

Marriage Patterns in Egypt¹

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Abstract

Marriage is one of the important social systems that significantly affects the form and structure of population. Marriage patterns are also affected by the characteristics and social and economic conditions of the populations and their customs, traditions and values.

Marriage is linked to several other phenomena such as celibacy, divorce and re-marriage. This paper highlights the marriage patterns in Egypt and the characteristics of population that affect them and other associated phenomena.

Data of different surveys and marriage and divorce statistics were used to analyze marriage and related phenomena. A wealth index was developed to reveal the relation between marriage patterns and socioeconomic level. A new test was used to test the similarity of age at first marriage percentile curves.

Data reveal that the socioeconomic level affects the patterns of marriage and related phenomena. Data also reveal that the pattern of age at first marriage in rural differs from its pattern in urban. Divorce statistics of 2006 show that about 14 thousand divorces were between couples with children and marriage duration less than 20 years resulted in the disintegration of the households of at least 26 thousand children.

Key words: Marriage Pattern, marital status, celibacy, divorce, Curve Chi Square test.

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1- Introduction:

Marriage is one of the important social systems that significantly affects the form and structure of population through the timing of marriage and its effect on birth rates and the health of mothers and children and through the incidence of consanguineous marriages that have impact on the health of newborns. Marriage patterns are also affected by the characteristics and social and economic conditions of populations and their customs, traditions and values.

Marriage is also linked to several other phenomena such as celibacy, divorce and re-marriage. This paper will highlight the marriage patterns and the characteristics of population that affect them as well as the other phenomena that are related to marriage. Section two will present the methodology used in the paper. Section three will highlight marriage patterns and the characteristics that affect these patterns. Celibacy and divorce will be discussed in sections four and five respectively. Section six will briefly present the remarriage rates in Egypt. Finally, section seven will contain the most important conclusions.

2 - Methodology:

Marriage and divorce related phenomena will be analysed in this paper through the following dimensions:

1. Analysis of the demographic and health survey (DHS) data and similar surveys reflecting the current status of ever married women in Egypt. These data represent marriages that occurred among women in the age group (15 – 49) years, which therefore include marriages that took place in different periods i.e. recent and old marriages. Data of individuals in different age groups will also be used to analyze marriage related phenomena^[4].
2. Analysis of marriage and divorce statistics for successive years with focus on 2006 data, which reflects all recent marriages and divorces that took place in 2006.
3. Comparing the situation in Egypt with the situation in other Arab countries whenever possible to determine the extent of similarities and differences in the phenomenon among Egypt and these countries.

To study the impact of the socioeconomic status of the household on marriage and other related phenomena, a wealth index was developed to be used as a proxy for poverty or wealth level of each household (HH). The wealth index was determined using the available data about household substances and dwelling characteristics. Factor analysis was used to assign score for each HH using principle components method. This score represents the relative economic level of the HH. HHs were then divided into 5 categories reflecting descending wealth levels. Wealth index of each HH was assigned to each of the HH members.

Since the level of poverty varies from urban to rural areas, a separate index was derived for each area using the variables that are suitable for that area. The appendix shows the variables that have been used to calculate the wealth index in urban and rural areas as well as some of the characteristics of the HHs and HHs' members of each quintile.

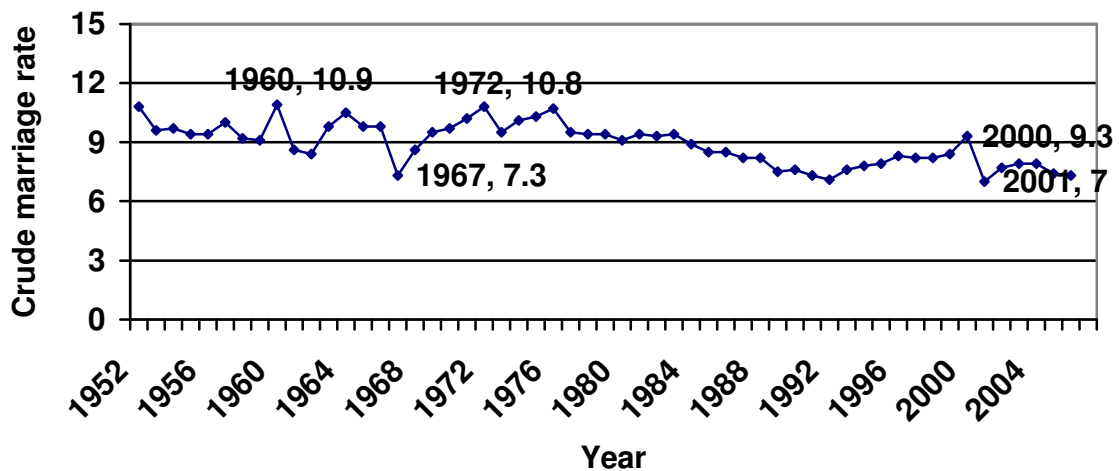
This paper will also present a new methodology for testing the similarity of the pattern of age at first marriage between urban and rural areas in different age groups using percentile curves. Percentile curves of age at first marriage were built and Chi Square test was adapted to test the equality of different percentile curves.

3 - Marriage:

3-1 - Marriage rates:

Crude marriage rates published in marriage and divorce statistics show that rates take a downward trend, which dropped from 10.8 per 1000 population in 1952 to 7.3 per 1000 population in 2006. Tracking the time series of these rates shows a status of stability with the presence of fluctuations in the fifties and sixties and until mid-seventies of the past century. From the second half of the seventies and until the end of the eighties, rates have taken a declined trend and then witnessed a status of stability in the first half of the nineties, after which it rose to reach its highest value since the mid-seventies (9.3 per 1000 population) in 2000 - perhaps due to the desire of many people to marry in the Millennium year. The rate then experienced a sharp decline from the beginning of the millennium and until 2006.

Figure 1 Crude marriage rate (1952 – 2006)



Source: Marriage and divorce statistics, CAPMAS

Studying the marriage rates in urban and rural areas shows that marriage rates are higher in rural than in urban areas. The difference between them has reached about 3.1 per 1000 population in 2006 (table 1). Studying these rates for different years also shows that rates in both urban and rural areas have become lower but with a higher decrease in urban areas. The same pattern is evident in marriage rates in governorates and in their urban and rural

areas except for the frontier governorates, Port Said and Ismailia which witnessed an increase in the marriage rates between 1981 and 2006.

Table 1 Crude marriage rate by governorate and place of residence for selected years

Governorate	1980			1999			2006		
	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Cairo	9.9	—	9.9	8.1	—	8.1	5	—	5
Alexandria	6.7	—	6.7	6.0	—	6.0	3.3	—	3.3
Port Said	12	—	12	9.5	—	9.5	14	—	14
Suez	13	—	13	9.3	—	9.3	9.5	—	9.5
Damitta	10	12	12	6.5	12.2	10.6	5.7	11	2.7
Dakahlia	9.8	12	11	7.9	9.8	9.3	8.1	10	9.6
Sharqia	6.9	11	10	4.6	9.6	8.4	3.8	7.7	6.8
Kalyobia	8.7	11	10	6.2	9.3	8.0	6.4	8.2	7.5
Kafr El Sheikh	8	8.7	8.6	8.1	9.6	9.2	5.7	8.6	7.9
Gharbia	8	11	9.8	5.4	10.8	9.1	5.1	11	9.1
Monofia	9.1	12	11	8.1	11.1	10.5	8.1	12	11
Behera	11	11	11	9.2	9.4	9.3	11	9.6	9.9
Ismailia	12	9.6	11	11.8	10.8	11.3	14	12	13
Giza	7	8.5	7.6	5.2	9.4	7.1	0.9	0.5	2.6
Beni Suef	8	11	10	6.8	9.7	9.0	5.6	9	8.2
Fayoum	11	13	12	8.6	10.2	9.8	8.9	12	11
Menia	4.7	6.4	6	0.1	8.1	7.9	7	7	7
Asyout	7.8	8.6	8.3	7.0	7.8	7.5	5.6	7.4	6.9
Suhag	8.3	9.7	9.4	6.1	7.8	7.5	6.2	7.1	6.9
Quena	*7.7	*9.1	*8.8	7.6	8.4	8.2	4.8	6.7	6.3
Aswan	5.3	10	8.4	5.4	8.0	6.9	3.6	4.7	4.2
Luxor	—	—	—	6.2	7.2	6.8	9.5	5.9	7.8
Red Sea	7.4	—	7.4	5.5	—	5.5	11	0.2	8.1
El Wadi El Gedit	8.3	—	8.3	9.5	—	9.5	8.8	9.6	9.2
Matrouh	4	—	4	6.5	—	6.5	13	0.1	7.4
North Sinai	**5.0	—	**5.0	7.7	—	7.7	7.9	2.6	12
South Sinai	—	—	—	4.7	—	4.7	7.8	—	3.8
Total	8.5	10	9.5	7.2	9.3	8.4	5.5	8.6	7.3

*Including Luxor

**Including North Sinai and South Sinai

Source: Marriage and divorce statistics, CAPMAS

Comparing crude marriage rates in Egypt with similar rates in Arab countries, we find that the rate in Egypt at the beginning of the eighties was higher than that of Arab States. While the rate declined in Egypt during the period 1981 to 2006, it rose in most of the Arab countries.

Table 2 Crude marriage rate for different Arab countries

Country	Year	Crude marriage rate	Crude marriage rate in 2006
Egypt ⁽¹⁾	1981	8.9	7.3
Jordan ^{(1),(2)}	1981	5.1	10.6
Tunisia ^{(1),(3)}	1981	7.7	8.0
Kuwait ^{(1),(4)}	1981	6.2	5.1
Algeria ⁽⁵⁾	1990	6.0	8.8
Qatar ^{(1),(6)}	1982	3.7	3.6

⁽¹⁾ Marriage and divorce statistics, CAPMAS.

⁽²⁾ Jordan statistical year book.

⁽³⁾ Tunisia statistical year book.

⁽⁴⁾ Kuwait statistical authority.

⁽⁵⁾ Algeria statistical authority

⁽⁶⁾ Qatar statistical authority

3-2- Marital status:

The results of 2006 census show that 63% of the Egyptian females age 16 and above are married. This percentage rises from 10% among females in the age group (16 - 19) to 90% among females in the age group (30-39). The comparison of the distribution by age and gender shows that the percentage of married females in the age group (20-29) is twice the percentage of married males in the same age group.

The percentages of widowed and divorced females are higher than the percentages of widowed and divorced males (10.7% and 1.2% vs. 1.8% and 0.4% respectively) reflecting the fact that the life expectancy of males is less than the life expectancy of females, causing a higher percentage of widowed females.

Table 3 Percent distribution of males and females by Marital status

Age \ Marital Status	Male					Female				
	18-	20-	30-	45+	Total	16-	20-	30-	45+	Total
Never married	98.5	71.4	8.7	1.2	33.6	88.3	33.7	4.2	1.4	24.2
Marriage contract	0.5	1.1	0.4	0.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.1	0.0	0.5
Married	0.8	27.2	90.1	92.9	63.8	10.4	64.1	89.9	62.7	63.4
Divorced	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.8	1.8	1.5	1.2
Widowed	0.1	0.1	0.3	5.3	1.8	0.1	0.4	4.0	34.5	10.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Calculated from 2006 census results, CAPMAS

3-3 - Marriage by age:

Marriage and divorce statistics show that in 2006 the number of early marriage cases (for girls under 20 years old) represents 29.2% of the total marriages that took place in 2006. In 14.5% of these cases the age of the husband was 30 years or higher.

To realise the scope of negative effects of early marriage on girls and community we must consider this issue in the light of the fact that the percentage of ever married women in the age group (15-19) who think that it is appropriate to use contraceptives after the first birth reached 92% in the DHS 2005^[2].

The DHS data also show that 35.5% of ever married women in the age group (16-20) who have been married for one year or more have given birth to the first child before the end of the first year of marriage and that 36% have given birth to the first child before the end of the second year of marriage. As a result, the marriages that took place in 2006 for girls aged less than 20 years will result in about 54 thousand births in the first year of marriage and 55 thousand births in two years, all of them for mothers under the age of 22.

This means that Egypt bears the burden of an extra 110 thousand births annually that can be avoided by raising the age at first marriage which also could save those children from the exposure to diseases, malnutrition and higher infant mortality associated to the young age of the mother.

Early marriage also leads to a prolonged reproductive life of a woman, leading to a rise in the number of children born to the woman, and thus to higher fertility rates. DHS 2005 data show that the mean number of children per woman in the age group (45-49 years) increases as the age at first marriage decreases, the same result could be noticed from the mean household size.

Table 4 Mean number of children and mean household size of ever married women in the age group (45-49) by age at first marriage

Age at first marriage	Number of children		Household size		Number of cases
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	
Less than 20	6.1	2.6	6.7	3.4	1394
20 – 29	3.8	1.8	5.6	2.9	1161
30+	1.3	1.3	4.5	23.1	103
Total	4.9	2.6	6.2	3.3	2659

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

3-4 - Age at first marriage:

DHS 2005 data show that mean age at first marriage among ever married women (15-49) in Egypt reached 19.5 years. It is higher in urban than in rural (20.8 years versus 18.6 years respectively).

Age at first marriage increases as the socioeconomic status of the household increases. It increases in urban areas from 18.7 years in the lowest socioeconomic level to 22.7 years in the highest socioeconomic level. The same pattern could be noticed also in rural areas (17.4 and 20.3 years respectively).

Table 5 Mean and median age at first marriage among ever married women (15-49) by socioeconomic level in urban and rural

Place of residence	Socioeconomic level	Mean	Standard deviation	Median
Urban	Lowest Level	18.7	4.0	18
	Second Level	19.9	4.2	19
	Middle Level	21.1	4.4	21
	Fourth Level	21.9	4.0	22
	Highest Level	22.7	4.1	22
	Total	20.8	4.4	20
Rural	Lowest Level	17.4	3.7	17
	Second Level	17.9	3.6	17
	Middle Level	18.6	3.7	18
	Fourth Level	18.9	3.6	19
	Highest Level	20.3	3.7	20
	Total	18.6	3.8	18

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

The median age at first marriage in Egypt has risen in the past ten years by one year. The comparison of the mean and median age at first marriage in Egypt and some Arab countries in the nineties shows that both mean and median age at first marriage were higher in

Lebanon and Jordan than they were in Egypt while they were lower in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. In 2003, Morocco showed a slightly higher mean at 1st marriage than Egypt.

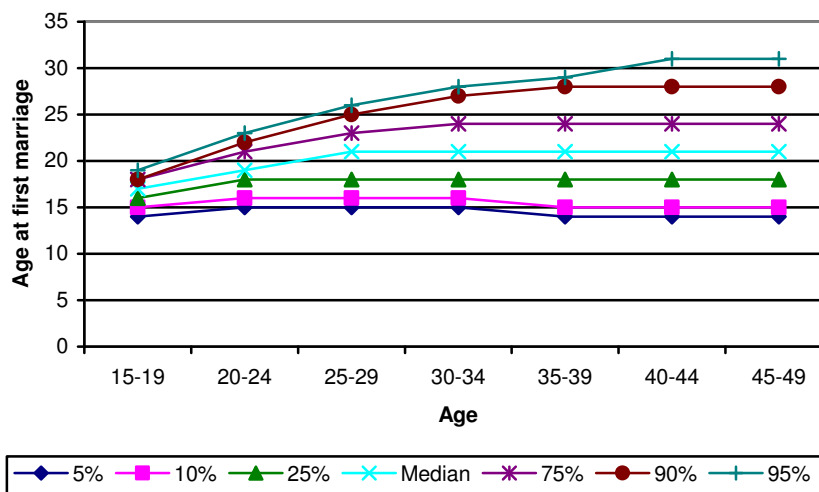
Table 6 Mean and median age at first marriage for ever married women (15-49 years) in selected Arab countries

Country/Year	Mean	Median
Egypt 1995	18.7	18
Egypt 2003	19.3	19
Egypt 2005	19.5	19
Yemen 1997	16.1	16
Jordan 1997	19.8	19
Lebanon 1996	20.2	19
Saudi Arabia 1996	16.7	16
Morocco 2003/2004	19.6	19

Source: Calculated from Demographic and Health Surveys and Maternal and Child Health Surveys

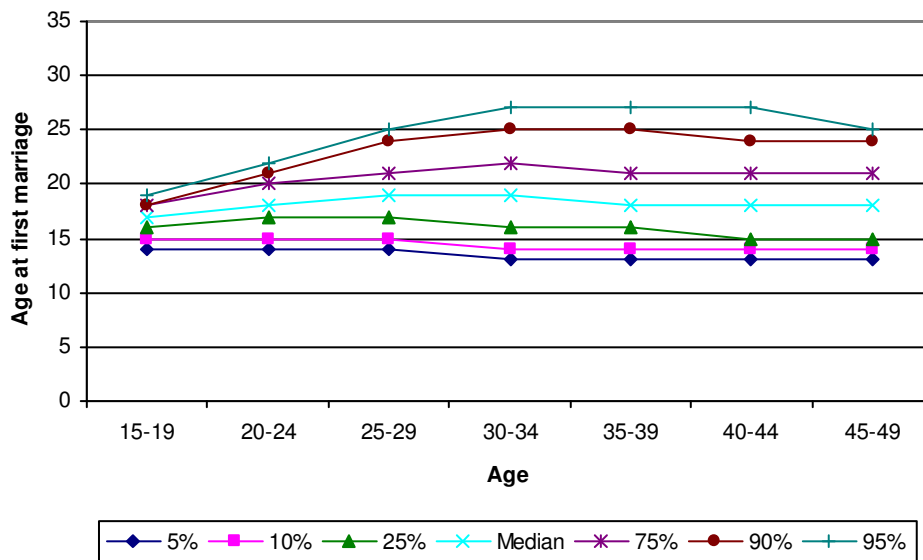
In the following part a new methodology will be used to compare the pattern of age at first marriage in different sub-populations. This methodology depends on the percentile curves. Percentile curves are used to compare the status of individuals and populations in the medical applications. The percentile curves method was applied in this paper to compare age at first marriage for different age groups in urban and rural Egypt, and a new test was used to test the similarity of these curves. Percentile "x" represents the age by which x% of the ever married women were married for the first time. The fifth, tenth, ninetieth and ninety-fifth percentiles represent the extreme values of age at first marriage.

Figure 2 Percentile curves for age at first marriage-for-age in urban areas



Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Figure 3 Percentile curves for age at first marriage-for-age in rural areas



Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

The initial comparison of percentile curves shows that the percentiles of age at first marriage in urban areas are higher than in rural areas, and that the higher the percentile order the greater the gap between urban and rural in higher ages.

It is also notable that in the lower extreme percentiles (fifth and tenth) the value of the percentile rises for ages less than 30 years, which indicates that the minimum age at first marriage has increased in recent years. The value of the lower extreme percentiles is constant in urban and rural areas after the age of 34 years and the gap between urban and rural areas remains unchanged.

The first quartile and the median curves indicate the stability of the value of these percentiles for age at first marriage in urban areas after the age of 20 and 25 years respectively while it tends to decline in rural areas. The gap widens between urban and rural as the current age increases till age 39 and 34 respectively, afterwards it remains unchanged.

The curves of the third quartile, the ninetieth percentile and ninety-fifth percentile suggest an increase in the values of these percentiles with higher age in urban areas while in rural

areas they rise up to the age of 34 when they start to decline. The gap between urban and rural widens with the increase in age.

Curve Chi Square test was used to test the equality of percentile curves for age at first marriage in different age groups using DHS 2005 data^[3].

H₀: Urban and Rural have the same pattern of age at 1st marriage

The test statistic of each percentile has a Chi Square distribution with 7 degrees of freedom.

$$\chi^2_{(7, 0.05)} = 14.07$$

Table 7 Chi-Square test results for different percentile curves

Percentiles	Chi square test value	Decision
5 th	206.5	Reject the Null hypothesis
10 th	312.3	Reject the Null hypothesis
25 th (first quartile)	492.6	Reject the Null hypothesis
50 th (median)	477.0	Reject the Null hypothesis
75 th (third quartile)	154.2	Reject the Null hypothesis
90 th	25.4	Reject the Null hypothesis
95 th	6.9	Can't Reject the Null hypothesis

Comparing the calculated value of Chi Square test with the tabulated value, we cannot accept the null hypothesis except for the 95th percentile curve.

Figure 4 5th percentile curve of age at first marriage-for-age

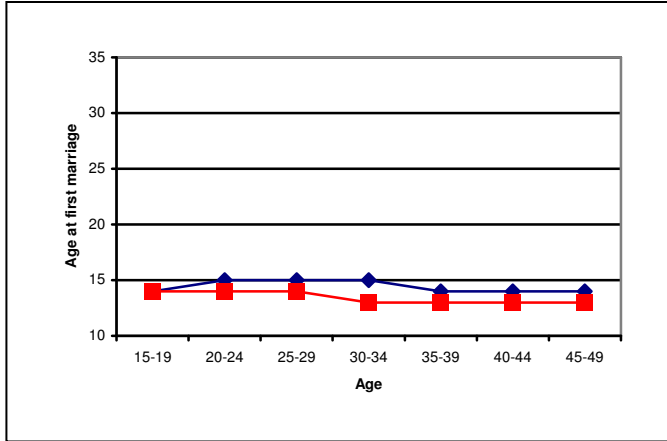


Figure 5 10th percentile curve of age at first marriage-for-age

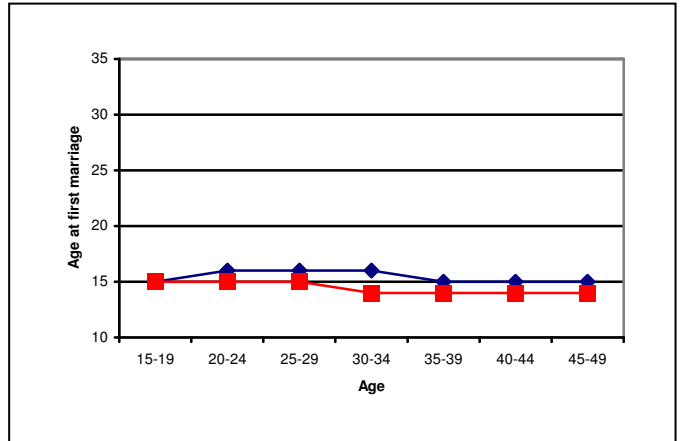


Figure 6 25th percentile curve of age at first marriage-for-age

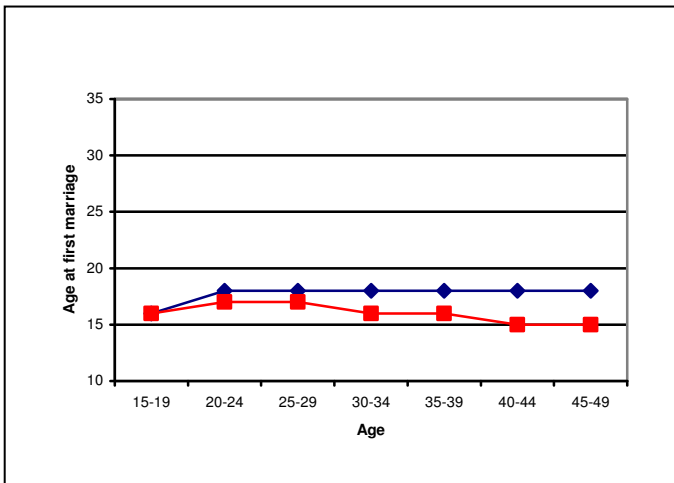
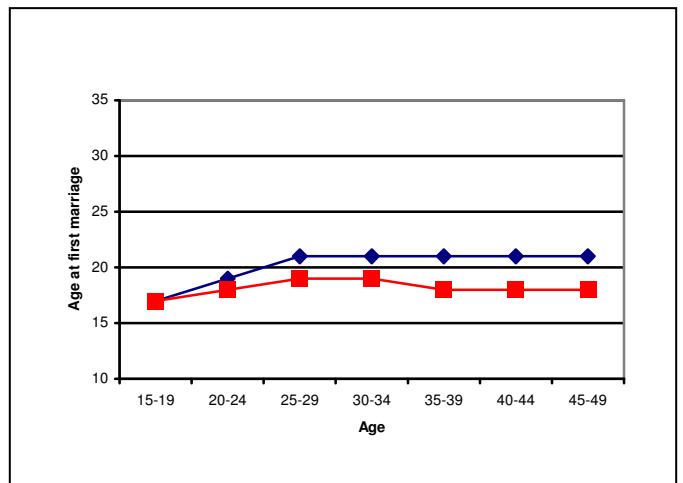


Figure 7 Curve of median age at first marriage-for-age



Urban —◆— Rural —■—

Figure 8 75th percentile curve of age at first marriage-for-age

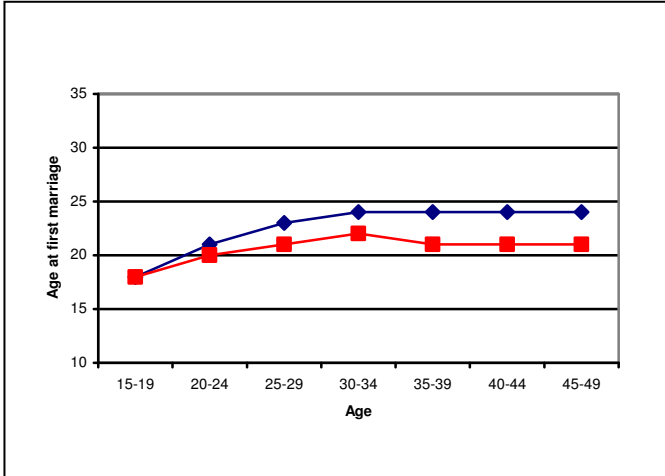


Figure 9 90th percentile curve of age at first marriage-for-age

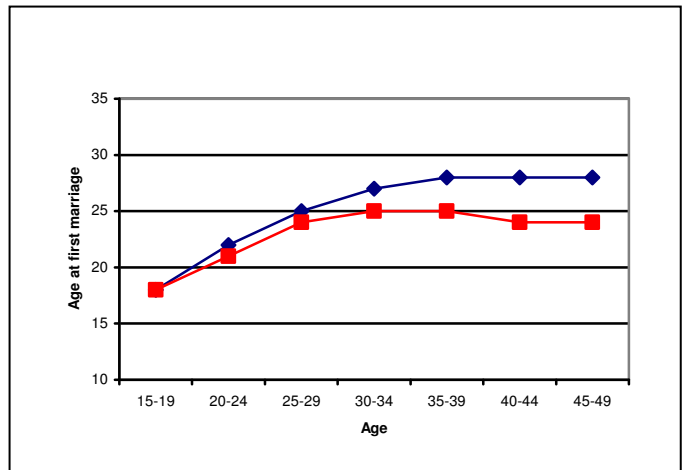
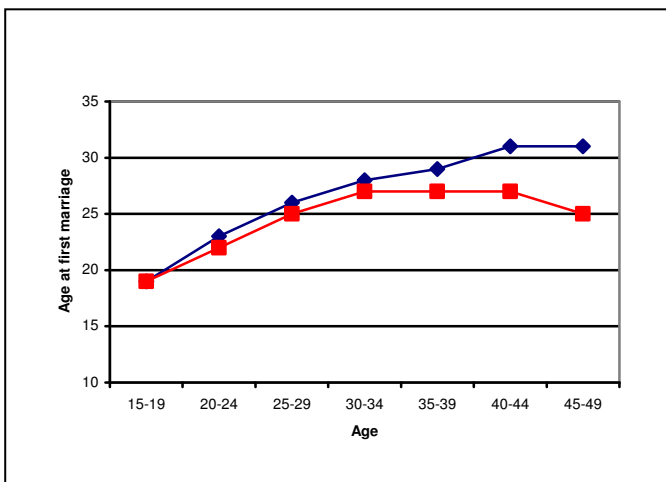


Figure 10 95th percentile curve of age at first marriage-for-age



3-5 – Consanguinity:

Consanguineous marriage is one of the factors affecting the health of births. Many studies indicate that the prevalence of familial diseases is higher among children who were born to related couples. Consanguineous marriages are widely spread in Egypt, where about a quarter of ever married women are married to their first or second cousins, and about 7.4% of them are married to other blood relatives. The percentage of consanguineous marriages in rural is higher than in urban (38% versus 24%). The percentage of consanguineous marriages increases as the socioeconomic level of the household decreases.

Table 8 Percent distribution of ever married women by place of residence and relationship to husband

Relationship to husband	Place of residence		
	Urban	Rural	Total
No blood relation	76.0	62.0	67.8
First or second cousin	19.0	28.9	24.8
Another blood relative	5.0	9.1	7.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number	8021	11435	19456

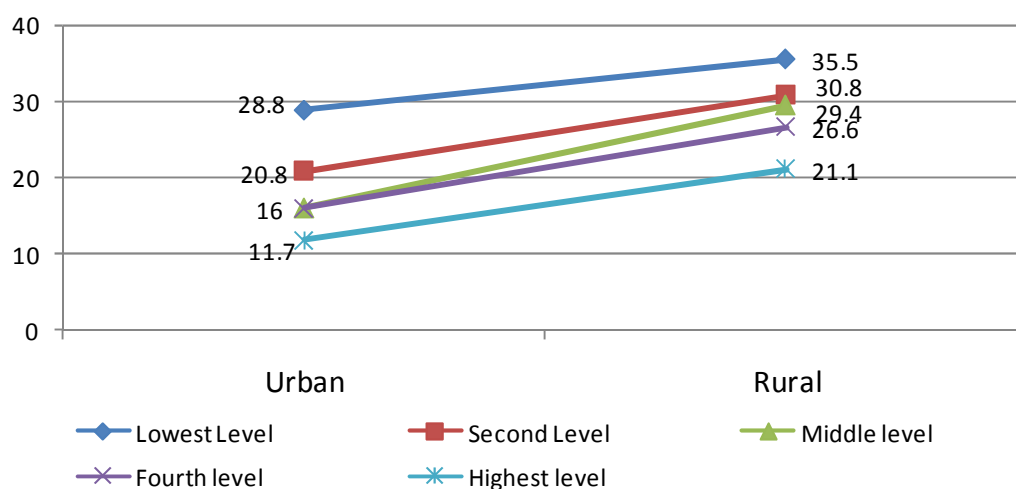
Source: DHS 2005 Report

Table 9 Percent distribution of ever married women by socioeconomic level and relationship to husband in urban and rural

	Relationship to husband	Socioeconomic level					Total
		Lowest Level	Second level	Middle level	Fourth level	Highest level	
Urban	No blood relation	64.1	74.2	79.5	80.7	83.1	76.1
	First or second cousin	28.8	20.8	16.0	16.0	11.7	18.9
	Other blood relation	7.1	5.0	4.5	3.3	5.2	5.1
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	1658	1615	1479	1583	1505	7840
Rural	No blood relation	54.0	59.4	61.3	64.7	71.6	62.1
	First or second cousin	35.5	30.8	29.4	26.6	21.1	28.7
	Other blood relation	10.5	9.8	9.3	8.6	7.3	9.1
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	2044	2392	2326	2106	2085	10953

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Figure 11 Percent of ever-married women (15-49) whose last husband is a 1st or 2nd cousin by type of place of residence and socioeconomic level



3-6 – Age gap:

DHS 2005 data indicates that the percentage of ever married women who are older than their husbands reached 4%. This percentage is higher in rural than in urban (4.3% versus 3.7%). The same percentage goes down with the increase in the socioeconomic level of the household. DHS data also shows that about two-thirds of women are married to men who are less than 10 years older and only about 8% of women are married to men who are 15 years older or more.

The mean and median age gap between husband and wife in Egypt in 2005 reached about 7 and 6 years respectively. The comparison between Egypt and other Arab countries shows that the difference in Egypt is close to the difference in most of the Arab countries.

Table 10 Percent distribution of ever married women by place of residence and age gap

Age gap	Place of residence		
	Urban	Rural	Total
Wife older	3.7	4.3	4.0
Same age	4.4	3.7	4.0
Less than 5 years	26.8	26.1	26.4
5-9 years	38.1	38.3	38.2
10-14 years	19.2	19.2	19.2
15 years +	7.9	8.4	8.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number	8033	11442	19475

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Table 11 Percent distribution of ever married women by socioeconomic level and age gap in urban and rural

	Socioeconomic level	Lowest Level	Second level	Middle level	Fourth level	Highest level	Total
	Age gap						
Urban	Wife older	4.2	4.4	4.1	3.6	1.7	3.6
	Same age	4.6	3.7	4.3	4.5	5.1	4.4
	Less than 5 years	25.8	26.3	26.0	27.5	28.3	26.8
	5-9 years	36.0	37.0	36.6	39.8	41.0	38.1
	10-14 years	17.8	20.7	20.4	19.0	18.2	19.2
	15 years +	11.6	7.8	8.6	5.6	5.6	7.9
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	1660	1618	1481	1584	1507	7850
Rural	Wife older	5.6	4.5	4.5	4.4	2.2	4.3
	Same age	3.7	4.3	4.2	3.3	3.0	3.7
	Less than 5 years	25.0	26.0	26.7	25.8	27.3	26.2
	5-9 years	37.7	37.8	37.9	38.6	40.9	38.6
	10-14 years	16.5	17.5	19.5	20.9	21.1	19.1
	15 years +	11.4	9.9	7.3	7.0	5.4	8.2
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	2045	2394	2328	2105	2090	10962

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Table 12 Percent distribution of ever married women by age gap in selected Arab countries

	Wife older	0-9	10 -14	15+
Algeria 1992*	9.2	71.0	13.9	5.9
Egypt 2003	3.3	66.5	20.5	9.5
Egypt 2005	4.0	68.6	19.2	8.2
Morocco** 2004- 2003	7.9	62.8	17.6	11.8
Sudan* 1993- 1992	2.8	52.7	26.7	17.8
Jordan 1997	4.9	73.4	14.9	6.8
Yemen 1997	2.9	72.0	14.4	10.6
Lebanon 1996	4.5	68.6	18.8	8.0
Palestine 2000	6.6	77.6	11.9	3.9

Source: Calculated from Demographic and Health Surveys and Maternal and Child Health Surveys

*Married only once and age at marriage is 35 years or less and marriage took place during the last five years preceding the survey.

**Currently married women only

Table 13 Mean and median age gap for selected Arab countries

	Mean	Median
Egypt 2003	7.6	7
Egypt 2005	7.2	6
Yemen 1997	6.9	5
Jordan 1997	6.3	6
Lebanon 1996	6.7	6
Saudi Arabia 1996	9.1	7

Source: Calculated from Demographic and Health Surveys and Maternal and Child Health Surveys

Studying the distribution of marriages registered in 2006 by the five-year age groups of husbands and wives shows that in 24830 marriage cases, represent 4.8% of total registered marriages where the age of both the husband and wife were stated, the wife's age was in a category higher than the age category of the husband.

3-7 – Education gap:

There is a clear gap between the educational level of husband and wife in Egypt as shown from DHS 2005 data. This gap appears among 59% of ever married women, and in most of these cases (40.2% of the total number of ever married women) the education of the husband is higher than the education of the wife.

The percentage of the cases where the wife's education is higher than the husband's education rises in urban than in rural (22.8% versus 16.0%). Studying the relationship between the education of husband and wife in urban and rural areas in relation to the socioeconomic level of the household, we find that the percentage of cases where the wife's education is higher than of the husband takes a different pattern in rural areas than in urban areas as while percentage increases as the socioeconomic level of the households decreases in urban areas, it decreases in rural area.

Table 14 Percent distribution of ever married women by place of residence and education gap

Education gap	Place of residence		
	Urban	Rural	Total
Neither have education	9.2	23.1	17.3
Wife's education less than the husband's*	37.8	41.9	40.2
Wife's education higher than the husband's*	22.8	16.0	18.8
Have the same level of education	30.2	18.9	23.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number	8019	11408	19427

* Includes cases of graduate and post graduate education where the number of school years is different.

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Table 15 Percent distribution of ever married women by socioeconomic level and education gap in urban and rural

	Socioeconomic level Education gap	Lowest Level	Second level	Middle level	Fourth level	Highest level	Total
		Urban	Neither have education	24.5	11.8	5.2	2.1
	Wife's education less than the husband's*	40.9	36.5	36.9	37.0	37.7	37.8
	Wife's education higher than the husband's*	21.0	28.5	26.9	21.7	15.3	22.7
	Have the same level of education	13.6	23.2	30.9	39.2	46.4	30.3
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	1656	1615	1478	1584	1505	7838
Rural	Neither have education	43.8	29.4	19.6	13.6	5.5	22.4
	Wife's education less than the husband's*	40.4	45.2	43.9	42.2	37.4	42.0
	Wife's education higher than the husband's*	10.1	13.7	18.0	18.6	21.1	16.3
	Have the same level of education	5.7	11.7	18.4	25.6	35.9	19.3
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	2037	2383	2324	2100	2082	10926

* Includes cases of graduate and post graduate education where the number of school years is different.

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Fig 12 Percent of couples with no Education by type of place of residence and socioeconomic level

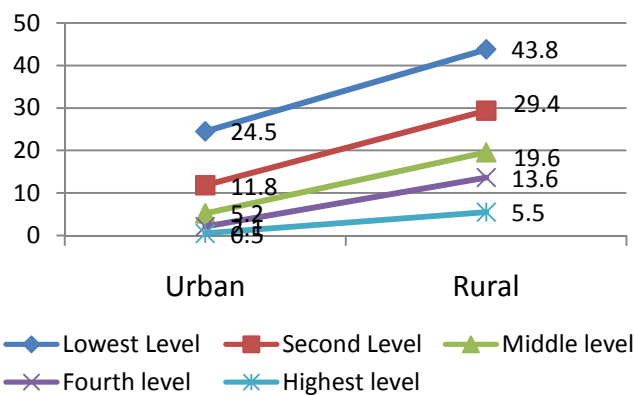
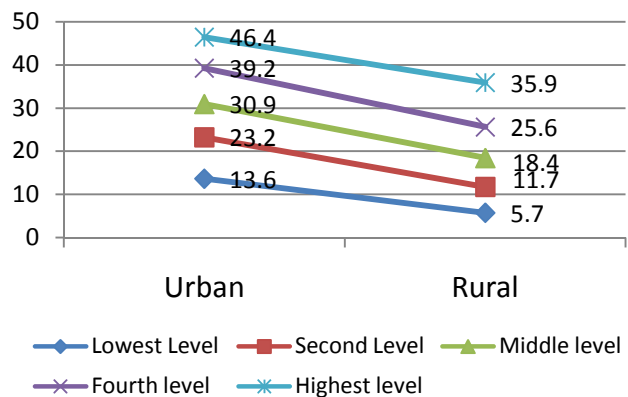


Fig 13 Percent of couples with the same level of education by type of place of residence and socioeconomic level



The proportion of the cases where the wife's education is higher than the husband's reaches its highest value among wives who enrolled in secondary education and did not complete it.

Table 16 Percent distribution of ever married women by wife's education level and the education gap

Wife's educational level Education gap	No Education	Less than primary	primary	Less than secondary	secondary	University +	total
Neither have education	50.1	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	17.3
Wife's education less than the husband's*	49.9	56.5	47.4	49.9	27.1	16.2	40.2
Wife's education higher than the husband's*	.0	33.0	29.7	39.8	24.3	26.5	18.8
Have the same level of education	.0	10.5	22.9	10.3	48.6	57.3	23.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number	6727	2190	856	1858	5782	2016	19429

* Includes cases of graduate and post graduate education where the number of school years is different.

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

The distribution of registered marriages that took place in 2006 by the educational level of husband and wife shows that 20% of the wives were illiterate and about half of them were married to illiterate husbands. This percentage will lead to a high number of births during the coming years as illiterate women fertility rates are higher than literates. About one third of the wives can only read and write and another third with intermediate education, and almost two thirds of both of the two groups are married to husbands with the same education level. Similar percentages could be noticed among husbands.

Data also show that in about 12% of marriages, where the educational level of husband and wife were recorded, the educational level of the wife was higher than the husband's. This percentage increases among women with a university degree to reach 26.6%. It reaches its highest value (47.4%) among women with upper intermediate education. In most of these marriages the husband completed intermediate education. The data shows that there have been no cases of marriage between males or females with education higher than university in 2006.

Table 17 Percent distribution of 2006 marriages by wife's educational level and husband's educational level

Wife's Education \ Husband's Education	illiterate	Read only	Read & write	Less than intermediate	Intermediate	Upper intermediate	University	Total
Illiterate	10.1	0.0	1.2	0.1	1.0	0.0	0.1	12.6
Read only	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3
Read & writes	5.8	0.0	20.2	0.4	4.8	0.2	0.4	31.9
Less than intermediate	0.4	0.0	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.1	2.7
Intermediate	3.2	0.1	6.6	1.6	21.3	0.6	1.9	35.3
Upper-intermediate	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.8	0.2	0.4	1.9
University	0.3	0.0	1.8	0.5	4.2	0.6	7.7	15.3
Total	20.1	0.3	31.0	3.5	33.0	1.7	10.5	100.0
Total Number	101230	1447	156490	17456	166365	8533	53200	504721

Source: Calculated from Marriage and divorce statistics of 2006, CAPMAS.

Table 18 Percent distribution of 2006 marriages by wife's educational level and husband's educational level

Wife's Education \ Husband's Education	illiterate	Read only	Read & write	Less than intermediate	Intermediate	Upper intermediate	University	Total
Illiterate	50.4	4.2	3.9	2.9	3.1	1.5	0.5	12.6
Read only	0.3	64.8	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4
Read & writes	29.1	0.7	65.2	12.3	14.6	9.2	4.1	31.9
Less than intermediate	1.9	2.4	2.4	21.7	2.3	1.4	0.6	2.7
Intermediate	16.1	21.4	21.4	46.1	64.7	35.2	17.9	35.3
Upper-intermediate	0.5	0.8	1.1	2.5	2.5	14.3	3.4	1.9
University	1.7	5.7	5.8	14.4	12.8	38.3	73.4	15.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Number	101230	1447	156490	17456	166365	8533	53200	504721

Source: Calculated from Marriage and divorce statistics of 2006, CAPMAS.

3-8 – Marriage to foreigners:

The number of marriages between Egyptian women and foreigners in 2006 was approximately 1498 cases represent 0.3% of the total marriages of Egyptian women. The

number of marriages between Egyptian men and foreign women in the same year was approximately 2008 cases represent 0.4% of the total marriages of Egyptian men.

4 – Celibacy:

DHS 2005 data shows that the proportion of never married females among females aged 30 years and over reached 2.8%. This percentage increases in urban than in rural areas (3.3% versus 2.2%). The data also shows that the percentage of never married males at the same age group was 4.6% (Table 20).

The distribution of males and females aged 30 years or more by the gender of household head and marital status shows that the percentage of never married rises in female-headed households than in households headed by males (11.4% versus 2.8%). This percentage rises in the case of male HH members than in female HH members. The percentage of never married females aged 30 years and over declines slightly as the socioeconomic level of households increases (figure 14).

Table 19 Percent distribution of females aged 30 years or more by place of residence and marital status

Place of residence \ Marital status	Urban	Rural	Total
Never married	3.3	2.2	2.8
Married	75.7	74.1	74.8
Widowed	18.2	21.7	20.1
Divorced	2.2	1.4	1.8
Separated	0.5	0.5	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number	8973	10416	19389

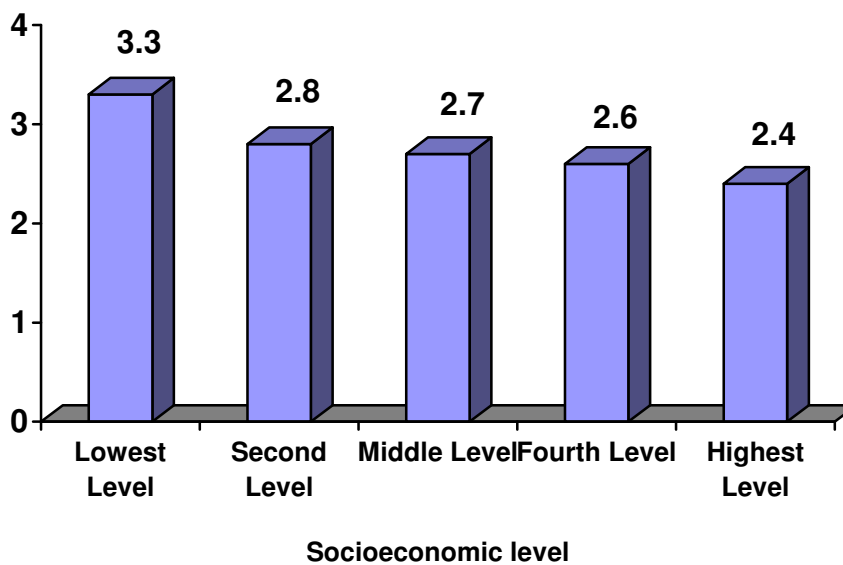
Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Table 20 Percent distribution of individuals aged 30 years or more by individual's gender, gender of household head and marital status

Gender of HH member	Gender of household head		Male	Female	Total
	Marital status				
Male	Never married		3.7	39.9	4.6
	Married		92.6	55.1	91.7
	Widowed		3.0	1.8	2.9
	Divorced		0.5	2.4	0.5
	Separated		0.2	0.9	0.2
	Total		100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number		18229	454	18683
Female	Never married		1.8	7.4	2.8
	Married		87.5	11.5	74.8
	Widowed		9.6	72.4	20.1
	Divorced		.8	6.5	1.8
	Separated		.2	2.1	.5
	Total		100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number		16154	3236	19390
Total	Never married		2.8	11.4	3.7
	Married		90.2	16.9	83.1
	Widowed		6.1	63.7	11.7
	Divorced		0.7	6.0	1.2
	Separated		0.2	2.0	0.4
	Total		100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number		34382	3690	38072

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

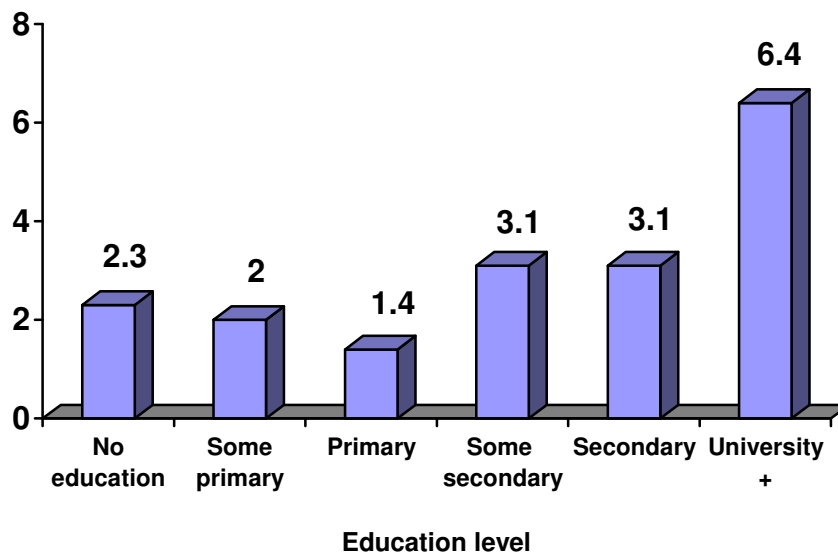
Figure14 Percentage of never married females in the age group (30 +) by socioeconomic level



Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Figure 15 shows that the percentage of never married females among females aged 30 years or above reaches its highest level (6.4%) among females with a university education or higher.

Figure 15 Percentage of never married females in the age group (30 +) by the educational level



Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

It is clear from the results of the Egypt Labor Market Panel Survey of 2006, that work also has an impact on the female attitudes towards marriage. The study of never married working women's perceptions' regarding the impact of their work on men's view regarding them through a question about the impact of work on their chances of marriage shows that about 46% of the respondents believe that work increase their chances of marriage, while a lower proportion (37.6%) believes that work does not change men's position regarding marrying them, and 2.4% only believe that work might be prohibitive for men to consider them for marriage. However, only 47.3% of never married working women think that they can continue working after marriage. This percentage declines among female working in the informal private sector, which employs more than two fifth of the respondents, to reach only 33%^[1].

The successive census data show that the percentage of females in the age group 15 years and older who work doubled from 5.8% in 1986 to 11.5% in 1996, then increased to 12.9%

in 2006. On the other hand the percentage of ever married females has declined from 79.5% in 1986 to 78.4% in 1996 and then to 75.7% in 2006.

Table 21 Percent distribution of never married women by perceptions of how work affects marriage prospects and sector

Perceptions \ Economic Sector	Public sector	Formal private sector	Informal private sector	Total
Increase it	40	47.7	50.2	46.2
Make them not marry me	0.0	1.5	2.7	1.5
Become reluctant about marrying me	2.3	0.0	0.3	0.9
Do not change their position	45.1	38.8	31.4	37.6
Don't know	12.6	12	15.4	13.7
Total	100	100	100	100
Total Number	154	84	180	418

Source: Labour Market Survey 2006

Table 22 Percent distribution of never married women by perception of ability to continue working after marriage and sector

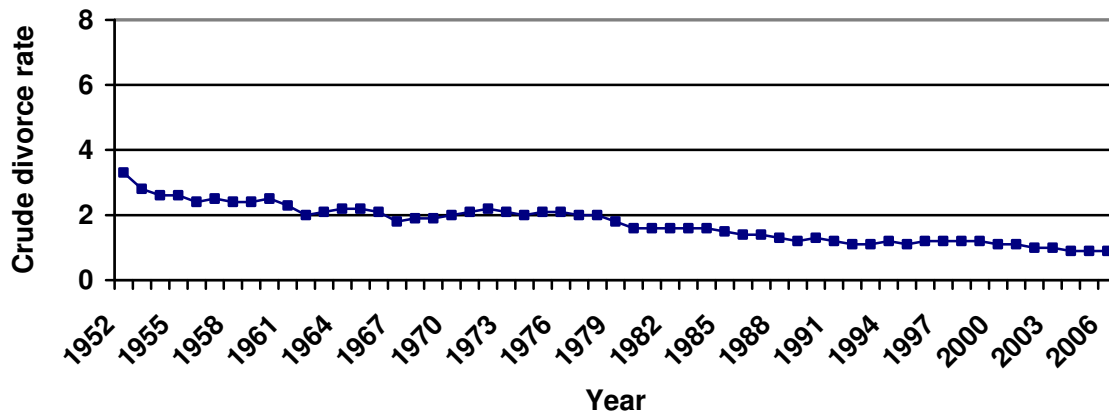
Perceptions \ Economic Sector	Public sector	Formal private sector	Informal private sector	Total
Yes	66.5	46.8	32.9	47.3
No	6.9	5.4	23.5	14.1
It depends	26.5	47.8	43.6	38.6
Total	100	100	100	100
Total Number	154	84	180	418

Source: Labour Market Survey 2006

5 - Divorce:

The declining trend of marriage rates was accompanied by a similar trend in divorce rates, as rates have declined from 3.3 per 1000 population in 1952 to 0.9 per 1000 population in 2006. The rates fluctuated in the mid-sixties and all the way through the seventies then started a steady decline until 2006.

Figure 16 Crude divorce rate (1952-2006)



Source: Marriage and divorce statistics, CAPMAS

The number of divorce cases in 2006 reached 65461 divorces, about 17% of which were among couples with less than one-year marital life and about 16% between couples with a 10 years or more marital life. The marriage and divorce statistics for successive years shows that the data of marriage duration is incomplete. In 2006, the marriage duration was not stated in 18.5% of marriage cases nationwide (Table 23).

Table 23 Percent distribution of certificates of divorce in the years from 2000 to 2006 by marriage duration

Marriage Duration \ Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Less than one year	37.4	35.2	14.5	15.5	16.8	17.5	16.6
1-	31.3	34.0	32.9	32.3	35.5	37.2	35.2
5-	14.7	14.5	13.7	13.1	14.0	15.4	13.8
10-	11.1	10.9	10.6	9.8	10.6	11.1	9.9
20+	5.5	5.4	5.7	5.7	6.0	6.0	6.1
Not available	0.0	0.0	22.6	23.7	17.0	12.8	18.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	68991	70280	70069	69867	64496	65047	65461

Source: Calculated from Marriage and divorce statistics of 2000 to 2006, CAPMAS

Marriage and divorce statistics of 2006 reveal that in about 20 thousand divorce cases (30.5% of the total divorce cases) wife was less than 25 years old. In two thirds of these cases marriage duration was less than 3 years, which indicates the impact of early marriage on high prevalence of divorce.

Studying the distribution of divorce certificates in 2006 by duration of marriage and number of children shows that about 16983 divorces were between couples who had children represent 26% of the total cases of divorce. Divorce is associated with several other phenomena that have negative effects on society. For example many studies indicate the link between divorce and the phenomenon of street children. The data reflects the serious effects of divorce in Egypt as it shows that about 14267 divorces were between couples with children and marriage duration less than 20 years. This means that almost all their children are aged less than 19 years i.e. divorce has led to the disintegration of the households of at least 26079 children in year 2006.

Table 24 Distribution of certificates of divorce in 2006 by marriage duration and number of children

Marriage duration \ Number of children	Less than one year	1-	10-	15-	20-	Not available	total
0	10841	21504	1897	863	1249	12124	48478
1	17	6391	310	105	140	0	6963
2	4	3104	857	359	334	0	4658
3	0	810	803	579	825	0	3017
4	0	153	231	224	708	0	1316
5+	0	82	95	143	709	0	1029
Total number	10862	32044	4193	2273	3965	12124	65461

Source: Marriage and divorce statistics, CAPMAS

6 - Re-marriage:

The crude remarriage rate refers to the number of second or higher order marriages contracted by women per 1,000 previously married women (divorced and widowed) in the population in the middle of the same year.

To estimate the crude re-marriage rate in 2006, the number of previously married women in mid-2006 was calculated using the proportion of previously married women from 2006 census and estimating the 2006 midyear number of females and the proportion of females in the age of marriage from the 2006 census.

The crude re-marriage rate in 2006 was about 10.1 per 1000 previously married women.

7- Conclusion:

Early marriage is wide spread in Egypt with about 153 thousand early marriage cases took place in 2006. One of the early marriage problems for girls is that it leads to early childbearing, which poses a threat to the health of the mother and birth. Considering 2006 data, the number of births will be born to women who marry before the age of twenty within two years of marriage is estimated by 110 thousand births. Early marriage also increases the reproductive life for women, leading to higher fertility rates.

Early marriage is also linked to early divorce. Thus, raising the age of marriage through the enactment of new laws, activating the existing laws, raising awareness and integrating women in education and work, will help the country to avoid many of the burdens caused by early marriage.

Consanguineous marriage spreads in Egypt, especially in rural areas, which requires raising the awareness about the dangers of consanguineous marriages on the health of births.

Socioeconomic level, education level and work affect the patterns of marriage and related phenomena. Patterns of marriage also differ between urban and rural.

Divorce leads to the disintegration of households. If number and pattern of divorces of 2006 continued, at least 26 thousand children would suffer from the disintegration of the household and its consequences that result from the divorce of their parents yearly. This requires changing the marriage and divorces laws in Egypt in order to spare these children the harm caused by the divorce of their parents.

Appendix

Table a-1 Variables used in developing the wealth index

	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Has electricity	1.00	0.06	0.99	0.11	0.99	0.09
Has radio	0.90	0.30	0.76	0.43	0.83	0.38
Has refrigerator	0.94	0.23	0.74	0.44	0.84	0.37
Has bicycle	0.10	0.31	0.18	0.39	0.15	0.35
Has motorcycle/scooter	0.02	0.13	0.02	0.13	0.02	0.13
Has car/truck	0.11	0.31	0.03	0.17	0.07	0.25
Share toilet with other households	0.02	0.15	0.08	0.27	0.05	0.22
Non-mobile telephone	0.69	0.46	0.36	0.48	0.52	0.50
Video/DVD	0.20	0.40	0.04	0.19	0.12	0.32
Mobile telephone	0.39	0.49	0.10	0.30	0.24	0.43
Personal home computer	0.18	0.38	0.02	0.15	0.10	0.29
Electric fan	0.92	0.27	0.83	0.37	0.87	0.33
Color television	0.89	0.31	0.65	0.48	0.77	0.42
Water heater	0.58	0.49	0.13	0.34	0.35	0.48
Freezer	0.10	0.30	0.01	0.12	0.05	0.23
Sewing machine	0.11	0.31	0.06	0.23	0.08	0.27
Automatic washing machine	0.35	0.48	0.04	0.21	0.19	0.39
Non automatic washing machine	0.76	0.43	0.83	0.38	0.80	0.40
Dishwasher	0.03	0.16	0.00	0.03	0.01	0.11
Air condition	0.08	0.27	0.01	0.10	0.04	0.20
Satellite dish	0.26	0.44	0.08	0.27	0.17	0.37
Livestock, herds, or farm animals	0.10	0.30	0.51	0.50	0.31	0.46
Land for agriculture	0.03	0.18	0.28	0.45	0.16	0.37
Drinking Water: Piped Into dwelling	0.97	0.17	0.82	0.39	0.89	0.31
Drinking Water: Piped to yard/plot	0.00	0.06	0.01	0.09	0.01	0.08
Drinking Water: Public tap/Standpipe	0.01	0.10	0.08	0.27	0.04	0.21
Drinking Water: Unprotected well	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.02
Drinking Water: Unprotected spring	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.02
Drinking Water: Tube well or borehole	0.00	0.05	0.06	0.24	0.03	0.18
Drinking Water: Protected well	0.00	0.05	0.02	0.14	0.01	0.11
Drinking Water: Protected spring	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.03
Drinking Water: Surface water (River/Dam /Lake/Pond/Stream/Canal/Irrigation	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.02
Drinking Water: Tanker truck	0.01	0.09	0.01	0.09	0.01	0.09
Drinking Water: Cart with small tank	0.00	0.04	0.01	0.09	0.00	0.07
Drinking Water: Bottled water	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.04
Earth/Sand	0.03	0.16	0.26	0.44	0.15	0.35
Wood planks	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.02
Parquet/polished wood	0.01	0.10	0.00	0.03	0.01	0.07
Ceramic/Marble tiles tiles	0.18	0.38	0.03	0.17	0.10	0.30
Cement tiles	0.67	0.47	0.36	0.48	0.51	0.50

	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cement	0.08	0.27	0.35	0.48	0.22	0.41
Wall to wall carpet	0.02	0.14	0.00	0.07	0.01	0.11
Vinyl	0.01	0.11	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.08
Electricity	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.04
LPG, natural gas	0.98	0.12	0.92	0.27	0.95	0.21
Biogas	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02
Kerosene	0.01	0.11	0.07	0.25	0.04	0.20
Coal, lignite	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
Charcoal	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
Firewood, straw	0.00	0.03	0.01	0.08	0.00	0.06
Dung	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.03
Apartment	0.80	0.40	0.27	0.44	0.52	0.50
Free standing house	0.18	0.39	0.70	0.46	0.45	0.50
Owned	0.53	0.50	0.78	0.41	0.66	0.47
Owned jointly	0.04	0.20	0.09	0.28	0.06	0.25
Rented	0.37	0.48	0.04	0.21	0.20	0.40
Modern flush toilet	0.69	0.46	0.14	0.35	0.41	0.49
Traditional tank flush	0.01	0.12	0.02	0.14	0.02	0.13
Traditional bucket flush	0.29	0.45	0.79	0.41	0.55	0.50
Pit latrine	0.00	0.03	0.02	0.13	0.01	0.10
Bucket toilet	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.05
Piped sewer system	0.84	0.37	0.24	0.43	0.53	0.50
Vault (Bayara)	0.08	0.28	0.27	0.44	0.18	0.38
Septic system	0.07	0.26	0.43	0.49	0.26	0.44
Piped connected to canal	0.00	0.06	0.02	0.12	0.01	0.10
Piped connected to ground water	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.04
Emptied (No connection)	0.00	0.04	0.02	0.13	0.01	0.10
Separate room used as a kitchen	0.91	0.29	0.67	0.47	0.78	0.41
Persons per room	1.39	0.84	1.67	1.03	1.53	0.95

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

 Excluded variables

Table a-2 Percent distribution of household members by socioeconomic level and educational level in urban and rural

	Socioeconomic level	Lowest Level	Second level	Middle level	Fourth level	Highest level	Total
	Educational level						
Urban	No education	39.1	30.3	23.7	19.5	13.9	25.9
	Some primary	20.7	18.9	16.1	13.7	10.9	16.3
	Primary	6.2	6.7	6.6	4.8	3.4	5.6
	Some secondary	17.4	18.1	16.6	15.3	13.5	16.2
	Secondary	13.4	19.7	23.3	25.2	16.4	19.4
	University +	3.2	6.3	13.6	21.5	41.8	16.6
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	9873	8851	8304	8418	8258	43704
Rural	No education	51.8	43.9	39.0	33.6	26.8	39.8
	Some primary	20.7	19.9	18.4	17.7	15.9	18.7
	Primary	5.3	5.7	5.0	5.4	4.7	5.2
	Some secondary	13.1	16.4	17.2	16.3	14.5	15.6
	Secondary	7.4	11.7	16.3	20.3	24.2	15.4
	University +	1.7	2.4	4.2	6.7	13.9	5.3
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	12290	13504	12600	10777	9803	58974

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Table a-3 Percent distribution of households by socioeconomic level and gender of household head in urban and rural

	Socioeconomic level	Lowest Level	Second level	Middle level	Fourth level	Highest level	Total
	Gender of household head						
Urban	Male	82.8	86.3	84.1	87.5	89.8	86.1
	Female	17.2	13.7	15.9	12.5	10.2	13.9
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	2052	2054	2053	2053	2053	10265
Rural	Male	84.2	88.4	90.2	90.8	93.4	89.4
	Female	15.8	11.6	9.8	9.2	6.6	10.6
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	2191	2190	2193	2190	2192	10956

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

Table a-4 Percent distribution of households by socioeconomic level and ownership of dwelling in urban and rural

	Socioeconomic level	Lowest Level	Second level	Middle level	Fourth level	Highest level	Total
	Ownership of dwelling						
Urban	Owned	54.9	48.7	40.5	41.2	55.1	48.1
	Owned jointly	8.5	4.4	3.5	2.4	.7	3.9
	Rented	28.7	39.6	51.8	51.6	41.6	42.7
	Other	8.0	7.3	4.2	4.8	2.5	5.4
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	2052	2054	2053	2053	2053	10265
Rural	Owned	82.0	83.8	81.6	76.2	62.2	77.1
	Owned jointly	9.1	8.7	8.0	8.0	7.2	8.2
	Rented	2.3	1.5	3.0	4.9	17.4	5.8
	Other	6.6	6.1	7.4	10.9	13.2	8.9
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total number	2191	2191	2193	2189	2191	10955

Source: Calculated from DHS 2005 data

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