeking redress because of their exposure to violence. In other words, their seeking justice was a result of violence rather than a cause. On the opposite, respondents who believe that it is easy for them to access the justice have lower odds of exposure to violence by 25% compared to those who do not believe in this easy accessibility.

Satisfaction with the justice system for marital problems shows the same relation here as for physical violence (20% increase in the odds). We adopt the same interpretation as before.

Autonomy

Involvement in decisions related to living arrangements at time of marriage and not being consulted in sons' and daughters' marriages are all correlated in Factor 8. A unit increase in this factor is associated with 17% decrease in the odds of exposure to physical violence.

Factor 10 focuses on managing household budget; namely being able to freely buy things for herself and having the freedom to seek medical consultation. A unit increase in this factor is associated with 8% decrease in the odds of exposure to physical violence.

The other factors of evidence of empowerment and sources were insignificant in both models.

Other factors

Use of the internet, which reflects more access to information and is also associated with having higher levels of education, is associated with a decrease in the odds of violence by 55%. A year increase in spousal educational difference is associated with a 2% decrease in the risk of exposure.

10. Discussion and Conclusion

We can draw some central points from the analysis of this data regarding empowerment of women, profile of women who are vulnerable to violence, the risk factors of violence, attitudes and help-seeking behavior. In what follows, we will outline our main conclusions on each of the above mentioned points.

Empowerment

Multidimensionality

An empowered status for Egyptian women implies enjoyment of multidimensional autonomy. This multidimensionality makes the process complex and creating one index to summarize the whole process will hide the dynamics that lie within such multidimensionality. The relation between sources and evidence is not straight forward; it varies depending on the source and evidence under investigation.

Autonomy was found as one of the major evidences of women's empowerment. This autonomy was multidimensional and included; respondents' involvement in decision making, mobility, financial autonomy and ability to solve one's problems.

Positive gender values seem to reflect more of respondents' attitudes but do not necessarily impact their behavior.

Working for cash is the only source that had a consistent relation with evidence of empowerment.

Profile of women vulnerable to exposure to violence

Our findings show that less educated women; especially those with lower than secondary education are associated with higher risk of exposure to violence. This result is in agreement with the 2005 EDHS which showed that women with secondary education or higher reported 39% of physical violence, whereas the rate was more than 50% among women with lower education (Al Zanaty et al 2005). The 1995 EDHS also reported that women who had only primary education or none were 3 times more likely to experience physical violence than women with secondary education or higher. (Al Zanaty et al 1995).

Respondents who were married for the first time at younger ages (before the age of 20) reported higher levels of exposure to physical violence.

Women living in certain communities are at higher risks of exposure to violence. These are communities that do not necessarily have lower SES. For example, women living in the non screened areas of Cairo had the highest level of exposure even though they were ranked as the second region in terms of their SES index. On the other hand, Menya ranked as the region with the lowest SES. Women living in Menya reported lower levels of exposure to violence than those living in the non screened areas of Cairo.

Divorced and separated women reported high levels of exposure to violence by their ex or last husband yet the majority of these respondents reported that they did not take any action in response to the violence inflicted on them. However, a high percent of them reported considering divorce. Divorced respondents also reported that spousal violence and ill-treatment were main causes of the breakup of their marriages. These findings suggest that while these respondents did not seek help to address the problem of spousal violence during their marriage, they eventually walked out of these marriages to escape the violence and ill-treatment.

Risk factors of violence

Our findings support some of the results of existing literature regarding the relation between domestic violence and the education level while they show a different relation with work.

Our results show that an educational level of secondary and higher is significantly associated with a reduced risk of exposure to violence. Similarly, Yount (2005) found that educational compatibility between spouses impacted women's exposure to spousal physical violence. In her sample, women who received 6-17 fewer years of education than their husband were 49% more likely to be beaten by their spouses than women who had the same level of education as their husbands.

The contribution of this study goes beyond confirmation of some of the main findings of the literature. For instance, this study identifies a negative association between a woman's financial autonomy as represented by managing household budget; namely respondent being able to freely buy things for herself and having the freedom to seek medical consultation and her exposure to domestic violence. This finding is significant because financial autonomy in this study is conceptualized and measured multi-dimensionally. That is, it goes beyond owning assets and includes involvement in making financial decisions for the household and for oneself.

On the other hand, other factors of evidence of empowerment such as the non-financial aspects of autonomy (e.g. mobility and involvement in non-financial decisions) as well as work-related autonomy did not show a significant relation with the risk of exposure to both physical and emotional violence.

None of the indexes on gender values were significantly associated with risks of exposure to violence.

Another significance of the findings of this study is its revealing the association between accessibility of legal system and exposure to domestic violence. This finding is interesting. It suggests that women who are more likely to be exposed to domestic violence are also more likely to seek legal redress. This association can be interpreted as a reflection of awareness and agency on the part of these respondents, which is a dimension of empowerment. On the other hand, this association contradicts with the frequently reported response of the sampled women when asked what they did as a reaction to their exposure to spousal physical violence, which was “nothing.” This discrepancy is worthy of further investigation. The positive association between divorce factor and exposure to violence also suggests that domestic violence seems to be a main cause of marriage break ups. This calls for investigation of how domestic violence factors into divorce cases and how the legal system deals with it.

Also, there is a negative association between respondents’ belief that it is easy for them to access the formal justice system and their exposure to violence.

Regarding work, our findings differed from those in the existing literature. The 2005 DHS found a difference in the prevalence of physical violence between women who worked for cash and those who did not (44.3% and 48.1% respectively). This difference was higher in the 1995 DHS where the respondents who did not work for cash were twice as likely to be exposed to spousal physical violence as those who worked for cash. Yount (2005) also found a negative association between women’s employment for cash or kind and their exposure to spousal violence. In addition, in a population-based household survey that was conducted in multiple countries including Egypt, Jeyaseelan et al(2004) found a low rate of spousal violence among the Egyptian respondents (N: 631) who had an employment status that was equal or higher to their husbands.

However our results show that women who are working for cash were significantly associated with higher risks of exposure to violence when all our variables are entered together. These findings call for in-depth qualitative research to understand the dynamics through which work interplays with marital and power relations in the household leading to higher risks of exposure.

Attitudes towards violence and Help-seeking behavior

Respondents in Rural areas had the highest levels of acceptance of violence. This is expected due to the dominant patriarchal system in these.

On the other hand, respondents living in the screened areas of Cairo, as well as those with the highest level of SES and respondents having secondary level of education or higher expressed the lowest levels of acceptance to violence.

Divorced and separated respondents, respondents having no children, and those married at the age of 30 or afterwards expressed low levels of acceptance of violence as well.

In addition, having high levels of SES, a university education or higher, having no children or just one child as well as divorced and separated respondents were associated with the highest level of reaction to violence.

Policy recommendations

Our findings showed the low prevalence of street and workplace harassment. Thus policies aiming at combating violence against women should support further research in this area since harassment is a sensitive topic and women might be reluctant to talk about their experiences. Thus qualitative research methods need to be introduced in corporation with quantitative ones. At the same time, such policies should devote more attention to maintaining the environments that would keep these percentages low.

Having secondary education or higher was shown to be inversely related to the risk of exposure to violence. This relation was significant whether education was being analyzed alone or collectively with other variables. Having secondary education or higher was also associated with better attitudes towards violence as well as higher levels of positive responses to it; that is taking some action to eliminate such violence.

Based on this finding, it is recommended that policies aiming at combating domestic violence target increasing school retention and university enrollment for girls,

The risk of exposure to violence was higher in certain regions. These regions were not necessarily the ones with lower SES. This brings the attention to the effect of dominant gender values on the community level and policies targeting domestic violence should work at changing the cultural norms and values sanctioning violence against women on a long term and systematic basis.

The relation between utilizing the justice system and exposure to violence together with the low immediate response towards it brings the attention to the need to create facilitating mechanisms through which women can seek help in violent situations.

The relation between exposure to violence was not straightforward in our study. When examined separately, both working and non working respondents reported the same level of exposure to violence. When analyzed collectively, work was associated with an increased risk of exposure. Any policies addressing the issue of domestic violence need to support in-depth qualitative research to help understand the dynamics through which work interplays with marital and power relations in the household leading to higher risks of exposure.

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