

Sociological Analysis of Wives’ Violence: A Case Study in Egypt

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Abstract:

The importance of the present study stems from the problematic nature of the marital relationships and the societal dimensions that stimulate some wives to murder their husbands with intention in Egypt. Hence, the question of this study runs so: What are the motives and societal dimensions that stimulate the wives to kill their husbands in Egypt? In order to find answers to this main question, the study makes use of the diagnostic and analytical approach with its two aspects: the qualitative and quantitative. That is to realize the aims of the study and to identify the dimensions of wives’ violence in Egyptian society in addition to determining the factors that produce violence in the Egyptian family. The study also adopts the comprehensive investigation and scanning of the statistical crime reports of the public security administration associated with the ministry of internal affairs in Egypt in the period from 1985 to 2008. This helps in counting the rates of this crime, defining its types, classifying it in terms of general or familial, and comparing it with the

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crime of “murder with intention.” The field study was carried out in Al-Qnater Al-Khairia prison for women, taking into consideration this prison as the main prison for female criminals. The study also employs so-called “depth interviews” in order to apply the questionnaire as the main tool capable of identifying the daily life aspects of the subject under study and their familial histories. The study was carried out between July 2009 and December 2009 in Al-Qnater Al-Khairia prison for women. The writing of the report occurred between January 2010 and July 2010. The study emphasizes that the reason behind the increase in the crime ratios lies in an inequality in the distribution of economic resources. This cause is the main factor in committing both the crimes motivated by money gain and violence. The results of the social surveys reveal that the murdering wife affiliates to the lower social class by a ratio of 83.33% of the total crimes (or 30 cases). 10% of those murderers belong to the upper lower class and 6.67% belong to the middle class. The latter are only two cases. The study reports that 53.33% of the female murderers do not have jobs and 46.67% of them are service workers.

Keywords: Wives’ Violence, Murder of Husbands, Crime of Murder, Egypt.

1. Introduction:

HUMAN BEHAVIOR IS conditioned by the ruling social classes, which accordingly own society and hold power in the fields of economics, education and politics. Power is directed to realize the interests of this ruling class, a process that opposes the requirements of the lower classes and deprives those classes from satisfying their basic needs. This study takes such an argument as its starting point. This comprehensive perspective opens criminal behavior up to explanation, accomplishing something that one-dimensional theories fail to do.

Being committed to the proper social behavior and social criteria of action is conditioned by some specific factors. These factors include the economic satisfaction of the social classes, equality in the distribution of resources among all sectors of society at its demographic levels, and valorization of the culture of human rights through socialization in a democratic environment that determines the rights and responsibilities of citizens and the nature of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. Moreover, this democratic climate defines the relation between the employer and the employee in all institutions in civil society. One of the most significant institutions in civil society, the family, determines the roles of the married couple. If such a relationship is characterized by a democratic spirit—with its notions of equality, freedom of expression, and participation in decision-making, in addition to the previously mentioned democratic conditions—the social structure foregrounds a type of healthy behavior. In the absence of democracy, unhealthy behavior prevails and hence new types of crimes and violence dominate. In such a

case, one can find crimes committed by children and women within the institution of the family. Such crimes are reflected in contemporary statistics. The rapidity of international changes and their influence upon traditional societies help those crimes to dominate. This serves in the presence of a duality of cultural types and criteria that determine the individuals' behavior according to specific class differences.

Domination of mass media globalization contributes in establishing a social environment characterized by opposition and conflict concerning the norms that govern social questions. Such domination helps also in creating a gap between generations. This is because of the Western cultural invasion, which falsifies Egyptian reality and decreases the possibility of making a powerful connection with both the past and the present. In light of this conflict, structural and cultural oppositions appear in the Egyptian family. This results in a great deal of familial problems in which the wife finds herself overloaded as the pivotal figure in the family.

Those life pressures push the woman to live an internal self-conflict on the one hand, and a societal conflict with the other on the other hand. The latter kind of conflict appears in the violence directed against the woman in the family on the one level, and from the woman towards her children and husband on the other level. The violence of women towards the members of their families represents the majority of cases of female violence.

This study is primarily concerned with the investigation of the nature of motives behind such violence and the societal

dimensions that stimulates a wife to commit to murder her husband.

2. Feminist Perspective and Woman Crimes:

The researcher depends in her interpretation of wives' violence and husband killing on a feminist approach because it offers social theories that help to handle many of the issues that inspire cases of exploitation, subordination, and inequality. This is illustrated through the following theoretical issues: adjusting power, and gender and class struggle (see: Daly 2006, 205-213). In addition to some theoretical arguments like marginalization of social, frustration and aggression (see: Coleman & Cressey 1987, 445-446), relative and absolute deprivation (Carrabine et al. 2009, 185).

3. Study's Systematic Approach:

The main objective of this study is the observation of wives' social dimensions and the motives behind premeditated murder in the Egyptian society.

There is a group of sub-objectives branching from the main objective that reveal the features, characteristics and motives of wives' premeditated murder as follows:

1. Observation of the felony rates in Egyptian society during the last twenty years.
2. Recognition of the features of bloody violence directed against husbands and its proportion relative to the sum of family crimes.
3. Observation of the socio-economical level of murderous

wives.

4. Detection of demographic characteristics of murderous wives.
5. Analysis of the social dimensions that motivate a wife to kill her husband.
6. Recognition of the features of social upbringing of the murderous wife in the family orientation.
7. Detection of the relationship between the type of life and the wife's killing of her husband.
8. Detection of the nature of the relationship between murdering wives and murdered husbands.

4. Methodology:

The study depended on the comprehensive social survey method of the General Security Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs specialized in Egyptian crime statistics from 1985 to 2008 in order to observe crime rates, types, and classification (general and family) and compare them to premeditated murder. There was also the comprehensive social survey method conducted on female murderers in the Kanater Khairia general prison for women in Egypt in order to determine the ratio of husband killing in proportion to the rest crimes committed by women. The case study method, using "depth interview," was applied to four cases of wives who premeditatedly killed their husbands.

The field of study was carried out in the period from July 2009 to December 2009 in Al- Qnater Al-Khairia prison for women. The writing of the report took a period of time from January 2010 to July 2010.

5. Findings of the Study:

Findings of the field study are divided into two sections: the first deals with the results of the Comprehensive Social Survey of Egyptian crime statistics reports developed by Ministry of the Interior between 1985 and 2008. The second section deals with the results of a social survey of women in prison for murdering their husbands, in addition to the results of “the four study cases” of women who murdered their husbands, using more than one method in their crimes. It is shown in the following view.

5. 1. Results of the Analytical Study of Crime Statistics in the Period 1985- 2008:

An Interior Ministry commission reports a rise in total crimes (felonies and misdemeanors) and the private interests of public security over previous years. This rise is most notable in crimes of money, such as counterfeiting currency, which increased by an estimated 44% (The Report of Public Security Organization 2008, 1). The results refer to the escalating rate of crimes in general, from 3. 44% in 2000 to 4. 20% in 2008. The most prominent crime surge occurred in the area “of murder and attempted [murder],” which rose by 42. 6%. Recorded crimes of aggravated assault (beating to death–beating to deformity) increased by 43. 3%. The crimes of “indecent assault and rape” increased by 21% and the crime of “robbery” came in fourth place, increasing by 18%. The report highlights the most important indicators learned in the commission of the crimes of “murder and robbery with violence and coercion and launched” and notes they make up

the highest ratios in the quality of the scope of the crimes committed in the Republic and 56% of the total crimes (Public Security 2008, 11).

The escalating crime rate in Egyptian society during the past twenty years reveals the poor structural conditions of construction, which are further illustrated by the absence of social justice, the weakness of national integration, and a lack of respect for human rights. All these indicators are reflected in the statistics of the Human Development Reports, which report that 43.9% of Egypt's total population lives below the poverty line, getting two dollars a day as determined by the United Nations Development Programme as "income poverty." The rate of human poverty is 20% (Arab Human Development Report 2009, 237), so Egypt is located at the top of the list of countries with high rates of "human poverty and income poverty." This finding is confirmed by many studies on the correlation between human deprivation and high crime rates. The lack of equality in the distribution of resources is a key factor for the commission of financial crime and aggravated assault (Carrabin et al. 2009, 193-194). And it shows the results of the present study.

5. 1. 1. Crimes of "Murder" between Husband and Wife:

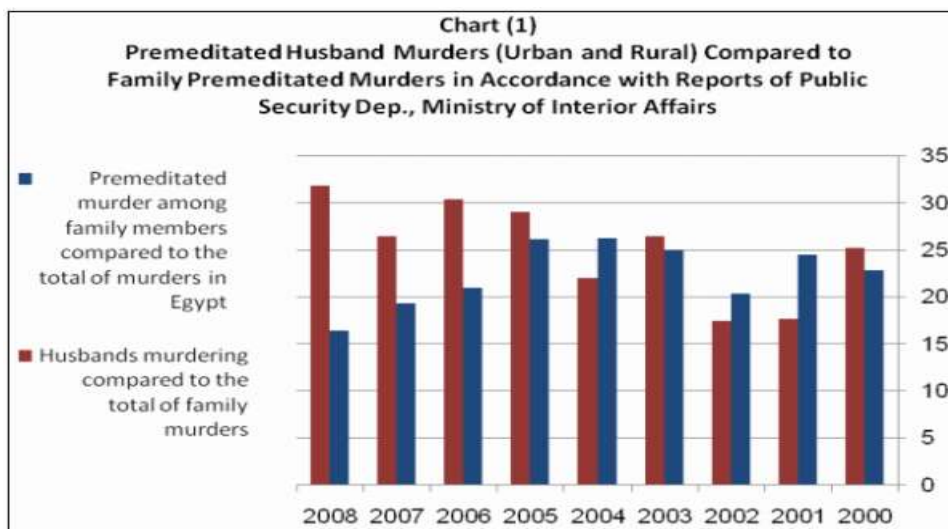
Chart (1) shows that the killings between spouses for the year 2008 has amounted to 31.8% of the total crimes of "murder" in the family, which were reported as making up 16.4% of the general "murders" in the Egyptian society and which amounted to 42.6% of the total crimes. These crimes are considered among the most prominent crimes, and their

commission rate escalated as compared to previous years (The Report of Public Security Organization 2008, 11). The crimes of “murder” between husband and wife briefly decreased from 25. 2% to 17. 7% to 17. 4% then up to 26. 4% and then back down 22% in 2000, 2001, 2002,

2003, and 2004, respectively. Then the murder rate started to rise again in 2005, 2006, 2007, to 29%, 30. 4%, 26. 4%. The decrease in the tangible killings between spouses, especially in 2001 and 2002 is due to the application of the divorce law (Article 20 of the Personal Status Law of 2000) (Al Sharq Al Awsat 2002, 2).

These statistics emphasize that social policies issued by the State can limit the commission of murders between spouses.

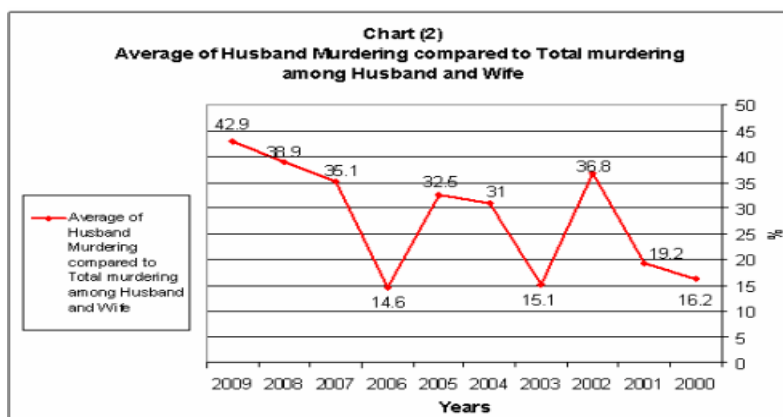
The application of Islamic law is misunderstood in some Arab societies, particularly with regard to women’s rights. This is clearly shown when women request to get a “divorce” the husband asserts his right not to divorce, even though the Muslim religion affirms that “A divorce is only to be effected twice, then either stay together with honor or separate in kindness” (The Holy Quran, 2: 229). Another surah states, “If you divorce women and they complete the term prescribed, then either retain them in kindness or release them in kindness, but do not take them back merely to harass them and whoever does that harms his own soul” (The Holy Quran, 2: 231).



One of the study cases stressed that one of her reasons for “murdering her husband” was attributable—at a percent of 25%—to her husband’s refusal to divorce her. She was urged to get rid of him by murdering him. She justified not filing a Khul`a lawsuit by explaining that her economic and social conditions are very poor. Besides, she needs the marital accommodation to live in after divorce, and the Khul`a law devours all the financial rights of the wife. These findings explain the increasing rates of the “intentional murder” of husbands (**See: Chart 2**). The rate of this crime in 2007 and 2008 reached 35. 1% and 38. 9% of the total spouse murders respectively. The results of the survey study of “husband murderers” in Al- Qanater Al-Khairia Public Women’s Prison in Egypt recorded a remarkable increase in the crimes of husband murder. The percentage reached 42. 9%, which means there were 30 such cases out of the total number of murders committed by women, which reach 70, in 2009. This indicates that the percentages of general murder cases committed by

women decreased if compared to the crimes committed in 2008, which reached 216 total murders compared to 21 cases of murdered husband with a percentage of 9.7% of the general murder cases. This matter emphasizes the increasing rates of the crime of husband murder, which tends to occur primarily in very poor, rural societies where women suffer from oppressing social conditions. Moreover, 23% of rural families are supported by married wives whose their husbands are either immigrants, sick, or handicapped. This makes women responsible for their families. This also reflects women's reliance on income transfers, which exist as a result of effects of the economic recession on the standards of living of Egyptian families as a result of the economic reforms and structural adaptation programs that began in the late seventies. (Abdel Ghani 2004, 201).

This explains the pattern and rate of crimes committed by women in Egypt. These crimes are attributable to the women's need for money, with crimes of theft reaching a recorded 45.2%, prostitution 19.8%, drugs 14.2%, public funds 11.3%, and begging 6.5% (Public Women Prison in Egypt 2009).



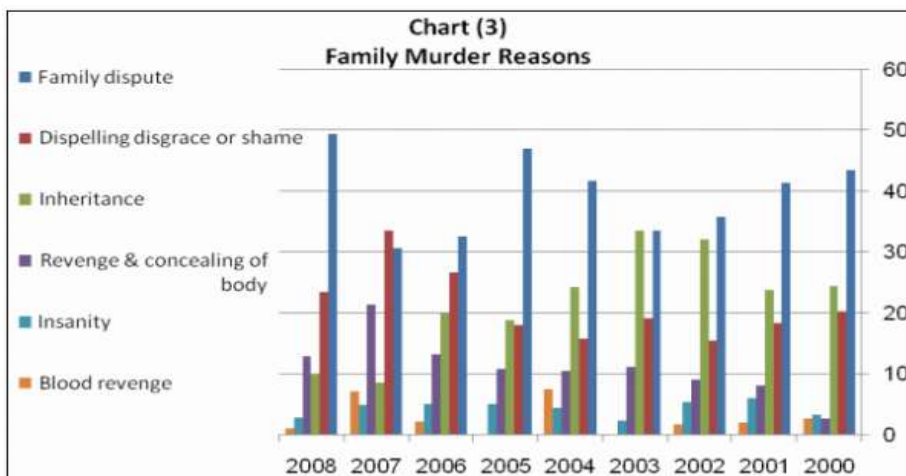
5. 2. Results of the “Case Study” and Social Survey:

5. 2. 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Killing Wives:

The results of the study show higher rates of women killing their husbands in rural areas (64%) than in urban-registered areas (36%). This is coupled with a low educational level, or lack thereof in female killers. Most of the women in prison for killing their husbands (80%) are in the 25–35-year-old age group, as compared to only 20% between the ages of 36 and 46 (Public Women Prison in Egypt 2009). This paper examines those findings in light of the work of Foster (1989, 273-284) and Biomy (2005) to explore female violence.

5. 2. 2. Social Dimensions of the Crimes of Murdering Husbands:

This is illustrated in **chart (3)** on the social dimensions that prompted wives to commit the crimes of “intentionally murdering” their husbands during the past ten years. The findings of the social survey of the crime statistics in the Egyptian society emphasized the high rates of “family dispute” between spouses due to the inability of husbands to meet the basic needs of their families as a result of their low wages and declining family incomes. The rate of “family dispute” reached 49. 4% in 2008 and hence it is considered the highest in the previous ten years, as it was recorded at 43. 5% in 2000. Taking into consideration the increasing and decreasing rates of family disputes, we found that they range between 30. 7% in 2007, 32. 6% in 2006 and 47. 1% in 2005. The years 2004, 2003, 2002, and 2001 recorded the following rates respectively 41. 7%, 33. 6%, 35. 8% and 41. 5%.



It is noted that the rates fluctuate around the mid-factor percentage, which stresses the stability of its causes, which include poverty. Many social studies pinpointed the impact of poverty and the factors of impoverishment on the women's criminal behavior, particularly in poor and socially disadvantaged areas. These areas suffer from discrimination and disparities in the distribution of resources, and hence they are ranked as socially needy areas. Therefore, such areas are hit with "human being assassination" because of the frequent injustices directed at poor people, which lead them to commit crimes (Carrabin et al. 2009, 103). This was confirmed by the findings of a social survey of "murderer wives" in the current study. Their percentage in the lower class with its three segments reached 93.33%.

The findings were also confirmed by the results of the "case study" performed on four women guilty of murdering their husbands; three of the women belong to the lower class, and one belongs to the middle class.

May social studies attribute “women’s crimes” to the capitalist pattern of production, which leads to an ideology of sexual bias towards men that reproduces the traditional role of women with its focus on the family. This constitutes the social status of the woman and the crimes she commits.

Accordingly, the socialist feminist tendency singles out women’s crimes with two patterns. The first pattern includes women’s need of money. This crime pattern, which includes crimes like theft and prostitution, is non-violent. The second pattern is characterized by violence and includes acts such as murder. The victims of such crimes are almost always family members. In committing murders, women use household tools; they are not frequent users of firearms.

The nature of the crimes committed by women reflects their low status in the social surroundings and the capitalist system, where comets confirmed the use of lethal weapons (knife-chopper), which are key tools to commit murder in addition to other means to help such as electricity and sleeping pills (Abu Zeid 2002, 384).

5. 2. 2. 1. Social Exclusion and Killing their Husbands:

The results of the social survey of husband murderers in the women’s prison in Kanater reveal that 83. 33% of women in the 30 most extreme cases belong to the lower class, while 10% belong to an even more impoverished underclass. In only 2 of the 30 cases the women belong to the middle class. The study also shows that 53. 33% of these lethal women do not have paying jobs (although they do unpaid work), while 46. 67% do service work.

The above indicators agree with the status of women as reflected in the statistics reported by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, which emphasize that the rate of illiteracy among rural women was 47% versus 25% in urban areas in 2006 (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics 2009, 5).

The percentage of illiterate women who are “the heads of families” is 81. 6% in rural areas, as compared to 57. 6% in urban areas (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics 2009, 88). Furthermore, women’s contributions make up 17. 3% of the total family support. Within the larger distribution of the work and economic activity across Egyptian society women contribute at a rate of 45. 6% in the agriculture and fishing industry and at a rate of 39% in the service sector (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics 2009, 61).

Simmons confirms that women belonging to impoverished communities suffer from social exclusion of the variance in the distribution of resources according to type and class and race. Women who are disadvantage or who suffer deficits in their basic needs are therefore committed to the social strata of criminal and deviant behavior as a result of their rights being stolen from them by force (Makarios 2007, 100-102).

5. 2. 2. 2. Economic Impoverishment and the Killing of Husbands:

The results of the study revealed high rates of crimes of “intentional murder of husbands” in rural areas, which are the poorest areas in Egyptian society. This was further confirmed by the demographic characteristics of the comets to

considerations identified by the framework of building and structural communities. This is illustrated by the status of the murderous women, which indicates the case of hegemony and domination in human societies that depend on discrimination of the species in all societal spheres, which puts women in the ranks of “need and human poverty” of inequality and the absence of equal opportunities” (Burgess 2006, 28-29). And this produces the critical reality of women who commit criminal behavior against those who robbed them of their right to a dignified life. This is confirmed by the sample cases, and it also explains the causes behind the murder.

5. 2. 2. 3. Economic Impoverishment and the Killing of Husbands:

The study results showed that the poor quality of life experienced by members of the lower class and marginalized communities is the reason behind the different forms of physical and sexual abuse generally committed by the victims who suffer from the quality of life or those who cannot fulfill their basic needs. This makes low quality of life one of the major reasons for committing criminal acts (Carrabin, 2009, 185).

Poverty is the major factor in poor quality of life. It leads to relative and absolute deprivation, which is responsible for the impoverished state that the lower classes remain in as a result of their inability to fulfill their basic needs due to their low incomes. Marginalized societies, especially in the countryside and slums (Lila 1995, 83), reflect patterns of bad social conditions and they become centers of criminal and deviant behavior. The current case studies are a realistic

example of these conditions. The study findings emphasized the low standard of living in these communities.

5. 2. 2. 4. Class and Gender Difference:

The analysis of the interviews with the study cases to discuss such low conditions experienced by wives reflected the marriage cases by means of gender and class difference. Some of what was mentioned by the study cases:

“The features of that relationship made me think that we were two teams in the family, one including me and my mother and the other including my brothers and my father, who discriminated between us even in the food, as my father was keen on fulfilling my brothers’ needs of meat and fruit. Such things were rare in our house, as we would not see them except on the market day and not often. Eating, drinking, clothing and place of sleeping were not the only difference in treatment, but my father deprived me of education although all my brothers joined education. When I grew up and asked him about that, he said: ‘You are a girl and marriage is your destiny, how will you benefit from education? Will education help you cook? Stop girls’ nonsense, go with your mother to show you what to do and learn it. This is your job in life’”

Theorists of Marxist and Socialist feminism attribute the conditions of human and economic impoverishment to the nature of the capitalist system based on exploitation of the poor and women for the sake of the forces of production, which are augmented in the absence of the fair distribution of wealth and as a result of the division of work on the basis of gender and caste discrimination. Women represent an example of oppression and persecution in the social structure (Potter 2006,

114) due to their experience of another sort of discrimination out of their secondary standing in the labor market, where the role of women is considered to be marginal, as the labor market depends mainly on men. This excludes women from the social welfare system, a matter that fills them with “anger and frustration.” Such reasons are deemed as justifications for most economic-natured and property crimes committed by women as an expression of their rejection of their class standing in the patriarchal capitalist society (Al Wrikat 2008, 269).

5. 2. 3. Adjusting Power:

The results of analyzing “the case study” reveal a close relationship between the family disintegration and committing the crimes of “murdering their husbands.” They underline the disruption of the family atmosphere of the guiding family and its negative impact on the psychological and social attitudes as a result of improper socialization of disunited families, a matter which undermined their ability to cope with the rules and laws imposed by society (Abdel Ghani 2004, 212).

The analysis of the content files of the “case study” revealed the overlap and correlation between the practice of physical and sexual abuse in their childhood and the growth of deviant and criminal behavior (Makarios 2007, 100). The following are some quotations of cases of the study : “I lost my mom when I was forty days. I opened my eyes on my stepmother who used to insult and hit me for trivial reasons. She used to tie my feet with a rope and leave me without food.

I lived with my father and his wife suffering from deprivation to eat and get dressed and everything a girl in my

age would wish, but I was having plenty of severe treatment at the hands of stepmother.”

5. 2. 3. 1. Incest and the Assassination of Childhood:

The feminist perspective offered an explanation to the cause of “the assassination of childhood” through physical and sexual abuse when it stressed that sexual abuse is an expression of the concept of masculinity in men in patriarchal communities and the desire of men to be dominant and commanding. It is the product of the nature of relations within these communities (Carrabin et al. 2009, 200). Besides, the feminist perspective emphasizes the impact of sexual abuse of young girls as it implants in them tendencies towards criminal behavior and deviation (Makarios 2007, 10). Incest from interpretation of case studies and analysis of their files:

“My father was a mechanic who repairs cars. My mother died when I was ten years old. I have five brothers, three of them are full brothers and two are half brothers. I was the only female in the house. The house of my family was small and it consists of two bedrooms and a small hall; a room for my father and his wife and the second room for me and my brothers. My elder brother was a mechanic with my dad and I always slept next to him. One day he raped me and he used to do this with me. The relationship between us and our father is almost non-existent. He is addicted to drugs of all kinds to the point that his wife ran away from home, leaving her children to him, as he could not support her and her children. My father asked me to sleep next to him instead of my brother. I was happy and I felt that he would protect me from my brother’s

sexual abuse, but I found that my father is doing what my brother does. The two became accustomed to having sexual intercourse with me until [they] had sexual relations with others after I became fourteen years old.”

5. 2. 4. The Dispossessed Destiny (Dispossession of Marriage Right):

The results of the “case study” analysis of the current research stressed the sex discrimination forms which women have experienced within their families. Such discrimination is regarded as a form of power influence with its class and gender stereotypes in the Arab world in general and in Egypt in particular. This places women at the apex of conflict in an attempt from her side to release herself from the restrictions of the traditional image confirming a woman’s inferiority and secondary social status and defining her role as a “second class” human being created in order to reproduce energy to serve and comfort another human being, who is the man who has stripped her of her right to self-determination in education, work, marriage, love and even divorce (Qenawi 2000, 39).: Some of what was mentioned by the study cases: “My father’s harsh treatment made an iron curtain between me and him in spite of giving my brothers the freedom to go in and out of house and to wake up at any time and to talk to him in any way. All this discrimination did not hurt me as much as the time when my father agreed to marry me off and conclude my marriage contract without my knowledge. When I blamed him, he said: ‘You are not responsible for your affairs as I know your best interest more than you can do. This man has three feddans and a career to earn his living ...’ Anyway, my father

insisted on marrying me off to this man whom I had not seen and regarding whom my father had not got my mother's opinion because she did not have any opinion or a word in the family. According to my father's opinion, women can't think or make their own decisions as this is men's business because 'women lack reason and religion.'

5. 2. 5. Frustration, Aggression, and the Crime of Husband Murdering:

5. 2. 5. 1. Emotional Deprivation and Conflict between Spouses:

Feminist studies confirm that there is a relationship between the married woman practicing violence against her husband and her frustration with regard to marital life practices, especially the lack of an intimate relationship between her and her husband, or the husband's practice of "sexual violence" against her. Both cases change a woman's status from a "victim" to a "criminal" (Britton 2000, 65), a matter that is confirmed by the analysis of the interview with the "study cases" as well as their files in the office of psychological and social counseling in "the Public Women Prison." Some of what was mentioned by the study cases: "I knew the victim when I was married and a mother of three children because my ex-husband deprived me of my right in having sexual intercourse as I used to have intercourse with my elder brother and my father (incest). Sex became the most important thing in my life prior to eating and drinking. When I knew the victim, I had an illegal intercourse with him lasting for more than a year. Then I asked my husband to divorce me

and left my children with him in search of love and sex with my lover. We got married and I lived with him in his apartment. Our marital life lasted for four months and I was then surprised by his bad treatment. He would torture me physically, and verbally. Also, he used to beat me severely every day and bring some prostitutes at home to stay with him for more than a week having sex and I would serve them. He kept me away from having sex with him because he preferred having sex with prostitutes. My husband turned into a savage lacking all the characteristics and standards of humanity.”

5. 2. 5. 2. Lack of Marital Harmony:

The analytical study of the study cases has shown that the absence of marital harmony with its different levels and objective and subjective stereotypes cause the “competence principle” in marriage to be absent. Such competence, which refers to class equality with its lifestyles and practices expressing the objectives and standards of such class as well as non-abidance by these objectives and standards, leads to class difference between the spouses—a matter that leads to disharmony between the spouses. It is worthy to mention that the personal factor comes to support such issue as it shows the difference in the personal abilities and skills with their stereotypes as presented by the study cases. Some of what is mentioned by the study cases: “My father married me off to one of his companions who is the same age as my father. He is weak-sighted and works in the field of tanning. He is twenty-five years older than me. I was fourteen years when I got married to that person. My father married me off to such man through fraud as he took his sister (i. e., my aunt) instead of me

to the marriage official to complete such marriage in a formal way. He got the marriage document without my knowledge or consent, which was worthless in his sight after he dispossessed my right in life after stripping me off all my rights. My feeling of disability to resist his wrongdoings against me and abusing me made me a defeated person who has nothing to do—with the exception of revenge.”

5. 2. 6. Scenes from the Crimes of Husband Murdering:

The findings of the analytical study of the case studies revealed some scenes on how husbands are murdered and the motives of the murderer’s anger and aggression towards her husband. This made the researcher review “the situation of the murder” as some cases narrated them:

5. 2. 6. 1. Bad Experiences of the Patterns of Qualitative Abuse and Exploitation:

This was confirmed by the study cases: “One day after he bids farewell to one of the whores who cohabitated with him for more than a week while I was serving her in humiliation, I saw my husband coming back as if he had been a devil. In my eyes, the whole world turned into a black, gloomy reality. My heart was overwhelmed with wrath and I was fed up with all my sufferings including all patterns of physical abuse throughout my life. I decided to put an end to this tragedy. At this moment, I remembered how my ‘childhood was assassinated’ and I was ‘raped’ by my relatives until I got accustomed to having sex and knowing this devil. I felt that my eyes were all evil and anger provides me with a super power which I

have never felt. I brought the axe from the house garden and beat him at the head while he was asleep until I checked that he is dead. I threw him on the ground and I swear that I felt as if he had been a piece of paper in my hand. My body was provided with a superpower. I dragged him to the bathroom, spilled kerosene on his body, cut off his genitals and set a fire to him. Then, I headed to the police station, which I have frequently visited because of my now-and-then complaints against my husband, to confess to my crimes.”

5. 2. 6. 2. Poverty Structure and Murdering Husbands:

The historical roots of the gender gap emphasize that women are poorer when compared to men. This is manifested in the fact that two-thirds of the poor all over the world are females. There are 900 million females out of a billion poor people (males and females) whose income is less than US\$1 per day. They belong to more than one hundred countries in the South, which has witnessed the reduction of growth rates and the standards of living during the last two decades. On the other hand, 14% of the world population acquired more than three- fourths of the total world production (Abd Al-Muati and Alam 2003, 19-22). This increases the gap between the rich and poor countries and it leads to the emergence of some negative social phenomena such as the growth of poverty rates, feminization of poverty, the increasing opportunities of rates of class marginalization and the emergence of social classes and segments within the lower-class social cadres (Abd Al-Muati and Alam 2003, 19-22). This was confirmed by the study cases: “I managed to untie myself and escape. Hungry and

thirsty, I escaped to the street. I was obliged to drink stagnant, salty water; my aim in life was not high. I just hoped for a refuge to keep me away from human traffickers but I could not find any. One day, I was surprised with this panderer (i. e. my second husband) again. He asked ‘Do you think that you will be able to escape from me?’ At this moment, I felt that my whole life does not equal the moment of revenging from my circumstances and those who caused them. I went with him and I decided to get rid of him to avenge for myself. I found him naked in the bathroom and while he was feeling safe with me, I got into the bathroom and beat him with the chopper. I did not feel anything until I saw him in small pieces. Only then, I felt salvation from my exploitation and poverty. I surrendered to my destiny, headed to the police station and confessed everything to get rid of my life.”

Conclusion

The findings of the field study are divided into two sections: **the first** deals with results of the Comprehensive Social Survey of crime statistics reports developed by Ministry of the Interior between 1985 and 1999. The study views the overall homicide rates within Egypt and their proportion to the total number of multiple types of crimes. It also compares them to rates of family murdering—especially crimes of spouse/husband murders during the period from 2000 to 2008. The research focuses on this period in order to specify separate statistical data of family crimes from 2000 until the last report by the Ministry of Interior in 2008 and publication of this research in 2010.

Results of the analytical study of crime statistics showed high rates of “intentional murdering of husbands,” which reached an estimated 35.1% and 38.9% in 2007 and 2008, respectively, of the total rate of spouse murdering.

The second section: deals with the results of a Social Survey conducted in the prison of women who had murdered their husbands, in addition to the results of “the four study cases “of women who murdered their husbands deliberately, using more than one method in their crimes. The results revealed a significant increase of spouse/husband murdering, registering at 42.9% in 2009. Results of the cases of the study illustrated the impact of economic marginalization and the consequent deprivation (relative and absolute) embodied in poor quality of life, as the female

murderers reported, which is considered a motive for committing their murders.

This segment of guilty females belongs to marginalized groups in Egyptian society whose rates are increasing because of the policies of impoverishment which make them unable to meet their basic needs and the consumption-based aspirations imposed by the current status quo. This matter makes such segments suffer from “social needs” because of their human poverty and low incomes. These factors are mechanisms pushing them to commit different patterns of crimes to fulfill their needs.

In addition to other social dimensions of an adjusting power (incest and the assassination of childhood) and differences in class and gender, the dispossession of marriage rights, emotional deprivation, and conflict between spouses lead to a lack of marital harmony.

Women’s suffering from unemployment, poverty and social marginalization in a manner that exceeds men due to economic, political and cultural accumulations made the alternatives for men to cope with poverty more widely available than women’s alternatives and opportunities in society. The severity of such suffering is augmented in the less developed and grown societies on the productive, cultural (Swenson 2008, 73-89, Abd Al-Muati and Alam 2003, 22-23) and legislative levels in light of a value matrix and historical heritages that value masculinity and degrade feminism. This matter leads to creating a social environment that facilitates women’s perversion and criminal behavior as a result of poverty, social stresses and gender/class differences. This is

not a justification for the crimes committed by women; but rather it is an emphasis on the inadequacy of a political and social system that depends on gender, social class and geographical distance in the distribution of economic resources and the means of social and health care, in addition to the inability of the organizational structure of the Egyptian family due to its reliance on the principle of gender discrimination. This makes women lose social abilities because they are excluded from education; they have a low rate of economic participation because of inadequate training and a lack of opportunities. This drives them to remain in a circle of “abject poverty.”

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