

## **Youth in Egypt : emerging new values and lifestyles**

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## **1: BACKGROUND**

Egypt's National Population Policy calls for reducing the rate of the population growth. The low scenario of the population projections, which represents the target of the Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) assumes that total fertility rate will decline from its level of 3.5 in 2000 to reach replacement level (TFR = 2.1) in the year 2017 (The Policy Project, 2002). However, examining the critical issue of recent fertility trends in Egypt indicates that, following relatively rapid decline in the 1980s and early 1990s, fertility decline has slowed down during the latter part of the 1990s. Additionally, the 2003 Egypt Interim Demographic and Health Survey indicated that, despite further decline in fertility level during the period 2000 – 2003, TFR is estimated at 3.2, which is a full birth above replacement level. Thus, it is important to analyze the relevance of Egypt policies and how do they relate to and also how do they interact with social and economic processes taking place as well as individual and family realities.

This paper addresses the critical question posed above and attempts to refine our understanding to prospects of achieving further fertility decline by focusing on attitudes towards marriage and childbearing among young men and women who are about to begin their childbearing. Of particular importance, the paper will focus on the receptivity to the two-child family norm among those younger adults, as well as other related childbearing norms. It will also examine the extent to which young men and women are making adaptations to their attitudes and aspirations and accepting new ideas in response to various influences, both external and indigenous, including globalization and communication technology. Throughout the paper, the analysis will be done for each sex separately to reflect differences among them by issues explored.

The paper begins with some background on never married men and women and some description of the setting. This will be followed by examining briefly selected marriage aspects and attitudes. Subsequent sections explore in more detail childbearing attitudes and fertility desires as well as attitudes to family planning and their major correlates. The paper concludes with highlighting major programmatic implications of the findings.

## **2: THE DATA**

Data used in this paper came from “The Stalled Fertility Transition (SFT) Study” conducted by the Population Council in 2004. Two main sub-groups of the population were considered in the SFT study, currently married women in their reproduction years and never married men and women in the age range 18-29. The SFT samples were national in coverage and were drawn from the 2003 Egypt Interim Demographic and Health Survey (EIDHS).

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This paper is based on never married men and women sample. This sample was separately drawn from households in the larger EIDHS sample (all EIDHS households, not only those containing an EIDHS respondent). Two random sub-samples of clusters were selected and all eligible never married women and men in the selected cluster of each group were sampled. The never married women and men samples consist of 432 and 456 primary sampling units, respectively.

Data collection took place in May–June 2004 by the Cairo Demographic Center. Due to the high mobility of never married men and women within the age range determined by this study, it was not possible to interview some of them, despite frequent visits (at least 3 visits). Only about 56 percent of never married men and about 74 percent of never married women of the original sample were successfully interviewed. Substitutions of the remaining numbers that were not interviewed was done at random basis, following specified methods determined by survey staff. Appropriate sampling weights were produced by El-Zanaty and Associates, yielding sample size of 953 and 909 for never married men and women, respectively.

It should be noted here that, despite the numerous studies conducted in Egypt in the past few years on youth attitudes to childbearing and reproductive health, the SFT project was unique in investigating childbearing attitudes more intensively among never married men and women.

### **3: THE STUDY GROUPS : SELECTED SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND**

Most of never married men and women fall in the age range 20 – 24 (about one-half, Table (1)). Young women are better educated than men, about 36 percent attained university education or higher compared to about 27% of men. Differences are significant<sup>A</sup>. Likewise, significant differences are noted among men and women by working status. About 65 percent of young men work for cash, compared to only 28 percent among women. Because of younger ages at marriage of females, more women reported that they were engaged (37%) compared to men (17%), differences are also significant.

No other major differences are noted among men and women with regard to with whom they live in the household, number of siblings or place of residence. Most of young men and women live with parents and at least 3 siblings. Because of higher mortality levels among males and the tendency of men to remarry after marriage dissolution, fewer young adults live with father only (and other family members) compared to those who live with mothers only.

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<sup>A</sup> The analysis was conducted in this paper using SPSS version II. The Chi-square test was used to test the significance of differences. Two levels of significance were considered : alpha = 0.05 and alpha = 0.01.

#### **4: SELECTED MARRIAGE ASPECTS AND ATTITUDES**

Within typical Egyptian families, marriage is completed over a number of events. It starts with offering marriage proposal by the man / his family to the young woman, and moves on to Fatha (a religious action to confirm approval of and commitment to marriage), then engagement, contract of marriage and finally the wedding. However, marriage partners do not go necessarily through all these steps. Some of them may proceed directly to engagement or contract of marriage. In all cases, the women continues to live with parental family until the wedding takes place. No sexual relations are allowed to prospective marriage partners before wedding.

Data of Table (2) show that as expected, more women than men completed some steps towards marriage, given the earlier ages of their marriage (about 30% verses 15% among males). What is striking about this data is that engaged young men (or those who went through contract of marriage) reported on average 2.5 years waiting time since these events, and at least some of them have even to wait more before moving to wedding. This bears important implications for subsequent analysis on childbearing attitudes.

Within traditions of Egyptian families, parents with female children begin making some savings early in life for their marriage. These savings might take the form of cash or kind in order to prepare for purchasing furniture and other requirements of marriage needed from the girl. This pattern is reflected in the second panel of Table (2). Never married girls are in a better situation than never married men in terms of making some savings for their marriage, either by themselves or by other family members, most probably parents. This is also reflected by reports of about three-fourths of young men (compared by only about one-third of young women) that financial obligations needed for marriage may cause delay of marriage.

Both unmarried men and women expressed preferred ages at marriage for themselves that are higher than preferred ages at marriage of other adults of same sex. Thus, mean preferred age at marriage for themselves as reported by young men was 26.4 years, while they proposed on average age 25.7 years for young men in general. Likewise, young women preferred an average age 24.3 years for themselves for marriage, compared with age 22.3 for young girls in general. This may reflect perceived difficult economic conditions for themselves and their aspirations to marry earlier.

When asked about preferred residence after marriage, about one-half of men and three- fourths of women said that they prefer to establish their own households. It is interesting that the remaining men and women preferred to live in their parental households.

Many studies conducted in Egypt revealed that Egyptians place high value on marriage. All but very small proportions of young women get married by the end of their childbearing age. The situation about young men is not different.

Data of Table (2) also show that both young men and women indicated importance for them to ultimately get married. However, there is evidence of emerging change among women. A larger proportion of them (37%) indicated that it would be still good for them if they never marry, (compared to only 22 percent of men). These data, in fact, support the conviction that when women report views that deviate from the norm, this represents important information about diversity among women and emergence of changing attitudes. However, it must be made clear that those data do not reflect a preference for not to marry, rather, an indication that not marrying would not be a problem.

Finally, Table (2) also show that most of men and women think that the family should have a role in selecting marriage partner for a woman (with involvement of the woman), while they perceive less important role for the family in selecting marriage partner for a man.

## **5: CHILDBEARING ATTITUDES AMONG UNMARRIED MEN AND WOMEN**

### **5-1 : Desired family size**

Table (3) presents data on desired number of children among unmarried men and women. Overall, Women's desires are less than men's desires. This conforms with previous studies done in Egypt on fertility desires among husbands and wives, the latter were lower.

This variation among men's and women's fertility preference may be explained by the anticipation of division of household tasks in Egypt, where married women used to shoulder a particularly heavy burden during childbearing years.

Young adults desiring less than two children are very few among both sexes, and most of them desire only two children (51% of men and 59% of women). However, about 34 percent of men and 30 percent of women prefer to have three children. These are still big proportions, which bear important implications for the possibility of achieving the replacement level fertility in the near future. About one-tenth of young men and women desire four or more children.

To assess the strength of attaching to the reports on fertility desires examined above, unmarried men and women were asked two subsequent questions on would it matter for them to have one child less, or one child more than desires expressed by them? Answers to these questions are also given in Table (3). Overall, responses to the two questions reflect a weak attachment to the expressed number of desired children among both men and women. However, it is also clear that both men and women express more concern if their actual number of children exceeded their ideal by one child than the case of falling one child short of their ideal.

About 34 percent of men and 35 percent of women reported that it would matter a great deal if they have one more child than desired, whereas about 10 percent of men and 15 percent of women reported that it would matter a great deal if they have one less child than desired. Also, the data show that men were – to some extent – more

attached to their desires than women. Differences noted between men and women related to fertility desired were all significant.

## **5-2: Advantages and disadvantages of two-child family**

Never-married men and women were read a number of statements reflecting some advantages and disadvantages of having two-child family and they were asked to express agreement or disagreement with them (not shown). Overwhelming percentages of both men and women agreed to statements reflecting benefits of two-child family, including more benefits for the children (better education, health care and better standard of living) and more benefits for the family including better living conditions and less crowded and happier household. Also, almost all women and all men (except few) agreed that the two-child family provides better opportunities for mothers to invest their time in doing any activities they like to do.

However, unlike almost full agreement on benefits of the two-child family by never married men and women, very low percentages of them agreed to disadvantages of the two-child (not shown). These disadvantages included less benefits for the family as a result of having fewer children (only two), such as receiving less help from children with household chores and less income contributed from children to household income. Also, few men and women agreed that couples with 2 child families will receive insufficient support in old age, will lose the feeling of having strong family, and will face the risk of not having enough children surviving to adulthood.

Never-married men and women who agreed with more than one statement reflecting advantages of the two-child family, were asked to specify the most important advantage. Figure (1) shows replies of men and women to that question. There was agreement between men and women on the three most important advantages. These are, with two-child family, there will be better household living conditions, children can be raised more properly and more schooling could be secured to children. Taken together, those three advantages were reported by about 83 percent of men and about 72 percent of women.

Figure (2) presents the most important disadvantages for having two children only. Among men, the most important three disadvantages were losing the feeling of having happier / stronger family (36%), not having enough sons / daughters (16.5%) and the family name will be weakened (13.1%). And among women, the top three disadvantages were not having enough sons / daughters (23.1%) not enough support received in old age (17.3%) and losing the feeling of happier / stronger family (15.9%).

## **5-3: Correlates of the desire for two children**

In this section, correlates of the desire to have two children will be examined among never married men and women. This is especially important to identify factors most amenable to foster acceptance of the two-child family and design policies and

programs that help couples achieve their fertility desires, and ultimately, lead to achieving the replacement level fertility.

### **5-3-1: Desired fertility by selected background characteristics**

Table (4) shows desired number of children by never married men and women by selected background variables. Current age of young men and women does not show systematic association with desired number of children. Relatively younger (<20 years) and older men and women (25-29) prefer more two children than others in the middle age range (20-24). Also, whether working for cash versus not working or only work for household does not seem to make differences in preferring two children for both men and women, (although working women for cash appear to be more likely to desire only two children compared to other women, but the difference is not significant).

The association between level of education attained and desired number of children poses a puzzle, especially among women : the higher the level of education attained, the lower percent of women who desire only two children. This association is consistent across women's educational groups and significant, but in the opposite direction. Thus, neither pre-marital work nor high education appear to be anti-natalist (with regard to desired fertility). This seems to be a striking finding which goes against conventional assumptions. This puzzle calls for more research with appropriate design that focus on this issue. Small and insignificant differences are indicated by men's education and desire to have two children in the expected direction (Table 4).

On the other hand, significant differences exist in desired number of children by rural – urban residence as well as place of residence. The desire to have two children or less is clearly higher among urban residents (about 62% versus 46% for men and 66% versus 53% for women). Also, there is a systematic increase in percent of men and women who desire to have two children only as we move down from Upper Egypt, to Lower Egypt and then to Urban governorates.

Thus, while only 47 percent of men residing in Upper Egypt desire to have two children, 53 percent of men residing in Lower Egypt and 64 percent those residing in Urban governorates desire two children. Comparable percentages for females follow the same pattern, but the overall levels are higher (52, 63 and 67 percent). These findings bear important implications for designing counseling materials for unmarried men and women across geographical localities.

There is a significant association between number of children desired among females and number of siblings. Women tended to desire a number of children similar / close to number of siblings. The higher the number of siblings, the higher fertility desires. It is not clear if this pattern reflects satisfaction with number of siblings in family of origin, or influence on their attitudes of already existing situations. Also, significant association is reflected among men, but men with 3 siblings were more likely to desire 2 children or less (62%).

Finally, the last panel of Table (4) shows similar data by whether or not young men and women were engaged. For convenience, this category includes contract of marriage, engaged, Fatha, and marriage proposal. Being engaged is strongly associated with desire to have two children only, both among men and women. It is likely that the long waiting time before completing marriage and the need to secure financial obligations that are needed for marriage influence attitudes of young men and women and favour desiring two children only.

### **5-3-2: Desired fertility by selected constructed indices**

Childbearing attitudes, especially among younger cohorts, are influenced by changes taking place in the social context within which they live, both at the family and the community levels. They are also assumed to be influenced by changes in actual situations as well as expectations of household economics. Additionally, the recent changes in gender roles, attitudes and aspirations as well as women autonomy in Egyptian society are expected to impact childbearing attitudes and influence fertility desires.

#### **1- Index of women autonomy**

The construction of this index was mainly based on an earlier work developed by Nawar, Lloyd and Ibrahim (1995), which gave close attention to the particular social and cultural context in which women's personal autonomy is expressed. Dimensions of autonomy considered in constructing the index of autonomy include personal mastery to control the outcome of events in one's every day life, the extent to which women express autonomy in their personal opinions and their knowledge of women's rights, ability to act independently in matters related to health seeking behavior and affirmative roles in family decision making and participation in the labour force. Indicators used in constructing women's autonomy index as well as the descriptive statistics are given in Appendix A. The value of the index ranges between zero to 5, and the mean is 2.33.

#### **2- Index of economic stress**

The SFT questionnaire of never married men and women included questions on the actual circumstances of their household economics. This included items that indirectly measures the financial status of the household, in terms of ability to meet basic household needs (food, rent, health care for children and adults, schooling ...). It also included questions on the minimum income needed to meet basic household needs. There were also a question on number of days per week (or month) that the household members eat fish / meat or chicken. This is an important question within the Egyptian context that is assumed to reasonably reflect the current economic standing of the household for the majority of Egyptians. Finally, there was a block of questions on whether the household faced difficulties in meeting expenses on basic needs last month. Some combinations of items reflecting actual stressful economic situations were worked out to get reasonable reliability for the index. The constructed index of economic stress includes 11 items with a value ranging between zero and 11. The



mean for men is 3.29 and for women is 3.41, reflecting relatively more economic stress in women's households. For more details on the index items and descriptive statistics see Appendix A.

### **3- Index of social change**

The SFT questionnaire included some aspects of social change underway in Egyptian society including changes in division of labor and gender roles within the family. Never married men and women were asked if they support / favour those changes. A set of statements were read to them and they were asked if they thought those changes were for the good or not. Items selected for social change index included statements on increasing participation of women in household decision making and occupying more leading positions in society, less influence of parents on decisions made by children, some involvement of husbands in household chores, and also importance of training male children early in life to help out with household chores. Additionally, the social change index included items on agreeing with the idea of postponing of first pregnancy by the new weds, and that a person should not live with children in old age. The index of social change included 7 items, with a minimum value of zero and a maximum value of 7. The mean for men is 2.93 and for women 4.17, reflecting better standing on that index for women. (See Appendices A).

### **4- Index of community support**

The never married men and women questionnaire included three questions on support of most of friends, neighbors and religious leaders in respondent's locality to family planning use as well as some pro-natalist attitudes to childbearing. Those questions were used as a proxy of community support and an index of community support was constructed using them. Thus, the index includes three items and ranges between zero and 3. The mean for men is 2.56 and for women 2.59 (See Appendix A). It may be noted here that items of this index invariably reflected strong community support to both men and women.

For instance, the majority of both men and women reported that most of friends and neighbors in their localities agree to family planning use, and that religious leaders in their localities do not think that family planning use is against religion and do not encourage people to have many children.

### **5- Index of gender roles and attitudes**

The International Conference of Population and Development (ICPD) Plan of Action (POA) stated that the full participation and partnership of both men and women is required in productive and reproductive life, including shared responsibilities for the care and nurturing of children and maintenance of the household. The POA also encouraged countries to take steps to eliminate gender discrimination in hiring, benefits and job security and to eliminate violence against women. The POA also stated that male responsibilities should be emphasized with respect to child-rearing and household chores.

Additionally, it called for making greater investment in appropriate measures to lessen the daily burden of women's domestic responsibilities. The objective is to achieve equality and equity between men and women and to enable women to realize their full potential.

The selection of the items of the index of gender roles and attitudes was based on the guidelines referred to above. The index is composed of 12 items and its value ranges between zero and 12. The mean for men is 6.53 and for women is 8.36, reflecting better standing of women on that index (See Appendix A).

Table (5) shows desired number of children by never married men and women by the five constructed indices described above.

The data confirm that desiring two children goes systematically in the expected direction with achieving higher levels of women's autonomy, with adopting modernized norms and lifestyles within emerging aspects of social change and also with attaching to favorable gender roles and attitudes. This is true for both men and women and all differences are almost significant. Men and women who ranked highest scores on the economic stress scale were also more likely to desire two children. But responses of men at the middle and lowest levels of the scale were not consistently associated with their fertility desires. Some lack of association is also noted for men in case of the community support index, and to a lesser extent in the case of women.

### **5-3-3: Desired number of children by perceived benefits and costs of children**

Never married men and women were read a list of statements reflecting perceived benefits of children, and they were asked to indicate if they agree or disagree with them. The list included statements on benefits for the family with having many children (family name will continue after death of parents and more power for the family). It also included statement on old age support by children (not shown). Never married men and women who agreed to those statements were more likely to desire three or more children. But this analysis was based on small number of cases.

Desired number of children among never married men and women was also assessed by perceived costs of children. Unlike the case of having small numbers of young men and women agreeing to statements reflecting benefits of children, the majority of men and women agreed to statements reflecting perceived costs of children (not shown). Their perception that raising many children requires considerable cost and effort and affect quality of their education and standard of living influenced their desired number of children. Thus, more men and women expressed desire to have only two children, compared to three or more children (with more women desiring two children compared to men).

### **5-3-4: Discussing desired number of children among engaged couples**

Finally, the questionnaire of never married men and women included questions to engaged persons on topics discussed when they meet alone together. These questions

were asked only to engaged couples who are allowed to meet together (in limited cases, highly restricted cultural norms in some areas in Egypt do not allow engaged couples to meet alone before wedding). Table (6) presents some insights on this issue. About 40 percent of engaged men and 47 of engaged women reported discussing desired number of children with their fiancé (marriage partners). These are relatively low percentages and indicate lack of planning for future fertility of prospective marriage partners.

## **6 : FAMILY PLANNING ATTITUDES**

This section examines attitudes of never married men and women to family planning related issues. This includes receptivity to the notion of delaying the first pregnancy in general (for new weds) and also for themselves. It also examines correlates to accepting delaying first pregnancy. Additionally, the extent to which young men and women receive family planning messages through mass media (Radio or TV) will be explored. Some other related attitudes on family planning will also be assessed.

### **6-1: Attitudes to postponing the first pregnancy**

Previous studies conducted in Egypt indicated that couples tend to reproduce the first child fairly soon after marriage. This is invariably true across all population sub-groups. Even the medical professionals tend to advise new weds not to use family planning methods until they have the first child, to detect any problems associated with ability to conceive. The SFT questionnaire of never married men and women assessed their acceptance of postponing the first pregnancy both in general (for new weds) as well as for themselves.

Table (7) shows that unmarried men are in general more likely to accept delaying first pregnancy than unmarried women, but the overall level among both of them is relatively low. About 55 percent of men and 50 percent of women reported that postponing first pregnancy for new weds in general is good or acceptable idea. Current age reflected significant association with accepting to delay first pregnancy among both men and women : younger persons were more likely to accept delaying first pregnancy. Also urban residents, especially among males and female residents of Urban governorates seemed to be more likely also to accept delaying first pregnancy, but the association is not significant. There is a strong and significant association between desiring only two children and accepting delaying first pregnancy among both young men and women.

However, contrary to expectations, there was either lack of association between being currently engaged and accepting delaying first pregnancy (the case of women), or association in the opposite direction (the case of men). Young men who were not currently engaged were more likely to accept delaying first pregnancy (56%) compared to engaged men (50%), and the association is significant. Additionally, there was lack of association between cash work for both men and women and accepting delaying of first pregnancy. There was also some evidence of association

between high education for both men and women and less acceptance of delaying first pregnancy, but this association was weak and insignificant.

Finally, there seems to be some association between ever talking about family planning with friends or relatives and accepting delaying first pregnancy for both men and women, and that association is significant. On the other hand, whether exposed to family planning messages through mass media or not did not make clear difference in accepting the notion of delaying first pregnancy.

The issue of acceptability of delaying the first pregnancy was addressed as well to unmarried men and women themselves (Figure 3). Again men were more likely to accept this issue (41%) compared to women (30%). Note that the level of acceptance of delaying first birth is lower when men and women were asked about the case of themselves, compared to new weds in general, reflected earlier. On a subsequent question on how long after marriage they plan to postpone first pregnancy, it appeared that about four-fifths of women and two-thirds of men think that they would delay first pregnancy for only 12 months or less. These findings reflect weak desire to postpone first pregnancy even among those who reported accepting it, and suggest that perhaps it would make sense to consider the small percentages of young men and women who reported desire to postpone first pregnancy for longer period (13 – 24 months) as the real agents of change.

However, a more realistic outlook to this whole issue suggest that women tend to be opposing to the notion of delaying first pregnancy because their ages at marriage are increasing (see window 1).

Percentage who are engaged				
current age	Men		Women	
	%	N	%	N
< 20	1.4	293	26.9	334
20 – 24	16.5	455	31.6	446
25 - 29	32.8	204	28.7	129

Only between one-fourth to one-third of never married women are engaged across the broad age-groups. Taking into account also the long lead time to marriage completion because of marriage financial obligations, as discussed earlier, as well as the limited time span for women reproductive career, it makes it an issue of concern for women to postpone first pregnancy. By the same token, males would probably be concerned about their marriage partners' ability to conceive, but to a lesser extent. Conversely, it is also possible that social norms are still advocating having the first child sooner, and more time will be needed for the spread of the emerging social change.

Finally, the association between acceptability to delay the first pregnancy and the indices constructed for this study is shown in Table (8). Only the social change index shows significant association in the expected direction, and to a less extent the economic stress index (significant for men only). Other indices show no association.

## 6-2: Exposure of unmarried men and women to family planning information

Never married men and women were asked if they have received information on family planning through Radio or TV. In case if they responded affirmatively, they were asked how frequent they received that information. At least four-fifths of young

men and women reported that they frequently received information on family planning (at least 3 times). Wide differences exist between young men and women who frequently received information on family planning through Radio or TV by the selected background variables shown in Table (9). Also, patterns of differentials are different among men and women. While relatively older males were more likely to receive information on family planning (65% of men in the age group 25 – 29 compared to 47% for men who were less than 20 years old), younger women were more likely to receive these information (53% of females less than 20 years, compared with 35% of females aged 25 – 29). Also, working men who receive cash payment were much more likely to receive information on family planning than men who were not working or working for household. Among women, percent receiving information on family planning among non-working women (65%) far exceeded comparable percentage of women (29%). It is possible that non-working women have more time to watch TV and listen to the Radio at home or at neighbors' and friends' homes, while working men may have some opportunities to do that at the workplace or in the afternoon or evenings at any forms of youth gatherings. Also, better educated women and less educated men were significantly more likely to receive media messages on family planning.

Also, while residence in rural or urban areas did not capture any significant differences in percentages exposed to family planning messages, place of residence reflected some association for both males and females. However, the pattern of associations is, again, different. For men, residents of urban governorates were more likely to receive information on family planning than Upper and Lower Egypt residence. In the case of women, residents of Urban governorates were less likely to receive this type of information compared to other areas.

Finally, Table (9) also shows that engaged men were less likely to receive information on family planning through the mass media (35%) compared with men who were not yet engaged (58%). This is opposite to the female pattern which reflected higher exposure of engaged women to information on family planning through mass media (65%) compared to non engaged women (43%).

### **6-3: Attitudes of never Married Men and Women to Family Planning**

Attitudes of never married men and women towards family planning were assessed in the SFT study (Table 10). On a question on whether the young man / woman think that repeated pregnancies or use of family planning cause more health problems for women, almost all men and women said repeated pregnancies cause more health problems. Another question that was included for the first time in childbearing attitudes type of modules addressed young men's and women's agreement / disagreement on the following situation : suppose a woman's health would be at high risk if she became pregnant, and her husband disapproves family planning use, in that case should the woman use a family planning method without informing her husband? It is interesting that about one-half of both men and women agreed that the woman should use a method to save her life. This is indeed a new emerging attitude among new generations which contrasts with anecdotal research findings conducted one or

two decades ago. The prevailing attitudes at that time denied the right of women to use family planning methods without their husband's knowledge for any reason.

Finally, it is surprising to note that about one-fourth of never married men and women still think that couples have no control over number of children they reproduce, despite the frequent information on family planning received through mass media indicated earlier (last panel of Table 10). It is not clear, however what type of information on family planning is conveyed through mass media, but in any case, a message indicating the possibility of controlling the number of children a couple want to reproduce must represent a core message that is conveyed to couples and young men and women everywhere.

## **7- Multiple Regression Analysis Using Desired Family Size and Delaying First Birth as Dependent Variables**

Logistic regression was performed for the following dependent variables:

1. Number of children desired (2 or less = 1, 3 or more =0)
2. Acceptance of delaying the first pregnancy (12 months or more =1, less than 12 months =0)

### **7-1 Desired number of children**

Table (A-1) presents the selected variables in the logistic regression model.

Table (A-2) presents the odds ratios from a logistic regression for the desired number of children. The dependant variable used in the model is the number of children desired coded in primary form (1 for desire of two or less children and 0 otherwise). Similar to the analysis in the previous parts, the model is estimated for males and females. The individual and household variables included in the analysis are: age (as a categorical variable), region of residence as dummy variables for each of the three regions (Urban governorates, Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt ), level of education measured as dummy variables for the three educational levels (below secondary, secondary and above intermediate and university), number of brothers and sisters in the family (as an integer), and engagement for marriage represented by a dummy variable also (1 for engaged and 0 otherwise). Perceived benefits and costs of children are entered in the model as indices. Appendix B presents the composition of the indices used.

Two indices that represent the costs and benefits of children are entered in the logistic model in addition to the individual and household variables. Six indices for: autonomy of women, perceived social change, economic stress, community support, gender roles and attitudes and future concerns about family needs are also used in the model in the same format as the previous analysis. The additional index on “future economic concern about family needs” is used for the first time in this part of the analysis. The index is based on eight variables on future family needs for: food supplies, clothing, house rent, medical expenses, children's care and education and marriage (Appendix B). The logistic regression model includes also the attitudinal

variable for the desire for delaying the first pregnancy measured in dummy format (1 for desire to delay for 12 months or more and = 0 otherwise).

Looking at the results of individual and household variables in table A-2, we see that desiring two children is likely to be affected by region of residence and education level, especially for females. That is, those who reside in Urban governorates or attained higher educational level have significantly less likelihood of having favorable attitudes toward family of more than two children.

**Table (A-1) Variables in the logistic equation for Desired number of children**

<b>Dependent variable</b>	
Logq221	Desired no. of children 1 = Two children or less (reference category) 0 = otherwise
<b>Independent Variables</b>	
Q103	Age groups
RREGION	Place of Residence R1 = 1 Urban governorate, 0 otherwise R2 = 1 Lower Egypt, 0 otherwise R3 = 1 Upper Egypt, 0 otherwise
RQ107	Highest level of education attained R1 = 1 Below Secondary, 0 otherwise R2 = 1 Secondary & above intermediate, 0 otherwise R3 = 1 University+, 0 otherwise
BSQ233	Number of brothers and sisters
RQ901	Engagement for marriage 1 = engaged, 0 = otherwise
CHILDBEN*	Index of perceived benefits of children
CHCOST*	Index of perceived costs of children
AUTONOMY**	Index of women's autonomy
ECO	Index of economic stress
SOCIAL2	Index of social change
COMMUNIT	Index of community support
GEN	Index of gender roles and attitudes
q317	Delaying first pregnancy
CON*	Index of future economic concern

\* The composition of indices is presented in Appendix B

\*\* Index of autonomy for women only



**Table (A-2) Odds ratios from logistic regression for Desired Number of children (Males & Females)**

Variables	Men			Women		
	B	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	Sig.	Exp(B)
Q103	-.021	.384	.979	-.041	.148	.960
RREGION		.004			.016	1.732
RREGION(1)	.669	.001	1.952	.549	.019	1.574
RREGION(2)	.284	.092	1.328	-.041	.012	
RQ107		.985			.000	2.891
RQ107(1)	.025	.906	1.025	1.062	.000	1.555
RQ107(2)	.030	.861	1.030	.441	.148	.841
BSQ233	-.055	.118	.946	-.173	.000	1.018
RQ901(1)	-.503	.035	.605	.018	.923	.735
CHILDBEN	-.206	.010	.814	-.308	.001	1.208
CHCOST	-.049	.613	.952	.189	.088	1.169
AUTONOMY	----	----	-----	.156	.032	1.053
ECO	.062	.080	1.064	.051	.140	1.073
SOCIAL2	.096	.045	1.101	.071	.255	.995
COMMUNIT	-.208	.038	.812	-.005	.959	1.024
GEN	.029	.342	1.030	.024	.528	.992
Q317	-.005	.003	.995	-.008	.001	.974
CON	.028	.049	1.029	-.026	.161	3.301
Constant	.961	.245	2.613	1.194	.180	
Classification Percentage	60.6%			67.2%		

As for engagement for marriage, this seems to be of significant impact for increasing the odds ratios for females to desire families of only two children or less, but for males it has the opposite direction. That is, marriage commitment for females increases the odds ratios of desiring families of two or less children. Females seem to be more significantly influenced by the perceived costs and benefits of children than males. However, both effects, or perceived benefits and costs of children are in the expected direction: perceived benefits of children reduces the odds ratio for the attitude towards having two children or less, while perceived costs of children increases the attitude toward small family of two children, especially for females.

As for the indices of women's autonomy, economic stress, social change, gender roles and attitudes and future economic concerns about future family needs, they all increase the odds ratios for females to have favorable attitudes toward two-child family. However, the index of community support does not have the same direction of impact. Further, the order of magnitudes of the impacts of those indices have also an

important signal for their relative importance. The index of future economic concerns about family needs has the highest impact for increasing the odds ratios for females while residence in urban areas has the highest impact for males. The influence of those indices were in the expected direction. The estimated logistic regression models for males and females are highly significant ( $P > 0.01$ ) and capable of correctly classifying 61- 67 percent of the cases, total observations.

## **7-2 Attitudes towards delaying first pregnancy**

Table B-1 shows the variables selected for the logistic regression model for attitudes toward delaying the first pregnancy after marriage. The dependant variable in the model is the desire to delay the first pregnancy after marriage coded as a binary variable (1 for those who desire delaying first pregnancy for 12 months or more and 0 otherwise). The table also includes some of the individual and household variables selected in the previous analysis: region, educational level and number of brothers and sisters in the family coded also the same way as the previous analysis. However, the set of indices used in the previous analysis are excluded from this part of the analysis to allow for exploring the impacts of other individual variables. Four variables, coded in dummy format, are used in this regard, (see Table B-1). The variables include exposure to mass media messages on family planning, discussing family planning with friends and relatives, approval of friends and relatives for use of family planning and perception for having an additional child than desired. The index of “future economic concerns about family needs” is also used in this logistic model on the basis of its significance in the previous analysis.

**Table B-1 Variables in the logistic equation for attitudes towards delaying first pregnancy**

<b>Dependent variable</b>	
Logq317	Delaying first pregnancy 1 = 12 months or more 0 = Otherwise
<b>Independent Variables</b>	
Q103	Age groups
RREGION	Place of Residence R1 = 1 Urban governorate, 0 otherwise R2 = 1 Lower Egypt, 0 otherwise R3 = 1 Upper Egypt, 0 otherwise
RQ107	Highest level of school attended R1 = 1 Below Secondary, 0 otherwise R2 = 1 Secondary & above intermediate, 0 otherwise 3R = 1 University+, 0 otherwise
BSQ233	Number of brothers and sisters
RQ901	Engaged for marriage? 1 = engaged, 0 = otherwise
LOG401	listened or watched radio or T.V messages about family planning? 1 = No 0 = once or twice
Mq403	Talk about family planning with friends or relatives? 1 = Yes 0 = No
Log417	Friends or relative approve use family planning? 1 = Yes 0 = No
Mq222	Does it make a difference if you have one child more than desired? 1 = great deal 0 = No
CON	Index of future economic concern

**Table B-2 Odds ratios from logistic regression for attitudes toward delaying first pregnancy (Males & Females)**

Variables	Males			Females		
	B	Sig.	Exp(B)	B	Sig.	Exp(B)
Q103	-.019	.697	.981	.116	.070	1.123
RREGION		.139			.014	
RREGION(1)	-.574	.176	.563	1.622	.011	5.065
RREGION(2)	-.731	.048	.481	-.172	.596	.842
RQ107		.268			.562	
RQ107(1)	-.716	.106	.489	-.294	.541	.745
RQ107(2)	-.365	.341	.695	-.390	.283	.677
BSQ233	-.051	.459	.950	.026	.748	1.027
RQ901(1)	-.250	.628	.779	.095	.789	1.099
LOG401(1)	.003	.996	1.003	.222	.738	1.249
MQ403(1)	.339	.257	1.404	-.189	.543	.828
LOG417(1)	-.842	.005	.431	-.200	.595	.819
MQ222(1)	-1.039	.000	2.826	.149	.633	1.160
CON	-.056	.027	.945	.048	.118	1.049
Constant	6.174	.001	169.980	-.785	.657	.456
Classification Percentage	94.1%			94.0%		

Table B-2 reflects clear differences in the estimated odds ratios for males and females. For females, the residence in urban and Lower Egypt governorates, having small number of brothers and sisters, and engagement for marriage have the highest impact on increasing the odds ratios for delaying first pregnancy. The four individual variables added to this model: receiving radio and T.V. messages on family planning, talking about family planning with friends or relatives, approval of friends or relatives to family planning use and perception of having one more child than desired, have also impact on favorable attitudes for delaying first pregnancy. Furthermore, the index of future economic concerns about family needs has also an impact on females' attitudes towards delaying first pregnancy. The estimated logistic regression models for males and females are highly significant ( $P > 0.01$ ) and capable of correctly classifying 94 percent of the cases, total observations.

## 8- CONCLUSIONS

The following key findings were reflected by the study:

- Although never married women were more likely to desire two children (59 % VS 51 % of men), a substantial fraction of both men and women still considers three or more children to be desirable (47% of men and 39% of women). The majority of men and women perceive benefits of the two- child family, and despite that, they are still attached to the three children norm.
- Data indicated weak attachment to the expressed number of desired children among both men and women. Only about one- third of men and women reported it would matter a great deal if they have one more child than desired.
- There is a long lead time for engaged men to complete marriage. On average, they reported waiting time of 2.5 years since engaged, and will probably wait for some more time before moving to marriage.
- Only about 30 percent of never married men reported having some savings for their marriage. Men and women believe that financial obligations required for marriage may cause delay of their marriage.
- Engaged men and women were more likely to desire two children than other men and women. On the other hand, having big number of siblings was associated with less desire to have only two children.
- Social change underway in Egypt, stressful household economics, recent changes in gender roles and attitudes and improved autonomy of women impacted fertility desires of young men and women. These emerging situations tend to stimulate acceptance of two- child family.
- High community support for family planning was reflected in the study. Most of respondents' friends and neighbors agree to family planning use. Also, religious leaders in their localities neither encourage people to have many children nor think that use of family planning is against religion.
- While small samples of never married men and women perceived benefits of children and were more likely to desire three or more children, the majority of men and women perceived cost of children and were more likely to express desire to have only two children.
- Only about two-fifth of engaged men and women reported discussing desired number of children with their marriage partners, reflecting lack of planning for future fertility goals.

- Most of men and women oppose the notion of delaying first pregnancy and prefer to have it sooner after marriage. Men were more likely to accept this issue (41%) compared to women (30%). Furthermore, the majority of those who accepted postponing first pregnancy reported preference to delay first pregnancy for only 12 months or less (62% of men and 80% of women).
- Discussing family planning with peers (friends, neighbors, relatives) lead to relatively more acceptance of delaying first pregnancy.
- The majority of men and women (more than four-fifths) indicated that they frequently receive information on family planning through Radio or T.V

## 9- POLICY AND PROGRAMMATIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

- 1- Findings indicated by the study that a substantial fraction of both never married men and women still considers three children or more as desirable represent a challenge to achieving replacement- level fertility goal.

Findings also indicated that the majority of men and women receive frequently information on family planning. Mass media are increasingly important in lives of most of young men and women. These influential channels should have a role in promoting the culture of two- child family. Studies done elsewhere indicated that media interventions have the potential to influence social norms and change some individual beliefs related to young people reproductive health (FHI, 2002). Media spots should explain in which way a person and his family will be affected if he has a third child, and should identify which audience group to address and what type of messages might change their behavior.

- 2- Men and women ranking high on indices of female autonomy, social change and gender roles and attitudes scales were systematically and significantly more likely to desire two children as reflected by the descriptive analysis. Youth development programs that focus on developing life options and skills, promotes educational aspirations, vocational training and psychosocial development have been shown to be helpful in promoting healthy lifestyle for youth (FHI, Ibid). There are few programs of this kind in Egypt, mostly implemented by NGOs. Drawing upon these programs and expanding their coverage would help reinforce modernized attitudes and beliefs and foster emerging social change.
- 3- Parallel to youth development programs, youth centers should also be targeted to contribute some input in achieving wider acceptance of two- child family. There is large network of youth centers in Egypt, with wide geographic coverage. Youth centers generally provide recreational, educational and other components in a youth- friendly setting. Special component on favorable childbearing patterns could be designed and introduced to youth centers
- 4- It is important to involve young adults in youth policy dialogue and programming. They can provide useful information on their own needs and preferences, as well as explanation and interpretations of many of the observed patterns of youth attitudes and behaviors related to childbearing. This will make it easier for policy makers and program managers to think of appropriate designs of youth programs that help reinforce commitment to two -child family.
- 5- Continue to target school programs to reach a large number of youth. Population and reproductive health curricula should be continuously reviewed and updated. It should also be structured as to create strong sense of responsibility, especially parenthood responsibility. Curricula should also help strengthen skills on how to make proper choices for one's life, and how to effectively achieve individuals' desires, including fertility desires.

- 6- Although engaged persons among both men and women were more likely to desire two children compared to others, findings indicated that only about two-fifths of them discuss number of children desired when they meet together. Premarital examination has been made recently a requirement for marriage contract to take place. This opportunity should be capitalized to strengthen this service and promote its effectiveness in providing counseling to youth related to childbearing issues. Messages given to men and women during counseling session may include advantages of two-child family, optimal birth spacing and delaying first birth.
- 7- Most of men and women oppose postponing the first pregnancy and favor having the first conception sooner after marriage. More women than men opposed delaying the first pregnancy, most probably due to concerns about future infertility. Further, most of those who agreed to delaying first pregnancy proposed short period of delay (up to 12 months).

In view of the deep-rooted norms among Egyptians to have the first child soon after marriage, it is unlikely that delaying first pregnancy will gain wider acceptance in the short run, especially with the trend towards higher age at marriage of females. The medical professionals should be approached to broaden their knowledge and improve their attitudes to this issue



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**Table 1. Selected Socio-economic Characteristics for Unmarried Men and Women**

<b>Socio-Economic Characteristics</b>	<b>Men %</b>	<b>Women %</b>
<b>Age**</b>		
< 20	31	37
20-24	48	49
25-29	21	14
Mean age	21.8	21.1
<b>Education status<sup>A**</sup></b>		
Below secondary	19	15
Secondary to below university	54	49
University and over	27	36
<b>Working status**</b>		
Working for cash	65	28
Not working or work for household	35	72
<b>Residence</b>		
Urban	50	54
Rural	50	46
<b>Place of residence</b>		
Urban governorates	25	24
Lower Egypt	41	41
Upper Egypt	34	35
<b>No. of brothers and sisters</b>		
2 or less	19	19
3	21	22
4 or more	60	59
<b>Engaged?<sup>B**</sup></b>		
Yes	15	29
No	85	71
<b>Live with whom in household?</b>		
Father and mother	80	79
Father only	3	5
Mother only	15	14
Brothers and sisters	90	90
Relatives	5	9
Number	953	909

\*\* Significant ( $P < 0.01$ )

A : Persons who never went to school not included (22 men and 77 women)

B : Includes contract of marriage, engagement, Fatha and marriage proposal

Note :differences between males and females are statistically significant with regards to characteristics marked with \*\*

**Table 2. Selected Marriage Aspects and Attitudes : Never Married Men and Women**

<b>Selected marriage aspects/attitudes</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>- Committed to marriage? **</b>				
Contract of marriage / engaged (%)	11.7	113	25.3	230
Mean time since the event (in months)	30.3		18.7	
Fatha / marriage proposal (%)	3.5	34	4.1	37
Mean time since the event (in months)	7.4		6.1	
Not yet (%)	84.7	806	70.5	641
<b>- Preferred age at marriage **</b>				
For yourself (mean)	26.4	953	24.3	909
For young woman (mean)	20.9	953	22.3	909
For young man (mean)	25.7	953	27.1	909
<b>- Feasibility of marriage **</b>				
Have some saving for your marriage? (% yes)	17.5	166	29.2	265
Has anyone else in your family made some saving for your marriage? (% yes)	12.9	123	40.7	370
Financial obligations needed for marriage may cause delay of your marriage? (% yes)	73.1	696	37.3	339
<b>- Value attached to marriage</b>				
Importance to you to get married:				
Very important (%)	60.9	581	46.1	419
Somewhat important (%)	30.1	287	42.6	387
<b>- How does life sounds to you if you never get married? **</b>				
Good (%)	22.4	214	36.8	337
Very good (%)	2.7	25	1.8	16
<b>- Attitudes to selection of marriage partner **</b>				
For a young woman :				
Herself (%)	35.5	339	27.5	250
The family (%)	3.3	31	4.7	42
Both her & family (%)	61.2	583	67.8	616
<b>- For a young man :</b>				
Himself (%)	58.8	560	56.5	514
The family (%)	0.9	9	1.9	17
Both him & family (%)	40.3	384	41.6	378
<b>- Is it better for marriage partners to be relatives (first cousin/ other) **</b>				
Yes (%)	5.4	52	5.3	48
No (%)	53.1	506	62.6	569
No difference / DK (%)	41.5	395	32.1	291
<b>- Is it better for new weds to live in a separate household or to live with parents? **</b>				
New household (%)	49.0	467	75.3	684
With husband's family (%)	50.7	483	2.0	18
With wife's family (%)	0.3	3	22.7	207
<b>- Do you agree that the woman works after marriage? **</b>				
Yes (%)	33.3	318	50.0	454
Conditional approval (%)	10.7	102	7.5	68
No (%)	56.0	534	42.5	386

\*\* Significant (P < 0.01)

Note :differences between males and females are statistically significant with regards to characteristics marked with \*\*

**Table 3. Desired Number of children by never Married Men and Women**

Children Desired	Men		Women	
	%	N	%	N
<b>- Desired number of children<sup>A *</sup></b>				
Less than 2	3	24	2	19
2	51	487	58	525
3	34	326	30	267
4+	12	117	10	98
Total	100	953	100	909
<b>- If you have one more child than desired number, would it make difference?<sup>B*</sup></b>				
Yes, great deal	34	312	35	312
Yes, little	27	245	21	191
Not at all	39	362	44	396
Total number	100	919	100	899
<b>- If you have one less child than desired number, would it make difference?<sup>B**</sup></b>				
Yes, great deal	10	95	15	137
Yes, little	22	198	13	118
Not at all	68	627	72	644
Total number	100	920	100	899

\*\* Significant (P<0.01)

\* Significant (P<0.05)

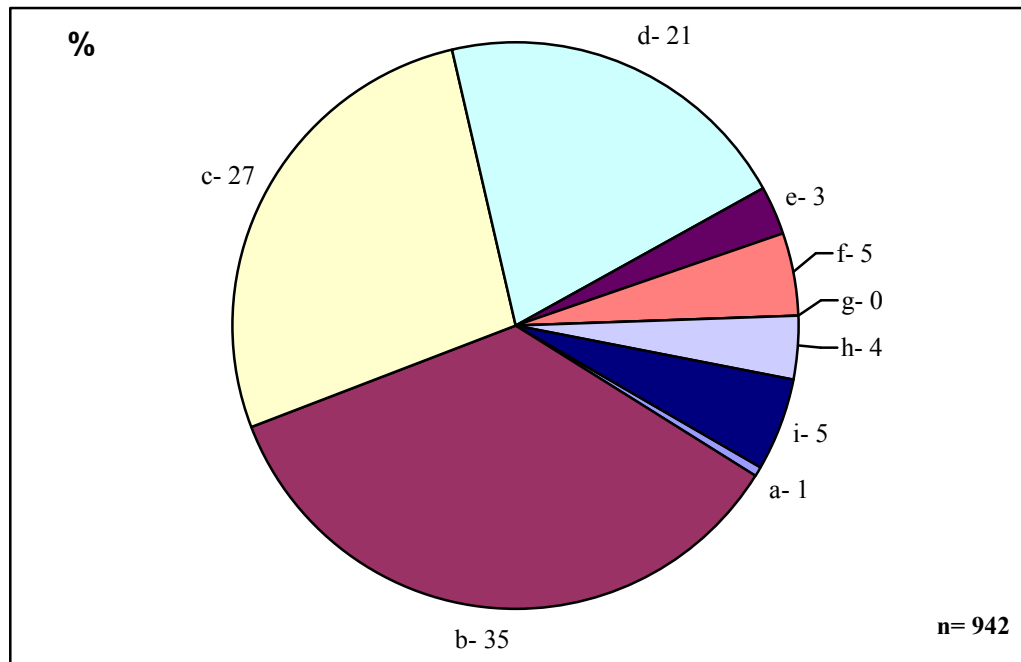
A non-numeric answers and don't know were added to 4+

B persons who did not reported numeric answer to the question on desired no. of children are not included

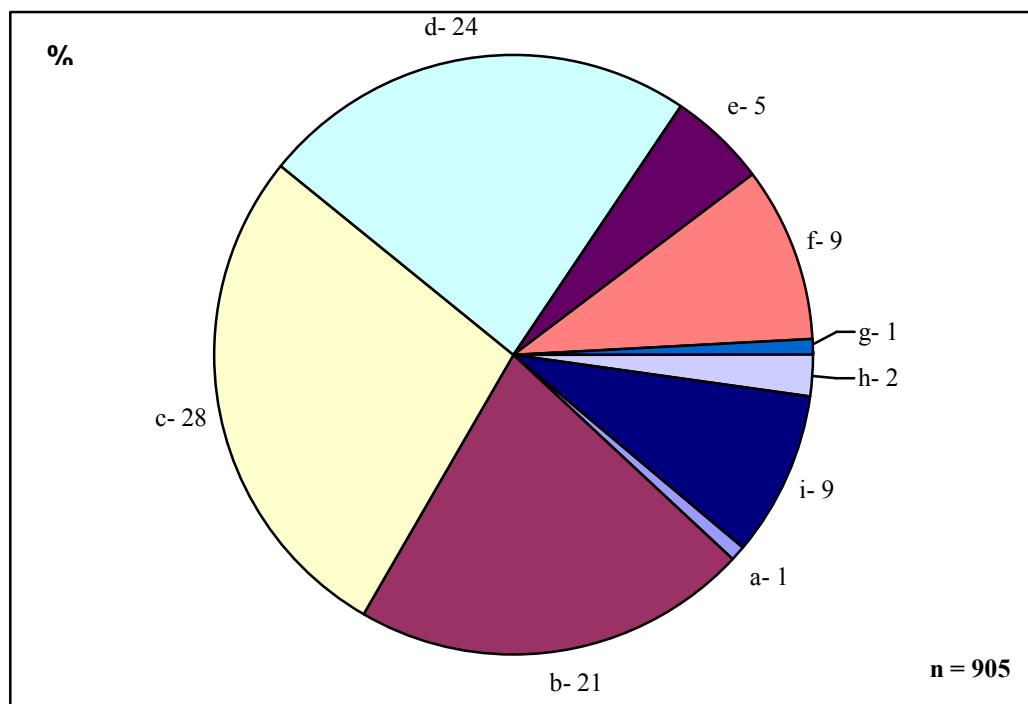
Note differences between males and females are statistically significant with regards to characteristics marked with \*, \*\*

**Figure 1. The most Important Advantage for Having two Children for Unmarried Men and Women**

Men %



Women %

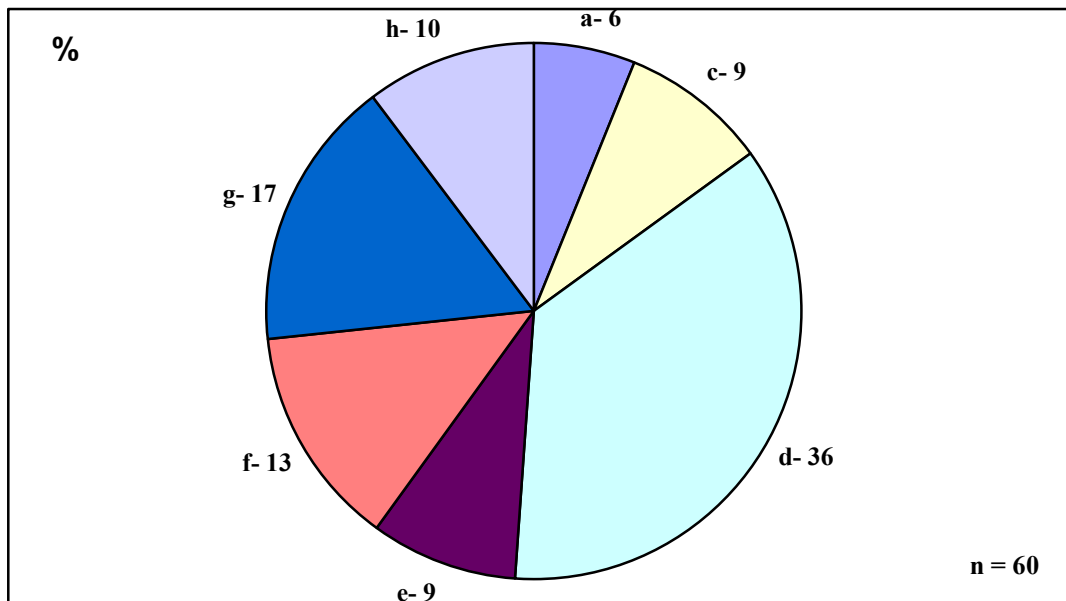


- |   |                                      |   |  |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| A | Less crowded Household               | e | Healthier children                             |
| B | Better Household living standard     | f | Less stressful to mother's health              |
| C | Children can be raised more properly | g | Easier for mother to work or to something else |
| D | More schooling for the children      | h | Reduce population explosion                    |
| I | Happier household                    |   |  |

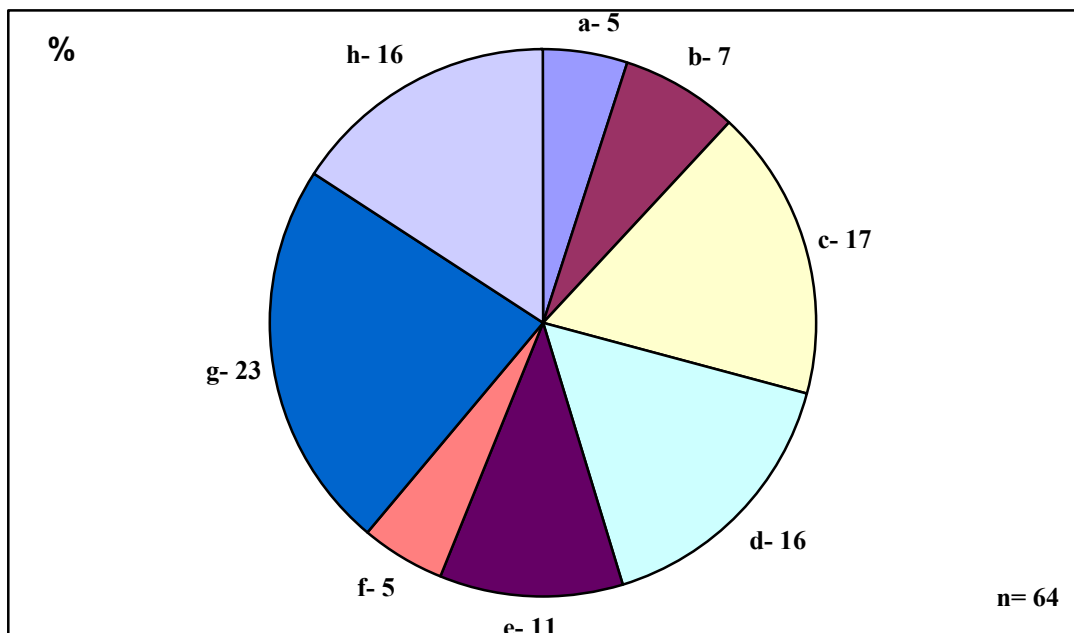
Note : Confined to men and women who reported more than are advantage for having two children

**Figure 2. The most important disadvantage for having two children for unmarried men and women**

Men %



Women %



- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| a | Less help from children in household work | e | Husband less tied                      |
| b | Less help from children in family income  | f | Concern about family name              |
| c | Not enough support in old age             | g | Not enough sons/daughters              |
| d | Losing feeling of happier/stronger family | h | Not enough surviving children to adult |

Note : Confined to men and women who reported more than one disadvantage for having two children

**Table 4. Percent of Never Married Men and Women who Desire two children or less by Selected Background Characteristics**

Selected Characteristics	Men		Women	
	% desire 2 or Less	N	% desire 2 or Less	N
<b>Age</b>				
< 20	54	294	63**	335
20 – 24	52	455	57	446
25 - 29	56	204	62	128
<b>Education status<sup>A</sup></b>				
Below secondary	52	177	67*	130
Secondary to below university	54	501	63	404
University and over	54	253	54	297
<b>Working status</b>				
Work for cash	55	554	62	238
Not working + family work	52	399	59	671
<b>Residence</b>				
Urban	62**	476	65**	493
Rural	46	478	53	416
<b>Place of residence</b>				
Urban governorates	64**	236	67**	219
Lower Egypt	53	388	62	373
Upper Egypt	47	329	52	317
<b>No. of brothers and sisters</b>				
2 or less	55*	181	66*	171
3	62	195	62	196
4 and more	50	577	57	542
<b>Engaged<sup>B</sup></b>				
Yes	64**	160	64*	284
No	52	792	58	625

\*\* Significant (P< 0.01)

\* Significant (P< 0.05)

A persons who never went to school not included (22 men and 77 women)

B includes contract of marriage, engaged, Fatha and marriage proposal

Note : cells with stars (\*, \*\*) indicate significant relationship between desired number of children and the background characteristics shown for men or women, separately

**Table 5. Percent of Never Married Men and Women who desire Two children or less by Selected Indices**

Indices	Men		Women	
	% desire 2 or Less	N	% desire 2 or Less	N
<b>Community support index</b>				
High	52	657	60	681
Low	56	296	59	228
<b>Social change index</b>				
High	57*	447	67**	371
Medium	52	383	56	448
Low	43	123	51	91
<b>Economic Stress Index</b>				
High	60**	236	65	275
Medium	47	297	58	182
Low	55	425	57	453
<b>Gender roles and attitudes index</b>				
High	57*	344	65*	348
Low	52	610	57	561
<b>Women's autonomy index</b>				
High			69**	142
Medium			64	286
Low			55	481

\* Significant (P < 0.05)

\*\* Significant (P < 0.01)

Note : cells with stars (\*, \*\*) indicate significant relationship between desired number of children and the index shown for men or women, separately

**Table 6. Childbearing – Related Topics Discussed by Engaged Persons<sup>A</sup>**

Issues Discussed	Men (%)	Women (%)
- Desired number of children	40	47
- Cost of living*	44	33
- Ways of raising children*	44	48
- Cost of raising children	31	34
- woman's work after marriage	45	54
<b>Number</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>250</b>

\* : significant (P < 0.05)

A : Confined to engaged couples who meet together



**Table 7. Never Married Men and women Who Think That Postponing first Pregnancy for New Weds is Good or Acceptable Idea by Selected Correlates**

Selected Correlates	Postponing first pregnancy is acceptable			
	Men		Women	
	% yes	N	% yes	N
<b>- Current age</b>				
Less than 20	60**	294	51*	334
20 – 24	55	455	50	446
25 – 29	48	205	47	129
<b>Education status<sup>A</sup></b>				
Below secondary	56	177	52	131
Secondary to below university	56	502	52	404
University and over	50	252	48	298
<b>Working status</b>				
Work for cash	55	554	49	238
Not working + family work	55	399	50	671
<b>- Urban – rural residence</b>				
Urban	58	476	51	493
Rural	51	477	49	416
<b>- Place of residence</b>				
Urban governorates	58	236	52	219
Lower Egypt	49	388	50	372
Upper Egypt	59	329	48	317
<b>- Desired no. of children</b>				
2 or less	60**	510	55**	545
3 or more	49	442	42	364
<b>- Engaged?<sup>B**</sup></b>				
Yes	49*	160	50	283
No	56	792	50	626
<b>- Exposed to FP messages through media?</b>				
No	55*	66	59**	66
Once or twice	39	84	34	113
Frequently	56	804	52	730
<b>- Ever Talked about FP with friends, relatives, neighbors?</b>				
% Yes *	58**	339	55*	364

\*\* Significant (P<0.01)

\* Significant (P<0.05)

A Persons who never went to school not included (22 men and 77 women)

B Includes Contract of marriage, engagement, Fatha and marriage proposal

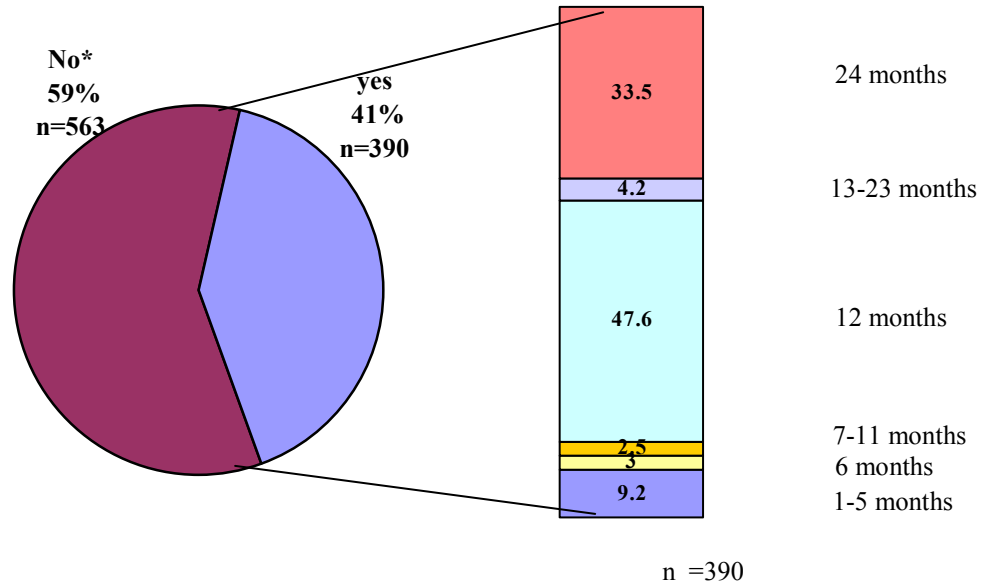
Note : cells with stars (\*,\*\*) indicate significant relationship between accepting postponing first pregnancy for new weds and the background characteristics shown for men and women, separately

**Figure 3. Accepting Delaying first Pregnancy among Unmarried Men and Women**

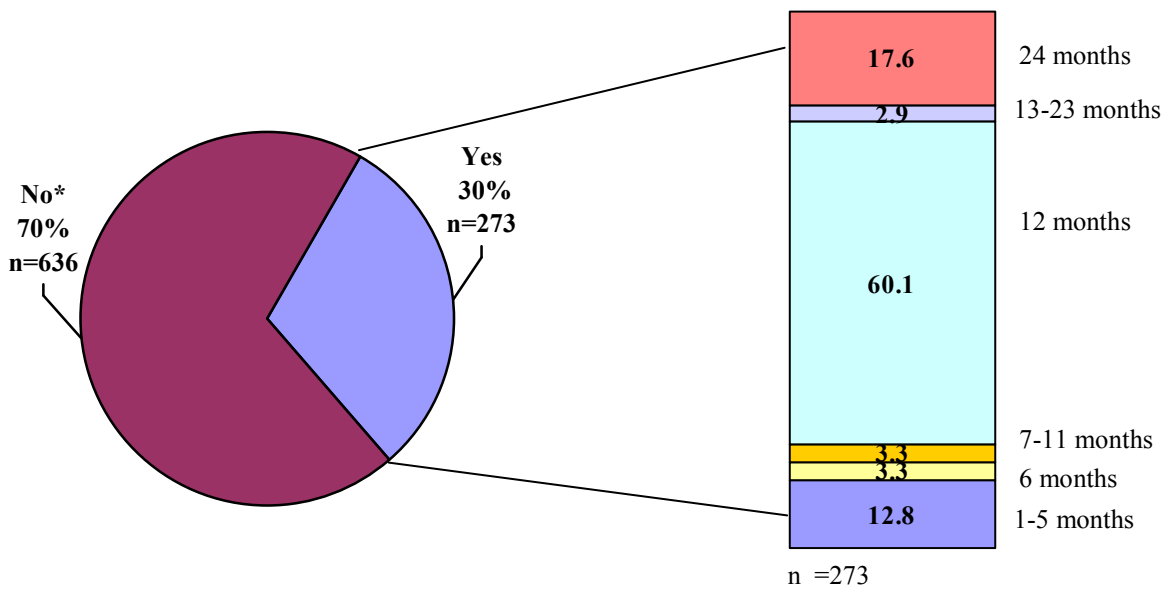
Men

Do you agree to postpone first pregnancy after marriage?

For how many months you want to postpone first pregnancy?



Women



\* includes don't know

**Table 8. Never Married Men and Women Who Accept to Postpone First Pregnancy by Selected Indices**

Indices	Men		Women	
	%	n	%	n
<b>- Community support index</b>				
High	44	657	34	681
Low	44	297	39	229
<b>- Social change index</b>				
High	52**	162	43**	371
Medium	49	387	32	448
Low	37	404	24	90
<b>- Economic stress Index</b>				
High	51*	236	38	274
Medium	46	291	40	182
Low	40	425	32	453
<b>- Gender roles and attitudes index</b>				
High	45	221	31*	492
Low	44	732	41	416
<b>- Women autonomy index</b>				
High			30	142
Medium			38	285
Low			36	482

\*\* Significant (P<0.01)

\* Significant (P<0.05)

Note: cells with stars (\*,\*\*) indicate significant relationship between accepting to delay first pregnancy and the index shown for men and women, separately

**Table 9. Exposure of Unmarried Men and Women to Family Planning Information**

% Received F P information through Radio or TV				
Selected Background Characteristics	Men		Women	
	%	N	%	N
<b>Age</b>				
< 20	47**	240	53**	273
20-24	52	392	48	364
25-29	65	171	35	92
<b>Education status<sup>A</sup></b>				
Below secondary	60*	135	40*	91
Secondary to below university	56	428	45	343
University and over	48	223	52	242
<b>Working status</b>				
Work for cash	70**	458	29**	190
Not working or work for household	35	345	65	540
<b>Residence</b>				
Urban	51	398	49	378
Rural	53	405	46	352
<b>Place of residence</b>				
Urban governorates	58*	207	42*	149
Lower Egypt	50	322	50	326
Upper Egypt	52	274	48	256
<b>Engaged?<sup>B</sup></b>				
Yes	35*	120	65*	226
No	58	682	43	504

\*\* Significant (P <0.01)

\* Significant (P <0.05)

A persons who never went to school not included (22 men and 77 women)

B Includes contract of marriage, engagement, Fatha and marriage proposal

Note : cells with stars (\*,\*\*) indicate significant relationship between receiving frequent information on FP through Radio or TV and corresponding background characteristics shown for men or women, separately

**Table 10 : Attitudes of Unmarried Men and Women to Family Planning**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Men %</b>	<b>Women%</b>
- <b>What do you think causes more health problems for women : repeated pregnancies or family planning use?*</b>		
Repeated pregnancies	92	94
Family planning use	4	3
Don't know	4	3
- <b>Suppose a woman's health would be at high risk if she gets pregnant, and her husband disapproves family planning use, do you agree that she uses family planning method without informing him?*</b>		
% yes	49	54
- <b>Do you think couples could have control over number of children they reproduce, or this is beyond control?*</b>		
Can control	78	72
No + DK	22	28
<b>Number</b>	953	909

\*\* Significant (P <0.01)

\* Significant (P <0.05)

Note : differences between males and females are statistically significant with regard to variable marked with \*,\*\*

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Indices' items and descriptive statistics**

## Index of Community Support

Items	Men %	Women %
- Most friends and neighbors agree to family planning use	80.2	93.8
- Religious leaders in locality don't think that family planning is against religion	87.0	81.0
- Religious leaders in locality don't encourage people to have many children	91.0	84.8
Number	953	909

## Index of Social Change

Items	Men %	Women %
- Agree that it is good idea if new weds postpone first pregnancy	29.5	29.1
- Think that a person should not live with his children in old age	40.0	54.0
- It is very important that boys should be trained to help out with household shores	14.3	25.0
- Agrees with emerging changes taking place recently to Egyptian families		
- Husbands help out with household shores	58.4	85.0
- Parents have less influence on decisions made by children	60.5	47.0
- Increasing numbers of women who occupy leading positions in society	49.4	91.6
- Women are increasingly participating in family decision making	41.8	85.6
Number	953	909

## Index of Economic Stress

Items	Men %	Women %
- Think that household income not enough to cover basic needs	31.9	29.0
- Think that current household income is equal to, little below or far below minimum income level that could meet household basic needs	81.7	77.7
- Think that household standard of living this year is worse than last year	45.0	30.1
- Eats meat, fish or chicken twice a week or less	69.5	59.3
- Household owes money to others	19.0	20.6
- Last month household had difficulty in meeting the following expenses		
- Food and other daily needs	16.0	28.0
- Rent	2.9	7.6
- Adult medical expenses	14.9	23.2
- Children health care	6.1	14.7
- Education fees of children	19.3	24.0
- Paying credit / loans	23.0	27.7
Number	953	909

## Index of Gender roles and Attitudes

Items	Men %	Women %
- A women should be able to work if she likes to	47.6	79.2
- Think that a girl should choose her spouse, not the family and not the girl and the family	35.5	27.5
- If a couple have three girls, should not try for a son	88.1	90.6
- Men and women could do same work	45.2	74.2
- Agree that women's place is not only home and should be allowed to work outside home	50.2	86.2
- If the wife works outside home, husband should help with child care	69.6	89.6
- Disagree that a thirty year old woman who has a good job but is not yet married is to be pitied	31.0	50.1
- Disagree that husband has the right to beat his wife if :		
- She neglects the children	55.9	66.8
- She argues / speaks loudly to him	33.0	58.7
- Talks to men outside family circle	58.4	70.2
- She spends a lot of money / wastes his money	72.1	73.7
- She refuses sex	67.2	69.0
Number	953	909

## Index of Women Autonomy

Items	Women %
- Currently working	30.0
- Think that a girl should choose her spouse, not the family or jointly with the family	27.5
- Think that a woman should work after marriage	50.0
- Think that couples could have control over number of children they want to reproduce	72.4
- Think that if a woman's health would be at high risk if she gets pregnant and her husband disapprove family planning, she should use a contraceptive method without informing him	54.0
Number	909

## Descriptive Statistics of Indices

### A. MEN

Index	No. of Items	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Mean	Standard Deviation	Reliability coefficient (ALPha)	N
Community support	3	.00	3.00	2.5813	.7074	.7637	953
Social change**	7	.00	7.00	2.9385	1.5761	.6791	953
Economic stress**	11	.00	11.00	3.2942	2.1765	.7226	953
Gender roles and attitudes*	12	.00	12.00	6.5378	2.4508	.6934	953

### B. WOMEN

Index	No. of Items	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Mean	Standard Deviation	Reliability coefficient (ALPha)	N
Community support	3	.00	3.00	2.5959	.7721	.8091	909
Social change**	7	.00	7.00	4.1715	1.3029	.6517	909
Economic stress	11	.00	11.00	3.4169	2.6866	.7444	909
Gender roles and attitudes*	12	.00	12.00	8.3596	2.3723	.7073	909
Women's autonomy**	5	.00	5.00	2.3386	1.1793	.6608	909

\*\* Significant (P < 0.01)

\* Significant (P < 0.05)



## **APPENDIX B**

**Additional indices used in the multivariate analysis**

## **Additional indices used in the multivariate analysis**

### **1- Index of perceived benefits of children (CHILDBEN)**

- Q3071 Do you agree or disagree: "Parents should have many children so that they will not be lonely when they are old"?
- Q30710 Do you agree or disagree: "Parents feel they will be alive after death when they have many children because the family name will continue"?.
- Q30711 Do you agree or disagree: "Families must have more children to increase the power of their family"?
- Q30714 Do you agree or disagree: "One of the best things about having children is the loyalty and care they show to their parents"?.

### **2- Index of perceived costs of children (CHCOST)**

- Q3072 Do you agree or disagree: "Having many children is an obstacle to parents being able to achieve what they would like to achieve"?.
- Q3075 Do you agree or disagree: "Parents cannot raise their children properly if they have many children"?.
- Q238 If you had more siblings: "How do you feel your family's economic situation would have been"?.
- Q239 If you had fewer siblings: "How do you feel that you and your siblings would have had schooling"?.

### **3- Index of Future economic concerns (CON)**

- Q8131 Are you concerned that during the next year your household might not be able to pay for Food and Household supplies?
- Q8132 Are you concerned that during the next year your household might not be able to pay for Clothing?
- Q8133 Are you concerned that during the next year your household might not be able to pay for Rent?
- Q8134 Are you concerned that during the next year your household might not be able to pay for Medical expenses for adult?
- Q8135 Are you concerned that during the next year your household might not be able to pay for Infant and child care & their medicine?
- Q8136 Are you concerned that during the next year your household might not be able to pay for Children's education?
- Q8137 Are you concerned that during the next year your household might not be able for Saving for children marriage?
- Q8138 Are you concerned that during the next year your household might not be able to pay dept?