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SOCIAL NORMS AND FEMALE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN EGYPT

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

EFA   Exploratory Factor Analysis

ENOW   Egypt National Observatory for Women

FGD   Focus Group Discussion

FLFP   Female Labor Force Participation

NCW   National Council for Women

PNB   Personal Normative Belief

SEE   Social Empirical Expectation

SNE   Social Normative Expectation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent decades, Egypt has made significant investments in closing gender gaps, including the passage of several laws in support of the rights of Egyptian women. The 2014 Egyptian Constitution guarantees equal opportunities for women, opposes discrimination against them, and ensures their physical and economic protection. Progress in gender equity is particularly evident in the level of educational attainment, with female enrollment in tertiary education exceeding that of males (39.8 and 38 percent, respectively).[1] Yet, despite this progress, female labor force participation (FLFP) has remained below the regional average. In 2019, when the proportion of men in the labor force had increased to 82 percent, the proportion of women declined to only 18 percent, from 23.6 percent in 2015.

Social and gender norms represent critical underlying factors in determining whether a women can work, what kind of work she can do, and what responsibilities she has aside from paid work. Surveys conducted by the Egyptian National Observatory for Women (ENOW) reveal that women's empowerment in Egypt is largely influenced by a system of values that elevates the role of women within the family over and above their social and economic roles.

This study is part of an ongoing effort by the National Council for Women (NCW), Baseera (the Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research), and the World Bank to support the ENOW with funding from the UK Embassy in Egypt. The study aims to develop a more nuanced understanding of the normative barriers affecting FLFP in Egypt by exploring the differences between individual behavior, personal beliefs, and social expectations around women's employment. It does so by applying a systematic measurement framework for social norms with the ultimate goal of informing and strengthening policies and interventions to improve FLFP.

METHODOLOGY

Social norms are society's informal rules of conduct that dictate what is appropriate or acceptable behavior in a given situation within a given social context. This study identifies social norms by measuring its four key components: 1) individual behavior; 2) personal normative beliefs (PNBs): what one thinks people should do; 3) social empirical expectations (SEEs): what one thinks other people do; and 4) social normative expectations (SNEs): what one thinks other people think they should do (Bicchieri, Jiang, and Lindemans 2014). A fifth component, intrahousehold normative expectations, considers the power dynamic between spouses and its impact on the

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1   See data from World Bank, "Egypt, Arab Rep.," **https://data.worldbank.org/country/egypt-arab-rep**.

perpetuation and enforcement of social norms at the intrahousehold level by asking women about the beliefs of their partners. Each of these components explored the beliefs and expectations around support for FLFP, men and women's roles within the household, the acceptability of work conditions, and masculinity in Egypt.

The study used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. An initial qualitative study was carried out with working and non-working women and their male counterparts to scope out the dominant beliefs and social norms surrounding FLFP. This was followed by a quantitative phone survey to measure the current prevalence of these norms in the general population and to understand their influence on women's labor market behavior.

The quantitative survey was carried out with 6,633 respondents from all 27 governorates and was representative at the national and regional levels (urban governorates, Lower Egypt, and Upper Egypt). To minimize survey length and the effect of social desirability bias, in which respondents might feel the need to match their personal beliefs with that of their community, two versions of the survey were carried out with two separate samples, both representative at the national and regional levels: an "individual survey" with 3,340 respondents and a "community survey" with 3,377 respondents. The surveys were identical and administered with individual respondents, with the exception of the personal beliefs and normative expectations modules. The individual survey had an expanded personal beliefs module with 19 questions (six of which were common across both surveys), and the community survey had an expanded normative expectations module with 19 questions. During the analysis, data from both surveys (except the additional questions in the expanded modules) were combined to look at results across the combined sample of 6,633 respondents.[2]

FINDINGS

Findings from the qualitative study show that women generally work due to financial need and that childcare and household responsibilities pose major barriers to their employment, barriers that are often reinforced by the men in their families. The study finds that the majority of married women entered the work force because of the financial needs of their families. In fact, some women suggested that they felt forced to go to work due to the increasing economic needs. Non-working women identified benefits beyond financial fulfillment, believing that work gives women a sense of agency and security. However, they pointed to childcare as the main reason for not joining the labor force themselves. With regard to social barriers to FLFP, participants pointed to the insufficient facilitators for working women, such as the absence of nurseries in the workplace and the husband's refusal to share household duties. Men pose an additional barrier to FLFP in that many of the men who refuse to allow their wives to work outside the home do so because they insist that women must take care of the children and because they fear that women's control over family affairs could threaten the man's independent authority in household decision making.

Quantitative survey results show that although labor force participation among the female survey respondents and the female counterparts of male survey respondents is very low, general support for FLFP is not. Support is even higher among female respondents, with 92 percent agreeing that women have a right to work compared to 68 percent of men. Support for women's education is similarly high, as are normative expectations.

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2   Some respondents were dropped from the full sample due to missing IDs.

FIGURE ES1.
Personal Beliefs vs. Social Expectations (full sample)
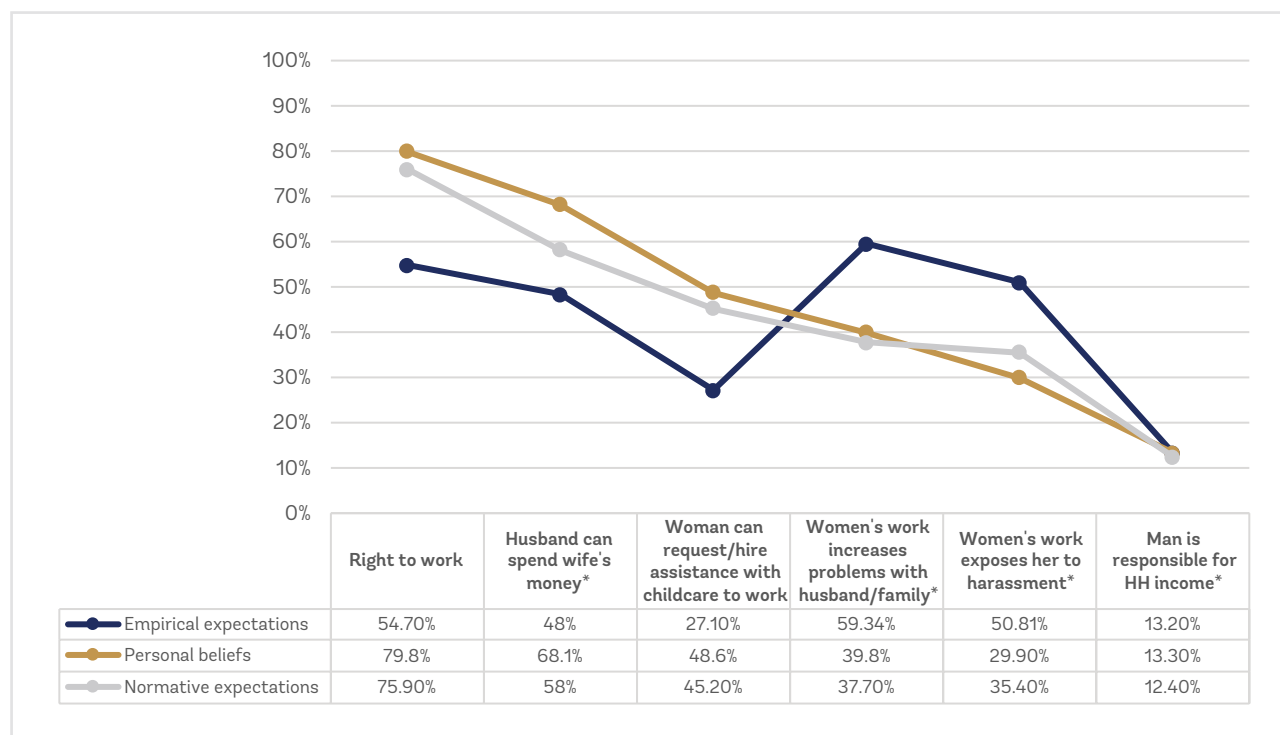
	Right to work	Husband can spend wife's money*	Woman can request/hire assistance with childcare to work	Women's work increases problems with husband/family*	Women's work exposes her to harassment*	Man is responsible for HH income*
Empirical expectations	54.70%	48%	27.10%	59.34%	50.81%	13.20%
Personal beliefs	79.8%	68.1%	48.6%	39.8%	29.90%	13.30%
Normative expectations	75.90%	58%	45.20%	37.70%	35.40%	12.40%

Note: Higher values reflect beliefs and expectations that are more supportive of FLFP. The percentage shows the proportion of respondents who "totally agree" or "agree" with the statements. For SEEs, the percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who think all or most people in their reference network engage in the behavior. Statements marked with * were reverse-coded as they were framed as negative statements: the percentage values in the graph reflect the proportion that "totally disagrees" or "disagrees" with these statements (which reflects views that are more supportive of FLFP).

However, this support does come with some caveats. Findings suggest that the majority of respondents believe and expect others to believe that men should be given priority when jobs are scarce. Similarly, at least 70 percent believe and expect others to believe that women may not be suitable for all kinds of jobs. These patterns are noteworthy because in addition to weak labor demand, Egypt has over time seen a shift in the labor market toward more manual and physical tasks that are less likely to be deemed suitable for women (World Bank 2021).

Indeed, not all views and expectations held by respondents are suggestive of an enabling environment for working women. Patriarchal beliefs around men's role as the primary breadwinners remain strong in Egypt, with only 13 percent of respondents disagreeing with the statement that "household income is the responsibility of the man only." Similarly, around 75 percent of the individual survey respondents believe, and 80 percent of the community survey respondents expect others to believe, that a woman's decision to work is mainly driven by her family's financial need, indicating the limited perceived importance of women's work beyond the material welfare of her family. Moreover, strongly perceived negative aspects of women working are evident from the data: 70 percent of respondents agree that work exposes women to harassment, while roughly six out of 10 respondents think and expect others to think that working women face more marital problems.

Women are expected to be the caretakers and caregivers within their home. Among women who have left the labor force, 65 percent did so in order to take care of their families and children. Beliefs and expectations around women's caregiver and caretaker roles are particularly strong among male respondents, who are more likely to think that women should prioritize family and caregiving over

employment. This dependency of the household economy on women's time holds them back from productive economic participation, which could have broader implications for productivity growth in the Egyptian economy.

However, not all beliefs and expectation are unsupportive of women's employment. There appears to be limited opposition to men supporting their spouses, and working women are generally expected to be able to balance work and home and raise their children well.

When it comes to general support for women's work, personal beliefs are not very different from normative expectations. This is true across most beliefs around FLFP—personal beliefs and normative expectations are very closely aligned on average and follow similar trends—irrespective of how restrictive or supportive of women's employment they are. This suggests that personal attitudes are as restrictive as normative expectations (when they are conservative) and potentially driven by deeply entrenched beliefs that are also consistent with social expectations.

Empirical expectations, however, do not necessarily align with personal beliefs and social expectations, nor do they always follow similar patterns. Both men and women tend to significantly overestimate the proportion of women working within their communities, with over half expecting all or most women in their communities to work outside the home. This is important because one of the factors most significantly associated with the likelihood of a woman being employed is observing how many women around them work. Although this overestimation of working women is potentially helpful, not all expectations about working women's experiences are positive. For example, around 60 percent of respondents expect working women to have marital problems, and only 30 percent expect working women to seek help for childcare. Expectations about harassment experienced by working women are also very high, especially among male respondents (nearly 60 percent). These expectations can make employment seem like a suboptimal option for women and restrict the support and safety they can expect to enable them to work.

Overall, social norms do appear to influence women's work decisions. Comparison of two vignettes that ask about a hypothetical woman's decision to work shows that respondents expect people to act differently when the social norms around them change from being supportive to unsupportive of women's employment. This suggests that women's employment decisions are dependent on social norms. However, the influence of norms is nuanced and can be stronger along some dimensions and for some groups than others. For example, regression analysis shows that both empirical and normative expectations around men's role as primary providers are strongly associated with women's employment outcomes. However, when it comes to general support for women's work, it is the observed behavior of others (that is, how many women around them work), rather than normative expectations about others' support for women's right to work, that are more closely associated with women's employment outcomes. Compared to men, women's decisions around work are more closely associated with social expectations—both normative and empirical—as well as expectations about their male counterparts' beliefs.

The role of male counterparts is important to consider because across most dimensions of beliefs around FLFP, men appear to hold more restrictive views than women. This is significant because both the qualitative and quantitative data suggest that men play an important role in women's decisions about joining the labor force. Expectations about the beliefs of male counterparts also appear to matter to women in deciding whether to work, though women appear, on average, to underestimate the extent of restrictive beliefs held by men across most aspects of FLFP. This suggests that targeting interventions at changing men's beliefs is more likely to lead to better employment outcomes for women.

The data indicate that beliefs around FLFP can be broadly categorized under four key themes:[3] 1) negative impacts of women's work; 2) affirmative statements about FLFP; 3) men's primary role as provider and women's role at home; and 4) women's responsibilities and men's role in enforcing them. A combined index of these themes for personal beliefs and social normative expectations shows that normative expectations are, on average, slightly more restrictive than personal beliefs in Egypt. Although the scores are moderate for both, on average, some noteworthy differences were observed across subgroups. The subgroup that appears to hold the most restrictive beliefs and expectations around FLFP are young male respondents with less than secondary education. This may provide some explanation for the recent declining FLFP trend in Egypt and suggests a strong intergenerational transmission of restrictive social norms and beliefs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A better understanding of the relationship between behaviors, individual beliefs, and perceptions about social norms regarding FLFP can inform the development of targeted interventions at the community and individual levels in Egypt. Specific recommendations include:

1. Develop awareness and sensitization campaigns targeting men and boys. Given the critical role men play in women's employment decisions, it is necessary to develop interventions that promote positive attitudes towards women, among men and boys and redefine the masculinity norms around men's role as the main providers for their families. Sensitization should start from an early age as it impacts not only adolescents throughout their life but also their parents and future generations.

2. Change aspirations for women by raising awareness of the value of FLFP. Modifying the narratives and views around the benefits of women's work—beyond easing the family's financial burdens—and the acceptability of women's roles outside the home can ease the social constraints women face when deciding whether to seek formal employment. This can be done using community-based and mass media campaigns, edutainment, role models, and peer mentoring.

3. Continue efforts against the harassment of women at the workplace and on public transport. Such efforts should be strengthened, including the NCW's plan to help the Ministry of Transport to develop a code of conduct to combat harassment and provide greater safety for women and girls on public transport. Initiatives should also be taken to ensure improved access to additional sources of safe and reliable transportation for women to boost their access to employment opportunities.

4. Promote better access to childcare. Promoting a care economy both allows working mothers to go back to work and also represents an attractive sector for female employment. Home-based daycare and mobile creches on business premises would help in providing affordable childcare to households with limited income. Access may need to be accompanied by interventions to promote demand for childcare among parents and social acceptance of the use of childcare services.

5. Bolster the digital economy as a source of jobs for women. The flexi-work environment and tele-working of the post-COVID era can make the workplace safer, more friendly to women, and potentially less hostile to women working outside the home.

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3   This is based on an exploratory factor analysis of the 19-item personal beliefs and normative expectations modules from the individual and community surveys, respectively.

01
INTRODUCTION

There have been significant improvements in women's empowerment in Egypt in recent years, including several pieces of legislation in support of the rights of Egyptian women. Progress in gender equity is particularly evident in the level of educational attainment, with female enrollment in tertiary education exceeding that of males (39.8 and 38 percent, respectively).[4] The 2014 Egyptian Constitution guarantees equal opportunities for women, opposes discrimination against them, and ensures their physical and economic protection. Women's political participation has also improved, as women make up 28 percent of the members of parliament and 24.2 percent of the country's ministerial positions.[5]

However, despite this progress, women's participation in the labor force has remained relatively low (below the regional average) and has even declined slightly since 2016 (see Figure 1). In 2019, when the proportion of men in the labor force had increased to 82 percent, the proportion of women declined to only 18 percent, from 23.6 percent in 2015. The traditional analyses, which correlate female labor force participation (FLFP) to the rise in economic growth and educational attainment, do not provide sufficient explanation for this decreasing trend in Egypt.

FIGURE 1.
Proportion of Men and Women in the Labor Force
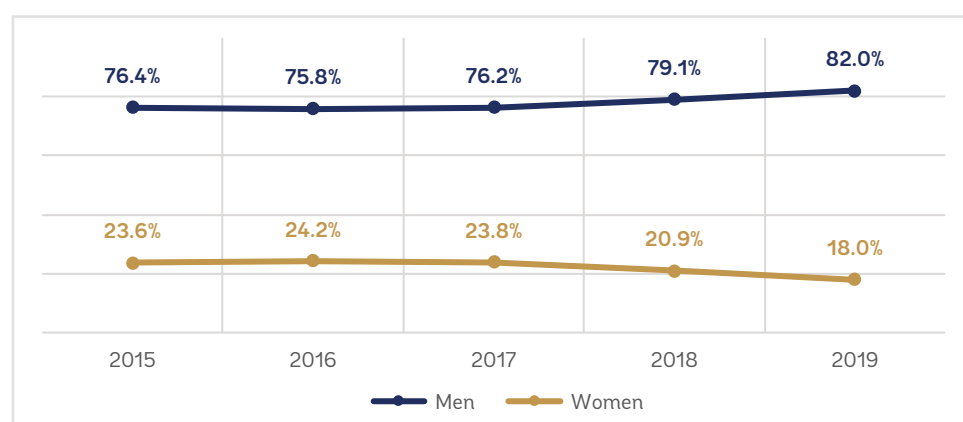
Source: Egypt National Observatory for Women (ENOW), **https://en.enow.gov.eg/Detail/8**. Data derived from the Labor Force Survey by Egypt's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).

In March 2017, Egypt launched its National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030. The strategy included four pillars: (i) political empowerment and leadership promotion; (ii) economic empowerment; (iii) social empowerment; and (iv) protection.[6] The implementation of this strategy has been monitored using several surveys conducted by the Egyptian

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4   See data from World Bank, "Egypt, Arab Rep.," **https://data.worldbank.org/country/egypt-arab-rep**.

5   See World Bank, "Proportion of Seats Held by Women in National Parliaments," **https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS?locations=EG**, and "Proportion of Women in Ministerial Level Positions," **https://genderdata.worldbank.org/indicators/sg-gen-mnst-zs**.

6   NCW, "National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030: Vision and Pillars" (Nasr City: National Council for Women, 2017), **http://ncw.gov.eg/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/final-version-national-strategy-for-the-empowerment-of-egyptian-women-2030.pdf**.

National Observatory for Women (ENOW).[7] These survey results reveal that women's empowerment in Egypt is largely influenced by a system of values that limit their opportunity and ability to participate in the labor force, a limitation that can impede women's overall ability to boost their economic empowerment. This prevailing system of values in Egypt elevates the role of women within the family over and above their social and economic roles. For example, although nearly 85 percent of surveyed individuals in 2018 agreed that women have the same right to be employed as men,[8] support for the statement, "females cannot work in a workplace far away from home," increased from roughly 54 percent in 2016 to nearly 70 percent in 2018. Similarly, although 76 percent of survey respondents believed that working women can balance work and household responsibilities, over 90 percent also believed that working women should quit if their husband or children need them (Osman 2019).

Social and gender norms represent critical underlying factors in whether a women can work, what kind of work she can do, and what responsibilities she has aside from paid work. Evidence of the contextual implications of social norms was revealed in recent studies conducted by Baseera, the Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research,[9] in cooperation with the World Bank (Girgis and Adel 2021; Osman 2019).[10] Findings from these studies demonstrate the prevalence of the conviction that women should not use external support to reduce the household's financial burdens. They also show that society views women as the primary caregivers in the household and has negative opinions about mothers leaving their children to (re)join the labor force. Both men and women would prefer not to send their children to daycare. Moreover, three-quarters of survey respondents appear to prioritize men's right to work over women's when economic opportunities are limited (Girgis and Adel 2021). Almost all survey respondents (97 percent) would refuse to seek external assistance to help take care of their children, and about half of those see childcare as the mother's responsibility and therefore find external assistance unnecessary. Roughly 62 percent believe that the mother does not have the right to seek outside childcare so that she can go out to work, and around 87 percent believe that children *suffer* when the mother does this. (See Annex 1 for information on the Number of the Day Initiative: Egyptian Women in Numbers, which provides evidence on issues of gender and social norms relating to FLFP.)

These values may significantly affect a women's ability to participate in the labor force. Moreover, these views were likely further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to periodic school closures, a reduced number of school days per week, and the widespread use of online or hybrid learning for children. Additionally, the economic repercussions of the pandemic, such as limited employment opportunities, may have worsened existing inequalities and increased barriers to FLFP.

The survey findings suggest a need to further explore the societal constraints and prevailing social norms that can impede women's economic empowerment and their ability to capitalize on the gains that have been made for women's equality in Egyptian society. A 2019 World Bank study on women's economic empowerment, launched in collaboration with the National Council for Women (NCW) , attributed the persistently low FLFP rates in the country to multiple factors, including social norms and values, the burdens of marital responsibilities, the lack of childcare facilities, the limited access to affordable and safe transportation, and sexual harassment (World Bank 2018; Osman 2019).

This current study aims to take a more nuanced approach to understanding the social constraints to FLFP in Egypt, and how these constraints are related to personal values and attitudes, by applying

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7   The Egypt National Observatory for Women (ENOW) aims to follow up on the implementation of the government's Women's Status Targets from 2015 to 2030. For more information about ENOW and to access additional survey results, see **https://en.enow.gov.eg/**.

8   See **https://en.enow.gov.eg/Detail/74**.

9   The Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research (Baseera) is the entity responsible for managing the ENOW platform under the auspices of the National Council for Women.

10 For a full list of ENOW publications and studies, see **enow.gov.eg**.

a systematic measurement tool to unpack social barriers to women's economic empowerment. Understanding how such social constraints influence women's economic participation can inform policy makers on how to adequately address them in the post COVID-19 era. Indeed, increasing FLFP to the same levels as that of males has the potential to increase Egypt's GDP by 34 percent. Promoting higher FLFP is thus important not only to ensuring gender equity but also to promoting Egypt's long-term economic growth.

1.1. STUDY BACKGROUND: WHY SOCIAL NORMS?

Social norms are informal rules of conduct of society that dictate what is appropriate or acceptable behavior in a given situation within a given social context (Cislaghi and Heise 2019; Bicchieri 2006). Individuals conform to a social norm—that is, they act a certain way—if they believe that most individuals within the group they consider to be their reference network both conform to the norm and believe that everyone should conform to it also (Bicchieri 2017). This makes social norms distinct from personal attitudes, morals, and beliefs. Although norms result in independent behavior that is externally driven and conditional on the perception of others, morals and beliefs are internally driven and unrelated to the perception of others (Cislaghi and Heise 2018; Mackie et al. 2015). Norms are also different from laws, which are formal rules of society that are held in place through prescribed sanctions and punishments. In contrast, social norms are unwritten rules that are held in place by expectations of social sanctions from one's reference group or society.

Social norms are often conflated with personal beliefs (or attitudes) in the literature, but it is important to distinguish between the two. Assuming attitudes to be a proxy for social norms can potentially lead to an underestimation of the strength of norms in driving behaviors and decisions. This distinction was well demonstrated in a recent global survey from 2020 that looked at how personal beliefs and social expectations can be different across various dimensions of gender equality, including factors that affects women's labor force outcomes (Cookson et al. 2020). As demonstrated in Figure 2 below, across all regions in the world, individual support for the statement that "men and women should have equal opportunities" is quite high (around 80 percent). However, normative expectations about the percentage of people in one's reference group agreeing with the same statement is much lower in comparison—closer to 50 percent in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. If gender outcomes around employment are normatively driven, this misperception about more restrictive social expectations can lead women to conform to these restrictive norms and refrain from joining the labor force despite the society being much more liberal in reality. This situation is what is commonly referred to in the literature as *pluralistic ignorance*. At the same time, not all behavior may be socially driven in every context. The same survey also showed a convergence in normative expectations and personal beliefs in the MENA region when asked about support for the statement that "the most important role for women is taking care of their home and children" (Cookson et al. 2020) (see Figure 2).

Personal Beliefs vs. Social Expectations

Men and women should have equal opportunities

A woman's most important role is to take care of her home and children

Source: 2020 data from Survey on Gender Equality at Home, Meta
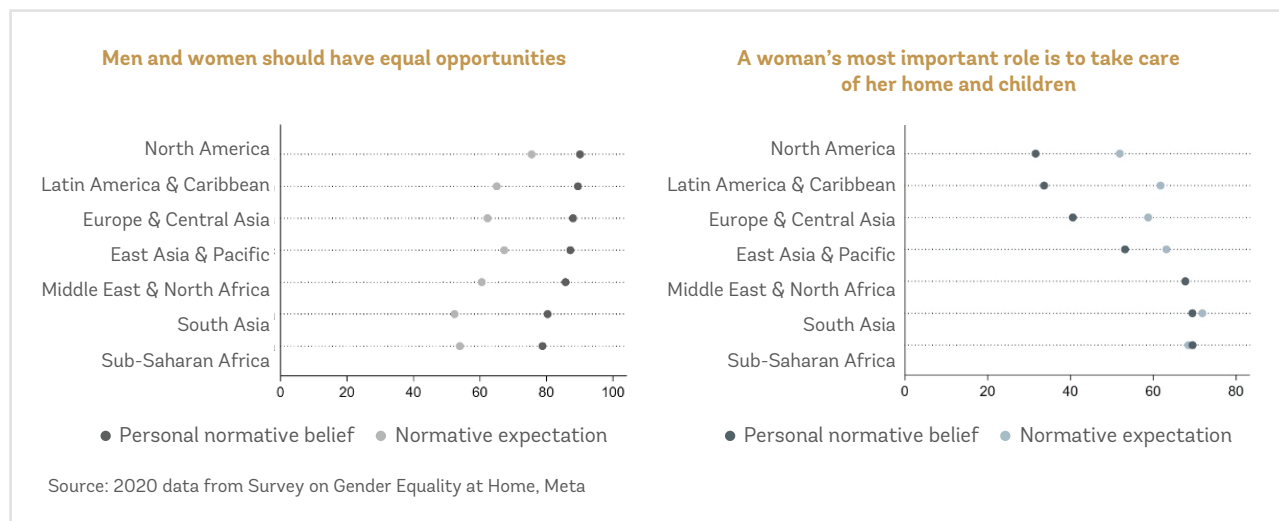
Although there are many structural, personal, and cultural drivers of FLFP, restrictive social and gender norms can play an important role in women's decision making regarding employment. When normative influences are strong, they can inhibit women's ability to participate in the labor force irrespective of their own beliefs and preferences due to fear of social sanctions.

This study, carried out by Baseera, is part of an ongoing effort by the NCW, Baseera, the Embassy of the United Kingdom, and the World Bank to support the ENOW. The study explores social norms by understanding the difference between an individual's behavior, personal beliefs, and perceived social expectations of women's role in Egyptian society and how all of these affect women's ability to join the labor force, with the ultimate goal of informing and strengthening policies and interventions to improve FLFP. The detailed exploration of attitudinal and normative beliefs in this study also provides an overview of the current constraints these beliefs impose on women's employment outcomes and can serve as a baseline from which to monitor progress in the alleviation of such constraints in the future. This nationally representative study uses insights from behavioral science and emerging social norms measurement techniques to explore these constraints by geography and gender.

1.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A nuanced exploration of social norms is important because it allows a better understanding of whether and how social norms facilitate or impede FLFP. This study therefore uses the conceptual framework for social norms measurement proposed by Christina Bicchieri (2017). Formative approaches typically categorize social norms into (i) descriptive norms, or perceptions of how people in a society behave, and (ii) injunctive norms, or second-order beliefs about how one ought to behave. However, most of these approaches do not distinguish between conditional and unconditional behaviors, which is necessary to determine whether a behavior is indeed driven by social norms. Bicchieri posits that behavior is dictated by two types of preference:

(1) Unconditional preference: These are the choices people make regardless of what others expect them to do or the perceived social norms, and are independent behaviors derived from personal normative beliefs.

(2) Conditional preference: These are choices that are dependent on what is expected and on the perceived social norms. These preferences are informed by social empirical expectations (descriptive norms) and social normative expectations (injunctive norms).

According to Bicchieri, Jiang, and Lindemans (2014), identifying a social norm requires that four key components be measured: 1) individual behavior; 2) personal normative beliefs (PNBs): what one thinks people should do; 3) social empirical expectations (SEEs): what one thinks other people do; and 4) social normative expectations (SNEs): what one thinks other people think they should do. For a social norm to exist, behavior must be driven by conditional preferences. Figure 3 below summarizes this measurement framework. When behaviors are driven by norms, both empirical and normative expectations are high (in favor of the relevant behavior), and personal behaviors and beliefs are consistent with empirical and normative expectations, respectively.

Social Norms Measurement Framework
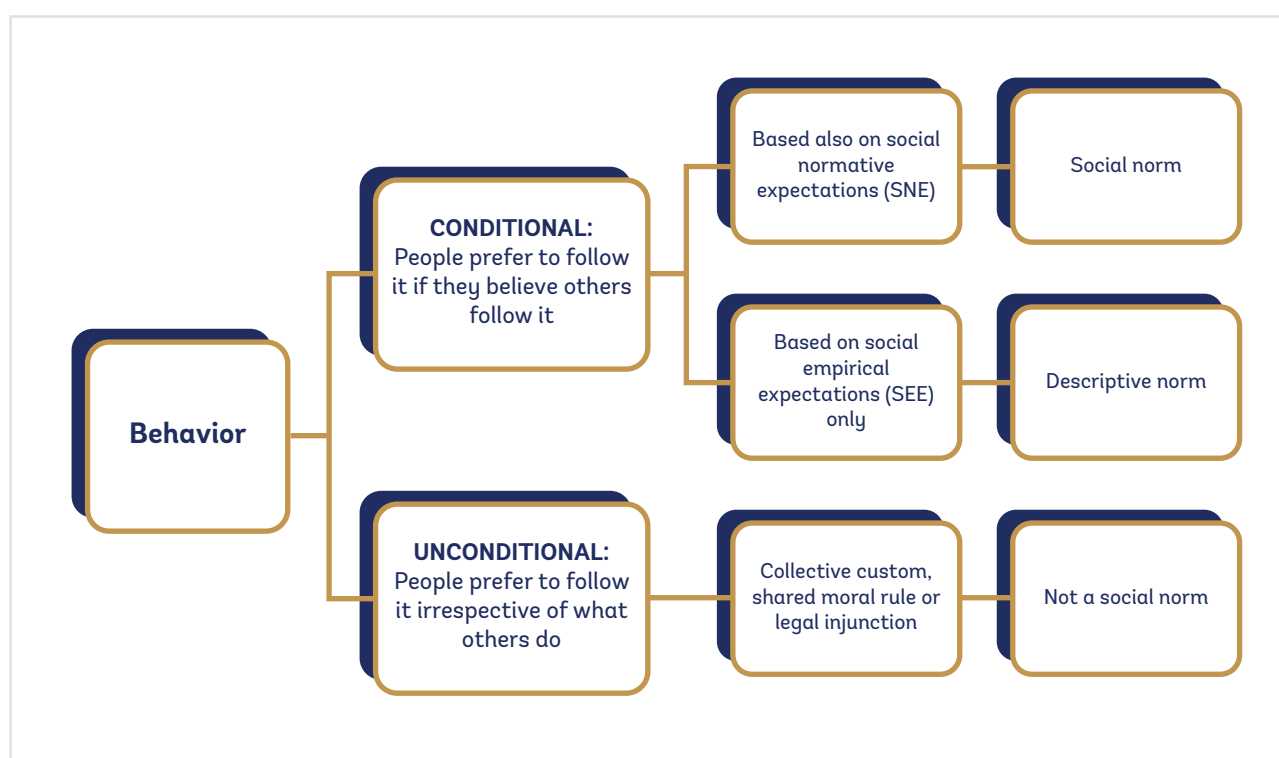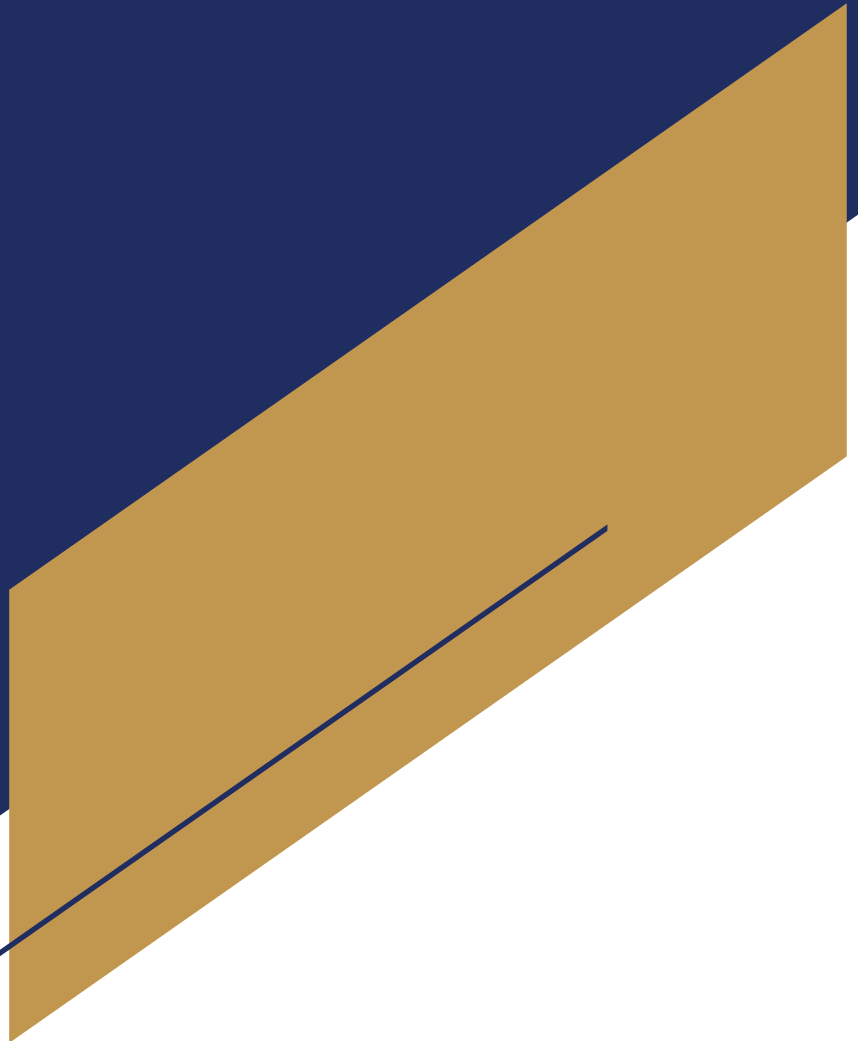
Source: Adapted from Bicchieri, Jiang, and Lindemans (2014).

When examining gender norms, it is also important to take into account the power dynamics within the household, particularly between spouses, and their impact on the perpetuation and enforcement of social norms. Though the employment decision pertains to women, men may play a stronger role than others in a woman's reference group in enforcing the norm of women staying at home, thereby imposing a sanction at the intrahousehold level. Additionally, men themselves may be affected by the norm of men as the primary earner and experience social sanctions when their spouses have jobs, sanctions that they subsequently transmit to their spouses. Efforts to understand the social influences on FLFP can thus also benefit from exploring the beliefs and behaviors of husbands, fathers, and brothers toward their female counterparts—and what women perceive those beliefs to be (Gauri, Rahman, and Sen 2019).
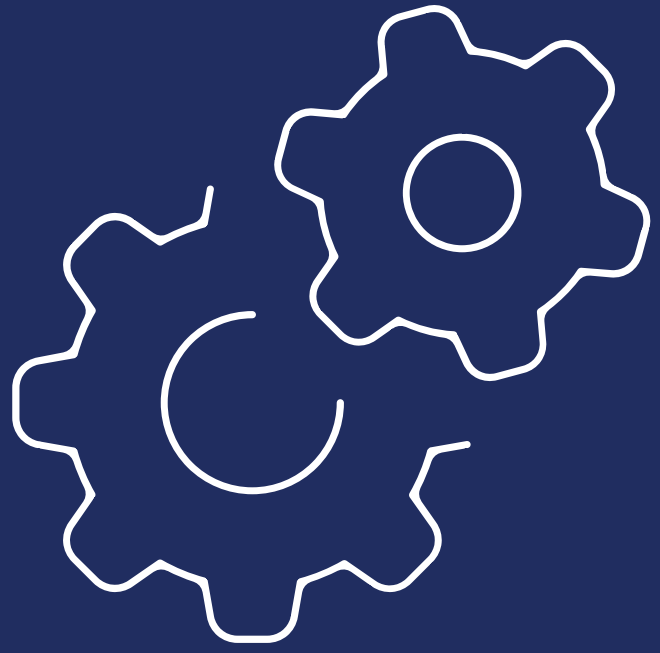
02

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a consecutive research design, beginning with a qualitative study and then using the lessons learned from that exercise to inform a quantitative survey. The purpose of the qualitative component was to scope out the prevalent beliefs and social norms surrounding FLFP. The subsequent quantitative component aims to quantify the current prevalence of these norms within the general population, to understand their influence on women's labor force participation, and to provide a baseline to monitor progress in personal beliefs that influence FLFP over time.

2.1. QUALITATIVE STUDY

The qualitative study was carried out using eight focus group discussions (FGDs) with the purpose of discovering the personal and social barriers to FLFP to be included in the quantitative survey. In total, 85 individuals participated in these FGDs. The study was carried out in three governorates, each representing one of the three main regions (excluding the frontier governorates): Cairo (representing the urban governorates), Gharbiya (representing Lower Egypt), and Minya (representing Upper Egypt). Within each stratum (region), three separate FGDs were conducted by trained facilitators with (1) married men (half of whom had working wives), (2) working women (half of whom were married), and (3) non-working women (half of whom were married).[11] Each group was designed to vary in specific demographic characteristics, such as age, education level, and urban/rural residence.[12] The thematic areas explored in the qualitative study examined barriers to FLFP at various stages of the decision-making process and the influence of social and intrahousehold factors.

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11 Working women and non-working women were combined in Lower Egypt due to budget constraints and the prevalence of moderate views regarding FLFP.

12 Not applicable in the urban governorates.

2.2. QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

Methodology

The purpose of the quantitative survey was to explore the four components of social norms measurement outlined in Section 1.2: individual behavior, personal beliefs, empirical expectations, and normative expectations. To elicit the social expectations, respondents were asked about their expectations with regard to the beliefs and behaviors of others in their community on the subject of FLFP, where "community" referred to the people in their village or place of residence who may have beliefs and opinions that affect their lives.

The quantitative survey was carried out with a total of 6,633 respondents from all 27 governorates and was representative at the national and regional (urban governorates, Lower Egypt, and Upper Egypt) levels. In order to minimize the effect of social desirability bias, in which respondents might feel the need to match their personal beliefs with that of their community, and to minimize the length of the survey to ensure survey completion, two versions of the quantitative survey were carried out with two separate samples. The first survey, hereafter referred to as the "individual survey," was with a nationally and regionally representative sample of 3,340 respondents from 27 governorates. The second survey, hereafter referred to as the "community survey," was with a nationally representative sample of 3,377 respondents, also from 27 governorates. This sampling strategy made it possible to calculate estimates at the national and regional (urban governorates, Lower Egypt, and Upper Egypt) levels with a confidence level of 95 percent and a margin of error of less than 3 percent.

The two surveys were identical, with the exception of the personal beliefs and normative expectations modules in each. Both surveys were administered with individual respondents. The individual survey had an expanded personal beliefs module with 19 questions (six of which were common across both surveys), and the community survey had an expanded normative expectations module with 19 questions (six of which, again, were common across both surveys). During the analysis, data from both surveys (except the additional questions in the expanded modules) were combined to look at overall results across the full sample of 6,633 respondents for variables that were common across both surveys. Analysis of the additional variables in the personal beliefs module of the individual survey and the normative expectations module of the community survey was carried our separately with their respective survey samples as this data could not be combined.

Sampling was done separately for both surveys, and data were collected using phone interviews. Phone numbers, both landlines and mobile, were randomly generated through a Random Digit Dialing (RDD) system.[13]

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13 For information on the guide to conducting public opinion polls, see **http://www.baseera.com.eg/Books2. aspx?ID=111.**

Survey instrument

Both survey questionnaires[14] included a battery of questions under each of the four components of the social norms measurement framework. The main behavior of interest was the current employment status of the female respondents and female counterparts of the male respondents. Each of the modules explored beliefs and expectations around various domains of FLFP, drawing on findings from the literature and the qualitative study. Topics included support for women's right to work, men and women's roles within the household, acceptability of work conditions, and masculinity. In addition to the four main modules, another module was added in both questionnaires, specifically for female respondents, to understand the expectations and influence of male decision makers in the household (husbands for married women, fathers if not married, and eligible brother above the age of 18 if the father is deceased). In this section, female respondents were asked about their expectations with regard to the normative beliefs of their respective male counterparts in relation to FLFP, referred to as intrahousehold expectations. Table 1 below provides an example of how the questions were asked across each of the four core modules as well as with regard to intrahousehold expectations.

TABLE 1. FRAMING OF THE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Module	Question
Individual behavior	Are you currently working?
Personal beliefs	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: A woman has the right to work.
Normative expectations	Each of us lives in the midst of a large community of people in the village or place of residence who may have beliefs and opinions that may affect our lives. Now I want to understand from you the position of your community members. To what extent would they agree with the following statement: A woman has the right to work.
Empirical expectations	How many women in the community that you live in work?
Intrahousehold expectations	Each of us lives with people who are close to us whose opinion we can take into account in decisions regarding work. To what degree does this person (husband/brother/father), regardless of your personal opinion, agree or disagree with the following statement: A woman has the right to work.

All answers were given using a four-point Likert scale, ranging from totally agree to totally disagree for personal beliefs, normative expectations, and intrahousehold expectations, and all of them to none of them for empirical expectations. Responses were reverse coded where applicable, so that the higher values reflect beliefs and expectations that are more supportive of or conducive to FLFP.

Data collection

Data were collected in January 2022 using phone surveys. Around 40 trained phone interviewers participated in the data collection process. A one-day training was conducted prior to each survey to train the interviewers on the questionnaires. A CATI system was developed for the data collection, which matched the questionnaires and included all the needed consistency checks. The quality control team included six senior interviewers who listened to the interviews while they were being conducted and then evaluated and guided the interviewers during the data collection process.

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14 The survey was conducted in Arabic. The instruments were initially developed in Arabic and then translated into English. The full Arabic and English questionnaires are available as a separate technical annex.

Data processing (weighting and analysis)

All data were reweighted to make them representative of key social and geographic groups in the population using 2014 Demographic Health Survey data. Weights were created based on the standard demographic variables—gender, education, region, and rural/urban status—for each of the survey samples as well as the combined sample (with data from both surveys). The combined sample included a total of 6,633 respondents,[15] and statistical experts at Baseera developed sample weights for the datasets. Data cleaning, preparation of the final data files, and analysis were completed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and Stata software.

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15 Some respondents were dropped due to missing IDs.

03

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

The qualitative study explored attitudes around FLFP across four broad thematic areas. Some key findings under each are included here.

1) Motivation for women's entry into the labor force

Economic and financial needs are the driving force behind a woman's decision to enter the labor force. For the majority of married women, it was the financial needs of their families and their willingness to assist their partners with the household expenses. Some women indicated that they felt forced to work due to increased living expenses, and this was affecting their physical and psychological health.

> *"The husband, as usual, worked every day. …. We (the family) needed help and (I) work because there are ….. financial needs first, for children's needs. Secondly, I will not sit and watch, I mean if one of my children needs something, and of course there are water and electricity bills, etc. ….. (To search for work) I searched online, I talked to people, my friends, till one of my friends found me this job."*

> *"We are forced to do both (work and home). They are both equally important. You cannot choose between them because I work for my family. What else would make me leave my house and leave my children (for work)? What made me spend less time at my home with my children? What made me neglect my household duties and children? What makes me spend the whole day at work and go back home at 8 o'clock and be kept in this whole cycle?"*

Generally, the male participants agreed that the culture has changed over time in favor of supporting FLFP. Some male participants suggested that this change was due to the increasing economic and financial needs of a modern family that require both partners to contribute with an income. When directly asked about the advantages of having a working wife, the majority of males acknowledged several reasons, including contributing to the family income and creating positive effects on their children by increasing their self-reliance. Most men also pointed to the ability of women to achieve success in the labor market, sometimes surpassing their male counterparts in that regard.

> *"The 'working woman' is an honorable form anywhere, this is someone who relied entirely or partially on herself… if we will assume, for the sake of argument, that the man left her, died, or something. Who will she depend on if I (the man) confine her or if I make her stay at home. I completely trust the importance, talents, and experiences of working women."*

2) Importance of FLFP

Most of the working women who participated in the FGDs emphasized the material importance of work reflected in their economic empowerment. All the non-working women (married and not married) emphasized that work gives women a sense of agency and also gives them strength, security, and independence in making decisions within the family, and that working women are valued by everyone.

> *"She is a pillar at home, and if he (her husband) does not value her (respect her), his family does. If he oversteps, his family would ruin the world for her because she makes money."*

> *"Women who do not work are controlled. If she makes money, she has a say in the household."*

Many also cite family stability as well as children's well-being and needs as strong incentives for women to work.

> *"When she works, she will work for her children a lot. For example, she will give them swimming, training, lessons, and other needs her husband will not consider. All the husband will be concerned with is education, eating and drinking only."*

On the other hand, women's main reason for not working is their childcare responsibilities, even though some women agree that working should be prioritized in the absence of children.

> *"I do not work, but I work with my children. I am afraid to leave them alone. I thought I would overcome this fear, but I am afraid."*

3) Gender roles, social barriers to FLFP, and safety and structural concerns

These include structural conditions on a woman's work, or what are deemed to be appropriate working conditions. These include time spent at work, distance from home, income earned, and the reputation of the workplace and employer.

> *"If the work is till late hours, of course, it will not work for my children." ..."Traveling is prohibited (by her family)."*

Additionally, the participants were acutely aware of the insufficient facilitators for working women, as many have to manage their responsibilities inside and outside the home alone. Structural obstacles mentioned mainly involved the absence of nurseries in the workplace, and the main cultural obstacle was the husband's refusal to share household duties.

> *"Crushed...when the man works for any number of hours, (he) goes home tired and can barely stand [exhausted] and cannot stand anyone to talk to him, but you (a woman) don't. (Women) work in the morning and prepare the food and complete the rest of the housework with the kids, schoolwork and lessons, and everything."*

> *"She is not allowed to complain, (she must) take care of your home and work without complaint or discussion. You don't get tired and don't rest for a day."*

Entrepreneurship and self-employment, particularly e-commerce, are highly desirable among women due to the assumed flexibility of working hours and freedom to work from home. This suggests that even some of those who accept women working outside the home insist on conforming to the gender limitation that binds women to prioritizing household duties over pursuing economic independence and empowerment.

> *"I prepare food. For a while I wanted to be a makeup artist, but it takes a lot of effort and needs funding."*

The consensus among women was that the ultimate decision whether to accept or reject a job opportunity is controlled by the men in her life, whether the husband, father, or brother. Although there are some instances in which the opinions of girlfriends or mothers are considered, the decision is always subject to permission from a male counterpart.

> *"The husband, if he sees it is not possible, she will not be able to work. He must be convinced about the place of work."*

> *"The issue is priorities. Working is not bad (inappropriate) as long as her husband agrees to what she does (works), (who) she deals with at work, work hours. If a man prioritizes his wife to stay home to care for young children and their schooling, then that's that."*

4) Masculinity and male control

A few men mentioned recent developments in gender equality, though others referenced the demographic changes involving an increase in the number of young adults who no longer believe in the traditional gender roles.

> *"In the past we used to believe that it is inappropriate for women to work. Things have obviously changed nowadays."*

On the other hand, men's reasons for refusing to allow their wives to work include the failure to take care of the children and the fear that women's control over family affairs could threaten his independent authority in household decision making. Some fears went so far as to suggest that if the man were to allow his wife to work, she might not need him at all, leading to a situation in which men are dispensed with and women become totally independent.

> *"If he does not support her financially (by being sole bread winner), I mean, it is possible that she can tell him, 'I work like you,' and at any moment, she can say, 'this is enough' and leave him."*

However, women's own contradictory responses pointed to the persistence of certain patriarchal values exemplified by two prevailing notions: a dismissal of the importance of women's work if the husband is able to fully support the family, and the contention that work and household expenses are the sole responsibility of the man.

> *"The woman who stays at home might be oppressed ..., but she is the man's responsibility in the end. If she is hungry, that is his responsibility."*

04

QUANTITATIVE SURVEY RESULTS

This chapter presents findings from the quantitative surveys. Section 4.1 presents the weighted and unweighted demographic characteristics of the full sample, combining respondents from both the individual and community surveys, as well as the weighted and unweighted characteristics of each of the two samples separately. The descriptive findings in sections 4.2–4.4 utilize the full sample (unless otherwise specified) to show how personal beliefs compare with social and intrahousehold expectations. Section 4.5, which uses factor analysis to categorize the social and attitudinal barriers by thematic areas, uses both surveys separately to compare and propose the relevant themes. Lastly, section 4.6 presents regression findings on the influence of personal, normative, and intrahousehold beliefs using the full sample.

4.1. SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Table 2 below shows the weighted and unweighted distribution of the combined sample from the individual and community surveys. The total sample of 6,633 respondents had a disproportionately higher representation of men compared to the population's gender distribution, as well as a larger representation of individuals with higher levels of education. Those from urban governorates were also overrepresented in the data.[16] After reweighting, the final sample had an equal gender distribution, with a mean age of 41 years. Less than half (40 percent) were from urban areas. Around 50 percent had some level of secondary or post-secondary education, and only 15 percent had university or other higher level of education. More than three-quarters of respondents were married, and a third had children below the age of six at home.

TABLE 2. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMBINED SAMPLE

	Unweighted						Weighted		
	Overall	N	Female	N	Male	N	Overall	Female	Male
Total respondents	**100%**	**6,633**	**36%**	**2,411**	**64%**	**4,222**	**100%**	**49.76%**	**50.24%**
Age (mean years)	40.5	6,633	39.9	2,411	40.9	4,222	41.1	40.9	41.3
Education									
No schooling	7%	456	8%	202	6%	254	15%	19%	11%
Below primary	5%	304	4%	99	5%	205	8%	8%	9%
Primary	7%	491	6%	152	8%	339	13%	13%	14%
Lower secondary	7%	491	8%	183	7%	308	13%	14%	12%
Secondary	41%	2,704	37%	887	43%	1,817	32%	28%	35%
Post secondary	6%	415	7%	166	6%	249	5%	5%	5%
Bachelor's+	27%	1,772	30%	722	25%	1,050	14%	12.9%	16%

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16 This may be in part due to the fact that mobile ownership is slightly higher among men (83 percent) than women (76 percent) in Egypt (GSMA 2022). Additionally, since the Random Digit Dialing (RDD) method includes only households with active mobile phones or landlines, it is not surprising that households from the lowest socioeconomic groups are less represented. Although the sample size for the surveys was large enough to account for these differences, this does point to a potential methodological limitation of sampling using the RDD method.

	Unweighted						Weighted		
	Overall	N	Female	N	Male	N	Overall	Female	Male
Marital status									
Never married	16%	1,068	12%	288	18%	780	13%	9%	16%
Marriage contract	0%	11	0%	5	0%	6	0%	0%	0%
Married	76%	5,013	71%	1,716	78%	3,297	76%	72%	80%
Widower	6%	378	12%	298	2%	80	9%	15%	2%
Divorced	2%	126	3%	82	1%	44	2%	3%	1%
Separated	1%	37	1%	22	0%	15	1%	1%	0%
Employed	57%	3,771	25%	603	75%	3,168	47%	19%	74%
Urban	52%	3,416	57%	1,365	49%	2,051	40%	40%	39%
Has child <6	34%	2,248	29%	697	37%	1,551	33%	30%	36%

Sample characteristics were roughly comparable across both the individual and community surveys, with both having a higher proportion of male respondents and respondents with university or higher education (see Annex 2 for the weighted demographic characteristics of both samples).

4.2. BEHAVIOR: EMPLOYMENT STATUS

The employment status of respondents in the combined sample closely reflects the gender inequality in labor force participation in Egypt discussed in chapter 1. Figure 5 shows that although 74 percent of male respondents are currently working and 14 percent are out of the labor force, only 19 percent of the female respondents are currently working and 66 percent are out of the labor force. Unmarried and urban women have slightly higher levels of employment (21 percent each) compared to their married and rural counterparts (18 and 17 percent, respectively). The unemployment rate is higher for female (15 percent) than male respondents (11 percent).

FIGURE 4.
Employment Status for Men and Women
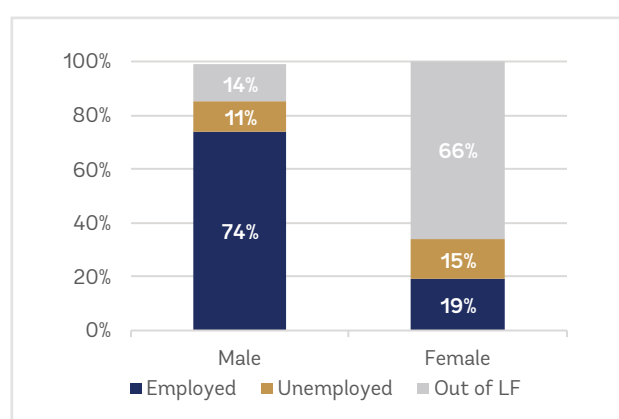
The main outcome of interest in this research study is the employment status of the female respondents and the female counterparts of the male respondents. The employment rate among female counterparts (wife, daughter, or sister) of the male respondents is slightly lower (13 percent) than that of the female respondents (Figure 6). In the combined sample, a total of 13 percent of female respondents and female counterparts of male respondents are currently employed. Among them, 40 percent work in the public sector and 59 percent in the private sector (see Annex 2).

Employment Status of Female Counterparts
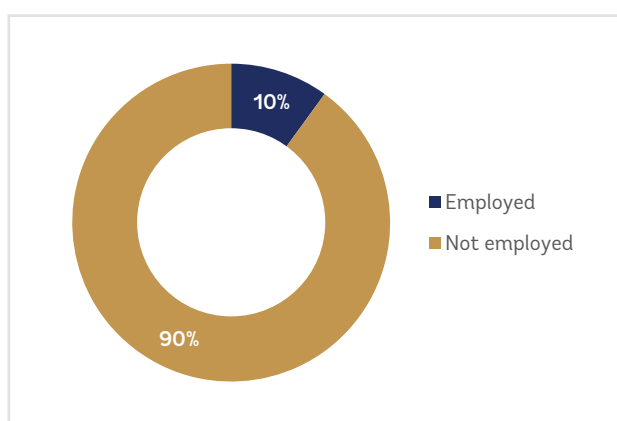
According to the survey data, women leave the labor market for family reasons. Among female respondents and female counterparts of male respondents who do not currently work, 22 percent report having worked in the past. The most common reason for leaving cited by 65 percent of these women was to take care of their home and children (see Annex 2 for detailed results).

4.3. PERSONAL BELIEFS COMPARED TO SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS

Although labor force participation among the female survey respondents and the female counterparts of male survey respondents is very low, general support for FLFP is not. Nearly 80 percent of respondents believe that women have the right to work and also expect others in their community to believe the same. Support for women's right to work is even higher among female respondents, with 92 percent agreeing with the statement compared to 68 percent of men. This suggests that men's attitudes are more restrictive with regard to FLFP in the Egyptian context, and this trend appears to hold across different dimensions of beliefs around FLFP. Interestingly, male and female respondents appear to overestimate the extent of FLFP within their communities (as suggested by the empirical expectations). Despite the low FLFP rate in Egypt, 63 percent of female respondents and 46 percent of male respondents expect most or all of the women in their community to be employed.

FIGURE 6.
Personal Beliefs vs. Social Expectations (full sample)
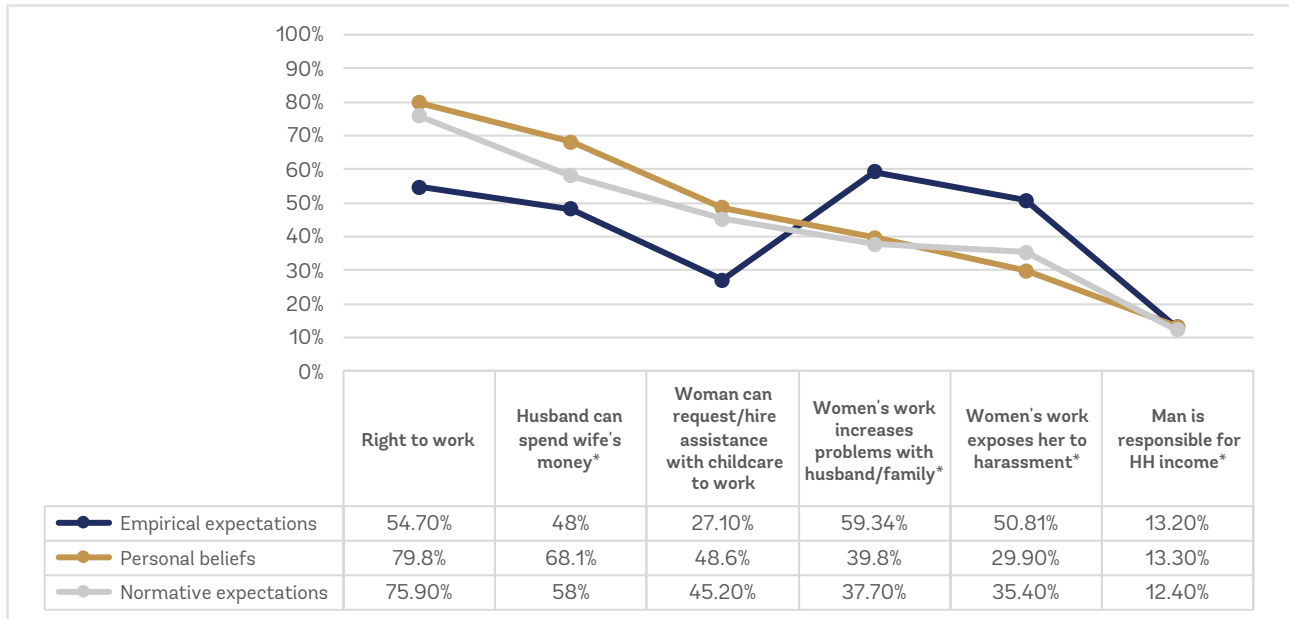
	Right to work	Husband can spend wife's money*	Woman can request/hire assistance with childcare to work	Women's work increases problems with husband/family*	Women's work exposes her to harassment*	Man is responsible for HH income*
Empirical expectations	54.70%	48%	27.10%	59.34%	50.81%	13.20%
Personal beliefs	79.8%	68.1%	48.6%	39.8%	29.90%	13.30%
Normative expectations	75.90%	58%	45.20%	37.70%	35.40%	12.40%

Note: Higher values reflect beliefs and expectations that are more supportive of FLFP. The percentage shows the proportion of respondents who "totally agree" or "agree" with the statements. For SEEs, the percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who think all or most people in their reference network engage in the behavior. Statements marked with * were reverse-coded as they were framed as negative statements: the percentage values in the graph reflect the proportion that "totally disagrees" or "disagrees" with these statements (which reflects views that are more supportive of FLFP).

FIGURE 7.
Personal Beliefs vs. Social Expectations (female respondents)
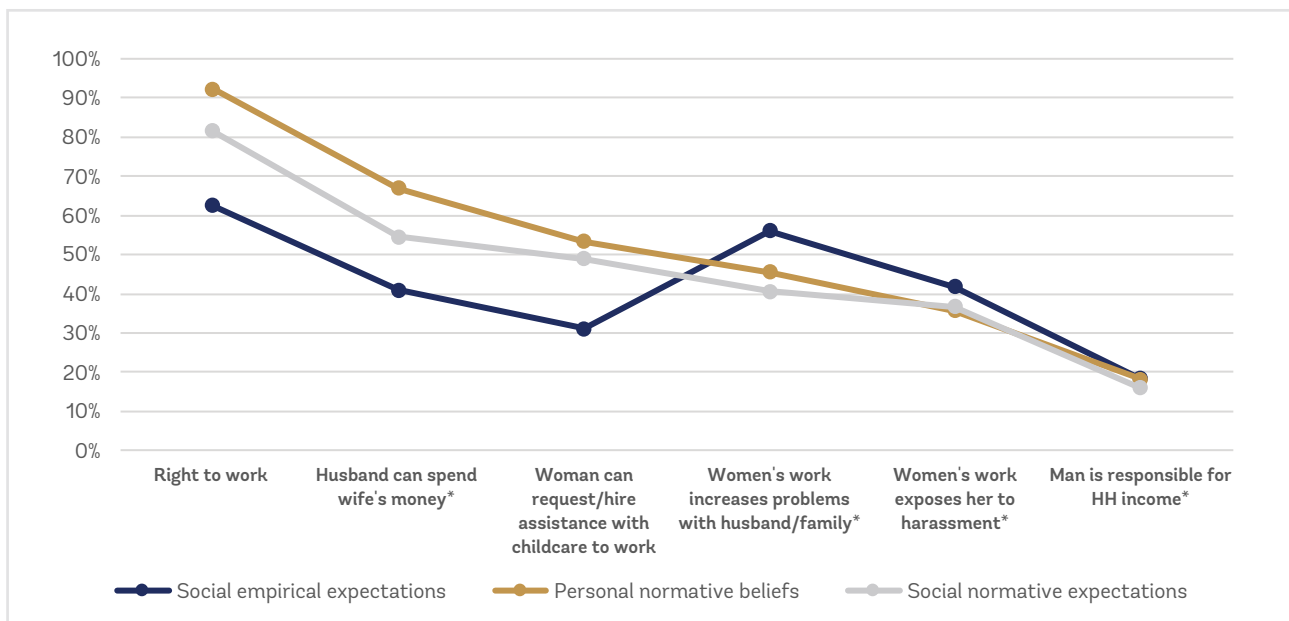
Note: Higher values reflect beliefs and expectations that are more supportive of FLFP. The percentage shows the proportion of respondents who "totally agree" or "agree" with the statements. For SEEs, the percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who think all or most people in their reference network engage in the behavior. Statements marked with * were reverse-coded as they were framed as negative statements: the percentage values in the graph reflect the proportion that "totally disagrees" or "disagrees" with these statements (which reflects views that are more supportive of FLFP).

FIGURE 8.
Personal Beliefs vs. Social Expectations (male respondents)
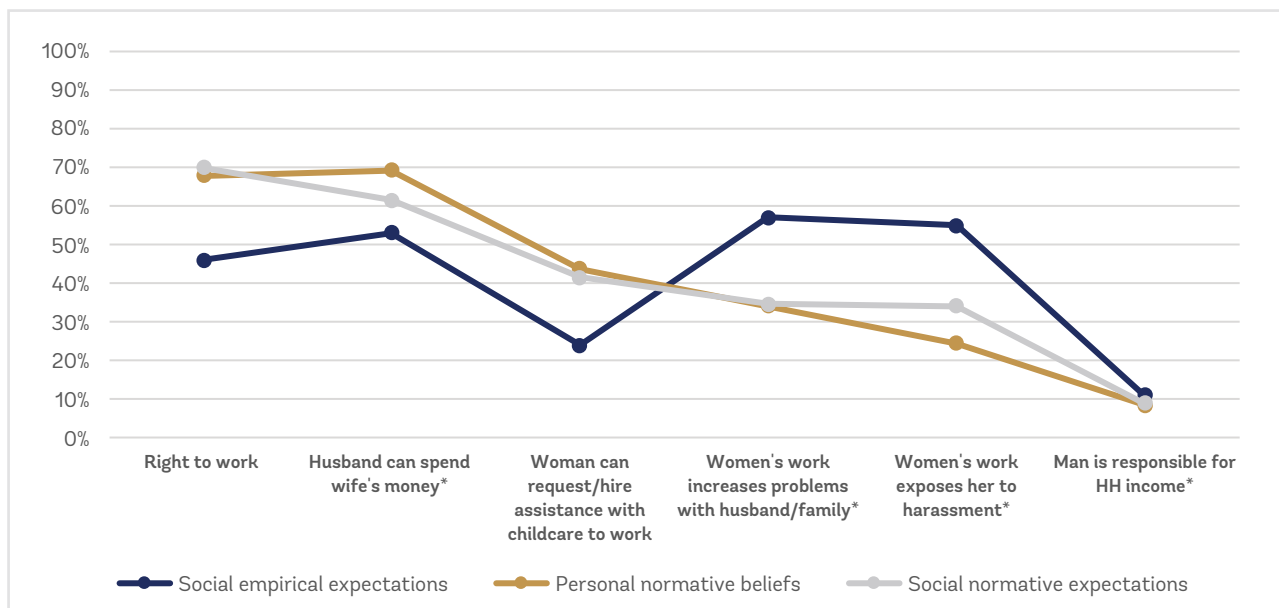
Note: Higher values reflect beliefs and expectations that are more supportive of FLFP. The percentage shows the proportion of respondents who "totally agree" or "agree" with the statements. For SEEs, the percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who think all or most people in their reference network engage in the behavior. Statements marked with * were reverse-coded as they were framed as negative statements: the percentage values in the graph reflect the proportion that "totally disagrees" or "disagrees" with these statements (which reflects views that are more supportive of FLFP).

However, there are some important caveats to this support. As shown in Table 3 below, 90 percent of individual survey respondents believe, and 94 percent of community survey respondents expect others to believe, that when jobs are scarce, men should be given priority over women. Women are also deemed to be more suitable for certain jobs, especially by male respondents in the individual survey, and these beliefs are consistent with the corresponding social normative expectations in the community survey.

Thus, not all views and expectations held by respondents are suggestive of an enabling environment for working women. Nor is women's employment deemed essential, as women's role within the household is still considered to be more important by many. Indeed, patriarchal beliefs around men's role as the primary breadwinners remain strong in Egypt, with only 13 percent of respondents disagreeing with the statement that "household income is the responsibility of the man only." Social normative and social empirical expectations are also consistent with these personal beliefs, though female respondents on average are more likely to disagree, and expect others to disagree, than male respondents. On the other hand, data from both the individual and community surveys show that three-quarters of both male and female respondents believe, and 80 percent expect others to believe, that a woman's decision to work is mainly driven by her family's financial need, indicating the limited perceived importance of women's work beyond the material welfare of her family. However, if the woman does work, nearly seven out of 10 of both male and female respondents disagree that the husband or the father/brother has the right to spend her earnings. Slightly less (58 percent) also expect the community to hold similar beliefs. Around a third expect husbands or fathers of women in their community to do so (i.e., control her wages), though nearly 19 percent also reported not knowing about these practices within families of working women in their communities.

TABLE 3. PERSONAL NORMATIVE BELIEFS (FROM THE INDIVIDUAL SURVEY) AND SOCIAL NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS (FROM THE COMMUNITY SURVEY)

Variable	Personal Normative Beliefs			Social Normative Expectations		
	Overall	Female	Male	Overall	Female	Male
A woman has the right to work.	79%	93%	65%	78%	83%	74%
Education is important for women and for their work.	91%	96%	85%	90%	93%	87%
Working women can achieve a balance between home and work responsibilities.	74%	89%	59%	74%	83%	65%
The husband (or father or older brother) has the right to spend the income of his wife or daughter.	31%	34%	28%	44%	47%	42%
Working women are able to raise their children in a good manner.	65%	76%	53%	66%	74%	58%
Married women should be fully dedicated to their family and should not work after marriage.	54%	43%	64%	60%	57%	63%
With limited job opportunities, men should have priority over women.	90%	87%	92%	94%	94%	95%
Women's work exposes them to harassment.	70%	64%	76%	64%	63%	66%
Women's work increases problems between her and her husband.	65%	59%	71%	64%	62%	66%
Women's work makes them more arrogant and belittling toward their husband.	48%	36%	61%	51%	45%	57%
A working woman has the right to seek assistance with childcare so that she can work.	48%	53%	43%	48%	53%	44%
The generation of income and the family's standard of living are the responsibility of the man only.	86%	81%	92%	89%	86%	92%
Taking care of children is the responsibility of women.	29%	27%	31%	42%	47%	37%
A husband who helps his wife with the housework is a weak husband.	8%	5%	11%	23%	25%	21%
Women should not work in a place that is all men.	51%	44%	58%	55%	52%	57%
The man who allows his wife to work is wrong.	23%	12%	34%	28%	25%	32%
A woman who stays at home is better than a woman who works.	47%	37%	56%	51%	44%	58%
Women are only suitable for work in certain jobs.	70%	60%	80%	72%	64%	79%
The financial needs of their family are the main reason women work.	76%	76%	76%	82%	81%	83%

Note: Table shows proportion of respondents who "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement (weighted).

Strongly perceived negative aspects of working, both at the individual and family levels, are evident from the data. Seventy percent of respondents agree that work exposes women to harassment at the workplace, while 65 percent expect others to agree with the same. Similarly, roughly six out of 10 respondents agree and expect others to agree with the statement that "working women have more marital problems," and (as shown in Table 3 above) around 60 percent of male respondents from the individual survey also think that employment makes women more arrogant toward their husbands. Personal beliefs are stronger among men compared to women when it comes to all three. Despite these strong views and beliefs, empirical expectations suggest lower expected incidence of workplace harassment or marital difficulties. Roughly 37 percent of respondents expect all or most working

women in their communities to have faced harassment (though it is worth noting that another third also expect some or few women to have experienced the same, which is still concerning), and a third of respondents expect all or most working women in their community to be facing marital problems.

There is a higher preference for women to prioritize their caregiver role and a higher expectation that they should do so. Not surprisingly, women are expected to give more priority to their household and children—more than half the respondents believe this and expect others to believe that women should not seek assistance with childcare in order to work. Similarly, nearly two-thirds of male respondents across both the individual and community surveys believe and expect others to believe that married women should be fully dedicated to their families and not work after marriage. In consequence, employment appears to negatively affect how women are perceived. Roughly half of the respondents of the community survey expect others to think, and 45 percent of respondents from the individual survey actually think, that women who stay at home are better than those who work.

Egyptians' views about working women are mixed, however, and some findings are encouraging. Although men do appear to hold more restrictive beliefs and expectations than women, it is also constructive that nearly half of all respondents also disagree with the view that women who stay at home are better. Personal beliefs and social expectations also do not suggest strong opposition to men supporting their spouses—less than 30 percent of individual survey respondents think that taking care of children is exclusively a woman's responsibility—nor do respondents think less of a man who helps his wife with housework or allows her to work (though a third of male respondents do think less of a man under these conditions). A similar trend is also observed with beliefs and expectations around working women seeking assistance with childcare. Although men's views are more restrictive once again, both men and women in the individual and community surveys believe and expect others to believe that working women can balance their home and work responsibilities and raise their children well. Additionally, 49 percent of all respondents believe, and 45 percent expect others to also believe, that women can seek assistance with childcare in order to be able to work. However, only 27 percent expect all or most working women in their communities to actually do so.

4.4. WOMEN'S INTRAHOUSEHOLD NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS

Across most dimensions of beliefs around FLFP, men do appear to hold more restrictive views compared to women. Given the critical role men play in decision making within the household in Egypt, it is useful to explore how women perceive men's beliefs to better understand how that may affect their own decisions. If women see men as the ultimate decision makers within the household and expect men to hold more conservative views about women's labor force participation, it may automatically deter women from considering employment. The intrahousehold expectations module thus explored women's expectations about their husband/ father/brother's normative beliefs.

As shown in Figure 10 above, half of the female respondents report that their husband's opinion matters to them the most when it comes to decisions about their labor force participation. Fathers, mothers, and brothers also appear to play equally important roles in the decision-making process, though significantly less so than husbands, especially for married women.

FIGURE 9.
Intrahousehold Influences on Women
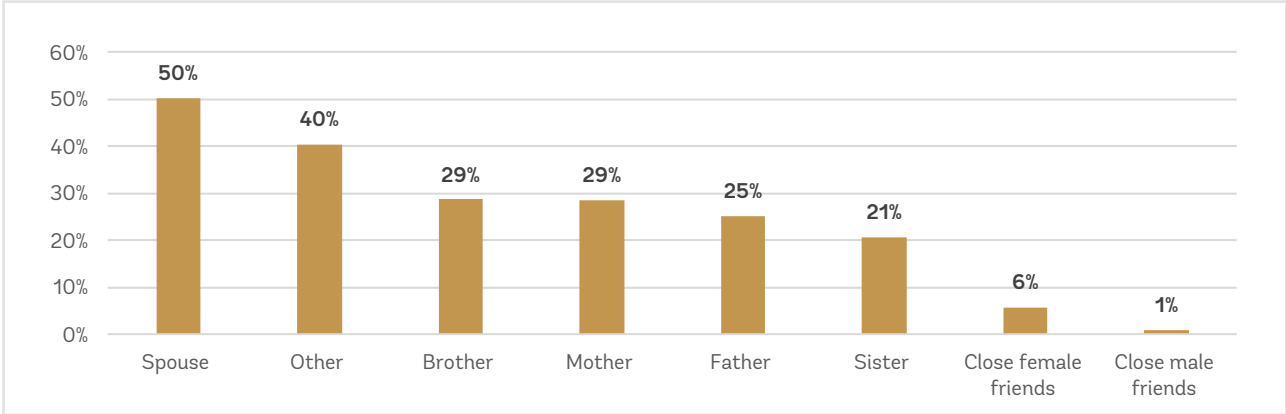
Note: Question posed as: Who are three people in your life right now whose opinion matters to you most or who you respect regarding your work decisions /(if male respondent) wife's (or future wife's) work? Respondents could choose multiple options.

FIGURE 10.
Women's Expectations vs. Men's Beliefs
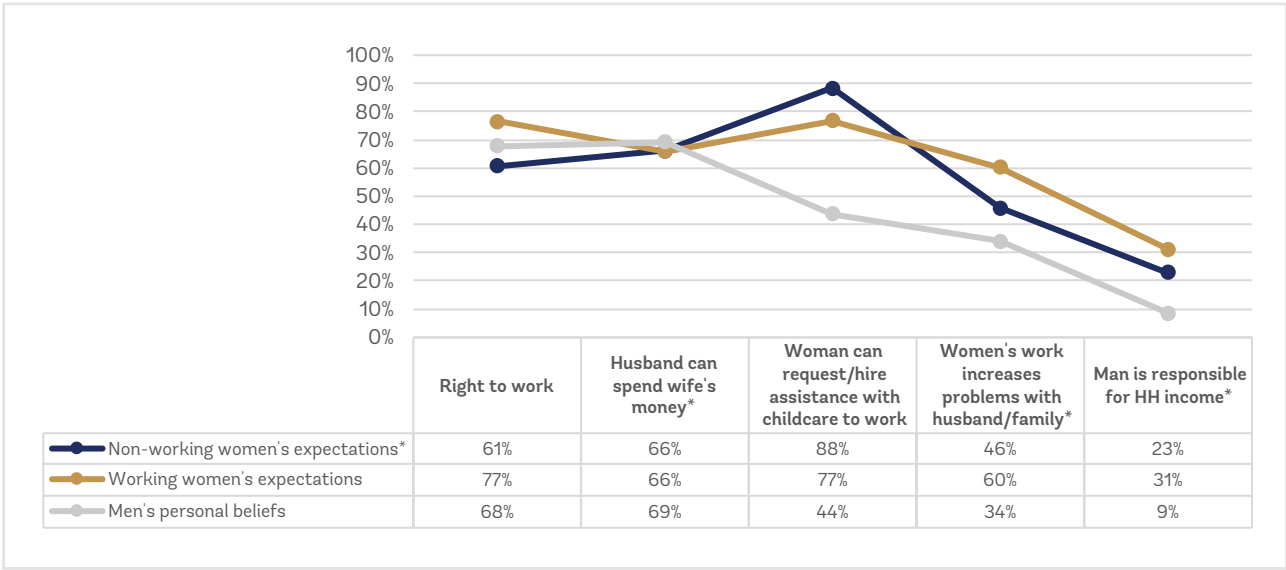
	Right to work	Husband can spend wife's money*	Woman can request/hire assistance with childcare to work	Women's work increases problems with husband/family*	Man is responsible for HH income*
Non-working women's expectations*	61%	66%	88%	46%	23%
Working women's expectations	77%	66%	77%	60%	31%
Men's personal beliefs	68%	69%	44%	34%	9%

Note: Higher values reflect beliefs and expectations that are more supportive of FLFP. The percentage shows the proportion of respondents who "totally agree" or "agree" with the statements. For SEEs, the percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who think all or most people in their reference network engage in the behavior. Statements marked with * were reverse-coded as they were framed as negative statements: the percentage values in the graph reflect the proportion that "totally disagrees" or "disagrees" with these statements (which reflects views that are more supportive of FLFP).

Figure 11 above shows the comparison between men's reported personal beliefs and what working and non-working women's expectations are about the personal beliefs of their male relatives. Across nearly all dimensions, women underestimate the extent of restrictive beliefs held by men. The difference is especially stark when it comes to beliefs around women seeking assistance with childcare and marital problems faced by working women. Non-working women on average have slightly more accurate expectations about their male counterparts' beliefs compared to working women. This is not altogether surprising, as non-working women are more likely to have male counterparts with more restrictive views, which may have influenced their decision not to enter the labor market.

4.5. GENDER NORMS: UNPACKING PERSONAL BELIEFS AND NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS

Two indices were created using data from the individual and community surveys to further unpack the dimensions of beliefs and norms explored in this study and examine how they vary across the different subgroups. To arrive at an index, it is important to first assess the reliability and internal consistency of the items (i.e., the variables) included in the index and what the index is in fact capturing. Data from the individual and community surveys were used to conduct these analyses, using Cronbach's alpha, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Statistic, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and construct validity,[17] and to compare them to the data from the shorter normative expectations and personal beliefs modules in the combined dataset. (See Annex 3 for detailed results of these analyses.)

The 19-item personal beliefs and normative expectations modules from the individual and community surveys both have good internal reliability, with Cronbach's alpha scores of 0.79 and 0.73, respectively. However, further analysis was done to unpack the themes captured by these modules and to develop a shorter module that can used for future research, without significantly compromising its reliability and consistency.

EFA reveals that the personal beliefs and normative expectations modules both capture four key factors or themes.[18] Table 4 below classifies the 12 items that were common across both modules under each factor[19] and categorizes these factors under four themes. However, not all of these individual factors have acceptable internal consistency across their items: only Factors 1 and 2 have Cronbach's alpha values above 0.6, which falls within the acceptable range. As a result, for the purpose of exploring the current status of normative beliefs and expectations in this study, two indices were created[20] using all 12 items from the individual (personal beliefs or PNB index) and community (normative expectations or SNE index) surveys instead of subindices using each theme.

However, although these indices are positively associated with women's employment outcomes for some subgroups, the association is not statistically significant for all. Logistic regressions to assess construct validity show that for both

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17 Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency of a group of items (i.e., variables) and shows how closely these items are related to each other. The KMO Statistic measures the inter-item correlation of items that are grouped together by showing how well other items in a group explain the correlation between individual items. The KMO values are a good indication of whether the data structure is suitable for EFA. EFA is used to identify the different factors (i.e., latent constructs or themes) that are present in a given set of data. EFA is also useful for the construction of indices as it provides information on which items belong together. A single module may have one factor or multiple factors depending on how many constructs these items capture. Lastly, construct validity measures how related a measurement (or index) is to the outcome of interest—in this case, FLFP.

18 The KMO Statistic was above 0.8 for both, which suggested that the data structure was suitable for factor analysis. EFA was conducted separately with data from both surveys.

19 For the purpose of creating a common set of questions for both personal beliefs and normative expectations, only items that appeared under factors/constructs across both modules were selected (as shown in Table 4). The difference was marginal: one additional item loaded on to Factor 4 in the community module ("A woman who stays at home is better than a woman who works") and one additional item loaded on to Factor 1 in the individual module ("Married women should be fully dedicated to their family").

20 Indices show the standardized average of standardized responses across all items within each module. Relevant items were reverse-coded to ensure that higher values reflect less restrictive views and expectations around FLFP.

the personal beliefs and normative expectations indices, the associations are statistically significant for men and for those with above secondary education levels but are weak or not statistically significant for women and those with below secondary education. The association between employment and the normative expectations index is also not statistically significant for the overall sample.

TABLE 4. THEMATIC BREAKDOWN OF ITEMS

Factor 1 Affirmative beliefs around women's FLFP	Factor 2 Negative impacts of women's work	Factor 3 Men's role as primary providers	Factor 4 Women's and men's role in enforcing beliefs
A woman has the right to work.	Women's work exposes them to harassment.	With limited job opportunities, men should have priority over women.	Taking care of children is the responsibility of women.
Education is important for women and for her work.	Women's work increases problems between her and her husband.	The generation of income and the family's standard of living are the responsibility of the man only.	A husband who helps his wife with the housework is a weak husband.
Working women can achieve a balance between home and work responsibilities.	Women's work makes them more arrogant and belittling toward their husbands.		The man who allows his wife to work is wrong.
Working women are able to raise their children in a good manner.			

This suggests the need for further statistical analysis and testing to build a reliable set of indices that predict FLFP and subindices that capture the various dimensions of normative beliefs around FLFP (as EFA suggests that these modules are capturing multiple key constructs). These current results provide an indication of the potential themes that are important to explore in the future. Other methods, such as Lasso regression or Random Decision Forests, can be used in further research to produce a robust index of norms that affect decisions about women's employment.

The above analysis does, however, make it possible to narrow down the 19-item module into a shorter 12-item one that includes all the variables listed in Table 4 above. For the individual survey data, compared to the 19-item module, the internal consistency of the shorter 12-item module (as indicated by the Cronbach's alpha score) decreases marginally from 0.79 to 0.78. Similarly, for the community survey data, internal consistency decreases from 0.73 to 0.70. This exercise is useful to arriving at a shorter set of questions that are more feasible to administer on a larger scale and can be used as a starting point for further testing and analysis.

In comparison, items from the short six-item personal beliefs and normative expectations modules (from the combined survey data) have significantly lower internal consistency—below 0.5—and do not demonstrate any clear factor structures. This suggests that the shorter module that was tested in this study is not a reliable measure of normative beliefs and expectations, especially when combined into an index. Section 4.6 uses a subset of items from the shorter module (one from each of the first three factors identified in Table 4)[21] for regression analysis.

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21 No items from Factor 4 were included in the short module. As with the 19-item module, the items, "The husband (or father) has the right to spend the income of his wife or daughter," and "A working woman has the right to seek assistance with household chores so that she can work," showed low internal consistency and were not included in the analysis. Intrahousehold expectations for the statement, "Women's work exposes them to harassment," were not captured, so this variable was also excluded from the regression specification for better comparison.

Comparison of the 12-item personal beliefs and normative expectations indices shows that normative expectations are slightly more conservative compared to personal beliefs among respondents in this study. Across the survey sample, the average normative expectations index score is 2.54 compared to the average personal beliefs index score of 2.62. These scores do tend to vary by population subgroups. As shown in Figures 12 and 13, both personal beliefs and normative expectations index scores are higher for female respondents, those with higher levels of education (especially university or higher), and those over the age of 50. Those in the frontier governorates also have relatively less restrictive views and expectations compared to other regions. In comparison, younger male respondents with below secondary education appear to hold the most restrictive beliefs and expectations, with personal beliefs and normative expectations index scores of 2.1 and 2.3, respectively.

Personal Normative Beliefs Index (by subgroup)
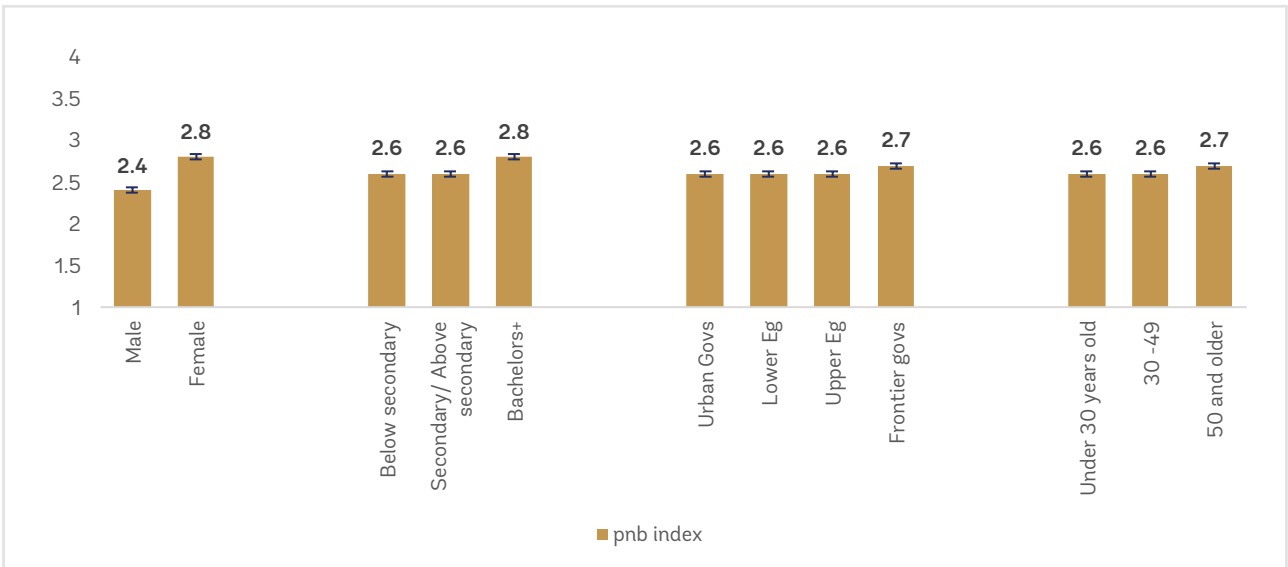
Social Normative Expectations Index (by subgroup)
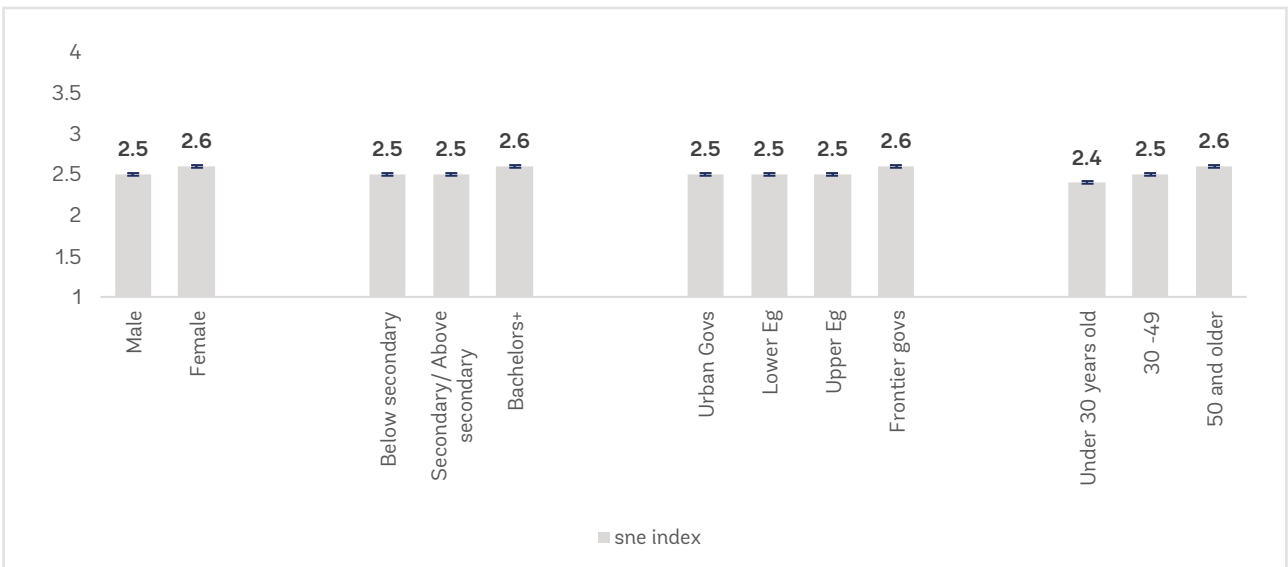
4.6. THE CORRELATION BETWEEN SOCIAL NORMS AND FLFP

Social norms are one of several factors that can influence women's willingness to work and men's willingness to allow their female family members to work. This section explores the relationship between women's labor market outcomes and social expectations (normative and empirical), and the extent to which personal beliefs and social expectations predict FLFP in Egypt, using multivariate logistic regressions. For female respondents, the regression analysis additionally examines the relationship between women's employment and women's expectations about the beliefs of her male counterparts (see Annex 4 for more details on the empirical specification).

Table 5 below shows the results of the logistic regressions. Across all respondent groups, women's work status is most closely associated with empirical expectations about how many other women work: a one unit increase in the empirical expectations score more than doubles the odds of women being employed, which suggests that observing more women working can potentially have a powerful influence on women's employment decisions. Personal beliefs about women's rights are positively associated with women's employment, though this appears to be truer for male respondents. Social expectations, both normative and empirical, around men's role as primary providers for the family also appear to have a strong association with women's employment. This means that expecting others within the community to disagree that men are the primary providers and knowing families where men are not the primary providers (especially for women) are both associated with higher odds of women working. For men, normative expectations about marital problems faced by working women also appear to be a predictor, though this effect is not observed in the overall sample. Lastly, for all groups, a respondent's higher education level is associated with a stronger likelihood of women working. For men, higher socioeconomic status also increases the odds of the counterpart being employed, but the opposite is true for female respondents. Age and the region where one resides do not seem to have any strong associations with women's employment outcomes.

TABLE 5. REGRESSION RESULTS

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
VARIABLES	**All**	Women	Men	Women (IH)
PNB: Right to work	1.289***	0.928	1.268***	0.897
	(0.0985)	(0.117)	(0.113)	(0.123)
PNB: Marital problem	1.127*	1.100	1.120	0.968
	(0.0699)	(0.0896)	(0.0956)	(0.101)
PNB: Men's provider responsibility	1.065	1.047	0.929	1.015
	(0.0603)	(0.0752)	(0.0851)	(0.0802)
SEE: Right to work	2.128***	2.002***	2.134***	2.002***
	(0.180)	(0.237)	(0.243)	(0.258)
SEE: Marital problem	0.975	0.940	1.066	0.968
	(0.0346)	(0.0476)	(0.0467)	(0.0533)

VARIABLES	(1) All	(2) Women	(3) Men	(4) Women (IH)
SEE: Men's provider responsibility	1.166***	1.125**	1.088	1.068
	(0.0479)	(0.0573)	(0.0914)	(0.0611)
SNE: Right to work	0.990	0.898	1.157	0.838*
	(0.0692)	(0.0879)	(0.104)	(0.0855)
SNE: Marital problem	1.013	0.970	1.184**	0.929
	(0.0647)	(0.0839)	(0.0914)	(0.0879)
SNE: Men's provider responsibility	1.248***	1.211**	1.273**	1.196**
	(0.0741)	(0.0938)	(0.120)	(0.0969)
IH: Right to work				1.203**
				(0.0987)
IH: Marital problem				1.249**
				(0.135)
IH: Men's provider responsibility				1.027
				(0.0778)
Age	1.004	1.003	1.004	1.007
	(0.00359)	(0.00491)	(0.00586)	(0.00579)
Lower Egypt	1.013	0.916	1.372	0.990
	(0.139)	(0.165)	(0.294)	(0.195)
Upper Egypt	0.950	0.948	1.062	0.967
	(0.139)	(0.186)	(0.242)	(0.208)
Frontier	1.300	1.486	1.274	1.278
	(0.241)	(0.392)	(0.332)	(0.358)
Married	1.480***	0.955		0.921
	(0.209)	(0.154)		(0.185)
Education	1.225***	1.313***	1.234***	1.316***
	(0.0441)	(0.0653)	(0.0602)	(0.0702)
Socioeconomic status	0.924	0.739***	1.425***	0.752***
	(0.0628)	(0.0721)	(0.131)	(0.0790)
Constant	0.000944***	0.0165***	0.000204***	0.0105***
	(0.000494)	(0.0125)	(0.000137)	(0.00871)
Observations	6,149	2,210	3,085	1,917

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

For female respondents, factoring in expectations about their male counterpart's beliefs (Column 4) shows that men's beliefs around women's right to work and marital problems for working women do tend to be associated with the likelihood of their female counterparts working. Women's own beliefs do not seem to matter once the counterpart's beliefs are taken into account.

BOX 1. IS WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONAL ON SOCIAL NORMS?

To explore whether employment-related decisions are conditional on social expectations, the quantitative survey also included the following vignettes, and respondents were asked what they think the person in the vignette would do with regard to her decision to work:

Vignette 1:

If a woman has children and gets a job opportunity, and if most of the people in her community accept women working and most of the women work, do you think she will work?
(low social empirical and normative expectations against women working: low-low)

Vignette 2:

If a woman has children and gets a job opportunity, and if most of the people in her community do not accept women working and most of the women do not work, do you think she will work?
(high social empirical and normative expectations against women working: high-high)

Results suggests that decisions around women's work are likely to be norm dependent in the context of Egypt. In the low-low scenario, 88 percent of all respondents (weighted) responded positively (i.e., "She will work"), while in the high-high scenario, 55 percent responded positively. In both scenarios, women were more likely to respond positively compared to men. Comparison of the weighted responses to the low-low and high-high vignettes shows statistically significant differences (see Table A below) for the overall group as well as for male and female respondents. As outlined in chapter 2, a behavior can be considered to be norm dependent if one's behavior (or expected behavior, in this case) changes in response to what one expects others to do and to believe. If behavior changes when one moves from a society with a "high-high" expectation to a "low-low" one, it indicates that the behavior is likely to be influenced by social norms.

TABLE A. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIGH-HIGH AND LOW-LOW VIGNETTES

	(1)	(2)	(3)
VARIABLES	**All**	**Women**	**Men**
Low-Low	0.8779	0.9423	0.8141
	(0.0040)	(0.0047)	(0.0060)
High-High	0.5492	0.6157	0.4835
	(0.0061)	(0.0099)	(0.0077)
Difference	0.3286***	0.3266***	0.33.07***
	(0.0062)	(0.0101)	(0.0081)
Observations	6,633	2,411	4,222

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

05
DISCUSSION

This study aims to develop a more nuanced understanding of the normative barriers affecting women's ability to join the labor force in Egypt by exploring the differences between individual behavior, personal beliefs, and social expectations around women's employment. It does so by applying a systematic measurement framework for social norms, along with a qualitative exploration of women's decision making and considerations with regard to employment.

Overall, support for women's right to work appears to be strong in Egypt across all respondent groups, especially among women, though some variations do exist. Men, who frequently have the final say in decisions about women's work and whose beliefs tend to play a significant role in women's decision to work, have relatively lower levels of support for women's right to work in comparison, although nearly two-thirds do not hold restrictive views. This is an important finding, because it suggests that women's own beliefs are unlikely to be the barrier when it comes to FLFP, and thus targeting interventions toward changing beliefs held by men is more likely to lead to better employment outcomes for women.

However, this support does come with some caveats. Findings suggest that Egyptians believe that men should still be given priority when job opportunities are scarce and that women may not be suitable for all kinds of jobs. These patterns are noteworthy because, over time, Egypt has seen a shift in the labor market toward more manual and physical tasks that are less likely to be seen as suitable for women. This, combined with the weak demand for labor, can make it particularly challenging for women to find jobs (World Bank 2021). This may also provide some explanation for why, despite general support for women's employment, FLFP continues to be so low in Egypt.

Not all beliefs and expectations are supportive of women working. For example, women are not expected to be income earners for the family. Overwhelmingly it is men who are deemed responsible for providing income for the family, and this is consistent across respondents' personal beliefs and social expectations. This is not surprising, however. Meta-norms[22] around men's role as the sole income earners have been found to consistently pose a significant normative barrier to FLFP across different contexts (IRH 2021), and Egypt is no exception. Indeed, qualitative findings show that financial need is often the only reason behind women's decision to work, even though some women, especially non-working women, do recognize the importance of work in gaining independence and security for themselves. In the context of Egypt, a woman's decision to participate in the labor force may signal that the family's financial needs are not being sufficiently met by the male income earner, which can subsequently impose a social sanction on the man. Regression results do show strong evidence of this. Findings suggest that the association of men's provider role with women's employment is purely driven by social expectations, especially normative expectations, across the entire

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22 Meta-norms are defined as norms that "connect with deeply rooted determinants, operate at a more profound level of society and influence multiple behaviors" (see Heise and Manji 2016).

sample and the gender subgroups. This means that barriers posed by the traditional role of men as primary providers are more externally driven and imposed. Believing that others hold these views may therefore discourage women from working and men from allowing their female counterparts to work.

Women are still expected to be the caretakers and caregivers within their home, though not all beliefs and expectation are unsupportive of women's employment. The study findings show that women who leave the labor force primarily do so in order to take care of their families and children. Beliefs and expectations around women's caregiver and caretaker roles are particularly strong among male respondents, who are more likely to think that women should prioritize family and caregiving over employment. This dependency of the household economy on women's time may result in a misallocation of talents in which women are held back from productive economic participation, with broader implications for productivity growth in the Egyptian economy. However, there is scope to address this, since there appears to be limited opposition to men supporting their spouses, and working women are generally expected to be able to balance work and home and raise their children well.

When it comes to general support for women's work, personal beliefs are not very different from normative expectations, which indicates that pluralistic ignorance is not an issue in this context. This is true across most beliefs around FLFP— personal beliefs and normative expectations are very closely aligned on average and follow similar trends—irrespective of how restrictive or supportive of women's employment they are. This suggests that personal attitudes are as restrictive as normative expectations (when they are conservative) and potentially driven by deeply entrenched beliefs that are also consistent with social expectations.

Empirical expectations, on the other hand, do not necessarily align with personal beliefs and social expectations, nor do they always follow similar patterns. Interestingly, both men and women tend to significantly overestimate the proportion of women working within their communities, with over half expecting all or most women in their communities to work outside the home. This is important because one of the factors most significantly associated with the likelihood of a woman being employed is observing how many women around her work. Rather than normative expectations, which do not seem to be strongly associated with FLFP, this seems to be more of a question of social validation or social proof. One possible explanation for this overestimation is that working women are more visible and noticeable (since it is less expected), leading people to overestimate the proportion of women who work. Given the potential importance of empirical expectations suggested in the regression results, some of the expectations about what working women do and experience could impede the decision to participate or allow women to participate in the labor force. For example, among both men and women, around 60 percent expect working women to experience marital problems, and only 30 percent expect working women to seek help for childcare. Similarly, expectations about harassment experienced by working women are very high, especially among male respondents (nearly 60 percent). These expectations can make employment seem like a suboptimal option for women and restrict the support and safety they can expect that can enable them to work.

Overall, social norms do appear to influence women's work decisions. As shown in the vignette analysis in Box 1, there are statistically significant differences in how respondents expect people to act when the social norms around them change from being supportive to unsupportive of women's employment, suggesting employment decisions are dependent on norms. The regression findings, however, imply that the influence of norms is more nuanced and can be stronger along some dimensions and for some groups than others. For example, when it comes to social norms around men's role as primary providers for their families, both empirical and normative expectations appear to be strongly associated with women's employment outcomes. However, for general support for women's work, it is the observed behavior of others (that is, how many women in their community work) and one's own beliefs that are associated with employment outcomes, rather than normative expectations about others' support for women's right to work. For women, decisions around work are more closely associated with social expectations, both normative and empirical, as well as expectations about the beliefs of their male counterparts.

Expectations about the beliefs of male counterparts also matter to women in deciding whether to work. Both the qualitative and quantitative data suggest that men are key decision makers in the household and play an important role in women's decisions about joining the labor force. Women also appear to, on average, underestimate the extent of restrictive beliefs held by men across most aspects of FLFP. Given the importance of intrahousehold expectations in women's decision to work, this is not necessarily bad. However, it also means that women who choose to pursue employment opportunities may be more likely to experience more prohibitions from their male counterparts than what they might anticipate.

The quantitative data suggest that beliefs around FLFP can be broadly categorized under four key themes: 1) negative impacts of women's work; 2) affirmative statements about FLFP; 3) men's primary role as provider and women's role at home; and 4) women's responsibilities and men's role in enforcing them. Analysis of the combined index of these themes for personal beliefs and normative expectations shows that normative expectations are, on average, slightly more restrictive than personal beliefs in Egypt. Although the scores are moderate for both, on average there are some noteworthy differences observed across subgroups that are important for policy and targeting. The subgroup that appears to hold the most restrictive beliefs and expectations around FLFP are younger male respondents with less than secondary education. This may provide some explanation for the recent declining FLFP trend in Egypt and suggests a strong intergenerational transmission of restrictive social norms and beliefs. It also points to the importance of focusing interventions on less-educated young men, including youth, who will likely continue to exert strong influence on the decision making of their spouses and other female family members regarding employment and deter them from joining the labor force.

06

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to capitalize on the results of this current study, which sought to better understand how social norms impact women's economic empowerment by focusing on individual behavior, personal beliefs, normative expectations, and empirical expectations. This can help to improve the outcome of programs aimed at increasing FLFP and bridging the gender gap in employment. A better understanding of the relationship between individual norms and perceptions about community norms regarding FLFP can be informative in developing targeted interventions at the community and individual levels in Egypt. This will be particularly important for designing interventions related to the national programs Haya Karima, Osra, Forsa, and Waii. One important recommendation is to focus particularly on male youth, as the findings of the study pointed to the high level of restrictive views within this group, especially when measuring personal beliefs.

The rest of this chapter outlines some key recommendations that emerged from the findings of this study.

1. Develop awareness and sensitization campaigns targeting men and boys.

There are notably restrictive and confining personal beliefs among many Egyptian males regarding FLFP. This is especially true for younger, less-educated men. Given the critical role men appear to play in women's employment decisions, it is important to develop innovative interventions directed at men that advocate for gender equality. These interventions should promote gender-equitable attitudes and also redefine the masculinity norms around men's role as the main providers for their families. A mix of media campaign modalities and platforms, including social media, soap operas, gamification, and aspirational videos, needs to be developed and segmented properly. Equimundo's (formerly Promundo-US) "Program H: Engaging Young Men in the Promotion of Health and Gender Equity" is an initiative that encourages young men to change masculinity norms that perpetuate gender inequality. Using a combination of education curriculums and community campaigns led by men, the program has been successful in creating more gender-equitable attitudes among men and reducing the perpetration and acceptance of intimate partner violence in several settings (Doyle and Kato-Wallace 2021).

However, sensitization needs to start early. Awareness raising and sensitization among school children to embed positive gender attitudes and norms could also yield positive results. Addressing gender norms at an early age may have an impact not only on adolescents throughout their life but also on their parents and future generations. In a study conducted in India, researchers evaluated the school-based program *Taaron ki Toli* (Gang of Stars) to test its impact on adolescents' gender attitudes, aspirations, and behaviors through discussion and persuasion. The program helped to promote more progressive, gender-equal attitudes among students. Both boys and girls were shown to have changed their behavior to be more gender equitable (Dhar, Jain, and Jayachandran 2022).

2. Change aspirations for women by raising awareness of the value of FLFP.

Modifying the narratives and views around the benefits of women's work—beyond easing the family's financial constraints—and the acceptability of women's roles outside the home can ease the social constraints women face when deciding whether to seek formal employment. This can be done using community-based and mass media campaigns, edutainment, role models, and peer mentoring. Exposure to women in leadership positives has been shown to raise the educational aspirations of women and girls in India (Beaman et al. 2012). Exposure to working women from similar backgrounds with successful careers who managed to overcome the structural, social, and intrahousehold barriers to FLFP could similarly raise employment aspirations for women. Popular media can also play a role. In Brazil, strong linkages were found between having access to soap operas that featured independent female characters with few, if any, children and the country's rapid decline in fertility (La Ferrara, Chong, and Duryea 2012).

Existing initiatives can be leveraged to promote the value of FLFP. The NCW previously launched the *Ta'a Marbouta* initiative as an advocacy and communication campaign to promote women's empowerment, and this could be further leveraged, together with grassroots engagement at the local level, to shape a stronger, more positive narrative around the value added of women working outside the home. It is equally important to identify local champions and to encourage media outlets and soap operas to facilitate gender norms messages. Through the *Waii* program under the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the government is emphasizing the positive spillover effects of women's economic empowerment among poor and vulnerable groups in all governorates, and this effort could be expanded.

3. Continue efforts against the harassment of women at the workplace and on public transport.

A large majority of respondents believe that work outside the home subjects women to harassment. All stakeholders should continue to support recent government efforts against harassment in Egypt, including violence against women in the workplace and on public transportation. Making females and their families more aware of the measures and tools available to protect them will help in reducing the barriers to women's economic empowerment.

It is also important to ensure improved access to safe and reliable transportation, which is positively linked to increases in women's employment (Martinez et al. 2020; Seki and Yamada 2020). A World Bank report examining the role of public transportation in women's economic empowerment found that only 13 percent of jobs in Cairo can be accessed by residents within 60 minutes using public transport or by walking (Belhaj, Um, and Alam 2023). Improving the accessibility and availability of public transportation will require, among other measures, increasing the coverage of the public transport system and the frequency of buses and other forms of transportation and improving the placement of public transit stops (especially keeping in mind the safety aspect for women).

The NCW is joining forces with the Ministry of Transport to develop a code of conduct to combat harassment and provide greater safety for women and girls on public transportation. In addition, the NCW has championed the development of one-stop-shop gender-based violence centers for survivors to provide full-fledged, coordinated, and multisectoral services through a national referral pathway and essential support package that ensures the safety of Egyptian women.

Enforcement of harassment laws and policies can also be strengthened through the involvement of women in the legal and judicial systems. Presidential decree 446 for 2021 appointed 48 women judges to the State Council and 50 women judges to the Public Prosecutor's Office. Having women judges

and prosecutors can play an important role in women's access to justice, especially when it comes to sensitive issues surrounding personal status law (family courts), gender-based violence, rape, female genital mutilation, and sexual harassment. It can also encourage more women to come forward with their complaints with more ease, including in cases of sexual harassment at the workplace. Global evidence confirms that increasing the number of female judges and other front-line justice sector officials can help create more conducive environments for women in courts and can make a difference with regard to the outcomes, especially for sexual violence cases (UN Women 2018). These measures could also help to create safer environments for women who work outside the home.

4. Promote better access to childcare.

The double burden of work and family care responsibilities on working women can hinder women's economic empowerment. The qualitative study findings strongly point to childcare as a major barrier to FLFP. Findings from the quantitative surveys also show some restrictive views and expectations around working women's right to seek childcare and strong beliefs and expectations among men that married women should prioritize family over work. Investing in a care economy to provide quality childcare options and making childcare accessible and affordable for working women can alleviate some of the challenges posed by these beliefs and expectations.

With daycare coverage estimated at 8 percent for children between 0 and 4 years and 31 percent for preschool children (between 4 and 6 years), along with the marital and care responsibilities on women, it becomes difficult for women to engage in paid work outside the home. Research and literature indicate the positive impact of the care economy and access to childcare on FLFP as a double benefit, as it both allows working mothers to go back to work and also represents an attractive sector for female employment. There is also an additional benefit to children's health, education, and overall development. Innovative business models, such as facilitating home-based daycare and establishing mobile creches on business premises, would help in providing affordable childcare to households with limited income.

However, the availability of childcare does not guarantee take-up. A review of childcare interventions from several low- and middle-income countries showed that the availability of childcare had a positive impact on FLFP only when there were no additional barriers, such as restrictive gender norms or a lack of jobs, to women's employment outside the home (J-PAL Policy Insight 2023). This suggests that childcare access may need to be accompanied by interventions that promote demand for childcare among parents as well as social acceptance of its use in order to change social attitudes that condemn mothers who make use of these services. Though more research is needed to understand the barriers to uptake of childcare services in the specific context of Egypt, interventions that provide information about the benefits of childcare, including the developmental advantages for children, or that engage female role models who use and endorse childcare services could improve parental awareness and opinions of childcare use. Similarly, local communities and nongovernmental organizations could play a role in fostering a positive image around childcare through their monitoring and presence at the grassroots level.

Under Haya Karima, a presidential initiative promoting a decent life for all citizens, the Ministry of Social Solidarity is working on the registration and licensing of nurseries and on establishing early childhood centers in an effort to expand coverage of nurseries and early childhood development services across the country. Easing the legislative framework and regulatory procedures on operating nurseries will also help to unlock the potential of the private sector to engage in this sector.

5. Bolster the digital economy as a source of jobs for women.

A large percentage of the respondents believe that women's work exposes them to harassment and does not allow them to properly raise their children. The digital economy is a job-creating sector and as such, it is a vehicle for creating new employment opportunities for women. The private sector needs to play a stronger role in creating more jobs for women. The information, technology and communications (ICT) sector, in particular, is one that circumvents many of the challenges facing women, making it one of the most female friendly service industries, with promising growth potential for female employment in Egypt. The post-COVID world is witnessing a paradigm shift in the recruitment process, as well as in the nature and method of work in all sectors, which might reduce women's employment barriers. The flexi-work environment and tele-working will make the workplace safer and more friendly to women. Furthermore, it might make social norms less hostile to women working outside the home.

At the same time, it is important to address the gender gaps in STEM [science, technology, engineering, and math] education, careers, and digital skills. Female enrollment in higher education in Egypt has increased in recent years, but it needs to shift toward disciplines that offer higher rates of employment for females. Even among those who do follow studies in the STEM fields, women are more likely than men to shift out of STEM careers once they are in the labor market. Higher education institutions need to create career guidance mechanisms that specifically target female secondary students to inform their decisions about which field of study to pursue, encouraging them to enroll in the STEM disciplines or other more labor market–relevant programs. These efforts can utilize female role models to raise aspirations and challenge prevailing norms around appropriate careers for women. Their employability could be further enhanced through targeted support by university career services to ease their transition into jobs. This would ideally be coupled with behavioral training targeting teachers at all grade levels to address stereotyping on men and women, and to establish a more sensitive and positive mindset towards women early on.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1.
NUMBER OF THE DAY INITIATIVE:
EGYPTIAN WOMEN IN NUMBERS

Egyptian women in numbers

1	Married-Woman's Work		44%	44% of Egyptians in 2018 viewed that married-woman's work negatively impacts families, 25% believed it has no effect, and 23% viewed it positive.
2	Elderly Care		34%	34% of Egyptian men and 27% of women in 2020 refused hiring caregivers for elderly parents even if respondent is unable to care for their elderly themselves.
3	Employment Opportunities		83%	83% of Egyptian men in 2018 believed that men should be given priority when there are limited employment opportunities, compared to 72% of women.
4	Women's Job		68%	68% of Egyptian men vs 49% of women in 2018 believed that women should be allowed to work only in specific jobs deemed appropriate
5	Stay Late at Work		37%	37% of Egyptian in 2018 thought that it's acceptable for women to stay late at work, the percentage rose from 28% among males to 46% among females.
6	Work Under a Female Supervisor		18%	18% of Egyptians in 2018 found it unacceptable to work under a female supervisor even if she is qualified and appropriate for the position, the percentage rose from 13% among females to 22% aming males.
7	Employment Opportunities in Urban		51%	51% of rural women believed in 2018 that employment opportunities in urban centers are better for urban residents than rural even if they are equally qualified.
8	Working under a Female Supervisor		8%	Only 8% of Egyptians in 2018 were working under a female supervisor and 55% under a male supervisor.
9	Owning Agriculture Land		34%	20% of rural women's households in Egypt in 2018 owned agriculture land; among which 34% of women at least sometimes work in this land
10	Women Working with Men		40%	40% of Egyptian men found in 2018 it unacceptable for a women's workplace to be full of male colleagues, comapred to 36% of women.
11	Determining Salarie		30%	30% of Egyptian men in 2018 and 22% of women believed that only competence should be a factor in determining salaries for the same position at the same place and not gender.
12	Women Working Far From Home		57%	57% of Egyptian in 2018 thought that women working far from home as socially acceptable, the percentage increased from 45% among males to 69% among females.
13	Sending Children to Nurseries		36%	36% of Egyptian men in 2020 considered women who send their children to nurseries as negligent, compared to 31% of women.
14	Female President		21%	21% of Egyptian men and 28% of women in 2018 approved having a female president.
15	Male and Female Labor		46%	46% of rural women believed in 2018 that employers prefer male labor to female labor even if they are equally qualified.

16	Female Supervisor		39%	46% of rural women believed in 2018 that employers prefer male labor to female labor even if they are equally qualified.
17	Wife's Income		59%	59% of Egyptians believed in 2018 if a wife's income is more will cause problem, the percentage increased from 57% in rural areas to 61% in urban areas.
18	Gender of Supervisor		36%	36% of women in Egypt in 2018 were indifferent to gender of supervisor compared to 41% of men.
19	Children's Caregivers		97%	97% of Egyptians who live in families with children refuse to rely on child care providers, according to 2020 data
20	Elderly care		80%	80% of Egyptians believed that it is a shame that their father or mother enters a nursing home for the elderl, according to 2018 data
21	Child Care		46%	46% of Egyptians think that people who work in child care cannot be trusted according to 2020 data
22	Women's True Success		92%	92% of Egyptians believed that women's true success is at home with her kids, according to 2018 data.
23	Men's Salary		61%	61% believed that men should get higher because they are the main responsible for the family, according to 2018 data.
24	Women's Working Hours After Childbirth		86%	86% of Egyptians believed that working women should have different work hours after childbirth, according to 2018 data.
25	Changing Work		71%	71% of Egyptians said that having a suitable person to take care of their children could make them change the nature of their work, according to 2020 data.
26	Females' Education		48%	48% of Egyptians believe that females should be educated until they obtain a university degree, according to 2018 data
27	Encouraging Women to Work		71%	71% of Egyptians said that newspapers, TV, and radio help encourage women to work, according to 2018 data
28	Women's Work at Home		34%	34% of Egyptian males said that women's work at home is considered work that should be paid, compared to 27% of females, according to 2018 data.
29	Participation in the Basic Expenses of the House		35%	35% of Egyptian males and 50% of females believe that if the wife has an income, she should participate in the basic expenses of the house, according to 2018 data.
30	Marriage without "Qayma"		82%	82% of Egyptians refused to marry their daughters without a list of furniture "Qayma" and the refusal was higher in rural areas (88%) compared to urban areas (73%), according to 2018 data.

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ANNEX 2.
ADDITIONAL DATA TABLES

TABLE A2.1. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESPONDENTS (WEIGHTED)

	Overall	Female	Male
Total respondents (unweighted)	**3,339**	**37%**	**63%**
Total respondents (weighted)	**3,339**	**50%**	**50%**
Age (mean years)	41.2	41.3	41.1
Education			
No schooling	15%	19%	12%
Below primary	8%	8%	8%
Primary	12%	12%	13%
Lower secondary	13%	15%	11%
Secondary	31%	28%	35%
Post secondary	5%	5%	5%
Bachelors+	14%	13%	16%
Marital status			
Never Married	14%	10%	17%
Married	74%	69%	79%
Widower	9%	16%	2%
Divorced	2%	3%	1%
Separated	1%	2%	0%
Employed	45%	17%	73%
Urban	40%	41%	39%
Has child <6	32%	28%	36%

TABLE A2.2. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONDENTS (WEIGHTED)

	Overall	Female	Male
Total respondents (unweighted)	**3,375**	**35%**	**65%**
Total respondents (weighted)	**3,375**	**50%**	**50%**
Age (mean years)	41.1	40.5	41.7

	Overall	Female	Male
Education			
No schooling	14%	18%	10%
Below primary	9%	9%	8%
Primary	14%	13%	15%
Lower secondary	13%	14%	11%
Secondary	32%	28%	36%
Post secondary	4%	5%	4%
Bachelors+	14%	13%	16%
Marital status			
Never Married	12%	7%	16%
Married	78%	74%	81%
Widower	8%	15%	2%
Divorced	2%	3%	1%
Separated	0%	0%	0%
Employed	48%	20%	75%
Urban	40%	41%	39%
Has child <6	33%	31%	35%

TABLE A2.3. EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS FOR WOMEN (WEIGHTED)

Variable		Frequency (%)
Sector	Public sector	40%
	Private sector	59%
	Other	1%
	Lower secondary	1%
Ever worked (if currently not working)		22%
Reason for leaving work	Permanently closed	3%
(if ever worked, but not currently working)	Temporarily closed	2%
	Terminated	4%
	Take care of home/children	65%
	Other	25%

ANNEX 3.
RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ANALYSIS OF THE PERSONAL BELIEFS AND NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS INDICES

To arrive at an index that accurately measures social norms, it is important to first examine the reliability and internal consistency of the items (i.e., the variables) included in the index and what the index is in fact capturing. Data from the individual and community surveys were used to conduct these analyses, using Cronbach's alpha, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Statistic, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and construct validity, and to compare them to the data from the shorter personal beliefs and normative expectations modules in the combined dataset. This annex presents the results from these reliability and validity analyses.

Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency of a group of items (i.e., variables) and shows how closely these items are related to each other.

TABLE A3.1. CRONBACH'S ALPHA SCORE FOR THE PERSONAL BELIEFS AND NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS MODULES

Component	Score
19-item personal beliefs module	0.79
12-item personal beliefs module	0.78
6-item personal beliefs module	0.45
19-item normative expectations module	0.73
12-item normative expectations module	0.7
6-item normative expectations module	0.35

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Statistic

The KMO Statistic measures the inter-item correlation of items that are grouped together by showing how well other items in a group explain the correlation between individual items. The KMO values are a good indication of whether the data structure is suitable for EFA.

The KMO Statistic is above 0.8 for both the personal beliefs and normative expectations modules, which suggests that the data structure is suitable for factor analysis. All individual items across both modules also have KMO values above 0.50 (which is the acceptable threshold).

TABLE A3.2. KAISER-MEYER-OLKIN STATISTIC FOR THE PERSONAL BELIEFS AND NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS MODULES

	KMO	
Variable	**Personal beliefs**	**Normative expectations**
A woman has the right to work.	0.883378	0.836406
Education is important for women and for their work.	0.875096	0.817259
Working women can achieve a balance between home and work responsibilities.	0.875013	0.82517
The husband (or father or older brother) has the right to spend the income of his wife or daughter.	0.738923	0.679532
Working women are able to raise their children in a good manner.	0.880045	0.845938
Married women should be fully dedicated to their family and should not work after marriage.	0.938961	0.925968
With limited job opportunities, men should have priority over women.	0.8785	0.783377
Women's work exposes them to harassment.	0.881274	0.833817
Women's work increases problems between her and her husband.	0.899065	0.831975
Women's work makes them more arrogant and belittling toward their husbands.	0.916188	0.865172
A working woman has the right to seek assistance with childcare so that she can work.	0.874702	0.781502
The generation of income and the family's standard of living are the responsibility of the man only.	0.911592	0.845028
Taking care of children is the responsibility of women.	0.84657	0.784248
A husband who helps his wife with the housework is a weak husband.	0.801428	0.768993
Women should not work in a place that is all men.	0.922333	0.899342
The man who allows his wife to work is wrong.	0.904175	0.881133
A woman who stays at home is better than a woman who works.	0.923337	0.881775
Women are only suitable for work in certain jobs.	0.921149	0.867791
The financial needs of their family are the main reason women work.	0.810843	0.78586
Overall	**0.893627**	**0.846544**

Exploratory Factor Analysis

EFA is used to identify the different factors (i.e., latent constructs or themes) that are present in a given set of data. EFA is useful for the construction of indices as it provides information on which items belong together. A single module may have one factor or multiple factors depending on how many constructs these items capture.

EFA was conducted separately with data from both surveys. Factor loadings were rotated using oblique rotation for easier interpretation. The number of latent factors to extract was determined

using the Kaiser's eigenvalue rule. Factor loadings for the personal beliefs module from the individual survey and the normative expectations module from the community survey are given below.

For the personal beliefs module, eight factors emerge after oblique rotation, with seven factors having eigenvalues greater than 1. Factor loadings for these seven factors are shown in Table A3.2 below. However, two of these seven factors (Factors 5 and 7) had no items, while Factor 4 had only one item. These factors were excluded from consideration for the thematic breakdown.

TABLE A3.3. ROTATED FACTOR LOADINGS FOR PERSONAL BELIEF ITEMS

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
A woman has the same right to work.	0.6736						
Education is important for women and for her work.	0.5837						
Working women can achieve a balance between home and work responsibilities.	0.6702						
The husband (or father or older brother) has the right to spend the income of his wife or daughter.							
Working women are able to raise their children in a good manner.	0.5659						
Married women should be fully dedicated to their family and should not work after marriage.	0.3465						
With limited job opportunities, men should have priority over women.			0.4231				
Women's work exposes them to harassment.		0.5484					
Women's work increases problems between her and her husband.		0.6043					
Women's work makes them more arrogant and belittling toward their husbands.		0.5007					
A working woman has the right to seek assistance with childcare so that she can work.							
The generation of income and the family's standard of living are the responsibility of the man only.			0.3622				
Taking care of children is the responsibility of women.						0.3745	
A husband who helps his wife with the housework is a weak husband.						0.4899	
Women should not work in a place that is all men.				0.3124			
The man who allows his wife to work is wrong.						0.3882	
A woman who stays at home is better than a woman who works.							

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
Women are only suitable for work in certain jobs.							
The financial needs of their family are the main reason women work.							

For the normative expectations module, seven factors emerge after oblique rotation, with five factors having eigenvalues greater than 1. Factor loadings for these five factors are shown in Table A3.4 below. Again, one of the five factors (Factor 4) had only one item and was therefore excluded from consideration for the thematic breakdown.

TABLE A3.4. ROTATED FACTOR LOADINGS FOR NORMATIVE EXPECTATION ITEMS

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
A woman has the right to work.	0.4924				
Education is important for women and for her work.	0.5116				
Working women can achieve a balance between home and work responsibilities.	0.6352				
The husband (or father or older brother) has the right to spend the income of his wife or daughter.					
Working women are able to raise their children in a good manner.	0.5503				
Married women should be fully dedicated to their family and should not work after marriage.					
With limited job opportunities, men should have priority over women.					0.3469
Women's work exposes them to harassment.		0.5399			
Women's work increases problems between her and her husband.		0.6346			
Women's work makes them more arrogant and belittling toward their husbands.		0.5482			
A working woman has the right to seek assistance with childcare so that she can work.					
The generation of income and the family's standard of living are the responsibility of the man only.					0.3655
Taking care of children is the responsibility of women.			0.4763		
A husband who helps his wife with the housework is a weak husband.			0.4797		
Women should not work in a place that is all men.					
The man who allows his wife to work is wrong.			0.4421		
A woman who stays at home is better than a woman who works.			0.3247		
Women are only suitable for work in certain jobs.				0.3912	
The financial needs of their family are the main reason women work.					

There is significant overlap between the factor loadings for the personal beliefs and normative expectations modules. Almost identical items load on to Factor 1 for both modules (with the exception of the statement, "Married women should be fully dedicated to their family and should not work after marriage," which only appears in the personal belief loadings). Factor 2 is identical across both personal belief and normative expectation loadings, and Factor 3 of the personal beliefs module and Factor 5 of the normative expectations module are also identical. Factor loadings for Factor 6 of the personal beliefs and Factor 3 of the normative expectations module are also almost identical (with the exception of the statement, "A woman who stays at home is better than a woman who works," which only appears in the normative expectations module). Items that do not load on to any of these factors were deemed unsuitable for the shorter module due to low reliability. This included two factors from the short six-item modules: "The husband (or father or older brother) has the right to spend the income of his wife or daughter" and "A working woman has the right to seek assistance with childcare so that she can work."

For the short six-item modules in the combined dataset, neither the personal beliefs nor the normative expectations modules have factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 (both unrotated and rotated). Only one factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1 emerges when EFA is conducted with all items across the personal beliefs, normative expectations, and empirical expectations modules (which excludes "Women's work exposes them to harassment," as it does not appear in the empirical expectations module). Factor loadings (as shown in Table A3.4 below) show that all personal belief and normative expectation items load on to this factor, with the exception of the same two that had low reliability in the longer modules, while none of the empirical expectation items do.

TABLE A3.5. UNROTATED FACTOR LOADINGS FOR ALL ITEMS

Variable	Factor 1
PNB-A woman has the right to work.	0.556
PNB-The husband (or father or older brother) has the right to spend the income of his wife or daughter.	
PNB-Women's work increases problems between her and her husband.	0.5655
PNB-A working woman has the right to seek assistance with childcare so that she can work.	0.3048
PNB-The generation of income and the family's standard of living are the responsibility of the man only.	0.3745
SNE-A woman has the right to work.	0.4883
SNE-The husband (or father or older brother) has the right to spend the income of his wife or daughter.	
SNE-Women's work increases problems between her and her husband.	0.4568
SNE-A working woman has the right to seek assistance with childcare so that she can work.	0.3046
SNE-The generation of income and the family's standard of living are the responsibility of the man only.	0.3464
SEE-A woman has the right to work.	
SEE-The husband (or father or older brother) has the right to spend the income of his wife or daughter.	
SEE-Women's work increases problems between her and her husband.	
SEE-A working woman has the right to seek assistance with childcare so that she can work.	
SEE-The generation of income and the family's standard of living are the responsibility of the man only.	

Construct Validity

Construct validity measures how related a measurement (or index) is to the outcome of interest—in this case, FLFP. Logistic regression was used to analyze the relationship between women's labor market outcomes and the 12-item personal beliefs and normative expectations indices. Equation (i) below was used to explore this relationship for all respondents as well as for various subgroups (based on gender and education level):

(i) $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PNB/SNEindex_i + \beta_i X_i + \mathcal{E}_i,$

where Yi is the binary dependent variable representing the employment status of the female respondents or the female counterpart of the male respondent. B1 represents the personal beliefs or normative expectations index, and Xi represents control variables, including age, governorate, level of education, marital status, gender, and socioeconomic status.

TABLE A3.6. LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF THE PERSONAL BELIEFS INDEX ON THE EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF WOMEN

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
VARIABLES	All	Women	Men	Below secondary	Above secondary
PNB index	1.572***	1.393*	1.761***	1.350	1.723***
	(0.163)	(0.231)	(0.181)	(0.267)	(0.147)
Constant	0.0219***	0.209*	0.00511***	0.817	0.00124***
	(0.0106)	(0.137)	(0.00296)	(0.788)	(0.000713)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,339	1,245	2,094	896	2,443

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

TABLE A3.7. LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF THE NORMATIVE EXPECTATIONS INDEX ON THE EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF WOMEN

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
VARIABLES	All	Women	Men	Below secondary	Above secondary
SNE index	1.087	0.834	1.767***	0.872	1.264**
	(0.0919)	(0.0900)	(0.172)	(0.135)	(0.0937)
Constant	0.00458***	0.0677***	0.00290***	0.0527**	0.000142***
	(0.00229)	(0.0418)	(0.00172)	(0.0545)	(7.95e-05)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,374	1,191	2,183	863	2,511

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

ANNEX 4.
REGRESSION SPECIFICATION

The relationship between women's labor market outcomes and social expectations (normative and empirical), and the extent to which personal beliefs and social expectations predict FLFP in Egypt, was explored using multivariate logistic regressions. For female respondents, the regression analysis additionally examined the relationship between women's employment and women's expectations about the beliefs of her male counterparts. Equation (i) below was used to explore this relationship for all respondents as well as separately for male and female respondents. Equation (ii) adds the intrahousehold expectation variables and was run with the subsample of female respondents only:

(i) $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PNB\_right\ to\ work_i + \beta_2 PNB\_marital\ problems_i + \beta_3 PNB\_men's\ responsibility_i + \beta_4 SEE\_right\ to\ work_i + \beta_5 SEE\_marital\ problems_i + \beta_6 SEE\_men's\ responsibility_i + \beta_7 SNE\_right\ to\ work_i + \beta_8 SNE\_marital\ problems_i + \beta_9 SNE\_men's\ responsibility_i + \beta_i X_i + \varepsilon\ I,$

(ii) $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PNB\_right\ to\ work_i + \beta_2 PNB\_marital\ problems_i + \beta_3 PNB\_men's\ responsibility_i + \beta_4 SEE\_right\ to\ work_i + \beta_5 SEE\_marital\ problems_i + \beta_6 SEE\_men's\ responsibility_i + \beta_7 SNE\_right\ to\ work_i + \beta_8 SNE\_marital\ problems_i + \beta_9 SNE\_men's\ responsibility_i + \beta_{10} IH\_right\ to\ work_i + \beta_{11} IH\_marital\ problems_i + \beta_{12} IH\_men's\ responsibility_i + \beta_i X_i + \varepsilon$

In both equations (i) and (ii), Yi is the binary dependent variable representing the employment status of the female respondents or the female counterpart of the male respondent. B1- β3 represent the personal belief variables, β4- β6 and β7- β9 represent the empirical expectation and normative expectation variables respectively, and β10- β12 in equation (ii) represent the intrahousehold expectation variables for women. Xi represents control variables, including age, governorate, level of education, marital status, gender, and socioeconomic status.

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