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No. 171, 2003

Amin, Sajeda and Nagah H. Al-Bassusi. "Wage work and marriage: Perspectives of Egyptian working women," *Policy Research Division Working Paper* no. 171. New York: Population Council. ([PDF](#))

Abstract

This paper explores young working women's perceptions of marriage and work in contemporary Egypt at a time when an increase in age at marriage was evident from national survey data. Data from two nationally representative labor surveys, the Labor Force Sample Survey of 1988 and the Egypt Labor Market Survey of 1998, show that working conditions and employment opportunities declined significantly for young women even as their educational attainment increased. In-depth interviews were conducted with young women working in a range of salaried jobs in three locations: a rural village in Mansoura, a periurban district near Cairo, and in the industrial zone of Port Said. The qualitative data indicate that young women have high expectations in terms of marital living standards that they seek to achieve by saving intensively before marriage and by enlisting help from their families.



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