



European Union



Clouds in Egypt's Sky

Sexual Harassment: from Verbal Harassment to Rape

A Sociological Study

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The Egyptian Center for Women's Rights

Advancing women's legal & political status since 1996

ECWR was founded by 6 women in the Dar El Salaam neighborhood of Cairo in 1996 with the mission of providing direct legal aid to poor women and training them to know and claim their legal and political rights independently. Since then, we've added new programs based on our belief that women's rights are an essential part of human rights, and the struggle to secure basic freedoms and advance democratic rule cannot be separated from their achievement. Gender equality and women's empowerment are essential to creating an informed citizenry capable of promoting and sustaining the social, political and economic development of Egypt. Especially during this time of great potential for change in Egypt, our work to promote women's involvement in political and public life is essential to ensuring women's voice in decision-making and defining an agenda for change.

A registered NGO with the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity (#5657 in 2004) and NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, ECWR has a Board of Directors, Chaired by Nehad Abul Komsan, that meets regularly to guide the organization's programmatic and strategic decisions. Our office is located in the Hadayak El Maadi section of Cairo. Our staff of 15 includes trainers, lawyers and social workers, in addition to accountants, administrative and international relations staff. Our methods and achievements have earned us a spot on the World Bank's World's 10 Best Development Projects, the 2008 Adel Abo Zahra Award for our efforts in the empowerment of Egyptian women, and a diverse collection of over 800 local and 50 regional and international NGO partners and activists in 17 Arab and 10 African countries. Our booklet on "Rape: The Safe Crime" was named the Best Idea in the Middle East and North Africa in V-Day's 2001.

Current Programs:

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Fighting Violence, Cultivating Democratic Culture

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Small Initiatives for NGOs and Women

Arab Women's Forum

East Africa Four Literacies Partnership

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The Egyptian Center for
Women's Rights

"Clouds in Egypt's Sky"

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Appendix:

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Egyptian Center for Women's Rights is pleased to thank all who contributed to the publication of this Study that concerns all groups of Egyptian society, women, men, children, and elderly people as well socially as politically and economically.

ECWR also thanks the numerous women and men who participated with dedication in order to analyze and a dangerous social cancer, currently spreading in our community.

It is rare that men and women agree on one subject like analyzing the phenomenon of Sexual Harassment in order to confront it and work hand in hand to suggest solutions and eliminate the problem.

Furthermore, ECWR thanks the surveyed audience who responded to the questionnaire, despite the large number of question. We also want to express our thanks to all the volunteers, who spent their time working with us in order to eliminate a danger either they themselves or their daughter, mothers, wives and sisters are subjected to.

We would like to thank the field researchers who bore the sufferings and difficulties of conducting a field study, but who nevertheless believed in the importance of the study. They worked seriously in order to obtain honest responses from the audience. Especially, we want to thank the foreign field researcher who volunteered to interview the foreign female participants and came to Egypt for different purposes.

Egyptian Center for Women's Rights

Introduction

The following study was conducted as part of the “Making our Streets Safer for Everyone” campaign, which was launched in 2004, in reaction to a high number of complaints reaching ECWR. Egyptian as well as foreign women contacted ECWR complaining about an increase of sexual harassment, explaining they did not longer feel safe when alone in public. For a lot of them, verbal offenses, insults or unwanted touching have become a daily burden.

This also effected foreign women coming to volunteer with ECWR seeking education, training or the aquisition of expertise working with an Egyptian Civil Society Organization. In some cases they even broke off their stay in order to avoid being objected to harassment.

Being confronted with this issue, ECWR started doing research in order to identify the major problems. By analyzing information and statistics, ECWR wanted to estimate the urgency of the issue and find ways to advocate for women’s right to personal safety.

The research however was unsuccessful, due to a lack of information on the matter. No research had been done except for the General Security Reports monitoring the increase of crimes against public decency, like sexual assault and rape.

No attention had been paid to Sexual Harassment, so far. Even the Egyptian Penal Code does not consider Sexual Harassment a crime, though it includes behaviors such as “immoral acts on public highways” or “indecent assault” and the methods of proof applicable. For theses crimes however, the legal foundation is completely different from that of the crime of Sexual Harassment, as defined by legal codes in several other countries, including the Arab Emirates, Qatar and France.

After ECWR’s attention had been drawn to the issue, we decided to further investigate

the problem by analyzing the complaints we received. The results we obtained after analyzing the first 100 complaints were shocking, being completely contrary to the social perception of Sexual Harassment and proving them to be stereotypic.

Having been taught to stay in crowded places whenever possible and to be careful whenever alone in public, considering crowds as being protective, the study taught us the contrary: most forms of Sexual Harassment occur in very crowded places – in front of schools or universities, in the workplace, at bus stations or on public transport.

We were also brought up, being taught to avoid delays and to return home before dark. However, the results of the study show, that Sexual Harassment occurs increasingly during daytime, reaching its peaks at seven o’clock a.m. and two o’clock p.m. in front of schools and when going to or returning from work.

We were also taught that modest clothing is protective, but veiled women and montaqba (women wearing the niqab, the full face scarf), have been objected to harassment, just as well as unveiled and foreign women. Many other stereotypic beliefs have also been proved wrong, including the role of policemen and other authorities.

Being shocked by the results, ECWR started campaigning to restore security on Egyptian streets and the respect for freedom of movement, personal safety and privacy under the title “Making Our Streets Safer for Everyone”.

The main obstacle was how to start the campaign, how best to adress society.

To be sure of the extent of the problem and the change that occurred recently, we conducted a practical study on 2800 women. The results of this study confirmed those of the initial survey, pushing us to work

towards ending this phenomenon and restoring personal safety on Egyptian streets.

ECWR faced many challenges; the most important of them were:

- How could we present the issue to the public? What language ought to be used? How could we avoid offending people and create a friendly atmosphere instead, urging for cooperation and respect?
- The lack of awareness of the concept of sexual harassment was a major obstacle. Often being confused with rape, women were afraid to speak about the issue in order to avoid being blamed for ruining society's reputation.
- How would media and society accept the issue and take it seriously, as many other projects related to women or launched by women's rights organizations, were merely greeted by sarcasm?

Concerned with these fears, the preparatory work continued for more than a year, including a number of meetings and in-depth discussions of young men and women in order to develop a campaign profile that would not accuse men but rather create bridges of dialogue within the community. Those young people made great contributions, especially, when being able to express themselves and charged with responsibilities.

Each stage of the campaign having its own slogan, we started to reach out to media and society, being assisted by young women and men. The slogan of the first stage was "Let's Sit and Talk", being the stage of raising awareness. It lasted for a year and a half. We did not accuse or blame but rather provided information and facts.

Starting out with a clear denial of the existence of such a phenomenon as sexual harassment, public perception changed when society was shocked after the collective harassment incident on Eid Al-Fitr in Downtown Cairo.

Even though people still differed concerning the reasons and the consequences, they now started to admit to ECWR, considering sexual harassment a serious problem.

With a considerable effort of young people in addition to the facts provided, the media reports – whether on TV, radio or in the newspaper - were very appreciative. Some of the media workers – particularly on Egyptian TV channels – played an important role in bringing the issue up on TV and thereby reaching out to all Egyptians. This opened significant prospects for a wide and sincere discussion, in the desire of restoring safety on Egyptian streets and detecting Egyptian values such as magnanimity, which might have been covered by frustration.

As a consequence, many young people joined in on the campaign and officials and Members of Parliament began paying attention to the issue, not only by silent observation or rejection, but instead making a serious effort to understand. This led us to develop the campaign and study the legal codes of countries, confronting the phenomenon by legislative means.

Cooperation and participation of young people in the campaign rising, they chose another slogan for their work: "What have you gained from harassing someone?!?". They also found new ways to reach out to each other in order to raise awareness through awareness days, discussion circles or posters. The objective was to join thousands of them, whether by mouth to mouth propaganda or via the internet.

Receiving complaints from some people and substantive rejections and denial of the phenomenon of Sexual Harassment from others, we decided to conduct further research in order to measure the impact of harassment on social, cultural and economic life.

This is why ECWR conducted the following study, attempting to perform an in-depth analysis of public opinion and different attitudes of males as well as females and trying to clarify the network in which Sexual Harassment is most likely to take place.

As part of this we analyzed the relationship between clothing and harassment – finding that no connection exists between the two, as most women experiencing Sexual Harassment were veiled. The study also aims at analyzing the economic status of the harassers and other reasons often used to justify harassment. In addition, we analyzed the attitude of the harassers and the reasons they themselves offer for their behavior.

The study targeted a sample of 2020 participants, 1010 of whom were female and another 1010 male. The sample also included 109 foreign women living and traveling in Egypt for different reasons.

This study as well as the previous one, had a great impact, establishing facts concerning the phenomenon of Sexual Harassment. They influenced public opinion and decision

makers alike, providing them with information that may shock but also contributes to a serious debate of the matter. The National Council for Women responded by submitting the draft of a law aimed at putting an end to Sexual Harassment. We hope to encourage more discussions on the topic in order to push for acceptance by the legislator.

So far, the study also contributed to breaking the silence of women, making aware of the fact that she is neither alone nor guilty and that – therefore – she can speak freely about painful experiences. Initially, a lot of women felt to be left alone and blamed for being objected to Sexual Harassment.

We are proud to present this study to the Egyptian library and confident that the results will receive the attention they deserve, being the fruit of struggles and sufferings of ECWR and all other participants. We apologize for any mistake that may occur due to human nature.

*Sincerely,
Nehad Abou El-Komsan
ECWR Chair*

Speech from Dr. Aliyaa Shoukry about the study

The study presents a remarkable contribution to the field of Egyptian Women's Studies, it addresses one of the most important issues that effects the heart of women's life at all levels of society as well socially as economically, and impacts all age groups equally.

This study focuses on the phenomenon of sexual harassment in various aspects and provides a comprehensive view of this recently growing phenomenon.

Let me please make some suggestions. It is essential to raise public awareness of the importance of protecting women against the various forms of sexual harassment. Therefore, public interest needs to be awoken by providing information. However, this information ought to be carefully selected and respect the cultural heritage of Egyptian society.

Also, I think that most of the issues that are analyzed in this study, deserve to be studied further and in-depth in order to be able to understand them better, because they concern several different issues associated with problems of the Egyptian society.

In conclusion, I congratulate ECWR to this remarkable study, I hope ECWR continues to conduct more studies that our Egyptian society needs at the critical stage it is going through.

*Dr. Aliyaa Shoukry
Professor of Anthropological Sociology
Girls College, Ain Shams University*

CONCLUSIONS

The issue of sexual harassment has become less taboo recently in the Egyptian media and within academic circles, and has even become a part of daily discourse among women in Egyptian society, regardless of social or economic status or political belief. In the past, women were afraid to talk about sexual harassment and considered discussing it culturally taboo. With the problem worsening, we have found that the way ahead is to encourage dialogue about this problem and to try to search for solutions. Sexual harassment has become an overwhelming and very real problem experienced by all women in Egyptian society, often on a daily basis, in public places such as markets, public transportation and the streets, as well as in private places such as educational institutions, sports clubs, and the workplace.

The research component of the Egyptian Center for Women's Rights' (ECWR) work concerning the phenomenon of sexual harassment has progressed in three phases. In 2005 we received and documented over 100 complaints of women subjected to sexual harassment – women across all different age groups and socio-economic classes. These women spoke to us about the seriousness of the problem and the extent of their personal and private suffering. During the second phase of our research, in order to investigate the issue further and discover if the problem of sexual harassment was an isolated phenomenon or a pervasive problem faced by the majority of women in Egypt, we conducted an exploratory study surveying over 2,800 Egyptian women. We met with and surveyed Egyptian women from different socio-economic backgrounds in a variety of settings and our preliminary results confirmed the prevalence and severity of sexual harassment and the suffering of women due to it.

In the third phase of our research we designed a more in-depth study focusing not only on Egyptian women but also included data on the motivations of Egyptian men, as well as the situation of foreign women in Egypt, to identify the extent of their suffering and the impact of sexual harassment on their lives.

Our study attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of sexual harassment and also aims to help us achieve our desired objective: to make Egyptian society a society in which all members feel secure - whether male or female, Egyptian or foreign. **The study encompasses a number of procedural definitions:**

First: the definition of sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as "unwanted sexual conduct deliberately perpetrated by the

harasser, resulting in sexual, physical, or psychological abuse of the victim regardless of location, whether in the workplace, the street, public transportation, educational institution, or even in private places such as home or in the company of others such as relatives or colleagues, etc.

It is possible that the harassment may come from an individual or group of individuals targeted to one woman or to a group of women. It is also possible that the harasser may be a person or persons with authority or a colleague or a relative. In some instances, harassment may even occur where the woman holds a supervisory position, as she will be reluctant to report harassment for fear of losing her job or status - although harassment of strangers in public places is the most frequent form of harassment in Egyptian society.

It is not necessary for harassment to declare an explicit sexual message, but may include behavior such as ogling, gestures, offers to perform sexual acts, questions of a private and sexual nature, displaying sexual photos or pictures, unwanted touching, etc. All forms of abuse and sexual harassment practiced by powerful groups upon weaker groups are usually aimed at women by men.

Second: the definition of a harasser

The study aims to develop a precise definition of a "harasser." Although the study confirms that it is difficult to determine a specific understanding of the term - a harasser may be male or female, and harassment is not limited only to men harassing women, although this is most common. The study illustrates that it is possible that the harasser be female, or any person in

everyday life, including an employer, a friend, a stranger, or even a family member.

Harassment is not limited to a specific group of people, and there are many factors and circumstances that lead to harassing behavior. These factors may be social, economic or cultural, moral or even political. The several types of harassers can be summarized as follows:

1. "Authoritarian harasser": the harasser who has authority aims to pressure the victim to comply with his orders, and often exists in circumstances of superior-subordinate relationships, whether in the workplace, educational environment, or even in situations involving the police and ordinary citizens or the accused.
2. "Male harasser": this harasser emphasized his masculine values and culture, found in and supported by societies where the male sex exercises harassment only to prove dominance over the female "weaker" sex.
3. "Bully harasser": this harasser is trying to achieve some sort of sexual satisfaction without discrimination between victims, as any and all victims can equally satisfy his desires. He harasses without regard to time or place and often prefers foreigners as victims. He also makes no distinctions of time or place, and prefers to harass in public places like streets and public transportation or markets, etc.

Third: the definition of the victim

The study illustrated that there is no specific group of women that is prone to be victimized by the harasser; the harasser does not differentiate between categories of victims nor is he limited to a specific type of woman, whether a young girl or even a woman in old age, nor are victims limited to a specific social or economic class. All women can be victims of sexual harassment. The phenomenon of violence against women is a global phenomenon, affecting all human societies.

Importance of this study

- Scientific interest - this descriptive and analytical study is one of the first to address the phenomenon of sexual harassment in a comprehensive way and thus helps to enrich scientific research with a discussion of one of the most important and difficult issues faced by Egyptian women today.
- Practical importance - this study attempts to provide an integrated approach to the

phenomenon of sexual harassment, and to highlight the most important reasons and motivations that led to the aggravation of this phenomenon in Egyptian society. Based on these important indicators and results, the study contributes to finding appropriate solutions to this phenomenon, to be submitted to decision-makers to enable them to develop appropriate mechanisms to reduce the aggravation of this phenomenon or eliminate it entirely.

Methodology

This study adopts the study sample survey method, as data were collected through the use of form questionnaires as a research tool for data collection. Three surveys were designed and implemented – the first to a sample of Egyptian women, the second to foreign women residing in Egypt, and the third to a sample of Egyptian males. The survey was based on a standard form but then modified and differentiated to take into account the characteristics of each audience - male and female, Egyptian and foreign.

Details of the study

Participants

The sample of 2020 Egyptian participants was divided equally between male and female Egyptians (females 50% (1010) and males 50% (1010)). The study also included 109 foreign women living or traveling in Egypt for different purposes.

Geographical area

The field study covered three governorates in the Arab Republic of Egypt: Cairo, Giza, and Qalubiya. The sample has been distributed as follows:

Cairo - The total sample in this province was 673: 336 in the region of Ain Shams and 337 in Shubra Masr.

Giza - The total sample in this province was 675: 339 in Dokki and 336 in Imbaba

Qalubiya - The total sample in this province was 673: 335 in the region of Shubra al-Kheima and 338 in Banha

	Gender		Male	Female
	Area			
Giza	Imbaba		168	168
	Dokki		169	170
Cairo	Masakan Ain Shams		168	168
	Shubra Masr		168	169
Qalyubeya	Shubra		168	167
	Banha		170	168
Total			1011	1010

The field research was conducted by four researchers in each region hired by ECWR— two males (to distribute the male surveys) and two females (to distribute the female surveys). Each region also had a supervisor for each group, and all groups were supervised by a director. The researchers targeted the main streets in each area as well as common crowded places with high population densities, in order to interview a large number of participants and ensure that a representative sample from the region.

To complete the study of foreign women researchers collected data in a number of places where foreign women are concentrated, such as Hussein and the headquarters of the American University in Cairo, as well as a number of Arabic language teaching centers.

The surveys were distributed by a number of foreign researchers in order to overcome language and cultural barriers and help obtain more truthful responses from the research audience.

Timetable

The study was divided into seven key stages:

Phase I: a compilation of articles on the subject to form a theoretical base.

Phase II : the formulation stage - developing the data collection tool (form questionnaire).

Phase III: the test phase of the questionnaire or "pretest" and analysis of the preliminary results of the study.

Phase IV: reformulation of the form questionnaire.

Phase V: application of the final form questionnaire in the field – data collection and data entry.

Phase VI: data analysis – extracting the results of the study.

Phase VII: preparing the final report of the study results.

Methods of analysis and interpretation

The study adopts a quantitative method of analysis, using the statistical program SPSS, relying on analytical methods in order to obtain the depth and precision necessary to reach the correct results. This concludes the first section this paper addressing sexual harassment theory. The remaining six chapters detail the results of our field study.

Chapter I: Sexual Harassment: The most important features of victims and perpetrators **Forms of sexual harassment**

- The results of the study illustrate there is evidence within all three study samples (Egyptian women, Egyptian men, and foreign women) of seven forms of

harassment, which are: touching, noises (including whistling, hissing noises, kissing sounds etc.), ogling of women's bodies, verbal harassment of a sexually explicit nature, stalking or following, phone harassment, and indecent exposure.

- Our study showed that foreign women are aware of more forms of harassment than our sample of Egyptian males and females. Foreign women indicated that sexual harassment also includes: sexual photographs displayed in a public place, sexual jokes or stories that have more than one meaning, insistent invitations to eat or drink or engage in other outings with the harasser despite the victim's repeated refusal, insisting on accompanying the female to her home or work in spite of repeated refusal, and asking the victim to work extra hours or work after her contract is completed for no real reason.

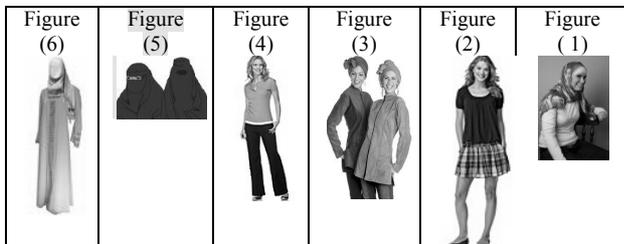
- As for the sources of knowledge about harassment, 31.0% of Egyptian women confirmed that they learned about harassment from the reality they faced in every day life, followed by 27.9% from the media. 78% of foreign women stated they learned about harassment from actual exposure to harassment, and 60.1% of the male sample stated that the media was the primary influence in their knowledge of the forms of harassment, followed by 43.0% from daily life.

Participants' views on the most important features of a victim of sexual harassment:

48.4% of Egyptian and 51.4% of foreign women that women of all ages are subjected to sexual harassment. However, the majority of the male sample 62.2% indicated that women in the age groups 19 - 25 years old are most susceptible to sexual harassment. This difference in the views of women and men may be due to the experiences that women have had with sexual harassment. If it happens to them, they are likely to believe that any woman at any age could be vulnerable to harassment, that it is not confined to young women and girls.

In terms of general appearance of the victim, 62.5% of the Egyptian women and 65.3% of men involved in the study stated that Figure 2 (see below) is the most common appearance of women vulnerable to harassment. 44% of foreign women rejected this notion, suggesting, rather, that all

women are commonly harassed. They think that the female in Figure 2 will be subject to harassment, but they also thought that the women in Figures 5 or 6 were also likely to be harassed. Generally, foreign women agreed that a woman's appearance is not a determinant of harassment.



- The study showed that sexual harassment is not class-based. 90% from Egyptian women 78% of foreign women, and 59% of males reported that the harasser does not distinguish between victims in regards to economic class.
- 77.1% of foreign and 61.6% of Egyptian women agreed that both married and unmarried women are subject to sexual harassment. 42.3% of men disagreed however, claiming that unmarried women (typically 19-25 years old) were most vulnerable.
- Finally, the study sample unanimously concluded that working women are most likely to be subject to sexual harassment. The next most likely groups were female tourists, housewives, and the mentally disabled.

Views of the public on the most important features of a harasser:

- Public opinion research showed that most harassers are young males, between 19-24 years old.
- In terms of occupation, the study showed that male microbus and taxi drivers are the most likely to be harassers. However, the vast majority of foreign women emphasized that police and security personnel are the most likely to engage in sexual harassment.

Chapter II: Sexual Harassment: Manifestations and Consequences

Manifestations of exposure to sexual harassment:

- Results of the study found high rates of exposure to sexual harassment. 83% of Egyptian women reported exposure to

harassment, while 98% of foreign women stated they had been sexually harassed while in Egypt.

- Women exposed to sexual harassment have experienced men staring inappropriately at their bodies, inappropriate touching, sexually explicit comments, stalking, and telephone stalking.
- Results also revealed that 46.1% of Egyptian women and 52.3% of foreign women are subjected to harassment on a daily basis.
- According to the results of the study, 91.5% of Egyptian women and 96.3% of foreign women faced sexual harassment on the street and public transportation most often. Second most common were tourist destinations and foreign educational institutions.
- It is customary that the harassment may occur at night or after midnight, but the results confirmed that 60.5% of Egyptian women, and 68.2% of foreign women were subjected to harassment at all times, followed by noon and evening and then early morning and lastly mid-night.

General appearance of women who get sexually harassed: what women wear

- 31.9% of women who reported sexual harassment were dressed like figure 1, wearing a blouse, long skirt and veil. 21.0% of women were wearing a longer blouse, pants, and veil like figure 3. Figure 4 was third, where women were wearing a cloak and veil (20 %), then figure 6 (19.6%). These results disprove the belief that sexual harassment is linked to the way women dress (women are sexually harassed when dressed “indecently” or are not veiled – in the words of some participants), since 72.5% of victims surveyed were veiled.
- We found that there was a contradiction between words and deeds. Participants believed that figures 2 and 4 would get harassed more than the others because these figures were not wearing the veil and were wearing short clothes, but the results prove that this is mistaken, as the majority of women we interviewed were dressed like the figures 1, 3, 4 and 5 - but still experienced sexual harassment. These results illustrate the contradiction between society's belief that the

appearance of the woman is a key factor leading to sexual harassment.

- This confirms that the stereotypical ideas of a patriarchal culture that blames women even if they are victims, is opposite to reality.
- Both foreign and Egyptian women confirm that the most common age of harassers are youth 19-24, then men from 25-40, followed by children under 18 and then finally men over 41 years old.
- The Egyptian women sample cited that the occupations of the harassers were drivers, followed by schoolchildren and university students with a rate of 42.8%, perhaps indicating the extent of the problem. The majority of foreign women identified the most common harassers as policemen, security, and then drivers.

The Effects of Sexual Harassment

- The results of the study also concluded that sexual harassment has serious physical consequences for the victim, such as cases of headaches, difficulty sleeping, and bad dreams, as well psychological repercussions such as a deep sense of anger, fear, pain, embarrassment, shame and turmoil, confusion and inability to act, and finally depression.
- The results confirmed the economic and social effects of harassment, including the impact of harassment on the productivity of workers at work, 9.5% of Egyptian women and 22.4% of foreign women stated that sexual harassment affects the productivity of students at school (such as students not being able to recall what they study), and a feeling of lack of security, both in public places or private as well as 42% of Egyptian women and 73% of foreign women indicated their lack of confidence in others and dealing with the opposite sex.
- The study results showed the impact of sexual harassment on tourism and the entry of foreign currency in Egypt. The study found that some foreign women had expectations about being harassed in Egypt before they arrived, which were confirmed by their experiences during their stay. 66.1% of foreign women confirmed that their experiences with sexual harassment had a negative impact on their vision of Egyptian society. 7.3% also thought that they would not return to Egypt again because of

their experiences, and 4.6% said they would advise their friends not to visit Egypt.

Chapter III: How the Victim, Witness and Security Officers Deal with the Problem of Sexual Harassment

- The study concluded that there are negative reactions to harassment at all levels, whether by the harasser or witness.
- The study indicated that the vast majority of women did nothing when confronted with sexual harassment, which is one of the most difficult obstacles to overcoming sexual harassment as it is therefore “silenced” or “covered up.” However, it is meaningful that many women stated they did not report harassment because they were not yet aware of the serious effect harassment would have on their lives. Women confirmed that they did also not report harassment because they feared an impact on their reputation, and were afraid of the reactions of people around them were they to admit they were harassed.
- Egyptian women and men who witnessed harassment of Egyptian women and foreign women are likely not to help victims of harassment. The vast majority of these attributed this to disinterest in the affairs of others.
- Results on reporting incidents of sexual harassment show that an extremely small percentage of women sought help from police as only 2.4% of Egyptian women and 7.5% of foreign women reported the crime. The result was that some let the harasser escape while others caught him and filed a report against him. We also found that some police officers mock these women or harass them as well. The vast majority of women - 96.7% of Egyptian women and 86.9% of foreign women - did not seek police assistance because they didn't think it was important or because no one would help them. This failure is significant and protection of women could stop harassment. Others reported they feared a negative impact on their reputation and negative consequences from breaching customs and traditions, while some sighted the absence of an effective law criminalizing sexual harassment and the absence of witnesses as reasons not to report. We note also that the vast majority of foreigners confirmed that many times the harasser was himself a police officer - further deterring them from

requesting assistance. There is no doubt that the silence of women is considered a major impediment to the reporting of incidents of sexual harassment, as it gives confidence to the harasser to continue to commit crimes, illustrating the need to end this silence and discuss the consequences of this phenomenon and its negative effect on women, who comprise half of society. Half of society will not be spared the threat of sexual harassment if the other half will not recognize the consequences of sexual harassment.

Chapter IV: Men and Sexual Harassment

- Results show that the vast majority - 62.4% of the male audience surveyed - confirmed that they have perpetrated and/or continue to perpetrate one or more of the forms of harassment. 49.8% being ogling women's bodies, 27.7% whistling and shouting comments, 15.9% shouting sexually explicit comments, 15.4% phone harassment, 13.4% unwanted touching of women's bodies, 12.2% following and stalking, 4.3% exposed or pointed out his penis.
- Results confirmed that the majority of these incidences take place in public places: 69% on the streets, 49.1% on public transportation, 42.4% in parks and coffee shops, 29% in educational institutions, 19.8% on beaches, and 6.2% in the workplace.
- Most participants stated they prefer to harass in the evening, followed by mid-day, no specific time, morning, and after midnight.
- Regarding frequency of harassing behavior, the vast majority of male participants stated they harassed women approximately once a day, while others stated they did so more than once a day. The minority harassed weekly and then monthly.
- Regarding reasons for the harassing behavior, results show that the vast majority of harassers 41.8% believe that harassing behavior works to satisfy their repressed sexual desires, perhaps confirming the above classification of the "bull harasser" who indiscriminantly looks to satisfy his sexual desire at any time or place with any females he sees.
- 23.1% of the men surveyed reported that harassing women made them feel more masculine, more confident, stronger in relation to women, powerful. 13.9% considered harassing degrading and humiliating to women, and agreed with the conclusion that sexual harassment enhances the already existing culture of male hegemony through acts of violence by men against women.
- 19.3% said that they experience no positive or negative feelings when they harass women because they are accustomed to doing it since they were young.
- Results indicate that 53.8% of men blame men's sexual harassment of women on the women. They interpret the cause of sexual harassment primarily as a result of women dressing indecently (unveiled). However, our study shows that most victims of harassment wear headscarves, illustrating the falseness of this claim. 42.4% of men also attributed harassment to women's beauty. One of the interviewees said that when he sees a beautiful woman he tries to harass her verbally first and then sees how it might develop further. Others said that they harass women because women enjoy it. 27.7% reported that they harass women to satisfy their sexual desire, or to pass the time, or to increase self-confidence. When we analyzed these responses, we found that all reflect the idea of masculine hegemony. Usually men blame women, not themselves, describing her appearance as inappropriate or saying that she initiated it or likes to be harassed.
- 88% of the sample saw someone harassing a woman. This occurred most often in public places including streets, public transportation, parks, clubs, etc. Our results showed that the reactions of these to seeing such incidents were negative, but that 61.4% ignored the issue completely and failed to provide any assistance to the victim or separate the harasser from her. 29.4% sympathized with the victim and only 0.1% reported trying to help the victim (verbally, physically, or by helping the victim to file a police report).
- Reasons that most of the sample ignored harassment and refused to help the victim included: 47.8% indicated that they don't care, others said that women enjoy harassment, and others replied that since they harass women themselves, they have no right to prevent others from doing the same.

Chapter V: Sexual Harassment and Blaming the Victim

- According to the results of the study, there are differences between Egyptian women, foreign women, and men regarding the ideal reaction to be taken by the victim when subjected to harassment. Most Egyptian women claimed that the victim should remain silent and not tell anyone about being harassed. Most Egyptian males and foreign women stated victims should request assistance from witnesses to help stop the harasser. No doubt this reflects the fact that Egyptian women support the image of the “silent woman” more than Egyptian males or foreigners. This also indicates that Egyptian women support the idea of male dominance and women's fault, as well as the inappropriateness of talking about women's vulnerability to harassment, which would violate norms, moral values and the ideal of the obedient woman.
- The results showed that there are a number of opinions held by research participants, which blame the victim for sexual harassment. Out of the Egyptian women and men interviewed, most believe that women who wear tight clothes deserve to be harassed. They also excused harassers on the grounds that "he sees a lot of girls." Most also rejected the views that men have the right to harass women because he is unable to marry, or that women shouldn't leave their homes (Egyptian women were more opposed to this idea than Egyptian men).
- Most Egyptian women interviewed agreed that it is wrong for a woman to go to the police station to report harassment or to talk about being harassed. Some men in the sample both agreed and disagreed with these ideas.
- Most of the Egyptian women and men agreed that women should be at home by 8 p.m.
- As for the foreign women participants, we find that the vast majority rejected all these views. They do not provide excuses for the harasser to commit these behaviors, and reject blaming women for being harassed.
- Although there are some contradictions in the opinions of Egyptian women, most of them were wearing hijab yet still suffering from the problem of sexual harassment. Despite this, they sometimes gave excuses

for the harassers, justifying his behavior. This shows that women are socially regarded as sex objects, not complete human beings or citizens with rights and obligations. The most important of these rights being the right to personal safety and freedom of movement.

Chapter VI: Sexual Harassment: Reasons and solutions

Results of the study confirm that 91.3% of Egyptian women, and 38.5% of foreign women, and 78.8% men agree that sexual harassment is a recently growing phenomenon.

- Participants cited various reasons for this growth: First, the worsening economic situation and the spread of unemployment among youth; followed by lack of awareness of religious values. Male participants particularly blamed the general appearance of some women and their behavior in public places. Male participants also attributed the behavior to the media's free airing of pornography and harassers' poor upbringings. The vast majority of the sample of foreign women blame harassment on the lack of a clear law that effectively criminalizes sexual harassment. Some foreign women indicated that this is also due to the victim's silence, which allows the harasser to escape any consequences.
- The main solution proposed by participants to reduce this phenomenon was the need to improve the economic situation and create job opportunities for youth. Some feel that the solution lies in raising awareness among religious citizens. The vast majority of foreigners and some of the Egyptian women and men have stressed the need to apply existing laws that may be used to address sexual harassment, if any, or the need for special legislation criminalizing sexual harassment. They also mentioned the need to create some effective security system and impose censorship on the media and, finally, the need for women to dress modestly so as not to provoke harassment from men.

After examining the results of the study we propose several recommendations which help achieve the study's overall goal – to find ways to attempt to limit or reduce the phenomenon of sexual harassment in the Egyptian society and make our society safer for all women and men, children and elders.

Recommendations

The need to raise awareness of the concept of sexual harassment. Many consider sexual harassment limited to rape or sexual assault, and do not realize that the term sexual harassment is a broad concept including many verbal and physical behaviors. Awareness of the phenomenon is necessary to stand against it and take action.

- The need to intensify research on the social, psychological, legal, and economic aspects of sexual harassment, with the goal of deepening our understanding of all facets of the problem as interpreted from every angle. Research should focus on the dangers of this social phenomenon and its threat to social progress and evolution, as well as studies focusing on the seriousness of the psychological consequences of the phenomenon on the victim as well as examining the most important psychological reasons why harassers commit such crimes. Legal studies should focus on evolving comparative legal frameworks for addressing sexual harassment in various countries around the world, and to how to best formulate legal recommendations addressing the specific needs of the Egyptian society and culture.
- The need to develop training sessions for police on how to deal with the issue of sexual harassment
- The need for increased security in the streets and easy reporting procedures aimed at reducing the incidence of harassment in the streets and creating a general atmosphere supportive of the ideas of women as victims of harassment, not the instigators, and harassment as a criminal act of violence against women.
- The creation of a sexual harassment reporting center, the main function of which should be to receive and document complaints from women subjected to this type of violence.
- The need for solidarity between civil society organizations and federations to mobilize public opinion and decision makers to address the problem of sexual harassment in all its forms.
- Drafting a law that clearly defines sexual harassment, criminalizes it, and defines procedures for evidence and proof. It should also allow policemen and officers to report sexual harassment when they see it or receive a complaint, like traffic officers who are able to write citations and give fines for parking or driving incorrectly.
- The police should have a specific document (file/folders) containing all information on the harasser, and if the harasser's name is repeated they should be punished.
- If a harasser is reported twice for harassment, this should constitute evidence and used to file a law suit against him.
- Punishment for officers or policemen who refuse to report sexual harassment or engage in any negative behavior against women should be set.

Case Studies of Foreign Women

Case (1)

I have been harassed in Cairo, Egypt many times (almost daily). One incident that stands out is the time I was walking down the street with a girl friend in Mohandessin (by the Shooting Club). Three young men tried to approach us and as always we tried to ignore them. However, this did not work. They proceeded to follow us much closer to the point where they were almost touching us. Finally, one of them grabbed my friend from her waist. Cars were driving by but there weren't that many people on the street. No one interfered. I started shouting and my friend started crying hysterically. They laughed and said "khalas, khalas, matez3aleesh awy keddah" and walked away. Of course, there is no way to describe the humiliation that one feels when one is violated like that in such a public place at 9pm. This is just one of the many horror stories. I get harassed everyday on the streets of Cairo and I never dress or behave inappropriately (not that it should matter). As a matter of fact, I went to the American University, and I often dressed in sweat pants and a sweat shirt. One day on my way to university, I was grabbed from behind by a teenager (around 17 or 18) on a bike. The funny thing is that I actually ran after him, but could not catch up with him; I don't know what I would have done to him. Moreover, if I attempt to involve a police officer, he will join the harasser NOT defend me. The attitude is more like "well, you're a woman; you should be home anyway so it's really your fault for leaving your house". There are no words to describe the magnitude of this problem. It is sad enough that when I pass a man by and he doesn't make an offensive comment, I feel like stopping and thanking him. It may also be helpful to note that ALL foreign women that I have spoken to have said that this is the one thing that ruined their trip to Egypt.

Case (2)

In the summer months, my class began at nine o'clock each day. Since the temperature is still cool at eight o'clock during the summer, I enjoyed walking 45 minutes to school over the 6th of October bridge from downtown Cairo to Kalimat language school, beside Musstafah Mahmoud mosque in Mohandissen.

Crossing the bridge, even at eight am, was not always a peaceful walk. Despite the early hour, the rushhour had already begun: cars honk, men scream "hello" from windows, and not in a

friendly way. Men stop their cars and ask me if I want a ride. They ask if I want a date?

On two occasions, I felt physically threatened in a sexual way by men on the 6th of October bridge. At the beginning of my walk, a man approached me, asking me where I was from. I politely told him that I would enjoy some quiet and was not in the mood to make conversation, even if it were not ill intended. I told him I would like to be left alone, to walk by myself.

He continued to follow me to the end of the bridge and turned onto the street leading to the mosque. His advances were seemingly harmless, at first. He invited me for a date, and gave me his phone number. He asked me where I lived and if I had a boyfriend or a husband. I tried to ignore him, I tried to reiterate the fact that I needed him to leave when ignoring him didn't work. I was forceful in my resolve. I told him that he was making me uncomfortable.

Yet, he continued to follow me. After the subtle approach failed to work, he asked me to kiss him. He told me that he was going to follow me until he got a kiss. I walked faster, with a quick stride. I was half running. He told me that he wanted us to meet. He was

"in love with me." He also told me that he was convinced I was here alone, and didn't have a boyfriend. I was silent.

Ahead of me I spotted a student from Kalimat. He was walking towards me and I asked him to walk with me for a short distance, until the man left. The student was in a hurry, but agreed, and after I thought the man had left, I thanked the student and continued to school. Once my classmate was out of sight, the man returned. I tried using the payphone, he waited.

Finally, I found a policeman. I was flustered. I went to the policeman and the man walked right with me. "STOP", I said to the man. "Help me," I cried to the policeman. The policemen mocked me, "Help me!" he replied in a sing-songy voice. He told me I was beautiful, in Arabic, and I began to cry. I ran to school and left the two men shouting at me.

Case (3) :

I was on the 6th of October bridge. I was halfway between Tahrir and Mohandassien. It was early, about 8 o'clock am, and I passed a well-dressed man, on his way to work. I was going in the direction of school, Kalimat, located next to Mustafah Mahmoud mosque. He was walking towards downtown.

When we passed, he looked at me, and I quickened my pace. I walked about another 3 minutes when I felt someone behind me. He was approaching slowly. I didn't want to turn around, for fear of making eye contact. One minute later, the same man that passed me, rubbed up behind me, putting both hands and his genitals on my back end. He grabbed hard and I screamed.

I hit him with my fists, telling him to back away. He ran, for fear of making more of a scene. I passed police officers about 10 minutes later, at the end of the bridge, but didn't report the incident, because just two weeks before, I was mocked and harassed by a police man when I sought his help. I have not walked to Kalimat via the 6th of October bridge since the incident.

Case (4) :

I was in high school at the time when i used to take a private class in an education centre near my home that i only had to cross few streets. that guy used to follow me everyday & used to be very scared..he waited for me at the time when my class ends, at firs he used to follow me then day after day he tried to touched me successively, i used to walk faster or turn suddenly tats when he temporarily stop & resume after making me feel that he's distant & that I'm safe. untill that day when he actually touched me & i shivered like a rabbit but I had books in my hand & i turned & slapped him hard in the face & called him names, i was scared but i was very angry at the time that I still cant imagine how i did that..he was very expressionless & wasn't afraid of me..but after that he stopped following me & i never saw him one day after that.

Case (5) :

22 year old female harassment happens everywhere. Zamalek, Mohandessin, just name the district you'll find it. harassment happens in broad day light as well as at night. people harassing me range from the age of 13 year old boys to 60 year old men. harassment acts range from just verbal abuse to actual physical abuse. even sometimes cars pull over and expect you to just jump in. a specific story is people working at parking lots. as I return at night around 11 pm i have to give the guy at the gate the card of the parking to open the gate. the guy used to touch my hand every time I went in, untill once I made a scene and got him fired. when physical harassments or verbal harassments take place in the street whether in broad day light or at night people don't react to these comments or actions since they take it as a normal thing that happens everyday. it's starting to be part of the everyday life. usually girls don't go to the police since these harassments can reach the number of 5 to 6

times a day. if every time we go to the police then our whole day will be wasted on complaints. furthermore, police personnel themselves sometimes harass girls and women in the streets. so if the police themselves do that so who are we supposed to go to?? after being harassed you really feel weak. like your right has been violated. my movements are being limited to certain places and with certain people just because of harassments. people usually do not support you when something like this happens. they just continue with their life as if nothing happened.

Case (6) :

I was dropping off my visiting friend at the airport, and I always get a lot of trouble there so this time I wore the hijab thinking I would have an easier time. Unfortunately, not only did I not have an easier time, but I had a very disturbing experience. After I dropped my friend off I took the bus back to Midan Tahrir, but the trip took a while and I was so exhausted by that point that I found myself dozing off on the bus. When I woke up suddenly, the woman who had been sitting next to me was gone and in her place was a middle-aged man with his hand between my legs, fingering the inside of my thigh. I looked at him in shock and before I could even know what to do he had stopped the bus and gotten off. The whole process took about five seconds, but I was very upset for the next few days.

I also have an American friend who had the following experience: She got in a cab after the cabbie convinced her that he was going the same way she was going and he would just drop her off without pay. She got into the front seat (mistake) and immediately he began fondling her and himself. She eventually managed to get out of the cab.

I hope these stories help you in combatting sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is the single worst thing I have experienced in Egypt and it is what has negatively impacted my decision to perhaps live here for an extended period of time. Maybe crime here is lower than in Europe or the States, but I cannot deal with being treated as such a lowly object all the time, even while doing the most simple things. I hate approaching a man to ask a simple question, like about directions, and having him laugh or make a comment to his friends. I hate being constantly condescended to and treated like I'm "asking for it." Interestingly, it's children and young teenagers, BOTH girls and boys, who harass me the most overtly, pulling my clothes and hair and saying things like "hey baby," or "hey! hey!" and getting in my way on the street. These kids are often in the around adults who do nothing to

stop them or to tell them that their behavior is rude. I have the impression that it's tacitly "okay" to treat foreigners like that.

Most people I meet here are really friendly, don't get me wrong. I've met some truly wonderful people. I've just had enough negative experiences though to seriously impact my impression of Egyptian society. I came here with such high hopes, thinking that I could defend myself from harrassment by modest behavior

and clothing. Since a young age I've had a passion for learning about Islam and Arab culture and coming to Egypt has been a lifelong dream of mine. But since then I've realized that there's nothing I can do about harrassment here. It's been a very disempowering experience. I didn't come to the Middle East to "change" the culture or on any sort of noble crusade; I just came here to learn. But I learned that I can't even control my own space here.

ملخص الدراسة باللغة الإنجليزية
