



**THE AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO**

Social Research Center



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international

**Women's Economic Empowerment in
Egypt: Challenges and Opportunities**

Abdallah Shehata Khattab

Hala M. Sakr

Working Paper #001

Working Papers Series

**Women's Economic Empowerment in
Egypt: Challenges and Opportunities**

Abdallah Shehata Khattab

Hala M. Sakr

Working Paper #001

**SRC/CIDA Research Program on
Gender and Work**

Working Papers Series

November 2009

The Social Research Center (SRC) was established in 1953. The mission of the SRC is to conduct and encourage multidisciplinary social science research in Egypt and the Middle East, to train researchers, and to guide and assist graduate students, scholars and organizations engaged in social science research in the region. The Center aims to contribute to developing skills and building institutional capabilities in the region as well as to advance public debate about important issues. The Center does not carry out research on a for-profit basis and does not undertake any confidential research.

The SRC Working Papers aim to circulate research findings on various socioeconomic issues in order to contribute to finding solutions to the problems facing development in Egypt. These papers represent work in progress rather than conclusive research.

The views and findings expressed in the papers concerning the SRC/CIDA Research Program on “Gender and Work” are those of the author(s) , and should not be attributed to the Social Research Center.

Inquiries: hebanas@aucegypt.edu

*Social Research Center, American University in Cairo, New Cairo Campus,
P.O. Box 74, New Cairo 11835, Egypt
Tel.: 26151414, Fax. : 27974926 Website : www.aucegypt.edu/src*

Acknowledgement

Our appreciation goes to the generous financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to establish the **SRC/CIDA Small Research Grants Program for Research Policy Papers and Policy Briefs on Gender and Work**. The valuable advice from all the participants in the consultative meetings conducted in the different stages of the research program is deeply acknowledged.

Special appreciation goes to Dr. Hoda Rashad, Director of the Social Research Center- the American University in Cairo, **Dr. Hania Sholkamy**, Associate professor-SRC, **Mrs. Ghada Abdel Tawab**, Lead Gender Equality of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)-Egypt Program, **Dr. Mona El-Baradaei**, Executive director of the Egyptian National Competitiveness Council (ENCC), **Dr. Omneia Helmy**, Lead economist at the Egyptian Center for Egyptian Studies (ECES), **Dr. Ola El-Khawaga**, Professor of Economics- Cairo University and **Dr. Ahmed Ghoneim**, Associate Professor of Economics - Cairo University

Our acknowledgement goes as well to Mrs. Mordefine Sabry and Ms. Rania Alaa- the team responsible for the Research project on “Gender & Work”.

Dr. Heba Nassar
Principal Investigator for SRC/CIDA
Research Program on “Gender& Work

Preface:

The concern for women economic empowerment has been a priority in the agenda of many national, non-governmental as well as international stakeholders in Egypt. Despite the various efforts that were carried on by the government and the different stakeholders concerned with the women economic participation in Egypt, it is evident that there are still various challenges and gaps that still hinder women full participation in the labor market and economic life. These main gaps include: The low women economic participation (around 20%), high unemployment rate (around three folds that of males), and the poor working conditions of women particularly in the informal sector.

Moreover globalization was found to bring a mixed blessing and curse for women; trade liberalization, rapid developments of information and communication technology, increased roles of Multinational corporations and many other manifestations of the global economy we are living in pose positive well as negative results for working women depending on their vulnerability in the labor market. This created the need to pursue thorough research to tackle how all these challenges are affecting women ability to participate, work, progress and be empowered.

In the frame of the Consortium (RPC) on Pathways of Women's Empowerment, the Social Research Center- the American University in Cairo with the funding from the CIDA have initiated the **SRC/CIDA research program for research policy papers and policy briefs on gender and work.**

The project aimed at producing policy research papers and policy briefs on the various factors affecting women and work at the four levels: the household level, the enterprise level, the economy level and the global economy level.

The SRC/CIDA research program on gender and work aimed at:

- Issuing policy research papers and policy briefs on women and work
- Producing guidelines and recommendations that are supported by empirical knowledge, for policies and actions to support women work as a tool for women economic and social empowerment.
- Encouraging evidence based debate on needed policies for women economic empowerment.
- Contributing to an open environment of data access and effective use of field surveys in policy research papers.

The project produced two outputs:

- ***Four Research Papers*** tackling different important aspects of women work in Egypt. These included examining work and women economic empowerment in the Egyptian context, the relation between education, women empowerment and work in Egypt. Another important aspect the project looked at is the evolution of wage and job quality for men and women in the Egyptian labor market in the formal private and public sectors over the period (1998-2006). The fourth research paper examined an important new topic which has emerged recently as a result of the increased

technological development which is the information and communication technology (ICT). It aims at assessing the impact of ICT on gender equality in Egypt focusing on differentials in wage rates and employment opportunities.

- ***Based on the results of the research papers; four policy briefs*** were prepared that aimed at providing the policy maker with clear and concrete policy advice. The briefs were prepared in Arabic.

The most important results stressed on by the papers and the briefs included that although the constitution and the Egyptian labour law stress on gender equality, however, it seems important to have an equal pay act, ensuring equal pay for equal work, in a broader sense, one which prohibits discrimination at the entry points into the labor market, in job titles, in job ranks and in pay scales, is yet to be passed.

The analysis indicates that there is a significant change in various views and social values regarding the right of women to participate, however, there is still a need to adopt labour market policies that support women's participation. These policies include: flexible working time (for example part-time jobs), designing macro and micro economic policies to better address women's employment problems especially in the private sector, and providing accessible and affordable daycare centers and other services which are important. Supporting an effective women's entrepreneurship policy could be an effective way to increase female labor force participation and to face female unemployment

Regarding the impact of education on women economic empowerment, it is evident that education is found to have a powerful influence on women's labor market pathways in Egypt. However, it is also found that raising female education level is not enough to boost young women's economic empowerment. To strengthen education as a path to enhance women's economic participation and opportunity in Egypt, there is an urgent need to focus on improving education quality, and targeting girls from secondary and technical education as they are more vulnerable to unemployment and engagement in the informal sector.

Information and Communication technology sector appears to be a promising field for improving women engagement in labor market and the community in general, however more efforts should be devoted to increase their engagement. To be able to reap from the benefits of ICT, women must be equipped with skills to prepare them for a range of roles not only as ICT users, but also as creators and designers.

In preparing the research papers and the policy briefs; the SRC/CIDA research program on gender and work have benefited from various consultative group meetings where participants from academia, research, donor organizations offered advice and guide to the researchers in designing their research work as well as in formulating the policy advice.

The project benefited from the Egypt Labor Market Panel Survey of 2006 (ELMPS 06). ELMPS 06 is a follow-up survey to the Egypt Labor Market Survey of 1998 (ELMS 98), which was carried out in November-December 1998 by the Economic Research Forum (ERF) in cooperation with the Egyptian Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) – the main statistical agency of the Egyptian government . ELMS 98 was carried out on a

nationally-representative sample of 4,816 households and was designed to be comparable to the special round of the Egyptian Labor Force Survey carried out in October 1988 (LFSS 88). The ELMPS 06 is the second round of what is intended to be a periodic longitudinal survey that tracks the labor market and demographic characteristics of the households and individuals interviewed in 1998, any new households that might have formed as a result of splits from the original households, as well as a refresher sample of households to ensure that the data continue to be nationally representative.

The final sample of 8,349 households is made up of 3,684 households from the original ELMS 98 survey, 2,167 new households that emerged from these households as a result of splits, and a refresher sample of 2,498 households. Of the 23,997 individuals interviewed in 1998, 17,357 (72 percent) were successfully re-interviewed in 2006, forming a panel that can be used for longitudinal analysis. The 2006 sample contains an additional 19,743 “new” individuals. Of these 2,663 individuals joined the original 1998 households, 4,880 joined the split households, and 12,200 were part of the refresher sample of households.

Women's Economic Empowerment in Egypt: Challenges and Opportunities

Abdallah Shehata Khattab¹

Hala M. Sakr²

Working Paper #001

Abstract

Women Economic empowerment has been recently gaining importance all over the World for many reasons. Among them is the positive impact of such empowerment on development. Egypt like many other countries has exerted much effort in this area, yet, female participation in the labour market –which is not even an adequate measurement of empowerment - has not exceeded 23% in 2006.

In this context, the focus of this study has been how could we increase Egyptian women participation in economic life as a rough indicator or even a prerequisite for economic empowerment of women. Accordingly, the paper attempts to seek the factors that hinder women's economic empowerment in Egypt, so as to identify the factors that discourage women's participation.

The paper is divided into two main sections, in addition to the introduction and conclusion. The first section introduces the different concepts of women empowerment in general and then more specifically economic women empowerment, it then extends the analysis to discuss the significance of the concept and the factors which hinder women's economic empowerment, according to the economic literature. It also outlines the measurement problem in assessing empowerment of women. Section two proceeds by examining the status of women's economic empowerment in Egypt, depending, basically upon the labour market survey of 2006. Finally, the paper identifies a set of policy recommendations to improve the status of the Egyptian women that is based upon the analysis findings.

The paper concludes that higher unemployment rate in general as well as the longer duration of unemployment that faces women vis-à-vis males, lack of access to education, training and information, let alone social norms are the major factors that hinder economic empowerment of women. Social norms have been quite apparent and reflected in the separation and conflict between accepting women working on one hand whereas refusing their financial autonomy, in the study. Such result highlights again the shortcomings of labour force participation as a true reflection of empowerment.

Accordingly, the paper calls for adopting a complementary approach supporting women's economic empowerment. This requires accessibility of education and training to women, correcting negative social values, changing labour market policies as well as supporting women with different social services.

¹ Assistant Professor – Department of Economics- Faculty of Economics and Political Science- Cairo University;
email: abdouk95@yahoo.com

² Assistant Professor – Department of Economics- Faculty of Economics and Political Science -Cairo University;
email: sakrhala@yahoo.com

Introduction

International organizations and national government are paying significant attention to women's economic empowerment. This is due to the fact that women's participation is the *raison-d'être* for economic development. In the Egyptian context women participation in economic life has extended to all sectors of the economy. Moreover, women have started to occupy a leading role in certain positions. Nonetheless, the Egyptian environment necessitates a gender perspective approach that faces the current challenges of women empowerment. This raises the question of what are the factors that hinder women's economic empowerment in Egypt. And thus, the paper is an attempt to identify the factors that discourage women's empowerment.

The paper is structured as follows. In section one the concept of women empowerment and the concept's dimensions are examined to outline the key issues related to the concept. Section two and three extend the analysis to discuss the significance of the concept and the factors which hinder women's economic empowerment. Section four of the paper outlines the measurement problem of assessing empowerment of women. Then, the study moves to examine the status of women's economic empowerment in Egypt. Finally, the paper identifies a set of policy recommendations to improve the status of the Egyptian women that is based upon the analysis findings.

The study applies the tools of qualitative and quantitative approaches, depending, basically upon the labour market survey of 2006 and information available about women status.

1. Economic Empowerment: A Conceptual Framework

Since mid 1980s, the concept of 'empowerment' has gained familiarity in literature. Despite the fact that this concept applies to women as well as other disadvantaged or socially excluded groups, it focuses on women (Sida 2001; Malhotra et al. 2005)³. Such focus on women empowerment is due to the fact that it encompasses some unique elements, namely;

- women are a cross-cutting category of individuals that overlaps with all these other groups,
- household and interfamilial relations are a central locus of women's disempowerment in a way that does not exist for other disadvantaged groups,
- women empowerment requires systematic changes not only in any institution, but fundamentally in those supporting patriarchal structures.

Empowerment is not simply defined in concrete terms. The concept means different things to different people. For instance, the feminist activists define empowerment as a challenging patriarchy. The Asia-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education states that women's empowerment is 'the process, and the outcome of the process, by which women gain greater control over material and intellectual resources, and challenge the ideology of patriarchy and the gender-based discrimination against women in all the institutions and structures of society' (Batliwala, 1995). "Empowerment of women" is defined also as "The idea that giving women power over their economic, social, and reproductive choices will raise their status, promote

³The word empowerment has been used in many different contexts and by various organizations. For example, literature about empowerment is found in the fields of education, social work, psychology, in US radical politics in the 1960s and community development groups in the North and South, as well as in the work of feminist and development organizations.

development, and reduce population growth.” (as cited in Todaro, 2000, p. 794). Other writings indicated that empowerment is about choices. As stated by Kabeer (2001), empowerment is the expansion in people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them.

These definitions imply that empowerment is referring to women’s ability to make decisions and affect outcomes of importance to themselves and their families. Women should have a type of control over their own life and over their resources. Specifically, empowerment is associated with the ability to “affect women’s own well being,” and “make strategic life choices.” For example, G. Sen (1993) defines empowerment as “altering relations of power...which constrain women’s options and autonomy and adversely affect health and well-being.” (as cited in the World Bank, 2002). Batliwala’s (1994) defines empowerment in terms of “how much influence people have over external actions that matter to their welfare.” Keller and Mbwewe (1991) stated that empowerment is a process whereby women become able to organize themselves to increase their own self-reliance, to assert their independent right to make choices and to control resources which will assist in challenging and eliminating their own subordination (as cited in Rowlands, 1995). Such set of definitions suggest that empowerment comprises not only forms of observable action, such as political decision-making, but also the meaning, motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their actions– their sense of agency or self-worth⁴ (Moser, 2007).

Another element that appears so frequently in defining empowerment is the concept of **human agency (self-efficacy)**. This implies that women should be able to identify self-interest and choice, and consider themselves as not only able but also entitled to make choices⁵. This, as described by Kabeer (2001), is a process of “thinking outside the system” and challenging the status quo. Therefore, the literature provides a useful definition of empowerment as the process of expansion of people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them⁶. In short, such definitions suggest that empowerment is a process in which there is a change from a condition of disempowerment to an environment in which women can choose, as choice necessarily implies available alternatives⁷. In this context, it is crucial to differentiate between first order choices that are strategic life choices as livelihood, living arrangements, marriage-related decisions, fertility-related decisions,...etc., and those of second order which are of less significance on one’s lives (Sida, 2001).

In brief, there is consensus that the concept of empowerment includes the aspects of options, choice, control, and power. Moreover, it contains the idea that a fundamental shift in perceptions, or “inner transformation,” as it is essential to the formulation of choices made.

- ***Dimensions of Women Empowerment***

As the mostly accepted definitions imply, the idea of empowerment has three key dimensions resources (conditions), agency (process) and achievements (outcomes).

1. **Resources:** the concept of resources includes different human resources embodied within the individual and encompasses her knowledge, skills, creativity, imagination...etc. In

⁴ For more details see, Kabeer (2005) and (Moser, 2007).

⁵ Such definition is provided by the writings of Chen 1992, G. Sen 1993, Rowlands 1995, A. Sen 1999, , and Nussbaum 2000, Kabeer 2001.

⁶For more details see, Sida (2001) and the World Bank (2002)

⁷ This approach is stemmed mainly from human rights and feminist perspectives.

addition, resources embrace social ones such as claims, obligations, expectations, relationships, networks and connections that prevail in different spheres of life. The latter type of resources enables women to improve their situation and life chances beyond what would be possible through their individual efforts alone.

Resources are distributed through a variety of different institutions and processes.

Moreover, access to resources is determined by the rules, norms and practices prevailing and differing among societies. This encompasses familial norms, patron-client relationships, informal wage agreements, formal contractual transactions and public sector entitlements (Sida, 2001).

Resources are crucial for women empowerment as they enhance the ability of women to make choices. Specifically, they form the conditions under which choices of women are made. However, they could reflect enabling or disabling environments for the empowerment process. The conditions and terms accompanied with how women gain access to resources are as important as the resources themselves. As mentioned women access may be conditional on dependency relationships or extremely exploitative conditions of work or it may be achieved in ways which offer dignity and a sense of self-worth, all of which have different implications (Sida, 2001). Accordingly, women empowerment requires a change in the terms on which resources are acquired as much as an increase in access to the resources⁸.

2. **Agency:** is defined as the ability to define one's goals and act upon them. It encompasses a much wider range of purposive actions, including bargaining, negotiation, deception, manipulation, subversion, resistance and protest as well as the more intangible, cognitive processes of reflection and analysis. Furthermore, agency encompasses collective, as well as individual, reflection and action. Briefly, it is the core of the process through which the process itself is made, that embraces the meaning, motivation and purpose that individuals bring to their activities. Agency has both positive and negative meanings in relation to power. In the positive sense of the 'power to', it refers to people's capacity to define their own life-choices and to pursue their own goals, even in the face of opposition from others. Agency can also be exercised in a more negative sense of 'power over', in other words, the capacity of an actor or category of actors to over-ride the agency of others, for instance, through the use of violence, coercion and threat (El Sheneity, 2008). When discussing the dimensions of empowerment, Malhotra and Schuler (2005) emphasize that agency as the defining criterion for empowerment and refer to examples where access to resources does not lead to greater control over those resources. They ensure that, while resources are often critical in ensuring that women are empowered, they are not sufficient. Alsop and Heinsohn (2005) presented a framework with two components: agency and opportunity structure. Agency is defined as the actor's ability to make meaningful choices; that is the actor is able to envisage options and make a choice. Opportunity structure is defined as the formal and informal contexts within which actors operate. Together, these two factors lead to different degrees of empowerment: the existence, use and achievements of choice (UNDP, 2005b).

⁸ This refers to conditions accompanying jobs and opportunities.

3. **Achievements:** are the outcomes of choices. Kabeer (2000) points out that, choices are central to the concept of power. There are three qualifications of choice that need to be measured in order to make it relevant to empowerment. These are;
- a. **The conditions of choice**, which refer to the distinction between choices made in the absence, or high cost, of alternatives and those made from the vantage point of alternatives.
 - b. **The consequences of choice**, which is sought to distinguish between first order choices and other less strategic choices.
 - c. **The qualifications**, which relates to transformatory significance, distinguishing between choices with potential of challenging and destabilizing social inequalities and those that reproduce these inequalities (Alsop and Heinsohn, 2005).

Changes in the ability of women to exercise choice can be thought of in terms of changes in the three inter-related dimensions which make up choices. First, resources which form the conditions under which choices are made. Second, the agency which is at the heart of the process by which choices are made. Finally, there are the achievements that are considered the outcomes of choices. These dimensions are inter-dependent as changes in each contributes to, and benefits from, changes in the others. Thus, achievements of a particular moment are translated into enhanced resources or agency, and hence capacity for making choices, at a later moment in time (Sida 2001; El-Sheneity and Mulki, 2008).

- **Key issues**

The above debate of the concept of empowerment and its dimensions demonstrate that:

- 1) Empowerment refers to the expansion of assets and capabilities of individuals to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable the institutions that affect their lives (World Bank, 2004a).
- 2) People who exercise a great deal of choice in their lives may be very powerful, but not necessarily empowered, as they were never disempowered in the first place.
- 3) Empowerment is essentially a bottom-up process rather than something that can be formulated as a top-down strategy. Understanding empowerment in this way means that development agencies cannot claim to empower women, on the contrary, women must empower themselves (Oxaal and Baden, 1997).
- 4) The degrees of empowerment could be measured by assessing 1) whether the person has an opportunity to make a choice, 2) whether such person exploits such opportunity and chooses or not, and 3) once the choice is made, whether it leads to achieving or reaching the desired outcome⁹.
- 5) There exists other related –but different – concepts to women empowerment, namely, “gender equality” and “gender equity”. The World Bank (2001a) has defined “gender equality,” in terms of equality under the law, equality of opportunity (including equality of rewards for work and equality in access to human capital and other productive resources that enable opportunity), and equality of voice (the ability to influence and contribute to the development process). Thus, implying “equivalence in life outcomes for women and men, recognizing their different needs and interests, and requiring a redistribution of power and resources.” The World Bank (2007) has then pointed out that gender equity “recognizes that women and men have different needs,

⁹ For details see, Sida (2001) and El-Sheneity and Mulki (2008).

- preferences, and interests and that equality of outcomes may necessitate different treatment of men and women”.
- 6) Women empowerment is basically about participation in the sense that women must participate fully in decisions and processes that shape their lives, but at the same time promotes a rather instrumentalist view of empowerment; investing in women’s capabilities and empowering them to exercise their choices is not only valuable in itself but is also the surest way to contribute to economic growth and overall development.
 - 7) As empowerment is usually described as being about the ability to make choices, it must also involve being able to shape what choices are to offer. Empowerment corresponds to women challenging existing power structures which subordinate women. Accordingly, empowerment is of a contextual nature, what is seen as empowering in one context may not be in another. It also differs by time. An issue that makes comparisons a difficult task (UNIFEM, 2002).
 - 8) Empowerment is demonstrated by the quality of people’s participation in decisions and processes affecting their lives. In theory, empowerment and participation should be different sides of the same coin. In practice, much of what passes for popular participation in development and relief work is not in any way empowering to the poorest and most disadvantaged people in society. Thus, it is quite apparent that participation and empowerment are closely interrelated, but it may be that some development organizations are more comfortable with the concept of participation, as the latter does not imply challenging power relations (Oxaal & Baden, 1997).
 - 9) A distinguished element of women empowerment is that women themselves must be significant actors in the process of change (Sen, 1993; Mehra, 1997). And thus, there could be, hypothetically, an improvement in the indicators of gender equality, but unless the intervening processes involved women as agents of that change rather than merely as its recipients, it is not recognized as empowerment ¹⁰(WEF, 2005).

The present study will consider economic participation as an indicator of empowerment, though with great awareness that the latter is wider and broader, including all aspects of life. Such approach is crucial to identify the challenges that hinder women economic empowerment reflected partially in labour force participation.

2. Significance of Women Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment of women is a crucial issue since international community and national governments have recognized that such empowerment is a prerequisite for economic development and achieving the MDGs¹¹. Moreover, international organizations are increasingly paying more attention to women’s economic empowerment as well as to investments in women. This could partly be due to the recognition that gains accruing from increasing women’s economic opportunities lag behind those in women’s capabilities (UNDP, 2005a).

¹⁰ For more details see Chen (1992), Rowlands (1995) and Oxaal and Baden (1997) and Kabeer (2001).

¹¹ This has been partly reflected in the establishment of gender equality and women’s empowerment as an independent goal (MDG 3), however, concerns have been expressed about its restrictive interpretation as reflected in the selected targets and indicators. Moreover, the existence of a gender-specific goal may hide the failure to fully integrate a much-needed gender perspective into the other goals (UNDP, 2005a).

It is claimed that increased women's labor force participation and earnings are associated with poverty reduction and faster economic growth. Such economic growth does not benefit only women but also men, children and society as a whole. Women's lack of economic empowerment, on the other hand, not only imperils growth and poverty reduction, but also has a host of other negative impacts, including less favorable education and health outcomes for children and a more rapid spread of HIV/AIDS (World Bank, 2004b ; Danida, 2008).

Moreover, female low participation rates are costly for any economy. As literature indicates these costs comprise the foregone growth. Lower female participation reduces flexibility of the economies in their developmental process during their transitional period. Countries in transition need greater flexibility at the economy level to draw on a deeper pool of labour assets, and at the family level so as to facilitate adaptation to economic changes and conditions (World Bank, 2004 and 2007).

3. Factors Hindering Women Economic Empowerment

The focus of this section is to analyze a set of factors that could, partly, explain lower female participation and hence economic empowerment of women. Factors that hinder women's economic empowerment could be classified into two groups. The first are those that hinder women participation in labour market, in general, whether those who started to join the labour market or just thinking to. The second group is the factors which affect negatively the status of women-owned and operated businesses.

- ***Female Labour Participation Obstacles***

1. ***Social and Marital Status*** is one of the main factors that affect or cause lower- female participation in the labor force. As argued, women leave the labor force when they marry and have children. The household survey data for individual MENA countries confirms that women are much less likely to work if they are married. This possibility increases if they get married and have children younger than 6 years of age. Egypt, like Djibouti, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Jordan, experiences a big drop for females being in the labor force upon marriage, while in Morocco it occurs when they have children. The latter pattern is more common in other regions. This pattern differs from that of other regions, where women's participation peaks in their late 30s to late 40s (Heintz, 2006).

The reasons that prevent young women from participating in the labor force differ across regions. In China, half of all female youth surveyed cited housework and/or childcare responsibilities as the primary reason for not working for pay; while in Syria, one third were denied permission to work by their families (Katz, 2008). Again, this is quite reflected from the demand side –according to the ILO 2008- as employers in a range of countries reveal a striking preference to hire young men rather than young women. For formal sector employers, this may be related to concerns regarding the likelihood of early marriage and/or pregnancy on the part of young female workers, which could generate high turnover rates or costly maternity leaves (Katz, 2008).

As noted, the social values stem from the traditional paradigm¹² that define and affect women's aspirations and their selection of jobs and professions. These values limit the options of women's selections that they believe to be acceptable, respectable and appropriate. Furthermore, traditional social norms also affect personal and societal tolerance for gender discrimination and shape the opportunities that are open to women. Specifically, social institutions and norms, including religious beliefs and limitations on mobility, do hinder the full participation of girls particularly in terms of skill acquisition and work (Katz, 2008).

Such social values imply that part-time, own-account and home-based work might be the best options for remunerative employment since on-going responsibilities for childcare and other unpaid activities limit the labour market opportunities available to women (Heintz, 2006).

2. ***Wage discrimination:*** Wage discrimination against women and job segregation play a role in discouraging women from working, in combination with existing social norms and the traditional gender paradigm. These factors pose additional constraints on women's access to work. Discrimination and inequality in the labor force normally manifest themselves in wage discrimination and occupational segregation, in which different groups work in different industries (horizontal segregation) or in which one group tends to dominate in supervision and the other in production activities (vertical segregation). Egypt "Duncan index"¹³ for occupational segregation scores 0.46, which is relatively low. The Gender wage gap measured by the ratio of women's wages to men's wages in Egypt (1998) is 0.96 which is smaller relative to other countries such as Yemen (0.64). On the other side, another more important –particularly in the Egyptian case- and related issue to wage discrimination and job segregation is that family responsibilities often make the reservation wage quite high for women. The reservation wage should be high enough to pay for childcare and other household services that would have to be purchased in the market, rather than those produced at home. In certain cases wage discrimination and lower potential earnings may cause women to decide that it is not worthwhile to work (World Bank, 2004a).

3. ***Labor laws*** generally discourage discrimination against women. However, a host of regulations, many of them based on outdated foreign models, discriminate against women and the families of working women. Meanwhile, aspects of labor laws that are intended to safeguard women in fact discourage employers from hiring them.

In Egypt, as many countries of the MENA, labour laws regulate the types of jobs that could be undertaken by women as well as the number of working hours. Such restrictions on certain types or limitation on number of hours had been intended to protect women and in recognition of their responsibilities. However, it ends up negatively affecting their opportunity and economic participation. It makes women workers less flexible, discouraging them from working and employers from hiring them as well. Among the most apparent

¹² Women's primary role is that of 'care-giver' or the home-maker whereas the male is the breadwinner. The female is further restricted by the 'code of modesty' as dictated by society, limiting her movement in the public sphere.

¹³ This is a commonly used measure of segregation.

example is that the government maternity leave policies. Despite the fact that maternity leave provided to women are crucial to keep them in the labour force, they are costly from the perspective of the employer and represent a disincentive to hire women. Some employers even perceive women as high cost employees because of such provisions (World Bank, 2004a).

From the demand side, the key findings from the STWS **(2007) in Egypt** reveal that 34 percent of a sample of almost 350 employers reported a preference for hiring men for professional and managerial occupations, and 69percent expressed a similar gender preference for production and manual occupations. In the Egyptian case, male bias in hiring preferences is present both the industrial and service sectors of the economy (see table 1).

Table (1): Preferred Hiring by Sex, Industry and Occupation in Egypt (2007)

Industry	Professional/ administration				Production/ manual				
	Male	Female	No preference	NA	Male	Female	No preference	NA	
	Male	Female	No preference	NA	Male	Female	No preference	NA	Number
Economic Activity									
Agriculture/ Fishing	100	0	0	0	66.7	33.3	0	0	3
Petroleum/ Mining	24.9	0	24.9	14.3	71.4	0	28.6	0	7
Manufacturing	39.6	3.2	23	34.1	70.5	5.5	20.3	3.7	217
Construction	0	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	1
Commercial/ Marketing/ Retail	28.6	1.8	14.3	55.4	66.1	3.6	5.4	25	56
Brokerage/ Real State	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100	0
Transportation/ Telecommunication	0	0	50	50	0	0	0	100	2
Tourism/ Hotels/ Restaurants	30.8	7.7	7.7	53.8	84.6	0	7.7	7.7	13
Personal/ Social Services	9.1	0	20.5	70.5	68.2	0	4.5	27.3	44
Computers/ Information	50	0	50	0	0	0	50	50	2
Education	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100	1
Total	33.7	2.6	21.6	42.1	68.9	4.3	15.3	11.5	347

Source: El Zanaty and Associates (2007) in (Katz, 2008).

- ***Obstacles of Women's Enterprises and Business Expansion***

Women-owned enterprises, particularly the small ones, identify finance as the biggest constraint to their growth. Lack of assistance to product development, marketing and access to business information are considered the other main growth constraints facing women-owned and operated businesses in Egypt. Large and small businesses alike cite tax rates, macroeconomic as well as regulatory uncertainty and corruption as their top concerns about the business enabling environment. Both women and men identified regulatory and administrative barriers as another prohibitive factor to MSME growth. Although the laws pertaining to MSMEs are relevant to all owners, regardless of gender, the impacts of these requirements affect men differently than women because of the "traditional gender paradigm"; previously mentioned (Katz, 2008).

- 1) ***Access to Finance:*** According to the Egypt GEM Assessment, women owned enterprises account from 10 to 17 percent of small businesses in 2003. The findings of the Egyptian investment climate assessment (ICA) show that women have less access to finance than men. Small number of the banks' businesswomen clients is typically micro-entrepreneurs. Moreover, the ICA indicates that women identified lack of access to finance as a major constraint (50 percent of women vs. 38 percent of men). Only 5 percent of businesswomen had successfully accessed financial resources from commercial banks, compared to 17 percent of businessmen.

As argued, the difficulties of accessing finance of women are similar to those by men and attributable to the environment of business of SME. Nonetheless, the impacts of such factors do affect business women disproportionately. This could be due to cultural dimensions to providing access to finance for women. For instance, the Egypt ICA research shows that 100 percent of the women surveyed were asked to provide collateral for having a loan, while only about 80 percent of the men surveyed were asked to do so. Furthermore, women's loan rejection rates were higher than those for men. This may be further impeded by the fact that there is limited research on the profitability on the women SME market in Egypt, as well as limited understanding by financial institutions regarding businesswomen's financial and non-financial services needs. Only few banks of the Egyptian banking sector offer services that target women MSME owners. Specifically, banks estimate that women account for 10-25 percent of bank clients, most of whom are microfinance clients.

In this respect, much effort and actions have been undertaken, though not sufficient yet¹⁴.

b) Access to Networks: Business networks by which women-owned enterprises can collaborate on knowledge sharing, exchange of goods & services, and joint-ventures is as important for the performance of women's businesses as it is for men's. Women's relative lack of the kind of social capital that can help them gain information about and access to jobs is a major obstacle. Recently, the research entitled "Girls Count," conducted by the Center for Global Development, suggests that young men and women have access to very different social networks for information about jobs and job training opportunities in Sri Lanka and Thailand ¹⁵(Katz, 2008). Similarly, the IFC GEM Egypt research demonstrates that women typically had much weaker access to networks than men because of their limited social mobility. Women identified a lack of networks as a

¹⁴ Programs like the Women's Initiative Fund (WIF) have been instrumental in providing women MSME owners with access to finance. Set up in 1990 by the Canadian International Development Agency, the Foundation for International Training, and Egypt's Ministry of Social Affairs, 'WIF is dedicated to preparing low-income women entrepreneurs and their families for the business world.' This project has been taken over by the Egyptian Association for Community Initiatives and Development (EACID) in Aswan and the Association for Rural and Urban Women's Development in Qena.

¹⁵ In Thailand, where both parents and youth have high expectations that out-of-school youth of both sexes will earn money, girls consult their parents about work issues, while boys and young men cite colleagues as their primary sources of information. Because young men rely on broader social networks to advance their employment interests, they have more information to improve their job prospects.

hurdle to their businesses growth. Internet therefore is seen as a potential source for women to strengthen networks all over the country¹⁶.

c) Access to Markets: Access to markets is one of the key constraints identified by women business owners. As noted, obstacles to women's access to economic opportunities cut across private and public institutions, policies, regulatory environment of business and labour market. Mechanisms disfavoring women's participation are deep-rooted in private sector institutions like banks, finance institutions, business organizations, and trade unions. There are other factors that affect negatively upon women access to market such as low levels of literacy and asset ownership. Poor women face prevailing notions of what is acceptable as women's work. Nonetheless, both poor and well-off women entrepreneurs often lack networks to support them in their business ventures due to regulations and women's disadvantages in vocational and technical education (Danida, 2008).

Most women-owned SMEs in Egypt serve local and regional markets, and only a small number are export-oriented. Women interviewed identified product quality, export know-how, highly bureaucratic business registration processes²⁴ and export market procedures as impediments to accessing larger and more lucrative markets¹⁷ (IFC, 2007).

4. Assessing the Status of Women Empowerment: The Problem of Measurement

It is difficult to quantify and capture women empowerment by a single indicator since empowerment is a multi-faced concept. Therefore, there are a set of indicators each of which has some value. However, none could be considered sufficient or accounted as a complete measure.

In 2005, the World Economic Forum, in a first attempt to assess and evaluate the ongoing and current size of the gender gap (women empowerment) has measured the extent to which women status in 58 countries have achieved equality vis-à-vis men in 5 critical areas, namely: economic participation, economic opportunity, political empowerment, educational attainment and health,

¹⁶ The SAEW project aims to eventually serve women nationwide, expecting to have more than 5,000 visitors to the portal. The 28 Business associations also need to develop business relationships and expand the capabilities of women-owned enterprises by facilitating access to networking, training and business-to-business linkages (IFC, 2007).

¹⁷ The US Small Business Administration (SBA) has been working towards improving women's access to markets in Egypt, by expanding trade opportunities and strengthening small business ties between the U.S. and Egypt. The International Labor Organization (ILO) has launched the Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality" (WEDGE) project. 'Its objective is to facilitate the provision of practical assistance to help women start, formalize and expand their own enterprises,' through developing a knowledge base on women entrepreneurs, promoting their representation, advocacy and voice (including potential ones), along with developing innovative support. Furthermore, the Scientific Association for Egyptian Women's (SAEW) working in cooperation with the National Council for Women (NCW) has established the E-Business Support Center for women entrepreneurs to allow them to market their products and services through a portal, showcasing their websites. 'The project's first accomplishment was constructing the Cleo Store Portal to display online catalogues of products made by Egyptian women entrepreneurs. The Development of Business Women Export Ability Association has been established to improve women's access to international markets.

and well being¹⁸. The economic participation of women—their presence in the workforce in quantitative terms—is important not only for decreasing disproportionate levels of poverty among women, but also as an important step towards raising household income and fostering economic development in countries as a whole. Economic participation concerns are not only the actual numbers of women participating in the labour force, but also their remuneration on an equal basis¹⁹.

Economic opportunity concerns the quality of women's economic involvement, beyond their mere presence as workers. Women may gain employment with relative ease, however, their employment is either concentrated in poorly paid or unskilled job “ghettos,” characterized by the absence of upward mobility and opportunity. This is most commonly a result of negative or obstructive attitudes, and of legal and social systems. As argued, such systems use maternity laws and benefits to penalize women economically for childbirth and child care responsibilities, and discourage—or actively prevent—men from sharing family responsibilities (WEF, 2005).

Human Development Report in 1995 used the gender-related development index **GDI** and gender empowerment measure **GEM** to assess women empowerment and gender equality. Both GDI and GEM are among the most widely used indicators for measuring gender equality at the national level.

The GDI attempts to measure countries' achievements in the basic capabilities covered by the HDI, taking notes of the inequalities in achievement between women and men, hence, penalizing for inequality and gender disparity. Countries with greater gender disparity in basic capabilities (life expectancy, educational attainment, and income)²⁰ have low GDIs compared to their HDI. The GEM measures the gap between men and women along three equally weighted dimensions of empowerment²¹. These indicators are useful because their limited number of easily accessible indicators. Moreover, they can cover a large number of countries, and provide a ‘shorthand’ means of tracking gender-related development (UNDP, 2005).

¹⁸ There is a difference between economic participation and economic opportunity, whereas the former is more of a quantitative nature reflecting whether the woman is working or not, the latter is focusing on the conditions and environment in which she is working at.

¹⁹ Worldwide, outside of the agricultural sector, in both developed and developing countries, women are still averaging slightly less than 78% of the wages given to men for the same work, a gap which refuses to close in even the most developed countries.

²⁰ □ Long and healthy life (measured by male and female life expectancy at birth), Knowledge (measured by male and female adult literacy and years of schooling), and Decent standard of living (measured by women's and men's share of earned income) (Moser, 2007).

²¹ It is a composite indicator which looks at women's representation in parliaments, women's share of positions classified as managerial and professional, women's participation in the active labour force, and their share of national income. It aims to examine whether women and men are able to actively participate in economic and political life and take part in decision making. The HDR states that while the GDI focuses on the expansion of capabilities, the GEM is concerned with the use of those capabilities to take advantage of the opportunities of life (Oxaal and Baden, 1997).

Political participation and decision-making (measured by women's and men's share of parliamentary seats) □ Economic participation and decision-making (measured by women's and men's share of professional and technical jobs, and share of administrative and managerial jobs) and □ Power over economic resources (measured by women's and men's share of earned income) (Moser, 2007).

Such measures (HDI) and (GEM) are crucial in monitoring the differences in achievements across regions and over time. Furthermore, they draw attention to problematic disparities and succeed in capturing different aspects of achievements. In addition, they represent the values of those who are doing the measuring (Sida, 2001).

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has also developed a range of both quantitative and qualitative indicators of women's empowerment. The CIDA indicators break down empowerment into legal, political, economic and social empowerment for the purposes of quantitative indicators. Besides, CIDA (1996) also suggests a range of qualitative indicators to accompany quantitative ones due to the complexity of measuring empowerment. The key indicators of the CIDA approach in measuring economic empowerment are:

- Changes in employment/unemployment rates of women and men.
- Changes in time use in the selected activities, particularly greater sharing by household members of unpaid housework and child-care.
- Salary/wage differentials between women and men.
- Changes in percentage of property owned and controlled by women and men (land, houses, livestock), across socio-economic and ethnic groups.
- Average household expenditure of female/male households on education/ health; ability to make small or large purchases independently.
- Percentage of available credit, financial and technical support services going to women/men from government/ non-government sources (Oxaal & Baden, 1997).

Similarly, the **World Economic Forum (2007)** has introduced another useful index, the **Gender Gap Index** which ranks countries according to their proximity to gender equality rather than to women's empowerment. It focuses upon whether the gap between women and men in the chosen variables has declined, rather than whether women are "winning" the "battle of the sexes"²². Specifically, the Index rewards countries that reach the point where outcomes for women equal those for men, but it neither rewards nor penalizes cases in which women are outperforming men in particular variables.

It is worth mentioning that the aspects of economic participation and opportunity are captured through three concepts:

- 1) The participation gap.
- 2) The remuneration gap.
- 3) The advancement gap.

The participation gap is measured through the difference in labour force participation rates. The remuneration gap is measured through a hard data indicator (ratio of estimated female-to-male earned income) and a qualitative variable calculated through the World Economic Forum's Executive Opinion Survey (wage equality for similar work). Finally, the gap between the advancement of women and men is captured through two hard data statistics (the ratio of women to men among legislators, senior officials and managers, and the ratio of women to men among technical and professional workers). (WEF, 2007).

²² The Global Gender Gap Index examines the gap between men and women in four fundamental categories, through four sub-indices and 14 different indicators: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment and health and survival.

5. Challenges of Women's Economic Empowerment in Egypt

This section of the study examines the key challenges that hinder economic empowerment of women in Egypt, after presenting a short overview of the Egyptian case. The analysis is to identify such challenges that will go through two phases. In the first phase, key indicators of women economic empowerment are provided. Then, it goes a step forward to analyze the results of the Labour Market Survey (2006) that focuses on the elements which either encourage or discourage empowerment. Such two phases will help to outline the challenges that hinder women empowerment in Egypt and at the same time highlights the opportunities to support women Empowerment.

1) Women's Economic Empowerment in Egypt: Overview

The Egyptian constitution in early version in 1971 stresses that all citizens are equal and have equal opportunities to participate in economic life. The new version of the constitution in 2005 ensures such stance. In addition, Egypt has signed in September 1981 the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which guarantees women equal rights in employment, including: equal employment opportunities as men, the free choice of profession, and the right to promotion. The Convention also extends to women the right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and equal treatment for work of equal values (UNIFEM, 2003).

Although Egypt's gender-gaps in literacy are still persisting, nevertheless, women have made substantial gains (from 34% in 1990 to 59% in 2004). At the university level, the female share of students' enrollment in almost all universities has increased (at the undergraduate level from 35.4% in 1991/2 to 43.9% in 1998/9). Women's desire and availability to participate has increased significantly over the past three decades. The female labor force participation has increased from 22percent in 2004 to 24percent in 2005, falling then in 2006 to 22.1 percent (between ages 15 and 64). Moreover, Egyptian women have shown their ability to occupy top management levels in the Egyptian corporate world, though they are few in terms of number.

Furthermore, women's share in decision making positions in the private sector has increased from 7 percent in 1988 to 24 percent in 2003, to 35percent in 2005. This increase in top management levels has been particularly visible in media and tourism sectors.

Despite the fact that women's desire and availability to participate has increased significantly, labor markets are slow in incorporating women within the economy. Women's unemployment rate continues to increase. It has reached 24percent in 2005 compared to 6percent for men, i.e., three or fourfold that of men, with the highest being among the young and educated women in rural areas (World Bank, 2007). Egyptian women still lag far behind men in their participation in the labor market. A form of sectoral gender bias that does exist in the Egyptian labour market is that females are concentrated in the government and public sector. Moreover, female participation continues to be low in all sectors, and has particularly been declining in the public sector. The ratio of male to female employee for every 100 workers is 72 to 28 in the government; 90 to 10 in public establishments; 85 to 15 in informal private establishments and formal private establishments and 89 to 21 in foreign cooperatives and other organizations. In addition, women constitute a large share in the informal sector, accounting for 67percent in 2005 of the informal sector, suffering from lack of social security coverage. Women are also largely

employed by the public sector, accounting for almost one-third of Government employees (35%), and in the private sector, making up one-sixth (18%) of employees as of 2005. This implies the need to consider the gender impact of any reforms, including privatization.

It is worth mentioning that the labor force distribution of women is segmented along marital lines and education, with more married women dropping out of the labor force. The absence of government employment opportunities has resulted in female technical secondary and post-secondary graduates to withdraw from the labor force. As a result, unemployment has further increased amongst both male and female university graduates. Nevertheless, women have used to overcome these barriers through delayed age at marriage, higher female education levels and lower fertility rates within marriage. As more women enter the labor force, particularly the entrepreneurship sector, female labor force rates are likely to further increase as women employers are likely to hire more female employees²³(UNIFEM, 2003).

2) Challenges of Empowerment: Labour Market Survey Insights

As noted, the gap between the formal discourse and practices is still significant in terms of women economic empowerment. Despite the achievements in terms of participation of women, there are set of challenges that negatively affect such progress. This section applies the results of the labour market survey of 2006 to identify such challenges.

It also links the theoretical framework presented above with the real data of women participation in Egypt. Therefore, set of questions from the survey are selected to underline obstacles to women empowerment²⁴. However, the problem is always how to quantify the effect of such factors as data availability is indeed a significant constraint in this area.

1. Women and Reasons for not Participating

To set up a well defined picture of factors that discourage women from taking an active role in labour market, the first step was to analyze how female identify factors to participate. This is because participation in labour market is a key factor that signifies such participation spirit as empowerment is about participation. Table (2) shows that for both male and female the first reason for not looking for job comes from the believe that there is no jobs available (49.7%) while just only 2.8percent are convinced that employers prefer males to females. A notable issue is that family responsibilities have not been a discouraged factor as only 5.5percent cannot cope with the social responsibilities with work. The absence of suitable job comes as the second factor that hinders participation in labour market as about 10percent of female consider this as a key reason of not searching for jobs, while 6.6percent of them are either waiting for government employment or do not know an effective way to look for job. The Chi-Square test indicates that there is significant difference between men and women concerning the factors that hinder participation for both men and women in labour market (See table (1) in appendix B). This implies that the weights of each factor in hindering both male and female in participation are different among sexes.

²³ This is known as the "female multiplier effect".

²⁴ The list of question is available in appendix A.

Table (2): Factors Discourage Empowerment and Participation in Labour Market

Reasons for not looking for jobs	Female (%)	Male (%)	Total (Male and Female)
believe there are no jobs	49.7	34.6	45.2%
tired of looking for jobs	5.0	7.7	5.8%
employers prefer males to females in hiring	2.8	0	1.9%
do not know an effective way to look for a job	6.6	7.7	6.9%
waiting for MoMP hiring	6.6	0	4.6%
no suitable job	9.9	14.1	11.2%
do not have enough training or education	1.1	1.3	1.2
do not need work	1.1	1.3	1.2
health conditions do not allow	0	5.1	1.5
family responsibilities	5.5	1.3	4.2
opposition of a family member	2.2	0	1.5
lack of personal connections	4.4	6.4	5
Other	5	20.5	9.7

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

2. Social Values, Participation and Empowerment

Another key issue that theorists indicated as a factor which stands against women participation is a social value upon work particularly the impact of husband's view. A notable result from table (3) is that husbands are supporting the right for women to work; 88.8percent of husbands accept that women have the right to work while there are only 1.4 percent that do not accept that their wives have the right to work, and just 3.7percent accept, but not happy with that.

Table (3): Husbands' View on Women Work

		Frequency	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	firmly accept it	467	41.0	41.0
	accept it	544	47.8	88.8
	accept but not happy	42	3.7	92.4
	do not accept it	16	1.4	93.9
	N/a	70	6.1	100.0
	Total	1139	100.0	

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

Such conclusion is matching with the results in table (4) that combines the husbands' view with the question of whether women have the right to work or not? As shown in table (4) 83.9percent firmly accept and strongly agree that women (their wives) should be allowed to work while there are only 12.5percent who do not accept and strongly disagree that women (their wives) should be allowed to work.

Table (4): Husbands' View on Women Work

Woman should be allowed to work							
		strongly agree	Agree	indifferent	disagree	strongly disagree	Total
Husbands' view on work	firmly accept it	392	68	1	2	4	467
		83.9%	14.6%	.2%	.4%	.9%	100.0%
	accept it	247	282	2	8	5	544
		45.4%	51.8%	.4%	1.5%	.9%	100.0%
	accept but not happy	23	15		3	1	42
		54.8%	35.7%		7.1%	2.4%	100.0%
	do not accept it	7	6		1	2	16
		43.8%	37.5%		6.3%	12.5%	100.0%
	N/a	34	31		4	1	70
		48.6%	44.3%		5.7%	1.4%	100.0%
Total		703	402	3	18	13	1139
		61.7%	35.3%	.3%	1.6%	1.1%	100.0%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

The level of education is a key determinanat that shapes women views on aspects of empowerment. Regarding the right to work, most women surveyed who are against such right are those with primary and preparatory education (30.7% and 15.7 respectively), while the most who support such right are those with higher eduaction level such as those with university degree (23.7%) and technical secondary school level (39.3%) (see table (5)).

Table (5): Views on whether women should be allowed to work and stage of education

	Stage of educ. last yr. of schooling							Total
Woman should be allowed to work	Primary	preparatory	general secondary	technical secondary 3-years	technical secondary 5-years	above intermediate	university	
strongly agree	572	323	69	1321	60	218	797	3360
	17.0%	9.6%	2.1%	39.3%	1.8%	6.5%	23.7%	100.0%
agree	882	400	83	1176	32	154	457	3184
	27.7%	12.6%	2.6%	36.9%	1.0%	4.8%	14.4%	100.0%
indifferent	100	40	4	75		7	22	248
	40.3%	16.1%	1.6%	30.2%		2.8%	8.9%	100.0%
disagree	190	65	16	147	1	23	35	477
	39.8%	13.6%	3.4%	30.8%	.2%	4.8%	7.3%	100.0%
strongly disagree	51	26	3	50	1	7	28	166
	30.7%	15.7%	1.8%	30.1%	.6%	4.2%	16.9%	100.0%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

Regarding married women's view on whether they should be allowed to work or not; it is noted that 83.6percent of married women strongly agree that women should be allowed to work. This percentage exceeds 90percent for divorced women and approach 98percent for women who are contractually married. Those of married women who strongly refuse that they should be allowed

to work are just 3percent. Similarly, those who are under the age of marriage that strongly disagree of not working constitute only 4percent (table 6).

Table (6): View of Married Women on Work

Woman should be work allowed to						
		Strongly agree	agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Marital Status	Less than minimum age	181	161	14	15	
		48.5%	43.2%	3.8%	4.0%	
	Never married	1574	1138	81	126	36
		53.2%	38.5%	2.7%	4.3%	1.2%
	Contractually married	27	25		1	
		50.9%	47.2%		1.9%	
	Married	2974	3500	353	687	229
		38.4%	45.2%	4.6%	8.9%	3.0%
	Divorced	98	80	5	7	6
		50.0%	40.8%	2.6%	3.6%	3.1%
Widowed(er)	505	701	128	200	78	
	31.3%	43.5%	7.9%	12.4%	4.8%	
Total		5359	5605	581	1036	349
		41.4%	43.3%	4.5%	8.0%	2.7%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

Those who are actually working support the right of women that they should be allowed to work. On average, the results indicate that 96.5 percent of the surveyed employees in different employment sectors are in favour of the women's right to work. The highest percentage is for those who are working in the government and public sector compared to smaller proportions in the private, investment and non-profitable sectors (see table 1 in appendix A). **Women's privileges in the government and public sector are a significant factor that explains such view of women right to work. Such working environment in the public sector is matching with the families' responsibilities of working women in Egypt.** This explains why more than 76.6percent of the surveyed in the government think that they will be able to work after marriage (see table 2 in appendix A). The highest percentages of those who think that they will not be able to work after marriage are working in private and investment sectors (table 2 in appendix A).

Such support for the women's right to work even after marriage is a result of the belief that men would help their wives in taking care of the children. 77.5 percent of the sample is convinced that husbands should help their wives, while 16.7 percent disagree with such view. The highest percentages of those who have such attitude are working for the private (81.5%) and investment sectors (100%), while the highest ratio that is against who work in government (17.4%) and public enterprise (18.6%). **Differences in the environment of work in terms of hours and privileges explain those differences in views.** (see table 3 in appendix A).

Another aspect of empowerment challenges that is related to social values is whether the environment helps females to participate effectively or not. A prerequisite to such participation is the educational attainment. Despite the positive social value in supporting the right of women to work, practices show sometimes different signals. Analyzing the causes for female not going to

school indicates that 24.5percent of the surveyed females consider that traditions and culture were key reasons for not joining schooling. Parent decisions seem to be the key that causes as about 35percent of female who were deprived from education as parents did not want to (table 7). This, in turn, affects women's ability to participate effectively in labour market (See table 4 of appendix A)

Table (7): Gender Bias and Educational Opportunities

	Male		Female	
no available school	65	3.40%	108	2.60%
expensive	333	17.30%	458	11.00%
too far	38	2.00%	76	1.80%
had to help at home	63	3.30%	453	10.90%
had to work outside the family	141	7.30%	10	0.20%
had to help with the family's work	277	14.40%	56	1.40%
passed the age of joining school	23	1.20%	33	0.80%
All teachers were male	1	0.10%	3	0.10%
parents did not want to	432	22.50%	1440	34.70%
individual does not want to	378	19.70%	335	8.10%
traditions and culture	29	1.50%	1017	24.50%
do not know	22	1.10%	41	1.00%
Other	118	6.10%	109	2.60%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

3. Working Conditions and Empowerment

As mentioned before, women empowerment is tied with the question of whether working conditions are helping women to participate or not. The first issue in this respect is to look at the stability of working and whether it differs according to the gender aspect. Table (8) indicates that 88.7percent of the women surveyed have a permanent job while only 2percent have casual irregular work. Remarkably, these figures are higher than those of male where casual (irregular labour) approaches to 10percent.

Table (8): Stability of Jobs and Gender Aspect

		Permanent	Temporary (regular labor)	Seasonal	Casual (irregular labor)	Total
Sex	Male	7705	597	21	884	9207
		83.7%	6.5%	.2%	9.6%	100.0%
	Female	2442	238	16	56	2752
		88.7%	8.6%	.6%	2.0%	100.0%
Total		10147	835	37	940	11959
		84.8%	7.0%	.3%	7.9%	100.0%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

This is due to the fact that about 70 percent of women (who are working) belong to the government sector whereas only 24percent are working in the private sector. For male, only 54.5 percent belong to the government and the public sector and 42.4 percent are in the private sector

(table 8). This affects the level of work stability and this explains the higher percentage of women stability ratio compared to men as shown in table (9).

Table (9): Gender and Sector of Employment

		Sector of employee							Total
		Government	public enterprise	Private	investment	foreign	non-profitable governme	other including cooperativ	
Sex	Male	2002	495	1945	117	5	11	9	4584
		43.7%	10.8%	42.4%	2.6%	.1%	.2%	.2%	100.0%
	Female	1053	70	363	15	2	7	1	1511
		69.7%	4.6%	24.0%	1.0%	.1%	.5%	.1%	100.0%
Total		3055	565	2308	132	7	18	10	6095
		50.1%	9.3%	37.9%	2.2%	0.1%	.3%	.2%	100.0%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

The marital status of women does not affect the issue of stability as 89.6percent of women surveyed have a permanent job and only 6.3 percent of them have casual irregular work (table 10). This is matching with the above-mentioned analysis that most husbands accept that women have the right to work (see table 4).

Table (10): The Marital Status and Job Stability

		Job Stability				Total
Marital status		Permanent	Temporary (regular labor)	Seasonal	Casual (irregular labor)	
	Less than minimum age	313	29		71	413
		75.8%	7.0%		17.2%	100.0%
	Never married	1982	462	16	329	2789
		71.1%	16.6%	.6%	11.8%	100.0%
	Contractually married	35	7		3	45
		77.8%	15.6%		6.7%	100.0%
	Married	7410	316	20	522	8268
		89.6%	3.8%	.2%	6.3%	100.0%
	Divorced	107	7	1	9	124
		86.3%	5.6%	.8%	7.3%	100.0%
	Widowed(er)	300	14		6	320
		93.8%	4.4%		1.9%	100.0%
Total		10147	835	37	940	11959
		84.8%	7.0%	.3%	7.9%	100.0%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

Another important aspect of women empowerment is the right of women to occupy leadership position. On average, 93percent of the sample support the women's right to occupy a leadership position, while 3.4percent are against. There are minor differences among employment sectors in

this regard. As noted 54 percent to about 58 percent of those who are government and public sector employees of the sample surveyed strongly agree that women have such right, while only 4.4 percent are against that right. The highest support for such right is revealed in the investment, private and foreign sectors (table 11).

Table (11): Sector of Employment and the Right of Women to Occupy a Leadership Position in Society

Woman continue to occupy leadership position in society							
		Strongly agree	Agree	Indifferent	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Sector of employment	Government	604	383	40	16	10	1053
		57.4%	36.4%	3.8%	1.5%	.9%	100.0%
	Public enterprise	38	27	3		2	70
		54.3%	38.6%	4.3%		2.9%	100.0%
	Private	203	125	11	14	9	362
		56.1%	34.5%	3.0%	3.9%	2.5%	100.0%
	Investment	9	5	1			15
		60.0%	33.3%	6.7%			100.0%
	Foreign	2					2
		100.0%					100.0%
	Non-profitable government organization	4	3				7
		57.1%	42.9%				100.0%
	Other including cooperatives	1					1
		100.0%					100.0%
Total		861	543	55	30	21	1510
		57.0%	36.0%	3.6%	2.0%	1.4%	100.0%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

Despite such positive results of the analysis, there is an alarming message that shows a significant difference between male and female in terms of duration of unemployment. As table (12) demonstrates that the mean of unemployment duration for male is 28 months, whereas it exceeds 53 months for female. This implies that positive social values and stable working environment are not enough to incorporate women in labour market, thus hinder women's economic empowerment in Egypt.

Table (12): Duration of Unemployment and Gender

How long unemployed (month)	Sex			Statistic	Std. Error
	Male	Mean		28.00	1.291
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	25.46	
			Upper Bound	30.54	
		Median		24.00	
		Variance		813.649	
		Std. Deviation		28.525	
		Minimum		1	
		Maximum		192	
	Female	Mean		53.12	1.881
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	49.43	
			Upper Bound	56.82	
		Median		36.00	
		Variance		2528.753	
		Std. Deviation		50.287	
		Minimum		-99	
		Maximum		300	

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

4. Women Finance Autonomy and Empowerment

Another important aspect of empowerment as literature emphasizes is women's finance autonomy. Table (13) shows that 56percent of women support the right of women's finance autonomy as a mean of empowerment. It is notable that only 1 frequency for male strongly disagrees of women autonomy. However, it is also important to notice that 26percent of women surveyed disagree with such autonomy and even about 10percent of them strongly disagree.

Table (13): Gender View over Women Finance Autonomy

		Woman's finance autonomy (must work and have earn)					Total
		strongly agree	Agree	indifferent	disagree	strongly disagree	
Sex	Male					1	1
						100.0%	100.0%
	Female	3204	4140	1036	3363	1185	12934
		24.8%	32.0%	8.0%	26.0%	9.2%	100.0%
Total		3204	4140	1036	3363	1186	12935
		24.8%	32.0%	8.0%	26.0%	9.2%	100.0%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

The marital status is also crucial with respect to women finance autonomy. As indicated in table (14), 54percent of married female call for women autonomy in terms of finance. Such view exceeds with non-married female particularly for those of less minimum in age and never married female as the percentage approaches 70percent. The same conclusion is valid also for divorced female where about 80percent of them call for women's finance autonomy. Nevertheless, there is still significant proportion of female who reject such autonomy either married or not or even divorced (table 14).

Table (14): Women Finance Autonomy and Marital Status

Woman's finance autonomy must work and have earned						
Marital Status		strongly	Agree	indifferent	disagree	strongly disagree
	Less than minimum age	115	129	26	69	32
		30.8%	34.6%	7.0%	18.5%	8.6%
	Never married	909	994	128	647	277
		30.7%	33.6%	4.3%	21.9%	9.4%
	Contractually married	19	24		8	2
		35.8%	45.3%		15.1%	3.8%
	Married	1740	2438	697	2147	721
		22.5%	31.5%	9.0%	27.7%	9.3%
	Divorced	77	73	6	27	13
		39.3%	37.2%	3.1%	13.8%	6.6%
	Widowed(er)	344	482	179	465	141
		21.3%	29.9%	11.1%	28.8%	8.7%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

The views of the surveyed sectors regarding women finance autonomy are quite different. Despite that more than 62.2percent of the surveyed in all sectors call for women finance autonomy, there are significant differences among employment sectors. As noted, 80percent of those who support the right of women finance autonomy are working in the investment sector and more than 70percent of employees of the private sector support the same right. The highest proportions that are against such right are employed in either the government sector (36.3%) or public sector (35.7%) (Table15). The highest return in both private and investment sectors compared to lower income levels of government and public sectors, seems as a key factor that explains such difference in views.

Table (15): Sector of Employment and View on Woman's Finance Autonomy

Woman's finance Autonomy must work and have earned							Total
Sector of Employment		strongly agree	agree	indifferent	disagree	strongly disagree	
	Government	309	308	54	273	109	1053
		29.3%	29.2%	5.1%	25.9%	10.4%	100.0%
	public enterprise	21	22	2	17	8	70
		30.0%	31.4%	2.9%	24.3%	11.4%	100.0%
	Private	133	129	12	60	28	362
		36.7%	35.6%	3.3%	16.6%	7.7%	100.0%
	Investment	6	6	1		2	15
		40.0%	40.0%	6.7%		13.3%	100.0%

Woman's finance Autonomy must work and have earned							Total
		strongly agree	agree	indifferent	disagree	strongly disagree	
	Foreign	2					2
		100.0%					100.0%
	Non-profitable government organization	1	1		4	1	7
		14.3%	14.3%		57.1%	14.3%	100.0%
	Other including cooperatives				1		1
					100.0%		100.0%
Total		472	466	69	355	148	1510
		31.3%	30.9%	4.6%	23.5%	9.8%	100.0%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

Finally, the women's view regarding women's finance autonomy is influenced by the level of education that woman has. As results show, the higher the level of education the higher is the support given for women's finance autonomy. As table (16) indicates, about 60percent of those with university degree and above call for women's finance autonomy while only 35.3percent do not accept such call. The highest share of women who reject such right of finance autonomy among the groups of the surveyed women are those with general secondary school (41.7%) followed by those with primary level (36.7%). Nonetheless, most women surveyed call for women's finance autonomy as only 35.6percent reject the call for finance autonomy compared to 57.6 percent support such call.

Table (16): Stage of Education and Woman's Finance Autonomy

Woman's finance Autonomy must work and have earned.						
Stage of educ. last yr. of schooling	strongly agree	agree	indifferent	disagree	strongly disagree	Total
Primary	373	604	159	500	158	1794
	20.8%	33.7%	8.9%	27.9%	8.8%	100.0%
Preparatory	205	282	82	224	61	854
	24.0%	33.0%	9.6%	26.2%	7.1%	100.0%
general secondary	34	59	9	60	13	175
	19.4%	33.7%	5.1%	34.3%	7.4%	100.0%
technical secondary 3-years	746	889	139	735	260	2770
	26.9%	32.1%	5.0%	26.5%	9.4%	100.0%
technical secondary 5-years	33	25	5	18	13	94
	35.1%	26.6%	5.3%	19.1%	13.8%	100.0%
above intermediate	121	127	24	97	40	409
	29.6%	31.1%	5.9%	23.7%	9.8%	100.0%
university	376	408	82	338	135	1339
	28.1%	30.5%	6.1%	25.2%	10.1%	100.0%
Total	1888	2394	500	1972	680	7435
	25.4%	32.2%	6.7%	26.5%	9.1%	100.0%

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

- **Key findings**

In brief, the analysis has shown very important results regarding challenges of women empowerment in Egypt, which are:

- Higher unemployment rate is a key reason to discourage women from participating effectively in labour market. Moreover, lack of information about opportunities available in the labour market is crucial to discourage women.
- Social values particularly of parents' views on women education are the key factor that process by which women are empowered. As shown females are deprived of their right to education due to their parents.
- There is still gender bias against female unemployed as their duration of unemployment is significantly higher than those of male.
- The analysis has shown also that most husbands are in support to the right of female work. However, when it comes to finance autonomy, there is a totally different view as they oppose such autonomy.
- Education is a key determinant for supporting women's right with respect to the right to work and women's finance autonomy. As argued, the higher the level of education is, the greater is the support for women's right to work and to be financially independent.

Such findings are important as the next section discusses the key policies that empower women to choose and practice such choices.

5. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

Economic empowerment of women is a key issue and a prerequisite for economic development. As argued, increased women's labor force participation and earnings are associated with poverty reduction and foster economic growth. Moreover, female lower participation rates are costly for any economy, and Egypt is no exception.

The assessment of empowerment status of women is quite difficult as empowerment is a multi-faced concept. Furthermore, women empowerment cannot be captured by a single indicator. For the case of Egypt, the analysis to assess and identify challenges that hinder economic empowerment argue that there are set of factors that discourage women's participation and hence empowerment. The Egyptian labour market is not able to incorporate women. Specifically, higher unemployment rate is a key factor that discourages women from participating effectively in labour market. This is basically due to the lack of information about available opportunities and required skills as well as the weakness of women's social network. As argued, there is a significant gender bias against female unemployed as their duration of unemployment is higher than those of male. Furthermore, the study has indicated that there are set of negative social values that discourage women's participation. For instance, parent's views on women education is a factor that hinder women's participation effectively since it lowers their capabilities. Nonetheless, the analysis indicates that there is a significant change in various views and social values regarding the right of women to participate. Most husbands are in support to the right of female work and that they can occupy a leadership position. As noted, marriage is no longer a discourage factor for women to participate, as 88.8percent of husbands accept that women have the right to work while there are only 1.4 percent that do not accept that their wives have the right to work, and just 3.7percent accept but not happy. However, in terms of finance autonomy, husbands are not in a fully support to women's autonomy. The remarkable notice is that 26

percent of women surveyed disagree with such autonomy and even about 10percent of them strongly disagree. Women's view with respect to finance autonomy is affected by education level since results showed that there is a trend of positive relation between the stage of education and the support for women's finance autonomy.

Such findings are crucial for policy recommendations. The key message for policy makers is that supporting women's economic empowerment should be a complementary approach. This approach relies on key two pillars:

- 1) Correcting the negative social values that deprive women and exclude them from participation particularly those which are related to investment in women capabilities. This requires significant efforts as it necessitates a cultural reform. An area that needs the collaboration of all the stakeholders in the economy.
- 2) Labour market policies that support women's participation. These policies include:
 - i. Part-time jobs policy that is beneficial for both firms and female labour. For firms, part-time jobs allow them to allocate more labor towards weekly peak hours and thus enlarging labor supply. Simultaneously, such job opportunities are crucial to women as they help them to combine work with family care²⁵.
 - ii. Increasing women's access to training and all form of human capital investment. Moreover, access to technology and facilitating women's access to credit.
 - iii. Designing macro and micro economic policies to better address women's employment problems especially in the private sector, and providing accessible and affordable daycare centers and other services which are important, reducing opportunity costs of working.
 - iv. Women's entrepreneurship policy is an effective way to increase female labor force participation and to face female unemployment²⁶.

In general, the success in empowering women requires more gender-sensitive approaches to economic policy. Policy makers have to incorporate a gender perspective in all economic issues. Efforts to collect, analyze and regularly report on sex-disaggregated data are essential (Jones et al., 2008).

²⁵ Throughout the world, the rise in female participation rates has been closely connected to the availability of part-time jobs (World Bank, 2004b).

²⁶ Studies across countries have shown that female owned firms employ a larger share of women than their male counterparts (World Bank, 2007).

References

1. Alsop, R. & Hensohn, N. 2005. "Measuring Empowerment in Practice: Bridge Development Gender", Gender and Indicators Overview Report, UNDP.
2. Discussing Women Empowerment. Theory and Practice. 2001. Sida Studies. No. 3
3. Economic Research Forum (ERF). 2006. "Labor Market Survey", Cairo: Egypt.
4. El-Sheneity, S. and Mulki Al-Sharmani. 2008. "Combating Violence against Gender Entrepreneurship Markets (GEM)", International Finance Corporation (IFC), Country Brief.
5. Gender Entrepreneurship Markets (GEM), International Finance Corporation (IFC). GEM Country Brief — EGYPT 2007.
6. Heintz, J. 2006. Globalization, Economic Policy and Employment: Poverty and Gender Implications" Employment Strategy Papers, ILO.
7. Jones, N., Rebecca Holmes and Jessica Espey. 2008. "Gender and the MDGs. A Gender Lens is Vital for Pro-poor Results Overseas Development Institute. Briefing Paper, no. 42, September 2008
8. Katz, E. 2008. "Programs Promoting Young Women's Employment: What works? The Adolescent Girls Initiative". An Alliance for Economic Empowerment, Washington, World Bank.
9. Malhotra, Anju, Sidney Ruth Schuler and Carol Boender. 2002. "Measuring Women's Empowerment in International Development", Washington, World Bank.
10. Moser A. 2007. Bridge Development Gender. Gender and Indicators Overview Report. UNDP. July 2007.
11. Oxaal, Zoe and Sally Baden. 1997. "Gender and Empowerment: Definitions, Approaches and Implications for Policy", A Report no. 40, Bridge Development-Gender, Brighton.
12. The Danish Agency for International Development Assistance (DANIDA). 2008. "Gender Equality in the Private Sector", Working Paper, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Denmark.
13. The UNIFEM, (2003). "Human Rights Protections Applicable to Women Migrant Workers". A Unifem Briefing Paper.
14. The World Bank. 2004b. "Structuring Analysis & Framing Indicators", The World Bank Research Policy, Working Paper No. 351
15. The World Bank. 2007. "The Status and Progress of Women in the Middle East and North Africa", The World Bank Middle East and North Africa Social and Economic Development Group, Washington, World Bank.
16. The World Bank. 2004a. "Gender and Development in the Middle East and North Africa", MENA Development Report, "Women in the Public Sphere", Washington, World Bank.
17. UNDP, Egypt Human Development Report. 2005a. "Choosing our Future: Towards a New Social Contract", Cairo: Egypt.
18. UNDP, En Route to Equality. 2005b. A Gender Review of National MDG Reports.
19. UNIFEM. 2002. "Progress of the World's Women", Volume 2, Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals, Key Findings and Recommendations, Social Research Center, Cairo: The American University in Cairo.
20. World Economic Forum 2007. The Global Gender Gap Report
21. World Economic Forum. 2005. Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap.

Appendix A

List of questions

- Sex
- Marital status
- Stability of job
- Sector of employ
- Husband view work
- Why not go to school (main reasons).
- Main reason leaves school.
- High. education degree attained
- Women should be allowed to work
- How long unemployed (week)
- How long unemployed (month)
- Reasons for not looking for job
- Continuing work after marriage.
- Women Finance Autonomy
- Duration of Unemployment
- Sector of employment

Table (1): Sector of employment and View on whether Woman should be allowed to work

		Woman should be allowed to work					Total
		strongly agree	agree	Indifferent	Disagree	strongly disagree	
Sector of employ	Government	682	342	4	15	10	1053
		64.8%	32.5%	.4%	1.4%	.9%	100.0%
	public enterprise	43	27				70
		61.4%	38.6%				100.0%
	Private	211	131	1	11	8	362
		58.3%	36.2%	.3%	3.0%	2.2%	100.0%
	Investment	9	4			2	15
		60.0%	26.7%			13.3%	100.0%
	Foreign	2					2
		100.0%					100.0%
	non-profitable government organization	2	3		2		7
		28.6%	42.9%		28.6%		100.0%
	other including cooperatives	1					1
		100.0%					100.0%
Total		950	507	5	28	20	1510
		62.9%	33.6%	.3%	1.9%	1.3%	100.0%

Table (2): Sector of employment and the question "Think to be able to work after marriage"

		Think to be able to work after marriage			Total
		Yes	No	it depends	
Sector of employment	government	100	8	33	141
		70.9%	5.7%	23.4%	100.0%
	public enterprise	7		7	14
		50.0%		50.0%	100.0%
	Private	96	40	103	239
		40.2%	16.7%	43.1%	100.0%
	investment	5	1	3	9
		55.6%	11.1%	33.3%	100.0%
	Foreign	1			1
		100.0%			100.0%
	non-profitable government organization	2			2
		100.0%			100.0%
Total		211	49	146	406
		52.0%	12.1%	36.0%	100.0%

Table (3): Sector of employment and "the question of whether Wife has a job husband help her with child"

		strongly agree	Agree	indifferent	Disagree	strongly disagree	Total
Sector of employment	Government	341	461	68	139	44	1053
		32.4%	43.8%	6.5%	13.2%	4.2%	100.0%
	public enterprise	26	30	1	10	3	70
		37.1%	42.9%	1.4%	14.3%	4.3%	100.0%
	Private	151	144	15	38	14	362
		41.7%	39.8%	4.1%	10.5%	3.9%	100.0%
	Investment	5	6	2	2		15
		33.3%	40.0%	13.3%	13.3%		100.0%
	Foreign	1	1				2
		50.0%	50.0%				100.0%
	non-profitable government organization	2	2		3		7
		28.6%	28.6%		42.9%		100.0%
	other including cooperatives		1				1
				100.0%			
Total		526	645	86	192	61	1510
		34.8%	42.7%	5.7%	12.7%	4.0%	100.0%

Table (4): Unemployment Duration and Educational Attainment

Education Degree	Period of Unemployment (months)		
	Mean	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Nothing	17.43	6.43	28.42
Primary	12.03	2.25	21.82
Preparatory	22.57	5.99	39.15
general secondary	29.75	17.16	42.34
technical secondary 3- years	52.42	48.37	56.46
technical secondary 5-years	40.16	24.39	55.92
above intermediate	39.76	31.07	48.45
University	34.30	31.09	37.51
post graduate	30.00	19.71	25.8

Sources: Authors' calculation based on the labour market survey 2006.

Appendix (B)

Chi-Square Goodness-of-Fit Test:

It is used to test whether obstacles have a uniform distribution in the sense that whether they have equal weights against they have unequal weights.

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^k (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$$

where O_i is the observed frequency for bin i and E_i is the expected frequency for bin i . The expected frequency is calculated by

$$E_i = N(F(Y_u) - F(Y_l))$$

where F is the cumulative Distribution function for the distribution being tested, Y_u is the upper limit for class i , Y_l is the lower limit for class i , and N is the sample size.

Table (1): Chi-Square Tests for factors that hinder participation in labour market

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	39.121	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	44.591	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.161	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	259		