

**Meeting of the Friends of the Chair of the United Nations
Statistical Commission on Statistical Indicators on
Violence against Women
9 - 11 December 2009
Aguascalientes, Mexico**

Violence against women in Egypt¹

By Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics Egypt²

¹ Issued without formal editing.

² Soad ELhawary

Introduction

1. Violence against women is one of the issues that lie in the spheres of those who are interested in the study of women's health and her rights. Violence against women and the threat of violence are main barriers of women's empowerment and equal participation in society. However, they often go unnoticed and undocumented and therefore unresolved. When stress and violence increase in the society in general, women's safety at home, workplace and community are often seriously affected (UNICEF,1999). The UN Declaration on violence against women, adopted in 1993, defines violence against women as encompassing "any act of force and compulsion that affects the life, body, self esteem, psychological state, coercion or deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life"
2. We used data from two Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) conducted in Egypt in 1995 and 2005 using multistage household sampling. Data related to wife beating included information from 7122 women in 1995 and 5612 women in 2005.

1. Domestic violence

3. Domestic violence against women has been acknowledged worldwide as a violence of basic human rights. Several researches highlight the health burdens, intergenerational effects, and demographic consequences of such violence. It is violence that takes place at home or within the family. The 1995 EDHS followed up by 2005 EDHS included a special module designed to obtain information on the extent to which women in Egypt experience domestic violence. The module included a series of questions to collect information on various forms of marital violence including physical and emotional violence. Although the module focused on the extent of marital violence, information also was obtained on any physical violence involving perpetrators other than the current/last husband that the women experienced since her fifteenth birthday. Women who reported recent marital violence were asked about assistance they may have sought at the time the most recent episode of violence occurred.

1.1 Types of physical violence

4. The results of 2005 EDHS indicated that the most common forms of physical violence included being slapped or having her arm twisted (28%), being pushed or shaken or having objects thrown at her by the husband (26%) and being punched with the fist or another object (13%). Around (2%) of the women were the subject of extremely violent acts including being burned or strangled or threatened or attacked with some type of weapon.

1.2 Severity of physical violence

5. Two measures of the severity of beatings "hurt as a result of beatings" and "so seriously hurt that medical attention was needed". In 1995 EDHS, among women who reported being beaten, (18%) said they were hurt as a result of beating, increased to about one-third in 2005, and (10%) reported they needed a medical attention in 1995 and 2005 EDHS, and about (33.8%) of the women indicated that they sought help as a result of the violence in 1995 compared with (34.5%) of women beaten at least once in 2005.

1.3 Violence during pregnancy

6. Pregnancy does not necessarily protect women from being beaten. Violence during pregnancy may threaten not only a woman well-being but that of her unborn child. About (32%) of women who reported ever being beaten and have had at least one birth or are currently pregnant have been beaten during pregnancy in 1995. Among women who had ever been pregnant (6%) were hit, slapped, kicked or subjected to some other form of physical violence at least one during pregnancy in 2005.

1.4 Perpetrators of physical violence

7. The proportion of women who ever experienced violence according to the persons identified as a perpetrators of the violence. Almost all women who say they have been beaten, report being beaten by their husband (96%) (for women married more than once, includes beatings by her current or earlier husband) in 1995 EDHS. More than seven in ten women identified their current or a previous husband as perpetrator in at least one episode of physical violence (72%) and more than four in ten women had been hit, slapped, kicked or subjected to some other form of physical violence by male perpetrators other than a husband (father or brother) in 2005EDHS.

1.5 Characteristics of victim

8. Age: Women age 15-19 years were the least likely to have been subject to violence (29%) in 1995, (40%) in 2005 than women age 30-39 years which more likely to report ever experiencing physical violence (37%) in 1995 and (49%) in 2005.
9. Urban-rural residence: Rural women were some what more likely than urban women to report a recent episode (30% and 39% respectively) in 1995 while it is the same percentage (47%) in 2005, and is lowest among women in the frontier governments (22%) in 1995 and (38.8%) in 2005.
10. Education: Women with primary or no education are three or more times as likely to be beaten as women with complete secondary or higher education (42%, 14% respectively) in 2005.
11. Work status: Women who worked for cash were less likely than women who not work for cash to report physical violence (21%, 38%) in 1995 compared with (44%, 48%) in 2005.

2. Sexual and emotional violence

12. (71%) of women indicated that their spouse had ever physical forced them to have sex and (4%) reported that they had recently been forced to have sex by their spouse. (18%0 of ever married women reported they had ever experienced emotional violence, (11%) for recent episode.

2.1 Characteristics of victim

13. Age: Women age (30-39) years were more likely to report ever experiencing sexual violence from their spouse (7%) while women age (15-19) were the least (3%) in 2005 , while in emotional violence women age (30-49) reached (19%) decreased to (9%) in age (15-19).
14. Marital status: Divorced women were the more percentage indicated that their spouse had ever forced them to have sex (23%) than the married women (6%), and (51%) of divorced reported they had ever experienced emotional violence and (17%) Of married women.
15. Urban-rural residence: Rural women were more likely than urban women to being forced to have sex from their spouse (7.5%, 5.5%) respectively in 2005. (19%) for urban and (15%) for rural women who had emotional violence.
16. Education: women who had secondary and higher education less likely to be forced to have sex from their spouses (5%) than those who had no education(7%) and (11%,24% respectively) who experienced emotional violence.
17. Work status: (7%) of women who not worked for cash reported that their spouses had forced them to have sex , while women who worked for cash were slightly less than other women in the two types of violence.

3. Indicators on harmful practices

3.1 Female circumcision

18. The practice of female circumcision (also referred to as female genital cutting) has been a tradition in Egypt since the Pharonic period, and adherence to the custom remains widespread. The 2005 Egypt DHS
19. Survey included questions designed to assess the current prevalence of circumcision among survey respondents and their daughters.
20. The data shows that (97%) of the ever-married women interviewed in the 1995 EDHS reported that they had been circumcised and (96%) in 2005. Only in the Urban Governorates (93%) in 1995, (89%) in 2005 and the Frontier Governorates (75%) in 1995, (72 %) in 2005 does the prevalence of circumcision fall below the other governorates

21. The data shows that among respondents had at least one living daughter about eight in ten of these women reported that at least one of their daughters had already been circumcised (50 %) in 1995 and (28%) in 2005 or that they intended to have a daughter circumcised in the future (31 percent) in 1995, (41%) in 2005.
22. The results shows that residence is strongly associated with the likelihood a daughter who had been circumcised or who intend to have their daughters circumcised in the future (46%, 53%) in urban in 1995 ,2005 respectively. The proportion of girls who are currently circumcised or expected to be circumcised in the future decreases with the mother's educational attainment where it decrease from (60%) among women with no education to (18%) to women with highly education among who has been circumcised in 1995 and from (39%) among women with no education to (13%) among women with highly education in 2005.
23. Age at circumcision: Two-thirds (61%) and more than half of the girls were between seven and ten years of age at the time of circumcision, and virtually all girls were circumcised before age 13, median age at the time of the circumcision for daughters is 10 years
24. Person performing the circumcision: In 1995 EDHS, Dayas (traditional birth attendants) performed almost (62%) of the circumcisions. Compared with (22%) in 2005, while trained medical providers (doctors or other health workers) performed (17%) of the circumcisions in 1995 increased to (75%) in 2005.
25. Support for female circumcision: According to results of the 2005 EDHS, (68%) of ever-married women age 15-49 feel that the practice of circumcision should continue. (54%) of women believe that men support continuation of the practice of circumcision. Marked differences in these indicators are evident according to the woman's background characteristics. Urban residents are less likely than rural residents to believe circumcision should be continued or to feel men support continuation of the practice.

Table 1: Gender Violence throughout a Woman's Life

<i>Phase</i>	<i>Type of Violence</i>
Prenatal	Sex-selective abortions, battering during pregnancy, coerced pregnancy (rape during war)
Infancy	Female infanticide, emotional and physical abuse, differential access to food and medical care

Childhood	Genital mutilation; incest and sexual abuse; differential access to food, medical care, and education; child prostitution
Adolescence	Dating and courtship violence, economically coerced sex, sexual abuse in the workplace, rape, sexual harassment, forced prostitution
Reproductive	Abuse of women by intimate partners, marital rape, dowry abuse and murders, partner homicide, psychological abuse, sexual abuse in the workplace, sexual harassment, rape, abuse of women with disabilities
Old Age	Abuse of widows, elder abuse (which affects mostly women)

Source: Heise, L. 1994. *Violence Against Women: The Hidden Health Burden. World Bank Discussion Paper. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.*

4. Conclusions

26. Different measures used in both surveys make a direct comparison difficult. The observed patterns indicate that the changes in prevalence may be masked by two opposite processes occurring in the society: a decrease in (severe forms of) wife beating and an increase in reporting of wife were beating. Improving the access to education for women and raising education levels in the whole society may help reducing wife beating
27. Beating by an intimate partner remains highly prevalent in Egypt, despite increasing levels of education in the population and initiatives to reduce wife beating. However, patterns of wife beating may have moved less severe forms in recent years. The woman's towards level of education appears a strong determinant of reduced wife beating, but only when her partner is also educated. Thus, improving women's access to education and raising levels of education in the whole society are promising strategies to reduce wife beating.
28. The Grand Mufti (The country's top religion authorities) and the head of the Coptic Church said that female circumcision had no basics either in the Quran or in the bible.
29. The ban by the Health Ministry marks a return to 1950s government order prohibiting hospitals and doctors from carrying out the procedure. The warned that violators would be punished, but did not specify the penalty. The ban is not enforceable as a law, which requires passage in the national legislature.

5. Recommendations

30. To improve women situation, so that all the classes in the Egyptian society can enjoy peace and security especially women, the paper resulted in the following recommendations:
- a. Discrimination against women in any law should be removed, since this contributes to the occurrence of violence against women
 - b. Procedures and laws protecting women should be encouraged and loopholes allowing violence and escape from punishment should be closed.
 - c. Protection of victims of rape and punishment of rapists should be encouraged
 - d. A unified strategy to confront social, organizational and individual
 - e. Women's human rights should be discussed in international organizations, especially research and media organizations, in order to find culturally appropriate solutions to ending violence
 - f. The contact information of organizations working on human rights should be published and their goals explained and made available to all women
 - g. NGOs should cooperate with journalists to address issues of violence and mobilize public opinion
 - h. Fighting all forms of discrimination against women is the only way to stop violence
 - i. Civil society and all NGOs, especially women's organizations, must make a concerted effort to confront all forms of violence against women, especially organizational violence perpetrated by authorities who are supposed to protect the safety of citizens.
 - j. Raising community awareness regarding the elimination of domestic violence against women a guaranteeing health services for women especially in rural areas and slums.
 - k. Allocating pages for women in the press that discusses women issues and problems.