

## Impact of Socio-Demographic Characteristics on Attitude of Ever Married Women Towards Gender Based Violence in Egypt: Secondary Analysis of SYPE Data, 2014

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### Abstract

**Background:** To identify the impact of socio demographic factors on attitude of ever married female toward violence against women in Egypt.

**Material and Methods:** Data from Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE), 2014 were used in this study. Attitude towards Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and socio-demographic characteristics of 3,226 ever married females aged 13-35 years were selected for secondary and advanced analysis.

**Results:** Only a small percentage (28.7%) of all ever married female youth rejected gender-based violence. The rejection of GBV was increased with increasing the wealth quintile from the lowest to the richest level ( $p<0.001$ ). There were no statistical significant differences between respondents who accepted the GBV attitude and those who reject it as regard the employment status ( $p=0.442$ ). There was more rejection of GBV with increasing educational level of respondents and their parents from illiterate to university or higher level ( $p<0.001$ ). Agreement to GBV increased by increasing the number of brothers and sisters ( $p=0.021$ ).

**Conclusion:** Sociodemographic characteristics play an important role on the attitude of ever married women towards violence against women.

**Recommendations:** Parents, educational institutions, health care providers (e.g. pre-marital counseling), civil society (mass media), community and religious leaders need to engage in more open dialog with young people to educate them about GBV, enforce positive attitude (multi-sectoral interventions) and support economic and social development.

**Key Words:** Sociodemographic – Ever married – Women – Violence.

### Introduction

THE United Nations 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, compulsion, or arbitrary deprivation of freedom, whether occurring in public or in private life.” [1].

Violence against women occurs everywhere and all the times irrespective of ethnicity, class, religion, age, sexuality, culture and geographic region. Victims of violence may suffer from sexual and reproductive health consequences, which could include forced and unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, traumatic fistula, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV, and even death [2]. Violence has both physical and emotional harms on the victims and it has both a health and a human rights concern [2]. Violence prevents both women and societies from achieving their full potential [2].

EDHS, 2014 reported that, about 30% ever-married women aged 15-49 years in Egypt have ever experienced some form of spousal violence, with 25% saying they were subjected to physical violence, 19% emotional violence, and 4% sexual violence. Almost one-fifth of women were the target of an episode of spousal violence within the last 12 months, more than 1 in 3 women experiencing spousal physical or sexual violence are injured as a result of the violence, and 7% have serious injuries. Husbands were the most common perpetrators of violence [3]. Attitudes have been a key target of community education campaigns aimed at preventing violence against women. There is lack of studies about the factors that affects the attitudes towards violence against women [4].

This study aimed to identify the attitude of ever married female youth in Egypt toward gender based violence and its sociodemographic correlates.

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## Patients and Methods

Data from Survey of Young People in Egypt (SYPE), 2014 were used in this study. The SYPE adopted a multistage stratified cluster sampling all over Egypt to select 10,916 eligible young people aged 13-35 years. An interview questionnaire was used to collect detailed data related to education, employment, migration, health, risky behaviors, violence, family formation, social issues, and civic and political participation. The violence attitude was selected and its explanatory variables of 3,226 ever married females aged 13-35 years for secondary and advanced analysis.

### Data processing:

- A- Obtaining data files.
- B- Selection of ever married females.
- C- Recoding of some variables.

### Attitude towards gender based violence (Q4145):

SYPE, 2014 questionnaires asked respondents six questions (Q4145) to indicate the contexts in which it is justifiable for a husband to beat his wife:

- 1- If she burnt the food.
- 2- If she neglected children.
- 3- If she argued with the husband.
- 4- If she talked to another man.
- 5- If she wasted her husband's money.
- 6- If she refused to have sex with the husband.

Those who answered no for all these questions were considered rejecting gender-based violence and those who answered yes for one or more of these questions were considered accepting gender-based violence. This was done by recoding of answers to be (0) for those who disagree (reject) violence and (1) for those who agree (accept) any form of violence. Then summation of the codes of this group of questions. Those with score of zero were considered rejecting gender based violence and those with score of one to six were considered as accepting gender based violence.

### Data analysis:

Data analysis was done by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, Version 20). Data was analyzed using univariate analysis (frequency tables), bivariate analysis (cross tabulations) using chi-square test and *t*-test with a level of significance <0.05 and multivariate analyses (binary logistic regressions) for statistically significant variables were carried out.

Gender-based violence attitude was the dependent variable. Socio-demographic characteristics like age at marriage of respondents, residence, education of respondents and their parents, employment status of respondents, number of brothers and sisters, consanguinity among parents, family type and wealth quintile constituted the independent variables.

## Results

Table (1) showed that, a total 3,226 of ever married females were included in the study. The majority of the study population was 18 years or more. The mean age was  $20.1 \pm 4.3$ . About two thirds of the study population was rural residents (66.4%) and 42.3% of the participants had secondary education. Most (89.7%) of the studied women were un-employed. Nearly one fifth of each study population was distributed in each class of the wealth quintile. The majority of participants (71.9%) had non-consanguineous marriage. On the other hand, two thirds (66.6%) of studied women lived in nuclear families.

Only 28.7% of respondents rejected gender based violence compared with 71.3% accepted gender based violence.

Table (2) shows that the respondents with older age at marriage (18 years or more) were more likely to reject (29.6%) GBV than those with younger age at marriage (25.3%). The difference was statistically significant ( $p=0.028$ ).

Respondents from Upper Egypt whether rural or urban areas were less likely to reject GBV than those from Lower Egypt or urban governorates with high significant difference ( $p<0.001$ ).

As regard the respondents' education, there was more rejection of GBV attitude with increasing the level of education from illiterate (24.0%) to university or higher level (38.2%) with high significant difference ( $p<0.001$ ).

Similarly, father's education, with increasing the level of education, the rejection of GBV increased. 26.1% of respondents with illiterate fathers rejected GBV compared to 34.1% of those who had secondary or higher education, with high significant difference ( $p<0.001$ ).

Respondents with nuclear family were more likely to reject GBV (31.1%) than those with extended family (24%), with high significant difference ( $p<0.001$ ).

Agreement to GBV increased by increasing the number of brothers and sisters. The difference was significant ( $p=0.021$ ).

There was no significant statistical difference between respondents who accepted the GBV attitude and those who rejected it as regard the employment status ( $p=0.442$ ). Also, there was no significant difference regarding consanguineous marriage.

Regarding wealth quintile, the rejection of GBV was increased with increasing the wealth quintile from the lowest level (22.5%) to the highest level (31.0%) with high significant difference ( $p<0.001$ ).

Table (3) shows that by using logistic regression analysis, residing in Urban governorate, lower Egypt (whether urban or rural), and Frontier governorates, secondary and higher education, are significantly associated with higher probability of rejecting GBV.

Table (1): Socio-demographic characteristics of ever married female youth in Egypt, SYPE, 2014.

Characteristics	Frequency (%)
<i>Age at marriage:</i>	
<18 years	675 (20.9)
≥ 18 years	2551 (79.1)
Mean (±SD)	20.1 ±4.3
<i>Urban-rural residence:</i>	
Urban	1084 (33.6)
Rural	2142 (66.4)
<i>Place of residence:</i>	
Urban governorates	470 (14.6)
Urban Lower Egypt	325 (10.1)
Rural Lower Egypt	1122 (34.8)
Urban Upper Egypt	158 (4.9)
Rural Upper Egypt	899 (27.9)
Frontier Governorates	252 (7.8)
<i>Respondent's education:</i>	
Illiterate	726 (22.5)
Basic education	665 (20.6)
Secondary education	1366 (42.3)
High education	469 (14.5)
<i>Employment status:</i>	
Employed	332 (10.3)
Un-employed	2894 (89.7)
<i>Consanguinity:</i>	
Non-consanguineous	2319 (71.9)
Consanguineous:	
- First-cousin	407 (12.6)
- Other relative	500 (15.5)
- Total consanguineous	907 (28.1)
<i>Family type:</i>	
Nuclear	2148 (66.6)
Extended	1077 (33.4)
<i>Gender-based violence attitude:</i>	
Positive=Reject GBV	927 (28.7)
Negative=Accept GBV	2299 (71.3)
Total	3226 (100.0)

Table (2): Attitude towards gender-based violence among ever married female youth in Egypt by socio-demographic characteristics, 2014.

Characteristics	GBV attitude		<i>p</i> value
	Reject GBV 927 (28.7)	Accept GBV 2299 (71.3)	
<i>Age at marriage:</i>			
<18 years	171 (25.3)	504 (74.7)	0.028
≥ 18 years	756 (29.6)	1795 (70.4)	
Mean (±SD)	20.5±4.9	20.0±4.0	0.004*
<i>Urban-rural residence:</i>			
Urban	386 (35.6)	698 (64.4)	<0.001
Rural	541 (25.3)	1601 (74.7)	
<i>Place of residence:</i>			
Urban Governorates	162 (34.5)	308 (65.5)	<0.001
Urban Lower Egypt	157 (48.3)	168 (51.7)	
Rural Lower Egypt	342 (30.5)	780 (69.5)	
Urban Upper Egypt	21 (13.3)	137 (86.7)	
Rural Upper Egypt	164 (18.2)	735 (81.8)	
Frontier Governorates	81 (32.1)	171 (67.9)	
<i>Wealth quintile:</i>			
Lowest	140 (22.5)	481 (77.5)	<0.001
Second	173 (25.2)	514 (74.8)	
Middle	196 (31.5)	426 (68.5)	
Fourth	216 (33.4)	430 (66.6)	
Richest	201 (31.0)	448 (69.0)	
<i>Employment status:</i>			
Employed	103 (31.0)	229 (69.0)	0.330
Un-employed	824 (28.5)	2070 (71.5)	
<i>Respondent's education:</i>			
Illiterate	174 (24.0)	552 (76.0)	<0.001
Basic education	157 (23.6)	508 (76.4)	
Secondary education	417 (30.5)	949 (69.5)	
High education	179 (38.2)	290 (61.8)	
<i>Father's education:</i>			
Illiterate	486 (26.1)	1379 (73.9)	<0.001
Read and write	150 (33.9)	292 (66.1)	
Basic education	124 (31.4)	271 (68.6)	
2ry and higher	152 (34.1)	294 (65.9)	
<i>Consanguineous marriage:</i>			
No	659 (28.4)	1660 (71.6)	0.523
Yes	268 (29.5)	639 (70.5)	

Table (2): Continued.

Characteristics	GBV attitude		<i>p</i> value
	Reject GBV 927 (28.7)	Accept GBV 2299 (79.7)	
<i>Family type:</i>			
Nuclear	667 (31.1)	1481 (68.9)	<0.001
Extended	259 (24.0)	818 (76.0)	
• Mean No. of brothers and sisters (±SD)	5.0±2.7	5.2±2.7	0.021 *

Chi square test was used.  
\*: *t*-test was used.

Table (3): Logistic regression analysis for variables related to gender-based violence among ever married female youth in Egypt, 2014.

Variables	Odds ratio (95% CI)	p-value
<i>Current place of residence:</i>		
Urban Upper Egypt	1 (baseline)	0.000
Rural Upper Egypt	0.568 (.311 - 1.035)	0.065
Rural Lower Egypt	0.290 (.162-.518)	0.000
Frontier Governorates	0.259 (.134-.499)	0.000
Urban Governorates	0.181 (.098-.334)	0.000
Urban Lower Egypt	0.149 (.080-.278)	0.000
<i>Education of respondents:</i>		
Illiterate	1 (baseline)	0.001
Primary	1.154 (.766 - 1.738)	0.495
Preparatory	0.843 (.584-1.216)	0.361
Vocational secondary	1.241 (.685-2.248)	0.476
Secondary	0.717 (.546-.943)	0.017
Above secondary	0.573 (.413-.795)	0.001
Constant	2.098	0.009

## Discussion

A total 3,226 of ever married females were included in this study. This study found that the majority (71%) of studied women regardless age, or years of education, accepted violence against women and only 28.7% of respondents rejected gender based violence.

Kharboush et al., (2010) found that about 40% reported that the beating is justified if the wife goes out without telling her husband, neglects her children, argues with him, refuses to have sex with him, or burns the food [5].

This was in agreement with a study of Scott in South Sudan which found that 82% of women agreed with the statement 'a woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together'. The majority of respondents, 68% of women also agreed that 'there are times when a woman deserves to be beaten [6].

Another survey in South Africa found that the majority of women accept and agree that the husband has the right to beat his wife and moreover some of them enjoy punishment [7].

The results revealed that the respondents with older age at marriage (18 years or more) were more likely to reject (29.6%) GBV than those with younger age at marriage (25.3%). In a study in Zimbabwe found that Younger women are more likely to believe that wife beating is justified. than older women indicate that the next generation of women is just as likely to believe that wife beating is an acceptable behavior [8].

As regards the education level of respondents, our results revealed that there was more rejection of GBV with increasing the level of education. A survey in India found that women with higher levels of education are reducing their tolerance towards gender-based violence, meaning that individual-level improvements in education may only operate to reduce GBV at the community level [9]. Another study carried out by Boyle et al., 2009 [10] shows that the influence of female education operates through changing community-and-society-level factors that reduce the acceptability of gender-based violence in general.

Similar to previous studies conducted in Egypt [11], this study found that women having fewer children had lower risk of being exposed to GBV.

As regard wealth status, the results showed that the rejection of GBV attitude was increased with increasing the wealth quintile from the lowest level (22.5%) to the highest level (31.0%) with high significant difference.

Wealth status, education and urbanization had a greater negative impact on acceptance of GBV in this study. The limited effects seen in primary education alone compared to those with secondary or higher education is not surprising. Having few years of education usually at young age may not expose people to new non-traditional ideas [12].

There was no significant statistical difference between respondents who accepted the GBV and those who rejected it as regard the employment status. This was in accordance with the results of previous studies [13,14] which found that occupation status had minimal effect on acceptance of GBV. Most women in low-income countries work largely in informal sectors with low paid jobs.

A study in Australia [15] and the United States [16] found that attitudes toward violence against women vary with socioeconomic variables such as labor market participation and socioeconomic status. Both studies found an association between economic and social disadvantage and higher risks of violence and crime in general and intimate partner.

### Conclusion:

- In general, only 28.7% of all ever married female youth rejected gender-based violence.
- Socio demographic characteristics play an important role on the attitude of ever married women towards violence.

- Older ages at marriage (18 years and over) were more likely to reject GBV (29.6%) than those with younger age at marriage (25.3%).
- The urban residents rejected (35.6%) GBV more than rural residents (25.3%). This was demonstrated in urban Lower Egypt and urban governorates. In Upper Egypt whether rural or urban areas were the least likely to reject GBV.
- The rejection of GBV attitude was increased with increasing the wealth quintile from the lowest level (22.5%) to the richest level (31.0%).
- Education plays a key role in shaping the human development and opportunities of youth in Egypt. There were more rejections of GBV attitude with increasing the level of education of the respondents, fathers and mothers.

#### Recommendations:

- Parents, educational institutions, health care providers (eg. pre-marital counseling), civil society (mass media), community and religious leaders need to engage in more open dialog with young people to educate them about GBV, enforce positive attitude (multi-sectoral interventions) and support economic and social development.
- In absence of credible sources of information, young people may turn to their peers, internet or mass media which may not necessarily provide accurate information.

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## تأثير الصفات الإجتماعية والديموجرافية على إتجاهات السيدات نحو العنف القائم على النوع بين الشباب فى مصر: تحليل ثانوى لبيانات مسح الشباب فى مصر ٢٠١٤

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة تأثير الصفات الديموجرافية والإجتماعية على إتجاهات السيدات نحو العنف القائم على النوع بين الشباب فى مصر. بيانات مسح الشباب فى مصر سنة ٢٠١٤ أستخدمت لإجراء هذه الدراسة. إتجاهات السيدات نحو العنف القائم على النوع بين الشباب فى مصر والصفات الديموجرافية والإجتماعية لعدد ٣٢٢٦ سيدة متزوجة أعمارهن ما بين ١٣-٣٥ سنة تم أخذهم من بيانات مسح الشباب فى مصر لإجراء تحليل ثانوى ومتعمق عليهم. أظهرت نتائج هذه الدراسة أن ٢٨.٧٪ فقط منهم رفض العنف القائم على النوع. هذا الرفض كان يزداد كلما زاد مستوى الثروة. أيضا هذا الرفض كان يزداد كلما زاد مستوى التعليم لدى السيدات تحت الدراسة وأيضا مستوى التعليم لدى الأباء. أيضا كان هناك قبول للعنف القائم على النوع كلما زاد عدد الأخوة والأخوات لدى السيدات تحت الدراسة. نوع الوظيفة لدى المبحوثين لم يكن له تأثير يذكر على العنف القائم على النوع ضد المرأة.