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The American University in Cairo

School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN EGYPT: PUBLIC POLICIES AND SERVICES

**A Thesis Submitted to the
Public Policy and Administration Department
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Public Policy**

By

Maha Said Rateb

Spring17

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN EGYPT: PUBLIC POLICIES AND SERVICES

Maha Rateb

Supervised by Dr. Laila El Baradei

Abstract

Violence against women is one of the main forms of gender based discrimination that is prevalent in several countries. On the global level, Egypt is committed to international conventions and declarations to combat different forms of violence against women such as the Convention of the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Beijing declaration. Nationally, the Egyptian constitution mentions that the state is committed to address violence against women and a national strategy was developed two years ago to support the issue. However, the issue is still prevalent in Egypt and several news articles have been reporting on different cases of violence against women happening across a number of governorates. Based on a recent study published by the National Council for Women, CAPMAS and with the support of UNFPA, “Around 30 percent of women age 18-64 have been exposed during the past 12 months to at least one act of violence perpetrated by any of the three categories of perpetrators: spouse/fiancé, other close individuals or strangers in private and public spaces” (UNFPA, 2015, p.120). This research paper focuses on the policies and services offered by the Egyptian state to females survivors of violence and to what extent these policies are responsive and effective. Various studies have examined the state’s response to violence against women in different countries. Nonetheless, the studies conducted on violence against women in Egypt did not discuss the national efforts to solve the issue and create a better environment for Egyptian women. Through applying a qualitative approach, this research concluded that there are a number of policies and services either formulated or implemented to address the issue in Egypt. However, the findings highlighted that there are remarkable gaps in the responsiveness and effectiveness of these policies and services. In other words, the objectives of these policies and services are not successfully met. In addition, their responsiveness in terms of addressing the needs of the female survivors of violence in Egypt is being questioned. Accordingly, a number of policy recommendations are highlighted at the end of the study based on the findings reached.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACT	Appropriate Communication Techniques (non-governmental organization)
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CEDAW	Convention of the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CU	Cairo University
ECWR	Egyptian Center for Women's Rights
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoSS	Ministry of Social Solidarity
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
NCW	National Council for Women
NCCM	National Council for Childhood and Motherhood
NPC	National Population Council
RTC	Regional Training Center for Family Planning and Reproductive Health
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes
UN Women	United Nations Entity for the Empowerment of Women and Gender Equality
VAW	Violence against Women

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First of all, I am grateful that God gave me the chance and the strength to pursue this master's degree besides my work and to complete this thesis, which for me was one of the very far goals.

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Research Motivation

Violence against women is one of the types of gender based discrimination that women worldwide suffer from, including Egypt. However, the state's role to address such an issue is not clear. There is no enough information about the services offered to female survivors of violence. Therefore, this research is intended to help in exploring the Egyptian state's efforts to tackle the problem and create a safer environment for women in Egypt. I believe this study highlighted the gaps in the public policies and services addressing violence against women.

As a practitioner working in an international development agency relevant to the field of research, as a graduate student and a female Egyptian citizen, I believe that violence against women had been considered a taboo for a long time and only recently different parties have started working on addressing it. As part of their rights as humans in the first place, female survivors of violence should be provided with special services that would help them get out of any kind of abusive relation or situation and become productive citizens in the society. Therefore, the research looks at what is available to the survivors in terms of policies and services implemented by state organizations.

The findings of the research might contribute to designing new projects addressing violence against women in Egypt. It may also help in identifying the issues that policy makers should lobby for to be on the government's agenda.

As part of my work, I have been involved in the implementation of a couple of programs that address such a topic. Additionally, I wrote a couple of research papers related to specific angles of the issue that made me want to learn more about it.

This research took four months to be completed. Through my working network I managed to reach out to a number of experts in the field to interview. However, a number of challenges

were faced such as the lack of studies analyzing the state response to violence against women and the unavailability of some of the interviewees given their working schedule and timeline of the research.

Chapter One: Introduction and Problem Statement

Introduction

Women around the world are considered one of the vulnerable groups that are subjected to different forms of discrimination throughout the stages of their lives. Gender based discrimination has been practiced against women in several fields such as education and employment. Therefore, women are denied their rights to live a fair life just because of their gender. One of the forms of gender based discrimination is violence against women.

Violence against women is a global phenomenon that women around the world experience. It prevents women from living freely and enjoying their rights to participate equally in the development of the society. Egyptian women suffer from various forms of violence such as sexual harassment, forced marriage, early marriage and domestic violence. There are also some indirect forms of violence that women face in Egypt. For example, denial of education and denial of inheritance are considered some of the indirect forms of violence since they prevent women from enjoying their rights to get proper education or get their share in inheritance. Every other month, news articles report different incidents of violence against women, including harassment and rape, taking place across the governorates, yet the state response to these incidents is not clear. Therefore, this research will only focus on studying the state's response to the issue, especially to addressing the direct forms of violence.

Article 11 in the Egyptian constitution mentions that *“The State shall protect women against all forms of violence and ensure enabling women to strike a balance between family duties and work requirements”* (Egypt's Constitution of 2014). Accordingly, a recent national strategy has been developed to direct the efforts in the best way to solve the issue. The strategy was finalized in 2015 under the leadership of the National Council for Women in collaboration with

its Supreme Steering Committee and its Executive Committee including ministries, agencies and four of the civil society organizations (The National Council for Women, 2015). However, women on the ground still experience different forms of violence. Although some of the forms, such as early marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and sexual harassment are addressed by law, these forms still persist in the Egyptian society. Also, other forms like domestic violence are not even addressed legally, which complicates the situation on women.

Furthermore, there are some services that are offered to female survivors of violence through different entities. Nevertheless, an analysis is required to explore the state services and policies offered to female survivors of violence. Therefore, this research aimed at analyzing the way through which the Egyptian state responds to addressing the issue of violence against women in terms of policies and services. In other words, the paper explores the main available policies that target eliminating violence against women while reflecting on the national strategy that has been recently developed. It also examines the translation of these policies into services that can benefit women who suffer from violence.

The literature reviewed for this research included various scholarly articles and national as well as international publications on the multiple aspects of violence against women. Although the study focused on Egypt only, it was essential to review articles on the same topic in different countries to learn more about the state response to violence against women around the world. The literature also helped the researcher highlight the main gaps in the topic and realize the importance of focusing on the policies and services addressed to female survivors of violence in Egypt, which is not well covered in the available literature. Consequently, the main central research question of this research is how does the state respond to the issue of violence against women in Egypt? And what improvements can be introduced to further enhance responsiveness and effectiveness?

Following the problem statement and the research questions, the research paper is organized as follows: conceptual framework and methodology; literature review; overview on the current policies and legal framework in Egypt; data analysis and discussion of findings; conclusion and recommendations.

Problem Statement

Women around the world have been subjected to different forms of violence. One in every three women has experienced at least one form of violence in her life (UN Women, 2016). In Egypt, women and girls experience direct and indirect forms of violence against women. For example, *“Around 46 percent of ever married women age 18-64 years in Egypt have ever experienced some form of spousal violence, with 43 percent reported having been subjected to emotional violence, 32 percent physical violence and 12 percent sexual violence”* (UNFPA, 2015, p.62). Concerning violence in the public spaces committed by strangers, *“13 percent of women age 18-64 were exposed during the past year to any form of violence in public spaces; either at workplace, educational institutions, public transport or street”* (UNFPA, 2015, p.108). Unfortunately, in many cases women are subjected to more than one form of violence at the same time. *“Around 30 percent of women age 18-64 have been exposed during the past 12 months to at least one act of violence perpetrated by any of the three categories of perpetrators: spouse/fiancé, other close individuals or strangers in private and public spaces”* (UNFPA, 2015, 120).

Since women should enjoy their basic human right to live a life that is free from any form of violence, different actors have been working in Egypt to address that problem. However, this study focuses on the state response only to this issue as the Egyptian state, including its various entities, is the main responsible party committed to eliminate all forms of violence against women,

as per the Egyptian constitution. Consequently, it is essential to explore the policies and services provided by the government in Egypt to create a safer private and public space for women.

This topic is of high policy relevance as it is linked to the public policies and services that address women's right to enjoy a life free from any form of violence. In Egypt, women are more than half of the population and they are responsible for raising the other half; therefore, proper attention should be given to address their problems and challenges. It is also important to highlight that addressing a sensitive issue, such as violence against women, will enhance the country's economic status since it will indirectly support women to join the labor market and contribute to the overall development of the Egyptian society. In addition, violence against women has a remarkable economic cost that negatively affects the overall situation of the country. *"The value of the total cost emerging from violence (including both direct and indirect costs) for women and their families alone is estimated to be at least 2.17 billion LE in the past year in only one severe incident"*(UNFPA, 2015). It is worth highlighting that the state bears additional cost to provide the necessary support to the female survivors of violence as well.

This study follows the qualitative methodology throughout the research process. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with experts in the field of violence against women in Egypt. The interviewees included officials from the National Council for Women, Ministry of Social Solidarity, UN Women, UNFPA, UNODC, Egyptian Center for Women's Rights, Regional Center for Training, Cairo University, and Appropriate Communication Techniques. Although the research focuses on the state response only, it was important to interview experts from international entities who work with the government to better triangulate the data and obtain a comprehensive view of the topic. The main purpose behind the interviews was to understand the policies and services through which the different state institutions address violence against

women. Once data was collected, open coding was used for analysis. Consequently, information was categorized into different themes addressing the research questions to better come up with the findings and the recommendations for the study.

Research Questions

The area of gender based discrimination includes various topics that are worth studying. Nevertheless this thesis will focus on violence against women as one of the forms of gender based discrimination. The main area of analysis that the paper studies are the policies and services provided by the Egyptian state to address violence against women. Throughout the data collection and analysis, the policies tackling the different forms of violence against women will be analyzed while reflecting on the recently developed strategy to eliminate violence against women in Egypt.

Another aspect that is worth studying is the services provided to females survivors of violence. The paper will explore the role of the different governmental entities in providing the necessary services to women exposed to violence. Accordingly, the thesis will focus on the below research questions:

- **Central Research Question: How does the state respond to the issue of violence against women in Egypt? And what improvements can be introduced to further enhance responsiveness and effectiveness?**
 - Specific Research Questions:
 - What are the available policies addressing violence against women?
And which state entities are involved?
 - How are policies translated to services for female survivors of violence?

- What are some of the institutional challenges encountered in combating violence against women?

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework and Methodology

Conceptual Framework

Although there are some studies on violence against women in Egypt, none of the studies found analyze the policies and services that the state developed to address the issue. The topic is worth analyzing given the recent national strategy to combat violence against women published in 2015.

This research paper looks at the issue of violence against women through certain perspectives and concepts. Violence against women have been defined differently from several angles. For example, one definition explains violence against women as all kinds of abuse that women and girls are exposed to (Krantaz et al., 2004); while another definition focuses on all forms of abuses that women and girls are subjected to including the specific forms of violence that are culturally and geographically related such as dowry deaths and honor killings (Watts and Zimmerman, 2002). However, for the purpose of this research the definition adopted by the United Nations will be followed since it is very comprehensive and have been highlighted by a number of scholars in the literature examined. According to the United Nations, violence against women is defined as *“any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”* (quoted in Somach and AbouZeid, 2009). That’s why, it is considered a human rights issue that it worth analyzing from a public policy perspective. By using this definition, the researcher examines the Egyptian state response to the issue of violence against women given the different aspects mentioned in the definition.

When looking at a sensitive issue such as violence against women, one should not only consider the different forms of violence that women in Egypt experience. Nevertheless, one should take into consideration the different perpetrators of violence against women. Violence against women can be categorized into two main groups; public and private violence. For the purpose of this research, public violence is defined by the researcher as any form of violence that women experience by unfamiliar perpetrators, such as in the cases of rape and sexual harassment. It is worth mentioning that there are indirect forms of violence that are practiced against women such as deprivation from education or discrimination in the workplace. Concerning private violence against women, it refers to violence that is practiced against women by family members. Private violence includes female genital mutilation (FGM), domestic violence and sexual violence. Sometimes the state is the perpetrator of violence, as mentioned by Somach and AbouZeid (2009), such as violence practiced against female prisoners. Additionally, in some cases state actors such as the police practice violence against women as way of oppression, especially during political uprisings (SaferWorld, 2015; Amnesty International, 2015). Nevertheless, this paper will not focus on violence practiced against women by the state as it is beyond the scope of the study.

On the other hand, this paper only covers the policies and services offered by the state institutions to address direct forms of violence whether practiced in the private or public space. Accordingly, it is important to highlight the difference between a policy and a service. The available definitions for public policy (Cochrane et al., 2009; Dye, 1998; Peters, 2012) show that the term itself can be defined in a number of ways; however, as highlighted by Birkland (2014) public policy is governed by major aspects. A public policy is designed to address a problem; should be in the public's interest and should be directed towards certain objectives to solve that

problem (Birkland, 2014). The government is the main actor that develop the policies, yet the implementation can be done through public or private entities (Birkland, 2014). It is also important to note that public policy can take various forms including laws and regulations. The policy cycle starts with agenda setting followed by policy formulation, policy implementation and ends with policy evaluation (Amin, 2014). On the other hand, a service is what an entity offers to the public as part of the implementation phase of the policy. Responsiveness and effectiveness are critical aspects to the policies and services analyzed in this study. Responsiveness is the extent to which the available policies and services address the needs of the female survivors of violence while working on the prevention of violence in the future (Htun and Weldon, 2012). Concerning effectiveness, it focuses on the extent to which the policy succeeded in achieving its goals and objectives (Amin, 2014).

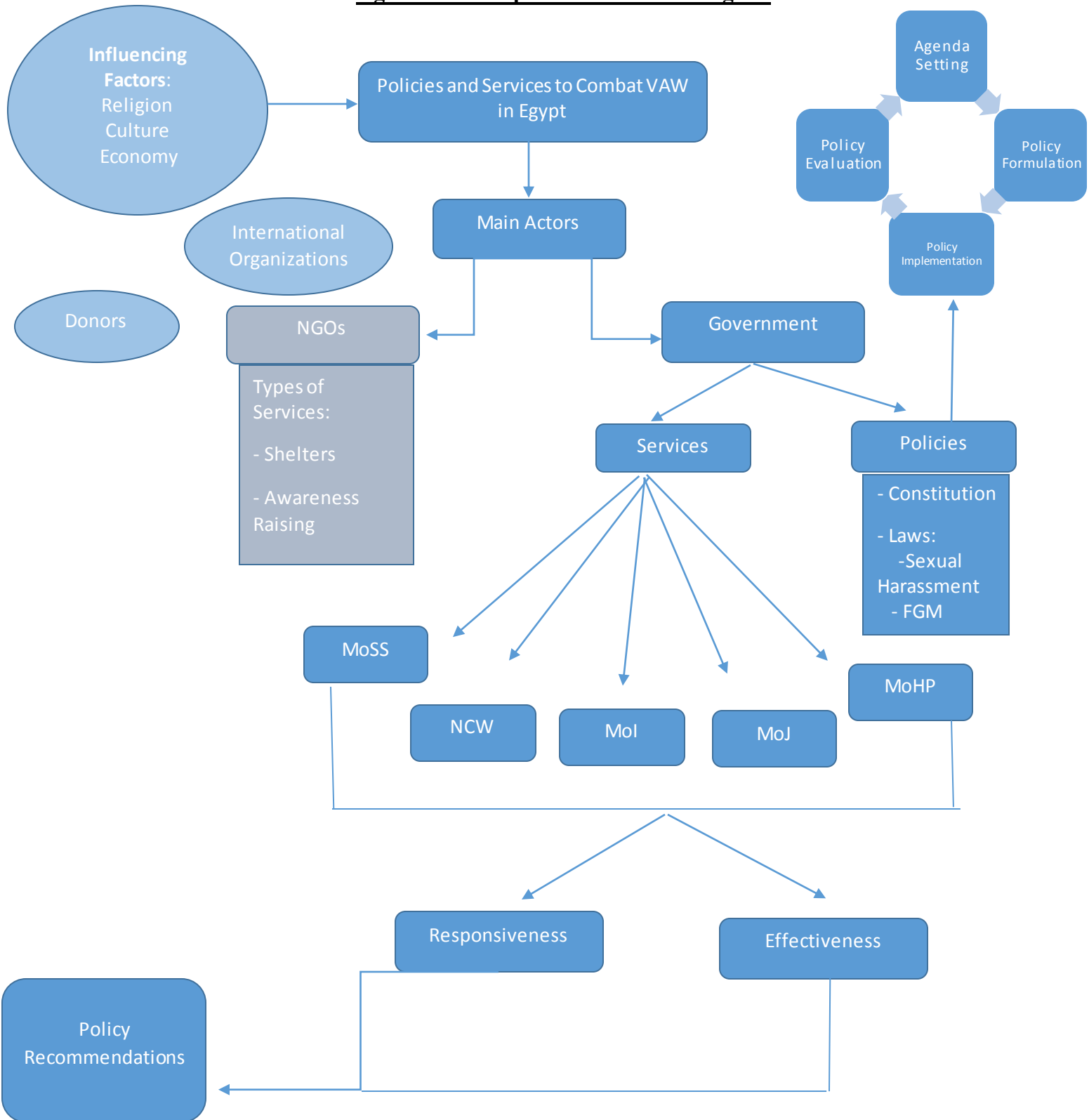
Applying the policy cycle on the issue of violence against women in Egypt, one would realize that the national efforts are somewhere between the policy formulation and implementation. In other words, there are laws and policies to be implemented by certain governmental entities but the implementation of these policies is not clear. For example, sexual harassment is one of the forms of violence that is recently criminalized by the law. However, the implementation of this law and its accompanying policies is not clear. Therefore, the paper explores these policies while at the same time examine how these policies are translated into services available for women, given the role of the state institutions involved. It is important to examine that angle, since according to the Egyptian constitution the state is committed to address the issue of violence against women and work on eliminating it. Not all the policies adopted are reflected on the ground to support the beneficiaries at the end line. Consequently, there is a gap in data on how the state works on doing so, given the national strategy developed on the topic.

The female survivors of violence are one of the vulnerable groups in Egypt that are denied from their right to live a safe life, which directly affects their own development and growth. These women should live a life where they can grow on a personal and professional level and contribute equally to the development of the whole society.

Moreover, there are different factors that contribute to violence against women. Among these factors are education, religion, economic/financial situation. Once women experience any form of violence, the experience negatively impact the women. The direct impact is how violence affects women's physical and mental health. The indirect impact is the impact of violence on hindering women's development and participation in the society.

Since the paper focuses on the policies and services offered by the state entities to female survivors of violence, an analysis of the relevant actors and their roles is essential. Among the main actors involved in the issue are the National Council for Women, the Ministry of Social Solidarity, and the Ministry of Justice. However, the work relationship between these entities as well as other aspects related to dealing with violence against women in Egypt is not clear. Therefore, despite the information mentioned earlier, the conceptual framework of the study was unfolding throughout the research process. Accordingly, the below figure (Figure A) represents the derived conceptual framework.

Figure A- Conceptual Framework Diagram



Methodology

As this research paper explores the policies and services related to violence against women in Egypt, a qualitative methodology was used. This type of methodology assisted the researcher in understanding the issue at hand using various evolving insights and perspectives. This methodology helped in categorizing the different findings into themes and linking these themes based on the data collected.

Semi-structured interviews were the main data collection method used throughout this study. The semi-structured interviews supported the researcher in properly moderating the interviews while at the same time gave the chance for the interviewees to elaborate on aspects that are not directly asked through the pre-prepared questions.

Two main sampling techniques were used for selecting the interviewees; the purposive and snowball approaches. The purposive technique was used since the interviewees were selected based on their expertise in violence against women in Egypt in their respective fields. Moreover, the researcher used the snowball technique together with the purposive approach since the interviewees selected referred other experts on the topic that can help the researcher collect more data from different views and accordingly better triangulate the data. Using the purposive sampling approach, experts from the Ombudsman Office under the National Council for Women, Ministry of Social Solidarity, UN Women, UNFPA and UNODC were interviewed as the first step for data collection. These entities were selected based on the researchers initial background on the topic and secondary research presented in chapter four. Through snowballing, experts from the Regional Training Center under the National Council for Population, Egyptian Center for Women's Rights and Appropriate Communication Techniques were added.

It is worth highlighting that the study focuses only the policies and services offered by the Egyptian state to female survivors of violence. Consequently, the interviewees selected are from different entities involved in addressing VAW in Egypt. However, all these entities are based in greater Cairo.

One of the main limitations that faced the researcher was the availability of the interviewees. It was a bit challenging to set appointments with some interviewees given their limited schedule and the tight timeline of the study. Also, it was very hard to interview some of the governmental entities that could have added to the study such as the Ministry of Interior. Additionally, some interviewees were reluctant to either conduct the interview in the first place or to share information that might put them in a bad position, showing that they are not working in the best way.

On the other hand, among the delimitations of the study is that it will focus only on the state response to violence against women in terms of actions and policies. The efforts exerted by the non-governmental organizations will not be covered in this study for a couple of reasons. Firstly, NGOs generally face a number of challenges to achieve their work such as unsustainability of funds. Additionally, in Egypt NGOs have been facing more obstacles that are making their work more complicated. That's why, the research will focus on the state side of the issue to understand how the state is committed to create a safer environment for Egyptian women. Although the sample interviewed included informants from international organizations and non-governmental organizations, the aim of the interviews was to get different perspectives on the state actions taken to address that issue.

Once the data was collected, the researcher used open coding to label and categorize the data in a way that would provide a clear understanding of the different aspects of the topic and

link the different findings together while answering the main research questions. The data analysis process was done manually without the use of any software programs.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to collecting data, the researcher applied for the AUC Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to be able to proceed with the study. The researcher submitted the IRB application together with a draft of the proposal and two versions of the informed consent form; Arabic and English. The initial feedback from IRB included very few comments; removing one word from the Arabic consent form and adding few details on the sample that will be interviewed. These comments were properly reflected in a timely manner. Accordingly, the IRB approval letter was successfully granted allowing the researcher to start the data collection process.

Exploring a sensitive topic such as violence against women, one should be well aware of the ethical issues that might affect the research. Therefore, the sample interviewed did not include any female survivors of violence to make sure that there is no direct or indirect harm practiced against these females; especially that, if included in the sample, they would probably need to reflect on the violent incidents that they faced. Additionally, interviewees' names are not mentioned except for the interviewees who expressed their consent to disclose their names in the study. Confidentiality is another ethical issue that was raised while conducting this research. Since most of the interviews were conducted with officials at different entities, some of the respondents shared confidential information that are for the researcher's knowledge only and not for publishing. Consequently, the researcher ensured that the confidential data shared is not published.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

The literature review presented here is a context review since the main purpose behind it is to relate the topic to the general knowledge and concepts that have already been discussed. It covers the different studies and research articles published in the past fifteen years. Most the reviewed articles are peer reviewed scholarly articles to make sure that the information presented is credible and accurate. The other reviewed sources are reports and studies published by international and governmental entities.

This section aims at presenting the literature that addresses violence against women and linking the concepts together and identify the main gaps found in the current available literature. Accordingly, the literature review is divided into several sections tackling the following subcategories; violence against women as a global and health issue; forms of violence against women; factors contributing to the problem; actors involved; a global overview on how governments in different countries respond to violence against women and a brief overview on the studies addressing the Egyptian response to violence against women.

Violence Against Women: Global Issue

Violence against women is discussed in the literature as one of the forms of gender based discrimination practiced against women worldwide. Arfaoui et al. (2016), Htun and Weldon (2012) and Watts and Zimmerman (2002) argue in their different studies that the issue of violence against women is a global issue that has been witnessed in various countries. Htun and Weldon (2012) mention that violence against women is studied in different nations including Europe, North America, Asia and the Middle East. Watts and Zimmerman (2002) state that the incidents of violence practiced against women have increased in the past years; while Krantz and Moreno

(2005), Arfaoui et al. (2016) and Htun and Weldon (2012) agree that violence against women should also be seen from a human rights' perspective. They believe that women in different countries have been denied their right to enjoy a life free from any of the different forms of violence; which is a basic human right.

Furthermore, Morrison et al. (2007), Arafoui et al. (2016) and Htun and Weldon (2012) state that violence against women is one of the main topics on the global agenda for women's rights. They also reflect on the international treaties that guarantee women's right to live a life free from any form of violence such as Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration for Platform and Action. These treaties show how violence against women has become a global problem that requires special attention on the international and local level to ensure that it is properly addressed. For instance, the CEDAW consists of thirty articles that clarify the different measures required to address discrimination against women including violence (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence). It frames discrimination against women as one of the main challenges for women's equal participation in different fields including politics and economics (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence, p.2). It also highlights that it does not affect the women only, but it negatively affects the development of the family and the society as well (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence, p.2). Additionally, Beijing declaration is considered one of the most structured global policy framework that addresses women's empowerment, being announced in 1995 (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action). Therefore, violence against women is one of the main issues that Beijing declarations aim to tackle. The declaration states the role of different actors whether governmental or international agencies to address violence against

women from different angles through a well-integrated approach that should provide tangible results on the ground (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action).

Concluding this section, the literature viewed violence against women as a global issue affecting the women's basic rights as a human. Therefore, different international conventions were developed to address the issue while setting it on the global agenda.

Violence Against Women: Health Issue

Other scholars view violence against women as a health issue including Ellesberg (2006) and Krantz and Moreno (2005). Throughout their studies, they agree that violence against women is a public health issue since it negatively impacts women's physical and psychological status. Ellesberg (2006) and Morrison et al. (2007) highlight the negative impact of violence against women on the survivors. For instance, violence against women can lead to severe injuries, sexually transmitted infections, and psychological disorders such as depression and post traumatic disorder which affect women's current and future life (Ellesberg, 2006; Morrison et al., 2007). Morrison et al. (2007) added that violence against women can negatively affect women's behavior leading to alcohol and drug addiction. Ellesberg (2006) also highlights that the negative impact of violence on women's health affect the children as well due to the direct connection between the mother and children. However, only McAllister and Lewis reflected on the social impact of violence against women, particularly intimate partner violence (2010). They explain the impact of violence against women on the survivors' social life (McAllister and Lewis, 2010). In other words, female survivors of violence might disconnect themselves from family members and friends and become socially isolated as a result of experiencing violence although these are the persons whom she needs their support after experiencing such incidents (McAllister and Lewis, 2010).

Consequently, some of the studies (e.g. Krantaz and Moreno, 2005; Ellsberg, 2006; Morrison et al., 2007) discuss the importance of reinforcing the medical response and enhancing the health services offered to female survivors of violence. Additionally, Krantaz and Moreno (2005) argue that it is crucial to provide medical workers with proper training to be able to deal with the survivors and provide the necessary support. The research by Morrison et al. (2007) highlighted the role of forensic medicine specifically in addressing violence against women. In other words, Morrison et al. (2007) state that the forensic doctors play a vital role in determining the negative medical impact on female survivors of violence as part of the required evidence to report cases and submit them to courts.

This section highlighted how some articles viewed violence against women from a health perspective given its impact on women's physical and psychological status. That's why, it also reflected on the importance of medical response provided to the female survivors of violence.

Forms of Violence Against Women

Although different scholars divide the forms of violence in various ways, they (Watts and Zimmerman, 2002; Krantz and Moreno, 2005; Ellsberg, 2006) all agree on the kinds of violence that women are exposed to regardless of the main categories. Among the common forms of violence, as discussed in the literature, are intimate partner violence, female genital mutilation, rape, trafficking and sexual assault (Watts and Zimmerman, 2002; Krantz and Moreno, 2005; Ellsberg, 2006). Other forms of violence include honor killing and violent incidents related to dowry issues (Krantz and Moreno, 2005). Additionally, Watts and Zimmerman (2002) include sex selective abortion and female infanticide among the types of violence practiced against females. However, the scholars fail to highlight that there are other indirect forms of violence.

Only the National Strategy to End Violence against women mention deprivation of inheritance as one of the forms of violence that women experience (The National Council for Women, 2015).

Factors Contributing to the Prevalence of Violence Against Women

The literature focuses on a number of factors related to women's exposure to violent incidents. Somach and AbouZeid (2009), Htun and Weldon (2012) as well as Arfaoui et al. (2016) argue that among the main reasons behind violence against women are the **negative interpretations of culture and traditions** that put women in an inferior status compared to men. Patriarchal traditions and norms that discriminate against females within the family relations contribute to the issue of violence against women (Somach and AbouZeid 2009; Htun and Weldon 2012; Arfaoui et al. 2016). However, this culture is not limited to family relations only. It is reflected in various fields including education and employment which hinders women's equal participation in the society.

Negative interpretations of Religion is another important factor that is linked to the issue of violence against women in several countries including Egypt. Based on the literature reviewed, there are contradicting views on the general concept of equality between men and women including the use of violence as a technique to treat women. For example, Anna King states that one of the scholars named Maryam Jameelah believes that achieving equality between men and women is not realistic because their core difference will never make them equal (2009). However, the argument presented by Jameelah through King's article is not very convincing. Through her explanation, she shows that women are not equal to men and have less responsibilities. For example, she mentions that women are not even required to find a suitable husband as this task is taken by other family members for her (King, 2009). This justification is very weak and shows women as passive members not only in the family but even in the society as well.

Therefore, religion is surrounded by many misconceptions that affect people's daily lives and relations. When it comes to violence against women, various scholars (Somach and AbouZeid, 2009; King, 2009; Shash and Forden, 2016) reflected on the impact of misinterpretations of religion on the issue of violence against women. For instance, Shash and Forden (2016) argue that religious misconceptions were among the main challenges to address violence against women, as per their research findings. It is worth highlighting that many unauthorized religious scholars contribute to the spread of these misconceptions. That's why, there should be proper control to make sure that only credible scholars can talk about religion whether on television or in community and religious places.

One of the main angles of debates in religion, namely Islam, is whether the husband has the right to beat his wife. The link between domestic violence and Islamic religion has been discussed by Dunn and Kellison (2010) and Ammar (2007) in their separate studies. Both articles mention that the husband should only beat his wife softly as a last resort for managing their relation (Dunn and Kellison, 2010; Ammar, 2007). Nevertheless, Ammar did a very good job in presenting the different schools for interpreting the Qur'an verse related to that point particularly (2007). The Qur'anic verse in a chapter entitled "Al Nesa'a" (women) states "As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill conduct (nushuz), admonish them, refuse to share their beds, and beat them" (Ammar, 2007, p.518). For instance, in one of the schools of interpretations, Ammar highlighted that the Arabic word in the verse can have several meanings other than "hitting" or "beating" (2007) one of them being leaving the place. Accordingly, Ammar (2007) argued that it is not confirmed that Islam promote wife beating. Although the previously mentioned studies focused on the Islamic position towards domestic violence or wife beating specifically, it is worth mentioning that religion is often connected to other forms of violence such

as female genital mutilation and honor crimes. Some practice these forms of violence believing that Islam calls for such practices while others confirm that these practices have nothing to do with Islam.

Building on the previously mentioned information, one can easily infer the critical role of religious institutions in addressing violence against women. In Egypt, Islamic and Christian religious institutions can contribute to addressing the issue of violence against women. Only two of the main sources reviewed directly reflect on that point; the research by McAllister and Lewis (2010) and the Egyptian national strategy to combat violence against women by the National Council for Women in Egypt (2015). McAllister and Lewis were one of the few authors who highlighted the role of the Church in addressing violence against women, particularly intimate partner violence (2010). There are two sides of the story. On one hand, the church together with the social workers can act as a support group that would help female survivors of violence; on the other hand, McAllister and Lewis argue that women sometimes choose to stay in an abusive relationship due to being afraid from the Church's reaction (2010). Reflecting this article on the Egyptian context, one should recognize the divorce situation in Coptic Christianity in Egypt where married couples could not get divorced easily and how this may force the woman to stay in an abusive relationship.

Based on the literature, **women's acceptance of violence and lack of awareness of their own rights** is another reason behind the prevalence of the issue that is also linked to the culture and traditions. Somach and AbouZeid (2009), Yount and Li Li (2009;2010) agree that women accept the violent incidents that they are exposed due to lack of awareness of their own rights. For instance, as explained by Yount and Li Li in their different articles, women easily justify being beaten by their husband or male family members. They believe that it is the man's right to

beat the woman if she commits certain actions such as going out without taking the husband's or family member's approval.

Consequently, Somach and AbouZeid (2009) and Ambrosetti et al. (2013) mention that there might be a relation between females' **education**, and sometimes couples' education, and their vulnerability to violence. Although Ambrosetti (2013) explains that women's education can help in raising their awareness of their rights and accordingly they would not accept any violent actions practiced against them, Somach and AbouZeid (2009) highlight that this relation is not always direct. In other words, they believe that education empowers women and raises their social status which can be a reason for some men to abuse women to reinforce males' control over females.

The link between **women's economic status** and prevalence of violence is another aspect that is discussed in a number of studies (e.g. Somach and AbouZeid, 2009; Ambrosetti, 2013; Kiss et al., 2012; Michau et al., 2015). Somach and AbouZeid (2009) in addition to Michau et al. (2015) argue that violence against women negatively affect the economic status of the survivors since it prevents them from equally participating in the labor market. Therefore, Ambrosetti et al. (2013) mention women's economic condition as one of the factors that affects women's vulnerability to violence. On the other hand, Somach and AbouZeid (2009) discuss another aspect of the link between the economic status and prevalence of violence by arguing that in some cases, especially in domestic violence, women tend to stay in an abusive relationship because of their poor financial status.

To sum up, this section included the main factors contributing to the issue to violence against women, as per the literature reviewed. Accordingly, culture, religion, education, women's

economic status and women's acceptance of violence are among the main factors that are linked to the issue.

Preventive Measures

Some of the literature reviewed (Krantz and Moreno 2005; Morrison et al., 2007; Htun and Weldon 2012; Mogale et al. 2012; Kiss et al. 2012) argues that one of the ways to tackle violence against women is through radical preventive actions that would stop the incidents from happening in the first place. For example Htun and Weldon (2012) and Mogale et al. (2012) agree that special attention should be given to **education** as it is one of the factors that can contribute to preventing violence against women. In other words, education would provide children with necessary knowledge on gender roles and gender equality, which will create a new environment in which males would be raised on respecting females and better treating them across different fields.

Furthermore, other researchers (Krantz and Moreno, 2005; Morrison et al., 2007; Htun and Weldon 2012) add that raising the **public's awareness about women's rights** in general and violence against women in particular through social marketing can help in disseminating the messages among various audiences. Accordingly, different members of the society would better understand the problem and would not blindly follow the cultural and traditional norms that encourages male dominance and set women in an inferior status compared to men. Consequently, Enrique Gracia (2014) argued the culture of blaming the victim should be address through several public educational efforts. The fact that people put the blame on the female victims of violence instead of blaming the perpetrators highlights the gender insensitive culture that always puts the women at an inferior status compared to men, even if they are the victims.

One of the unique perspectives to prevent violence against women is the **redefinition of gender roles and masculinity**. Salter (2015) and Murray and Powell (2009) are among the few scholars who highlighted the importance of involving men and boys in addressing violence against women through redefining the gender norms and masculinity. These scholars argued that one of the main reasons behind violence against women is the patriarchal culture that reinforces unequal distribution of power and resources among men and women (Salter, 2015; Murray and Powell 2009). Consequently, correcting the definition of masculinity and setting the proper gender norms are essential actions to prevent violence against women. Therefore, the misconception that women's issues should be addressed and discussed by women only will never stand in tackling any women's related issue including violence against women.

Based on the literature reviewed, violence against women can be addressed from a preventive approach through proper education and public awareness activities that also enhance the proper definition of masculinity and gender roles.

Actors Involved in the Issue

The literature focuses on various actors involved in the issue of violence against women. Accordingly, the main actors that take part in addressing the problem are the **police**, the **medical workers**, and the **judges** (Krantz and Moreno, 2005; Morrison et al., 2007; Somach and AbouZeid, 2009; Htun and Weldon, 2012). Therefore, scholars argue that these different actors should be well trained on how to deal with female survivors of violence and how to provide support to these females in the best possible way (Krantz and Moreno, 2005; Morrison et al., 2007; Somach and AbouZeid, 2009; Htun and Weldon, 2012). Although Somach and AbouZeid (2009) confirmed the importance of an integrated community response that involve all the previously mentioned actors, they failed to consider the religious scholars among these actors. On

the other hand, McAllister and Lewis (2010) devoted their study to discuss the role of the **church's social workers** in addressing intimate partner violence. Reflecting on the Egyptian context, it is worth highlighting that the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women is the only document that properly mentions the governmental stakeholders related to the issue (The National Council for Women, 2015). Following the strategy the main governmental actors that should contribute to eliminating violence against women are the following: National Council for Women, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Solidarity, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Endowments, Ministry of Youth and Sports, National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and the Public Information authority.

State Response: Global Overview

Some of the literature explores the government's response to the issue of violence against women whether through studying the policy implications or through examining the governmental actions in different countries. Morrison et al. (2007), Somach and AbouZeid (2009) in addition to Htun and Weldon (2012) discuss the importance of legal reforms in addressing violence against women. These scholars believe that a **proper legal framework** is one of the main aspects that would contribute to eliminating violence practiced against women. However, Morrison et al. (2007) explain that legal reform is an important step that should be accompanied with effective implementation to ensure elimination of violence against women. Additionally, Smoach and AbouZeid (2009), Kiss et al. (2012), Mogale et al. (2012), Strid et al. (2013), in addition to MacQueen and Norris (2014) explore the legal frameworks in specific countries while analyzing the various factors related to the legislations addressing violence against women.

The literature highlights the Brazilian laws addressing the issue. In their study, Kiss et al. (2012) mention that Brazil adopted an article in 2006 tackling domestic violence against women.

The law entitled “Maria de Penha” states the different angles of domestic violence. As a result of the law, many perpetrators were imprisoned (Kiss et al., 2012). However, the authors mention the **crucial role of informal networks** to which the women seek help sometimes before or even instead of formally reporting the incidents (Kiss et al., 2012). The literature also presents South Africa as one of the countries that managed to legally address the issue of violence against women through two main articles; one related to domestic violence and the other is concerned with criminal law (Mogale et al., 2012). Based on the literature, the government in South Africa intended to be very comprehensive and inclusive when adopting these laws (Mogale et al., 2012). For instance, the article focusing on domestic violence includes various elements such as defining the ranges of domestic violence practiced against women (Mogale et al., 2012). It also helps the victim financially by forcing the perpetrator to be responsible for the victim’s finances while leaving the main residence where they used to stay together (Mogale et al., 2012). Additionally, it mentions the role of the police and sets certain actions in case of the police failed to fulfill its duties (Mogale et al., 2012).

The literature (Morrison et al., 2007; Mogale et al. 2012; MacQueen and Norris, 2014; Farris and Holman, 2015) also emphasizes **the importance of police sector** as part of the governmental response to address violence against women reflecting on different countries such as the United States of America, Scotland and other countries in Latin America. When studying the Scottish governmental response to violence against women, MacQueen and Norris (2014) agree with Mogale et al. (2012) that the police sector is one of the main actors involved in the issue. However, MacQueen and Norris (2014) state that the national policies, including the role of the police sector, are still ineffective in encouraging women to report the incidents that they experience, especially when it comes to domestic violence. Lack of data, knowledge and

awareness among the survivors and the society are among the main reasons for low reporting, as explained by MacQueen and Norris (2014). Therefore, Morrison et al. (2007) mention specialized police stations for women as one of the actions that would better address the problem. However, Farris and Holman highlighted that the police officers' attitudes towards violence against women are one of the crucial factors that contribute to law enforcement (Barnerand Carney, 2011; Horwitz et al., 2011; Websdaleand Johnson, 1997 *quoted in* Farris and Holman, 2015). Farris and Holman also mentioned that the public's voice is heard and impact the police officers (2015). Elections take place and the public gets a chance to choose whether the police officers would continue or a policy change is needed (Farris and Holman, 2015). Therefore, it is important to educate the police officers about how to deal with cases related to violence against women.

Somach and AbouZeid (2009) as well as Wathen and McKeown (2010) mention the policies implemented in Canada to address violence against women but from two different perspectives. Somach and AbouZeid (2009) praise the Canadian approach to eliminate intimate partner violence through the support system provided for females including the shelters offering psychological support, which is one of the main services discussed by Smoach and AbouZeid (2009), Htun and Weldon (2012), and Farris and Holman (2015). In addition, once leaving the shelter, the Canadian government provides financial support and accommodation to make sure that these women are living a safe life. On the other hand, Wathen and McKeown (2010) explore the response of the Canadian e-government in providing necessary information to female survivors of violence, particularly domestic violence. Although the aim of the study was to analyze the information that women get through e-government when they need help, the fact that there is an online platform that is available for women to seek help and gather information is a success by itself.

Furthermore, Krantz and Moreno (2005) as well as Mogale et al. (2012) believe that **documentation and evaluation of policies** addressing violence against women is an essential action that should be implemented throughout the policymaking process. These measures will help in highlighting the main weaknesses and strengths of the current policies so that the government could act accordingly to make sure that the required objectives are achieved in the most effective and efficient way.

The literature mentions a number of responses adopted by different states to address violence against women. Some states focused on the legal reforms, while others emphasized the role of informal networks in contributing to eliminating VAW. In addition, the role of the police sector was highlighted in the literature as it is one of the main sectors that women seek its support once subjected to violence. The literature also highlights the importance of documenting and evaluating the implemented policies to be able to monitor progress and address unexpected challenges.

State Response-Egypt

Concerning Egypt, the literature confirms that there are few policies and services available to address violence against women (Kaplan et al., 2011; Shash and Forden, 2016). None of the literature found reflected on the recent sexual harassment law added to the Egyptian constitution nor the national strategy developed to eliminate violence against women. Additionally, Yount and Li Li (2009; 2010) and Shash and Forendo (2016) argue in their separate studies that gender stratification within the family relations and in some of the Egyptian policies complicates the process of addressing violence against women. In other words, the way children are brought up reinforces males' superiority over females which is also witnessed in different fields such as employment, as explained by Shash and Forendo (2016). As mentioned in the article

by Somach and AbouZeid, “47 percent of ever-married women reported ever having experienced physical violence since the age of 15”, as per the demographic and health survey conducted in 2005 (quoted in Somach and AbouZeid, 2009, p.8). This means that in Egypt violence is introduced to almost half of the ever-married female respondents at the age of fifteen and since then they have been subjected to different physical forms of it. Additionally, the study entitled “The Economic Cost of Gender-Based Violence Survey” highlights that in Egypt “around 30 percent of women age 18-64 have been exposed during the past 12 months to at least one act of violence perpetrated by any of the three categories of perpetrators: spouse/fiancé, other close individuals or strangers in private and public spaces” (UNFPA, 2015, p. 120) . Also, domestic violence is one of the main forms of violence against women that are not addressed by law. Cases of domestic violence usually fall under a regular case of abuse in the Egyptian constitution (Yount and Li Li, 2009; 2010). Therefore, women who are exposed to domestic violence could never get any legal support because the case is not covered by the law properly.

Regarding the services provided for female victims of violence in Egypt, only one governmental publication discusses the available services to these women. However, none of the scholarly articles reviewed studies that topic. The governmental publication entitled “Violence against Women” published by the National Council for Women divided the services into a number of categories including shelters, medical services, hotlines and counseling and legal services (2012). Although this publication showed an overview of the services available to the female victims of violence in Egypt, it does not provide an assessment to these services. That’s probably because the document is published by an entity under the presidential office, which is the National Council for Women, and its aim is to provide an overview of the available services without studying the impact of these services on the end users.

Moreover, most of the literature reviewed tackle violence against women from a public health or sociological approach such as the articles written by Kiss et al. (2012), Ellsberg (2006) and Watts and Zimmerman (2002). It is worth highlighting that very few sources discuss the issue from a policy or legal angle, especially the very limited sources found on Egypt. Also, the articles reviewed for the purpose of this study used various methodologies; some followed the quantitative approach while other used content analysis and desk research.

Additionally, most of the theses submitted to by AUC graduates focus on sexual harassment and link to either media policies or the role of the non-governmental organizations (Hanaa, 2015; Shata, 2015; Abdel Rahman, 2016). However, theses discussing violence against women from a public policy perspective highlighting the role of the state are very limited.

Based on the literature review, one can easily conclude that there is a huge gap in the studies conducted on the issue of violence against women in Egypt from a policy and services perspective. Most of the studies developed on Egypt address the causes and impact of violence only. In other words, these studies focused on discussing the factors contributing to the problem, highlighted earlier, and the impact of violence against women on the female and the society. None of the studies reflect on the national strategy to combat violence against women that was recently developed nor on how the Egyptian government work on eliminating that problem. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to focus on the policies and services provided by the state to eliminate violence against women in Egypt and create a better environment for Egyptian women and more importantly assess to what extent these policies are sufficiently effective and responsive.

Summary of the Literature Review

The literature review presented here is a context review since the main purpose behind it is to relate the topic to the general knowledge and concepts that have already been discussed. Also, all the reviewed articles are peer reviewed scholarly articles to make sure that the information presented is credible and accurate. This section aims at presenting the literature that address violence against women and link the concepts together and identify the main gaps found in the current available literature. Accordingly, the literature review is divided into several sections tackling the following subcategories; violence against women as a global issue; actors involved and a global overview on how governments in different countries respond to violence against women.

Violence Against Women: Global Issue

Violence against women is discussed in the literature and research studies as one of the forms of gender based discrimination practiced against women worldwide. Arfaoui et al. (2016), Htun and Weldon (2012) and Watts and Zimmerman (2002) argue in their different studies that the issue of violence against women is a global issue that has been witnessed in various countries. Furthermore, Morrison et al. (2007), Arafoui et al. (2016) and Htun and Weldon (2012) state that violence against women is one of the main topics on the global agenda for women's rights.

Factors Contributing to the Prevalence of Violence Against Women

The literature focuses on a number of factors related to women's exposure to violent incidents, particularly negative interpretation of religion and culture; women's acceptance of violence and lack of awareness; education and women's economic status. For instance, Somach and AbouZeid (2009), Htun and Weldon (2012) as well as Arfaoui et al. (2016) argue that among

the main reasons behind violence against women are the negative interpretations of culture and traditions that put women in an inferior status compared to men.

Some of the literature highlights women's acceptance of violence and lack of awareness of their own rights as another reason behind the prevalence of the issue that is also linked to the culture and traditions. Somach and AbouZeid (2009), Yount and Li Li (2009;2010) agree that women accept the violent incidents that they are exposed due to lack of awareness of their own rights. Additionally, Somach and AbouZeid (2009) and Ambrosetti et al. (2013) mention that there might be a relation between females' education, and sometimes couples' education, and their vulnerability to violence.

Several studies (e.g. Somach and AbouZeid, 2009; Ambrosetti, 2013; Kiss et al., 2012; Michau et al., 2015) explore the link between women's economic status and prevalence of violence. Somach and AbouZeid (2009) in addition to Michau et al. (2015) argue that violence against women negatively affect the economic status of the survivors since it prevents them from equally participating in the labor market. Therefore, Ambrosetti et al. (2013) mention women's economic condition as one of the factors that affects women's vulnerability to violence.

Preventive Measures

Some of the literature reviewed (Krantz and Moreno 2005; Morrison et al., 2007; Htun and Weldon 2012; Mogale et al. 2012; Kiss et al. 2012) argue that one of the ways to tackle violence against women is through radical preventive actions that would stop the incidents from happening in the first place such as education and efforts directed to raise the public's awareness on the topic

Actors Involved in the Issue

The literature focuses on various actors involved in the issue of violence against women. Accordingly, the main actors that take part in addressing the problem are the police, the medical workers, and the judges (Krantz and Moreno, 2005; Morrison et al., 2007; Somach and AbouZeid, 2009; Htun and Weldon, 2012). It is worth highlighting that most of the actors mentioned in the literature are state actors, which are the main focus on this paper including their role in combatting violence against women

State Response-Global Overview

Some of the literature explore the government's response to the issue of violence against women whether through studying the policy implications or through examining the governmental actions in different countries. Morrison et al. (2007), Somach and AbouZeid (2009) in addition to Htun and Weldon (2012) discuss the importance of legal reforms in addressing violence against women. Additionally, Smoach and AbouZeid (2009), Kiss et al. (2012), Mogale et al. (2012), Strid et al. (2013), in addition to MacQueen and Norris (2014) explore the legal frameworks in specific countries while analyzing the various factors related to the legislations addressing violence against women.

Furthermore, Krantz and Moreno (2005) as well as Mogale et al. (2012) believe that documentation and evaluation of policies addressing violence against women is an essential action that should be implemented throughout the policymaking process. These measures will help in highlighting the main weaknesses and strengths of the current policies so that the government could act accordingly to make sure that the required objectives are achieved in the most effective and efficient way.

State Response-Egypt

Concerning Egypt, the literature confirms that there are few policies and services available to address violence against women (Kaplan et al., 2011; Shash and Forden, 2016). However, none of the literature found reflected on the recent sexual harassment law added to the Egyptian constitution nor the national strategy developed to eliminate violence against women. Regarding the services provided for female survivors of violence in Egypt, some governmental publications discuss the available services to these women. However, none of the scholarly articles reviewed studies that topic.

Chapter Four: Overview on Current Policies and Legal Framework in Egypt

As mentioned in the previous chapter, not enough literature, specifically peer reviewed journal articles, was found studying the state's response to violence against women in Egypt. However, additional secondary research was conducted to find out more about that aspect before collecting the data from the field. The main sources of the secondary research were governmental and non-governmental websites including different reports published on the topic, but none of the sources reviewed was an academic or scholarly article due to the limited research available on the topic.

The first step is to highlight the legislative framework that governs violence against women in Egypt. As mentioned in the previous chapter, CEDAW is one of the main international conventions that Egypt ratified. CEDAW focuses on different forms of discrimination against women. Accordingly, it addresses violence against women as one of the main forms of discrimination. Based on article 93 in the Egyptian constitution the state is committed to the international conventions signed and they are regarded as international laws (Egypt's Constitution 2014) and consequently the state's efforts directed to address the issue fall within the framework on that important convention. Highlighting how Arab countries addressed the issue of violence against women in relation to the CEDAW, the report entitled "Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women: The gap between Ratification and Implementation in the Arab Countries" mentions that violence against women is still prevalent with its different forms in the Arab region (Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement, 2017). It indicates that some Arab countries amended their penal codes to criminalize certain forms of VAW except for Jordan, Algeria and Lebanon who managed to issue special laws

criminalizing domestic violence. However, the report failed to mention detailed information about the case of Egypt.

Focusing on the Egyptian constitutional framework, the Egyptian constitution includes a number of articles addressing equality in general and two articles ensuring gender equality in particular. Article 11 is considered the most important article when it comes gender equality and violence against women. This article includes the following statement on VAW, *“The state commits to the protection of women against all forms of violence, and ensures women empowerment to reconcile the duties of a woman toward her family and her work requirements”* (Egypt’s Constitution 2014, p.13). The other article that is related to gender equality is article 53 which ensures *“equality in public rights and duties”* highlighting that *“The state shall take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination, and the law shall regulate the establishment of an independent commission for this purpose”* (Egypt’s Constitution 2014, p.21). Additionally, article 89 states that all citizens should enjoy a life free from slavery or oppression including trafficking (Egypt’s Constitution 2014). Other articles (9, 59, 99) address equality between citizens in different aspects such as their rights to personal freedom, equal opportunities and safety (Egypt’s Constitution 2014). Translating these articles into legislations, the Egyptian law criminalizes the following forms of violence against women: rape, trafficking, female genital mutilation and kidnapping (The National Council for Women, 2015). In 2014, sexual harassment was defined and criminalized in the Egyptian law for the first time (The National Council for Women, 2015).

One of the main sources found is the **National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women**. The strategy was published in 2015 by the National Council for Women in coordination with several designated ministries and state entities (The National Council for Women, 2015).

However, based on the information gathered through the secondary research, several non-governmental organizations believe that the development of the strategy was undertaken through a non-participatory approach. The very low representation from civil society and non-governmental organizations is considered one of the main criticisms voiced against the strategy (Nazra, 2015; Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, 2017). Only four civil society and non-governmental organizations were involved in the development of the strategy (The National Council for Women, 2015). Therefore, different non-governmental organizations believe that their input should have been taken into considerations due to their efforts in combating violence against women and their supposed involvement in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the activities under the strategy. However, this does not deny the fact that they regard the strategy as a positive step in addressing VAW (Nazra, 2015; Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, 2017).

Exploring the information mentioned in the national strategy and other secondary sources, one could extract some of the main policies and services that are already implemented by various state institutions as part of the national efforts to combat violence against women.

One of the main bodies that provide direct support to the issue is **the National Council for Women, including the Ombudsman Office**. This office is available for women and responsible of receiving their complaints concerning any discriminatory act that they are subjected to (National Council for Women, 2017). Once receiving the complaints, the office provides the necessary legal or social consultations free of charge. The lawyers supporting the office are volunteers and the office works on building the capacity of these lawyers so that they are educated on the issue of gender discrimination. It also coordinates with other governmental entities that would help in solving the complaints received (National Council for Women, 2017).

Apart from the Ombudsman Office, the NCW also established an “Equal Opportunities” unit at all the ministries. The aim of these units is to monitor and combat any discrimination acts practiced against women in the workplace (The National Council for Women, 2015). Additionally, NCW works on developing national studies on the different aspects of violence against women. The latest study published was on the economic cost of gender based violence in partnership with CAPMAS and UNFPA in 2015 (The National Council for Women, 2015; UNFPA, 2015).

It was also mentioned in the strategy and on the Egyptian Center for Women’s Rights website that the National Council for Women is leading on submitting a comprehensive law on violence against women (The National Council for Women, 2015; Egyptian Center for Women’s Rights, 2017). However, there are no updates available to clarify the stage that the law is in now, its components and whether it is going to be discussed by the parliament soon.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity also offers some direct services to women including those who are subjected to different forms of violence. The shelters under the MoSS are one of the direct services provided by the government to female survivors, as mentioned in the national strategy and on the ministry’s website. The aim of the shelters is to provide the survivors with all the psychological, legal and social support needed to be ready to participate in the development of the society (Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2017). However, based on the criteria mentioned on the website, the women seeking the shelters’ support need to pay for the service and the supervising committee decides on the exact amount to be paid, on a case by case basis (Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2017). The shelters are among the social protection initiatives, yet the ministry develops different programs and activities to ensure women’s protection and development (Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2017; The National Council for Women, 2015). It is

important to highlight that there seems to be inconsistencies in the information available about the shelters, especially concerning the number of shelters in Egypt. On MoSS website, it is mentioned that they are eight shelters across Egypt; while the strategy indicates that they are nine and that the ministry is working on establishing more shelters.

The special units under the **Ministry of Interior** entitled “Combating Violence Against Women Units” are among the main steps recognized in the strategy and on different websites including the National Council for Women and Egyptian Center for Women’s Rights. The MoI also special phone numbers to receive complaints related to human rights violations including violence against women (National Council for Women, 2017; Ahram Online, 2016). However, the exact role of these specialized units is not explained even on the ministry’s website.

The **Ministry of Justice** is another entity that was mentioned in the strategy and some news articles announcing the establishment of special departments or courts specialized in dealing with cases on violence against women (The National Council for Women, 2015; Mada Masr, 2015). Same as the MOI’s units, there is no enough information available on the exact role of these courts and no clear confirmation that they are already in place.

Another initiative that has been developed by some **universities** is the establishment of special units to combat sexual harassment on campuses. It is important to highlight that these initiatives are not included in the national strategy, especially the initiative by Cairo University which supposedly took place before publishing the strategy. **Cairo University** established a special unit for anti-harassment and violence against women to address the issue of sexual harassment on campus (Cairo University, 2017). The unit is accompanied with a policy that mentions the agreed upon mechanisms and procedures to be taken with harassment cases on campus. The same initiative was undertaken by **Ain Shams University** which also established a

special anti-harassment unit in 2016 in collaboration with the National Council for Women and with the support of UNFPA and SIDA (UNFPA, 2017; Egyptian Center for Women's Rights, 2017). The purpose of these units is to increase the academic community's awareness about sexual harassment and set policies for dealing with harassment cases on campus while providing legal, social and psychological support to the female students (UNFPA, 2017).

It is worth mentioning that the previously mentioned initiatives are among the main services and policies highlighted in the secondary research. However, the national strategy to combat violence against women mentions other national efforts implemented by a number of state institutions.

The other state institutions that contributed to the national efforts to combat violence against women are the Ministry of Health and Population, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Endowments, Ministry of Youth and Sports, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and the Public Information Authority (The National Council for Women, 2015). It is important note that through analyzing the efforts mentioned, many of these efforts are considered short term activities because their intended impact is not highlighted in the strategy. For example, it is mentioned under the Ministry of Health and Population that it works on developing campaigns in coordination with civil society organizations. Nevertheless, the main messages of the campaigns and the impact or the reach of these campaigns are not clear. Therefore, the researcher will highlight only the main policy actions or services for each of the previously mentioned entities.

For the **Ministry of Health and Population**, a medical protocol, including a guiding manual, was developed to guide medical practitioners when dealing with survivors of violence. Training staff on that manual started in 2014 and still on going. The aim of the trainings is to reach out to all public hospitals across Egypt (The National Council for Women, 2015). Having

specialized clinics equipped with trained staff to deal with the female survivors of violence is another main achievement by the MoHP (The National Council for Women, 2015). However, it is not clear how these clinics are already established given that training medical staff is still in progress.

Briefly analyzing the copy of the manual, one could identify a number of advantages of that manual. First of all, it starts with setting some definitions clear so that all users are well educated on the topic (UNFPA et al., 2014). Therefore, it includes the definition of violence with a thorough explanation of all its forms. However, when highlighting the cycle of violence and referring to the types of violence that the female could be exposed to during the teenage period, the first type mentioned was “violence during engagement period” (UNFPA et al., 2014, p.24). I believe that this type should not come as the first type in the table as it will negatively reinforce that girls can get engaged and married in her teenager years, which is something definitely none of the partners working on the manual would like to promote.

Additionally, as part of educating the readers (medical doctors and nurses), the manual explains the international and national legislative frameworks that address violence against women so that they understand the full picture (UNFPA et al., 2014). This will also help them advocate for eliminating violence especially in rural areas where awareness is low. When it comes to the medical guidance that the manual provides, it includes three separate sections; the first is on how to deal with cases of gender based violence; the second is on how to deal with cases of domestic violence and the third is on how to deal with cases of rape and sexual assaults (UNFPA et al., 2014). It is important to note that although gender based violence can be practiced against men as well, the manual mainly focuses on females as the main group subjected to

violence, based on the facts presented at the beginning of the manual. However, only one part in the manual explains how to deal with children who are subjected to violence.

Each of the abovementioned sections provide all the necessary steps that the medical practitioner should take into consideration when receiving a case of violence. In addition, it provides a section on the frequently asked questions by doctors who feel uncomfortable dealing with such sensitive cases to support the practitioners psychologically and make sure that they are ready to deal with these cases (UNFPA et al., 2014). The manual also includes a copy of psychological first aid so that the practitioner can provide survivors with the psychological support needed and know how to deal with them properly given the incident or the trauma that the survivors have gone through (UNFPA et al., 2014). It also emphasizes the importance of properly documenting each case and the evidence found. Therefore, special information is included to highlight the steps to conduct forensic checkups with cases that has a criminal angle to it since the medical report will be one of the main documents used when the case is referred to court. It also provides copies of applications and forms to be filled by the survivor to either take her consent in some cases to undergo a forensic checkup, for example, or to answer some questions to be able to identify the intensity of the violence that she is exposed to.

Although the manual is very comprehensive and provides most information needed for medical practitioner who would deal with female survivors of violence, it has some drawbacks that shows lack of proper coordination between the different entities. One of these drawbacks is mentioning the police hotline (122) as the main hotline that the female should be aware of and call in case she is subjected to any form of violence, and need help. It is a bit strange to put the general police hotline instead of the special numbers designated by MoI, as explained in the earlier chapter, or the hotline of the ombudsman office whose staff are specialized in receiving different

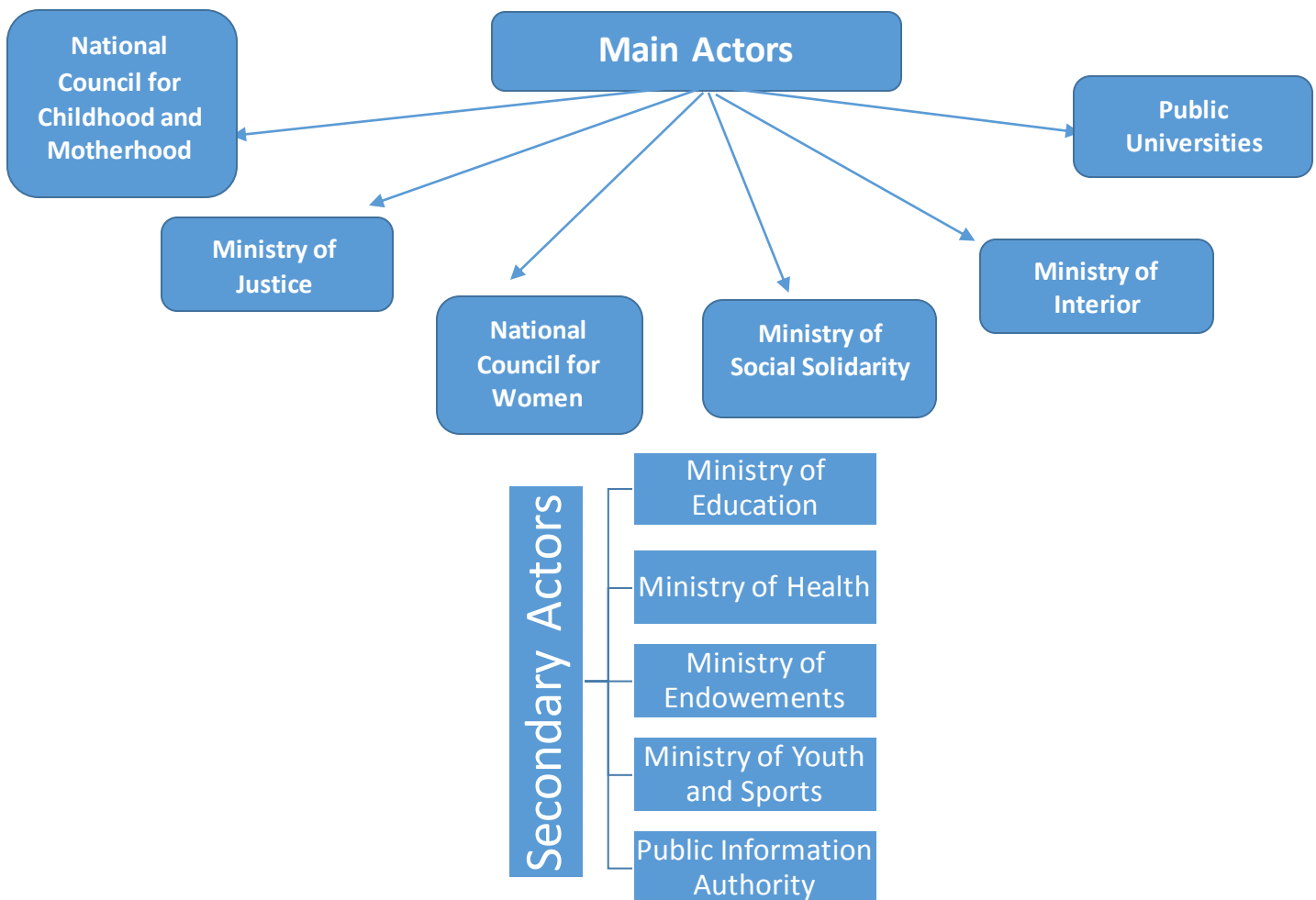
complaints from women. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that police staff that would answer the survivor's call would have the capacity to deal with such sensitive cases and provide her with the necessary steps that she could take. Additionally, the shelters provided by the MoSS were only presented at the end of the manual in a very brief table with their phone numbers without explaining when would the female seek the support of the shelters and what kind of the support can the shelters provide, even briefly.

Concerning the efforts implemented by the **Ministry of Education**, most of the efforts mentioned are towards ensuring enrollment of girls in schools (The National Council for Women, 2015), which addresses an indirect form of violence, as mentioned earlier. Furthermore, the ministry's actions to enhance the educational system including the quality is mentioned (The National Council for Women, 2015), yet it does not highlight the link between these actions and addressing violence against women and girls, especially that there were a number of harassment cases that take place on the school campus including severe sexual harassment incidents by teachers (Tahrir News, 2017; Masrawy, 2017; Egypt Independent, 2017)

For the **Ministry of Endowments**, the efforts mentioned in the strategy are limited to its role to educate the public about VAW and the religious stance towards it through religious talks and gatherings (The National Council for Women, 2015). Concerning **the Ministry of Youth and Sports**, it works on establishing special clubs and youth centers for girls and establishing a special department for girls' issues (The National Council for Women, 2015). However, it is important to note that excluding women and girls by creating separate recreational spaces for them will not address the issue effectively because exclusion is never the solution. However, the society needs to learn how to respect and treat women as equal human beings. The strategy also mentions that the MoYS utilized its centers and clubs to contribute to the implementation of the

strategy but it does not mention how it is planning to do so. Moreover, the main achievement of NCCM is the development of a special unit for women and children to combat human trafficking followed by a national plan to combat human trafficking specifically (The National Council for Women, 2015). For the **Public Information Authority** (The National Council for Women, 2015), its main objective is to keep the international community informed about the national efforts implemented in Egypt and it monitors how Egypt is portrayed in foreign media outlets. It is not clear what is the Public Information Authority is implementing specially for addressing VAW; what is mentioned seems part of its mandate and regular work.

Figure B- Summary of Actors Involved



Chapter Five: Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

This chapter presents the main findings of the study based on the information collected from the semi-structured interviews conducted in the field. Accordingly, using open coding the data collected is categorized into the following categories: VAW and its forms; reasons behind the prevalence of VAW; the legal aspect related to VAW; services and policies provided by the state institutions including the challenges faced by these entities to implement the policies and services and the extent these policies are services are responsive and effective.

Violence against Women in Egypt and its Forms

Based on the data collected, violence against women is any direct or indirect harm that women are subjected to in the public or private space. The data confirms that the UN definition of VAW is the most comprehensive definition that takes into consideration the different forms of violence against women. Most of the interviewees highlighted the direct and indirect forms of violence such as sexual harassment, domestic violence, psychological abuse as well as denial of education and inheritance. However, a number of new terms were introduced in the data collection process when it comes to reflecting on the definition of violence. The most important term is “Cultural Violence”. It is explained by one of the interviewees as the violence against women that results from inherited traditions and cultures which put the females in an inferior status compared to men. As highlighted by an official in the Ombudsman Office under the National Council for Women,

“Cultural violence is one the most dangerous forms of violence. In some governorates, cultural violence is practiced against females once they are born. In these governorates it is considered bad news to have a girl child; therefore, the father does not even register the girl child so that she does not have the right later to any of his assets/ inheritance” (Cairo, March 2017)

Data also includes other aspects of the indirect forms of violence such as choosing the type of education that the girl would pursue in addition to unequal pay and promotion in the workplace. One of the interviewees highlighted that until very recently female Police Officers only got promoted to Generals when they retire. In the General Prosecution in Egypt, the prosecutors are only males due to the belief that women cannot go to the field and would not be able to see severe crimes and deal with criminals.

None of the interviewees could confirm that VAW is now more prevalent in Egypt compared to the past decades due to the lack of data on the issue. They only emphasized that nowadays people can talk about it more openly and discuss its various aspects so it became more obvious but not necessarily more prevalent.

Reasons behind Violence against Women in Egypt

i. Domestic Economic and Financial Situation

As a multidimensional issue, the data collected presents the link between VAW and other societal problems such as poverty and illiteracy. The reasons behind violence against women in Egypt highlighted by the interviewees are linked to the factors contributing to the prevalence of VAW presented in the literature review chapter. One of the main reasons behind VAW, as highlighted in the data collected, is the economic situation. The harsh economic living conditions pressure men who find it an excuse to mistreat their female counterparts as an outlet for their stress. As explained by an official at the Ministry of Social Solidarity,

“Many men are suffering economically and believe this-hitting their wives- is the outlet for them because women keep on demanding things. They believe that women’s demands are very high and the economic circumstances are very hard so this-violence against women- is their outlet” (Cairo, April 2017)

Although the literature review focused on the economic status of women as a contributor to the problem. The previously mentioned information shows that the economic status of the woman should not be the only aspect to analyze. It is important to consider the economic and financial situation of the whole family since it reflects on the family relations and dynamics.

ii. Education

Education is another dimension to the issue of violence against women. The information gathered emphasized the important role that the educational system plays in addressing in the issue of VAW. Many of the interviewees reflected on two main issues related to education; the teaching methods and the curriculum. In other words, the culture of violence is present in many Egyptian schools as part of the teaching methods. Students are raised being exposed to violent treatment from their teachers and principals and some students are even harassed within the schools, which make them believe that violence is acceptable or that they should not complain about it. The curriculum in the educational system also indirectly support discrimination against females. UN Women official explains as follows,

“Curriculums at schools enforce negative gender roles. For example, you will find in early school curriculum that the girl helps the mother with cleaning the house while the boy watches television with his father”
(Cairo, March 2017)

This confirms that the level of women’s education or the difference between the couple’s education could not be as the main link between education and violence against women, as discussed in the literature reviewed. The woman’s education might in some cases affect her awareness of her rights but the data collected confirms that the educational system in Egypt reinforces negative perceptions about women which contribute to her status in the society and is accordingly related to the issue of VAW.

iii. Men's Perceptions about Gender Roles

Men's perceptions about gender roles is another reason behind the prevalence of VAW in Egypt. Gender roles are not only enforced through education. The Egyptian culture and traditions contribute to having a patriarchal society that accepts VAW. As explained by an official at UN Women,

"Males' perception towards women and gender roles-is one of the causes of violence against women-, how the society or male family members (male members) are expecting women to act regardless of what do women want to do....Parenting have changed in a way that affected gender roles.... Curriculum at schools enforce negative gender roles" (Cairo, March 2017)

iv. Family Relations

Moreover, the family relations contribute to the spread of violence against women. Most of the interviewees agreed that the way the children are treated affect their perception regarding gender roles and acceptance of violence. For instance, data confirms that in many cases boys get the chance to be enrolled in schools while girls stay at home to help the mother in the domestic chores. Therefore, being denied an equal chance of education is a form of violence that females get exposed to within the family. Additionally, similar to the educational system, violence is becoming the main method used by parents to treat their children. As mentioned by Dr. Safaa El Baz, Head of the Regional Center for Training linked to the National Population Council and the Ministry of Health and Population,

"Some mothers hit their children unconsciously as a way of treatment so these children get used to violence and find it ok to hit his wife in the future. We want the woman to be the main fighter against violence, she should not accept it nor practice it". (Cairo, March 2017)

Also, when children witness the father mistreating their mother and abusing her, they start to learn that the violence that their mother is exposed to is acceptable. This kind of family relations confirm gender stratification as explained in the literature review.

v. **Patriarchal Society**

The patriarchal society also allows the women to accept violence practiced against them given the prevailing cultures and traditions, as mentioned in the literature. For example, the data confirms that when it comes to domestic violence many women believe that it is the right of the husband to beat his wife and it is acceptable and sometimes seen as a sign of love. Even if women recognize their rights to live a life free from any form of violence, they still choose not to speak about it claiming that it would bring shame to the woman and ruins her reputation.

“A female student who joined our trainings was harassed off campus and she managed to take the harasser to the police station and report the case. When she got home, her father blamed her as she brought shame to the family. This is a middle class story where the student is well educated and probably her family too. In this case, the harasser was jailed, however, the next day the harasser’s family came to the girl’s home to convince her to take the report back”, explained Dr. Maha El Said; Head of Anti-Harassment and Violence Unit at Cairo University (Cairo, March 2017)

vi. **Drug Abuse**

Another societal problem that is linked to violence against women in Egypt is drug abuse. Officials at the Ombudsman Office under the National Council for Women confirmed that in some of the cases received the woman experience violence from the male partner or family member as a result of drug abuse. An official at the office reflects on one of the cases saying,

“One woman sought our help, she used to be very beautiful. When she started trusting me, she started to share her story freely. Her husband

broke most of her teeth, her nose and made other injuries in her body and the disaster is he hit her by the glucose cylinder and hit the physician at the hospital as well because of the drugs he was on” (Cairo, March 2017)

The officials at the Ombudsman office highlighted that the issue of drug addiction among various groups in the society is one of the issues that only the state is responsible to address and solve due to its sensitivity and its impact on a number of issues related to the country's development such as violence against women.

Challenges of VAW Legal Pursuance

As mentioned in the earlier chapters, Egypt's constitution for 2014 ensures gender equality in different articles (Egypt's Constitution 2014). Article 11 is the one directly related to the issue of VAW as it mentions that the state is committed to provide the proper protection for women from any forms of violence to enforce women's empowerment.

All of the data collected identified a number of challenges related to the legal aspect of addressing VAW in Egypt. First of all, the different experts in the field confirmed that laws are not enough. Law enforcement is crucial to be able to solve such a problem.

“Most of the people who talk about the law, they talk about the articles. But the law is more than articles. It has different levels: the level of articles, the level of implementation and policies, respecting and dealing with the legal system”, mentioned Dr. Nehad Abou El Kosman (Cairo, April 2017)

Learning more about the legal procedures and the steps for reporting violence against women cases, it is clear that even the governmental officials who should be supporting the process sometimes do not enforce the law due to several facts that are beyond the scope of this study. For instance, a couple of the cases explained by the interviewees showed that when a woman goes to

the police station to report the case, sometimes the police staff takes the man's side and convinces the woman not to file the report so that the harasser is not harmed nor her reputation as well.

Additionally, the reporting process requires the woman to go to different entities to undertake all the necessary steps. Therefore, some women would give up reporting due to the long process and the various entities that she has to reach out to, apart from the psychological impact that she will go through in each of these entities whenever she is asked to narrate what happened to her. Even if she decides to report and go through all of the steps, the data highlights that her case will be investigated together with the other crimes and sometimes she will be referred from the police station to the general prosecution in the same car with the thieves and criminals. An official from UN Women commented on that point saying:

“Women do not report because 1) they are afraid of stigmatization and the victim perceptions is towards men not women 2) there is a problem with the reporting system and the “first responders” (Who are the first to receive the survivors) in many times are prosecutors or police officers are not gender sensitized... The reporting system makes her lose her rights...the fact that she explains the story several times complicates her psychological status... other minor details is that she is referred in a police car with other prisoners...also when someone is traumatized, she might forget some minor details and with time she might remember these details...however one of the signs that the police use to make sure that the person is saying the truth is the consistency in the story but because she is traumatized the details mentioned might differ every time but they do not understand that” (Cairo, March 2017)

The forms of violence that are clearly criminalized by law such as female genital mutilation, rape and sexual harassment are still prevalent in our society. When it comes to FGM, still most of the cases are applied by medical doctors who should be imprisoned for such acts.

However, these practices still happen. For sexual harassment, data shows that there are many flaws in the law criminalizing the acts that fall under sexual harassment. In other words, the fact that the incident should have at least two witnesses to prove it and the legal gaps, in terms of police support and required procedures, make it very challenging for women to gain their rights if they decide to report. An important factor that was highlighted by Dr. Azza Kamel; Writer and Head of Appropriate Communication Techniques (ACT) and another official at the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is that the political situation prior to issuing the sexual harassment law is very important. They believe that the law was issued as a result of strong political will following the harassment cases that took place in Tahrir square after President Abdel Fattah el Sisi won the elections. Concerning rape and sexual assaults, data confirmed that the existing legislations are fine but the problem is with the implementation as highlighted by Ms. Germaine Hadad; UNFPA Assistant Representative,

“The legislations on rape and assaults are rarely executed due to the gap in the process”

In other words, in rape cases the forensic evidence should be collected in less than twenty four hours, otherwise the evidence will be lost. Therefore, the legal procedures including the evidence collection process sometimes are not implemented in a timely manner which complicates the case and makes it harder for women to gain their legal right.

Therefore, the data highlights that there are many challenges faced in enforcing the law. Due to these challenges, the law addressing VAW in Egypt cannot easily move from the “Policy Formulation” stage to “Policy Implementation” stage when reflecting on the policy cycle.

The Policies and Services by the State Institutions

This section will present the main policies and services found through the data collection process. Based on the findings of the data collected, this section will be divided into the following subsections: The Ombudsman Office (The National Council for Women); the Shelters (MoSS); Criminal Justice System including the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the General Prosecution and the Forensic Medicine. Although the focus of the study is the efforts by state institutions towards eliminating violence against women; this section will also reflect on the efforts of the main international agencies since they contribute to the implementation of the state efforts in addressing the issue such as UN Women, UNODC and UNFPA. Also, it is important to highlight that the below services and policies were the common efforts mentioned by the interviewees, who also reflected on each of these mechanisms.

The National Council for Women-The Ombudsman Office

The Ombudsman Office is one the main national mechanisms that address violence against women. Under the supervision of the National Council for women, the Ombudsman Office was established in 2001 and started receiving complaints in 2002, as clarified by the interviewees. Despite the misconception that some might have that the office receives complaints related to cases of violence against women only, the office actually receives complaints about various issues. The main aim of the office is to contribute to solving the various obstacles that women face, which prevent them from participating in the development of the society. Therefore, it works on different levels including identifying the problems that women face and referring these problems to the designated entities to solve it; providing legal consultations; raising women's awareness of their rights; pushing for legislative amendments based on analyzing the complaints received, as per the information collected. It is worth highlighting that the

Ombudsman Office has branches across all the Egyptian governorates to ensure that the services reach all women on the ground. Having a branch in each governorate helps in identifying the issues that women in each governorate suffer from, to be able to properly address these issues effectively.

The office is one of the few entities that offers direct services to women including female survivors of violence. Women submit their complaints to the office either directly by visiting the branch or through a designated hotline or other correspondences (email, fax, etc). The office provides all the support needed free of charge. However, the primary data clarifies an important issue concerning the Ombudsman Office hotline service.

“The hotline now works only from 9am till 3pm excluding the weekends and the national holidays” stated an Official at UNODC. (Cairo, April 2017)

This point shows that the lives of many women are put at risk due to not being able to reach the Ombudsman Office to get the necessary support once subjected to any form of violence.

For the cases of violence against women, the office provides legal and societal support. To provide the legal support, the different branches of the office are equipped with at least two lawyers to provide any legal support to the case. The data collected confirms that these lawyers are volunteers and are responsible for receiving the complaints and providing legal advice. However, the data clarifies that if the case requires extended legal support, then it has to be referred to certified lawyers included in a special database developed by the office. It is important to note that the lawyers in the branches are not allowed to handle the cases received to make sure that they provide unbiased advice and ensure that they do not abuse the women. Additionally,

the office covers all the expenses of raising the case to the court to all female survivors of violence.

Apart from the legal support, on a case by case basis, the branches might refer the survivor to one of the shelters under the Ministry of Social Solidarity. In some cases, the cause of violence is related to another problem that the woman is suffering from such as her economic status; therefore, the office also works on addressing the causes of the problem whenever possible by coordinating with the designated governmental entities and following up on the case till the case is solved.

All the above mentioned information represents the direct support that the Ombudsman Office provides to the female survivors of violence. However, the office also work on implementing a number of on ground activities that aim at raising the communities' awareness about violence against women and its negative consequences. These awareness raising activities do not target women only. Men are also targeted to change the misconceptions that they might have on the issue and to encourage them to advocate for a better living for women due to its positive impact on the family and the society as a whole. The office also conducts trainings for rural women leaders who play an important role in raising women's awareness about their rights and the services that the office offer them. The on ground activities are conducted between the branches of the office in collaboration with Equal Opportunities Units that fall also under the supervision and management of the National Council for Women. Nonetheless, the role of the Equal Opportunities units is not clear in these activities since the secondary data mentioned that these units focus on addressing discriminatory acts in the workplace only.

Among the main challenges that face the Ombudsman Office and affects its work are the traditions and cultures that encourage women to stay silent and not to complain. Engineer Hanaa, General Manager at NCW explained this point saying,

“One of the main challenges faced that women did not complain in the first place. Some women consider it inappropriate to complain. It is related to the cultural inheritance. The understanding that they can speak up and complain didn’t exist. Today women have changed a bit.” (Cairo, March 2017)

Moreover, the data highlights that another challenge faced by the office is the difficulty in measuring the impact of the activities and efforts conducted to eliminate violence against women as it requires years to be able to assess the true impact of these services and activities.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity-Shelters

Based on the data collected the Ministry is divided into three departments: protection, care and development. The protection department focuses on the cash transfer and the financial services provided to both female and male citizens. However, it was highlighted that most of the beneficiaries are women. One of the main programs under that department is “Takafol w Karama” which supports certain segments of society provided that they meet certain criteria to get the entitled benefits.

“95% of the cardholders for Takafol w Karama are women because we prefer giving the women the money because research has shown that a woman receives the cash, she spends it on her kids’ education and health compared to men who can spend it on themselves”, explained an official at the Ministry of Social Solidarity. (Cairo, April 2017)

In other words, the official highlighted that empowering women financially is one of the indirect ways through which the ministry addresses violence against women.

The second department “Care” includes the associations under the MoSS that receive special groups such as the juveniles, orphans and people with special needs. The shelters for female survivors of violence fall under this department. Therefore, the shelters are directly managed by the associations under the supervision of the ministry. The officials at MoSS confirmed that across Egypt there are eight shelters, and not nine as mentioned in the strategy. One shelter in each of the following governorates: Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Qalubeya, Dakahlia, Beni Suef, Fayoum, Minya. Based on the information gathered from the officials at the ministry, these governorates were selected based on the high rates of violence against women there. Data collected indicates that many experts believe that having eight shelters covering the whole country is not enough. However, some of the officials at the ministry argued that the eight shelters can serve survivors from across Egypt, disregarding the additional cost that the survivor would bear for commuting, which might discourage some women from seeking the services provided by the shelters.

The shelters in the eight governorates are managed by different associations under the supervision of MoSS and operates 24/7. The shelters aim at hosting and protecting women subjected to violence. The shelters also work on raising the survivors’ self-esteem and on enhancing their skills. Although the main target is women, the data also emphasizes that the shelters also work on conducting awareness session to both men and women on the different aspect of VAW and its impact. However, no clear link was highlighted between these activities and the ones conducted by the Ombudsman office. Data shows that the same activities targeting

the same groups are conducted by MoSS and the Ombudsman Office which highlights inefficient management of resources and efforts and a need for better coordination.

The main staff members in the shelter are: manager, psychologist, social worker, physician and legal consultant. A bylaw was issued in 2012 to set the main outline for the shelters. The bylaw consists of seventeen articles tackling various issue to ensure proper operations of the shelters (Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2014). For instance, the bylaw covers topics such as introducing the shelters and the minimum standards that they should meet in term of their infrastructure; the criteria for accepting women and the required documents; supervision committee responsible for the shelter (Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2014). However, the data collected confirm that there are still differences and inconsistencies in the working mechanisms between the eight shelters.

“The bylaw that governs the shelters is the only common thing between them, other than that every shelter operates with its own working system...the bylaw specify a number of elements but still it misses some elements...we are now identifying the problems/gaps in the bylaw and we intend to change it once and for all...the bylaw gets changed with a ministerial decree; that’s why it is incorrect to change it a lot”, mentions an official at the Ministry of Social Solidarity. (Cairo, April 2017)

In 2014, the ministry conducted an assessment to all the shelters in the different governorates in partnership with UN Women. This assessment highlighted that the infrastructure of many of the shelters need to be renovated to offer the minimum standards for the female survivors of violence who seek the shelters support. Apart from the infrastructure, the ministry is working on developing an institutional system for these shelters to ensure proper service delivery.

“We wanted to establish institutional systems in the shelters so we decided that we want quality standards, it is a huge document that include a lot of standards on different pillars, one of the pillars is on governance and internal control, another is advocacy and networking, the third is on financial management and the fourth is on the quality of the services provided and monitoring and evaluation and the last is on the infrastructure” stated an official at MoSS (Cairo, April 2017)

The fact that the MoSS identified some of the drawbacks of the system managing the shelters and working on it is a very positive indication. However, it is important to monitor the impact of these efforts to make sure that they are effective in achieving their objectives.

When the shelter receives a woman, certain steps are taken, as explained by the officials in the MoSS. Data highlights that it is important to investigate each case received to make sure that her criminal record is clear and that all the information she provided is true. The shelters support the woman in getting the necessary documents for her stay and within three days the case should get final confirmation to stay or gets rejected. During these three days, the woman is entitled to stay in the shelter. An important criterion mentioned in the bylaw as mentioned in the data collected, is that the survivor is required to pay the fees of her stay in case she has a regular income. This confirms the point mentioned in the previous chapter that the woman has to pay for her stay at the shelter, yet it is still not clear how the amount is calculated. The data only shows that this fees is decided upon based on the social research and investigation done on each case. Once the case is accepted, she is entitled to stay for three months during which legal and psychological support are provided. Additionally, the shelter helps the survivor in finding a nearby job, if she is unemployed. An official at the ministry gave an example saying,

“For example, the shelter in 6th of October is next to the industrial zone so they have linkages with some of the factories so they can send them to

work and generate their own income and then a couple of women can then get a shared apartment to stay” (Cairo, April 2017)

Although the shelters and the MoSS tries to provide unemployed women at the shelters with nearby job opportunities, there are some weaknesses in conducting these actions. First of all, linking the survivors to employment opportunities is not formalized. In other words, it happens based on the staff’s connections and networks, which threatens the suitability of that kind of support. Additionally, the data highlights that the shelters help the women in finding a job that is close to the shelter but it does not indicate the next procedures taken when the women leaves the shelter.

On the other hand, to extend the period of staying more than three months, the case has to go through various approvals to study her situation and decide whether she can stay or not, noting that all cases gets coded for anonymity. The data confirms that the shelters should not represent an alternative to the survivors’ homes. Therefore, the officials at the ministry indicated that having few number of survivors in the shelters should be taken as a good sign not a bad one as some may interpret it because it indicates that the shelters manage to solve the cases.

Since the shelters are not alternatives to the home, the data shows that the main mechanism of solving the survivor’s case is to reconcile the issue between her and her family or the other party that practiced violence against her. Nevertheless, based on the information collected from the ministry, none of the actions are taken without the survivor’s consent. The staff at the shelters do not inform any of the survivor’s family members or friends about her place unless she requests that. An official at the MoSS explained saying,

“In all cases, she-the survivor- never goes back to the house without her consent, no one will force her. We support the family to be together if they

can. Divorce is never our number one solution because it is never easy to break up a family” (Cairo, April 2017)

Therefore, it is important to study the mechanisms through which the staff at the shelters deal with the cases received because reconciliation is not always the best solution and getting back to her family or partner might have negative consequences on the survivor herself. Dr. Azza Kamel reflected on that point saying,

“Most of the staff-at the shelters- want the woman to get back to her husband and they do actions based on personal decisions. That’s because they are afraid from the community they are in. the fact that the shelters are within the communities is a problem ...they should be located in remote areas unknown to the families as done abroad” (Cairo, April 2017)

It is also worth highlighting that the ministry works on economically empowering the survivors, whenever possible, through one of the existing programs. Supporting the survivor in becoming economically independent is one the indirect ways to address violence against women.

The information collected from the officials at the MoSS and other experts during the interviews highlight a number of challenges that currently face the shelters. The number one challenge is the limited financial resources. The main source of funding for the shelters is governmental grants as they function through associations. The limited financial resources affect a number of elements that negatively impact the quality of the services provided by the shelters such as the capacity of the staff hired including the social workers who are among the important staff who should be aware and well trained to deal with survivors of violence.

Furthermore, some of the regulations are considered challenges to the staff. For example, the shelter prohibits male children above ten years old from staying in the shelters with their mothers. However, in many cases the woman comes to the shelter with her children. Shelters usually accept children under ten years old and provide them with psychological support also if needed. Yet, if the survivor comes with her son who is above ten years old, the shelter unfortunately could not accept him to stay at the shelter with his mother. Also, in many communities, shelters suffer from stigmatization since some people perceive them as places where women are empowered to fight back against men. Dr. Nehad Abol Komsan, commented on that issue by recommending another solution that is worth studying saying,

“There is a suggestion to have social housing, in agreement with the minister of housing and the governor to have emergency units and to have a building for example for survivors who have children as a temporary home till her case is managed and here standards can be put in place to manage the issue and women would sign on a paper indicating that this is only a temporary place” (Cairo, April 2017)

However, there is a high chance that these social houses suffer from the same stigmatization that the shelters face, unless it is developed in a way that ensures confidentiality of the issue and of the persons staying there.

Cairo University- Anti-Harassment Unit

Cairo University is the first university in Egypt to establish a policy with separate unit to address violence against women, specifically sexual harassment. The unit was established in 2014 with the support of civil society organizations to address the cases of sexual harassment taking place on campus while stating the necessary procedures and mechanisms to implement the policy.

Dr. Maha El Said; Head of the Anti-Harassment Unit gave a brief background about the establishment of the unit saying,

“Our policy is linked to the huge harassment incident that happened three years ago in Tahrir square when President Abdel Fattah El Sisi won the elections...this was a window of opportunity to raise the policy to the President of Cairo University who immediately endorsed it” (Cairo, March 2017)

This shows the importance of political will on policy development and endorsement. It also highlights that policies, especially ones on VAW, are very much linked to people in power. No one would guarantee that another university president would support such policy. As explained by Dr. Maha El Said, having a policy means that you have a problem that you need to address and not all faculty members and staff at Cairo University would agree that sexual harassment is an issue that required a special policy. However, due to internal political will the policy was endorsed and the president took the decision of establishing a special unit to implement that policy.

As part of the university’s mandate, CU is committed to provide a safe environment for all female and male students. As mentioned earlier, following the huge case of harassment in Tahrir square, where a number of women were harassed when they went to the square celebrating after President Al Sisi won the elections, and the amendments to the law leading to criminalizing sexual harassment, a new policy was developed by CU as part of the national efforts to address VAW. As per the data collected, this policy was developed on two main pillars: the first pillar focuses on raising awareness and protection among the CU community and the second pillar highlights the necessary procedures to be taken once a harassment incident takes place on campus. As mentioned earlier, the policy is developed through the unit which consists

of three main layers: the High Committee, the Executive Board and the coordinators in each college.

The policy starts with defining harassment and its different forms. What makes it special is that it also mentions harassment through internet such as sending inappropriate photos or messages. Moreover, it outlines the responsibilities of each member in CU community such as the President of the University, the faculty members, the high committee to combat harassment and violence against women and others.

“One of the main success factors of the policy is that we considered the law of organizing the universities and the punishments follow this law to maintain our credibility”, stated Dr. Maha El Said (Cairo, March 2017)

An important part of the policy is stating the steps to be followed when being subjected to harassment on campus. The data also clarifies that the unit has two female lawyers seconded from the legal affairs department to be able to deal with the complaints directly. These lawyers are trained on the issue to be able to deal with the cases properly. However, all the legal steps take place within the scope of the university. If the girl would like to report the case to the police station, this is her choice but the university does not get involved. For the cases that are reported on campus, based on the case and the investigation that follows, legal actions are taken against the harasser. Data clarifies that the policy outlines these action whether the harasser is a student or a faculty member. However, it does not mention other groups such as workers or security members. It only states that if the harasser is not part of the CU, the case is referred to the designated entity to take the necessary legal actions against him.

As part of implementing the first pillar of the policy, the unit organizes various awareness sessions among male and female students to learn about the issue and become advocates for the

cause, as per the data collected. The policy also ensures confidentiality of the cases to encourage female students to report to the unit once subjected to harassment on campus. Trainings were provided to university security staff because in many cases the female students seek their support once subjected to harassment on campus.

“We trained around 250-300 out of 500 member of the administrative security. Training will not create change, there should be intensive monitoring and follow up. The university is huge and we don’t have the capacity for regular monitoring and follow up”, highlighted Dr. Maha El Said (Cairo, March 2017)

Although these trainings show great efforts from the university’s side to address the issue. It is important to note that there are other security members on campus outsourced by the university to ensure the safety and the security of the buildings and the community. These outsourced security members were not part of the training, although it is important to engage them in addressing the issue since they support ensuring the safety on the community on campus as well.

Furthermore, the data shows that the unit provides psychological support to female students. The unit’s executive committee includes two psychologists who provide the necessary support to the cases submitted to the unit. The high demand of this support made the unit think of future actions to better enhance this service. Among the planned actions is developing a protocol with the Psychiatric Hospital. This protocol will allow students to seek the support of the hospital free of charge and at the same time the doctors there will be well trained on receiving cases of violence. The unit is also working on developing a new knowledge product that on psychological first aid that should be provided to females once they experience a case of

violence. Once the product is finalized staff at the unit will be trained on it to make sure that they deal properly with the cases received.

Although the development of an anti-harassment policy and specialized unit in CU is considered one of the main achievements in addressing violence against women, the data highlights a gap in coordination between the different universities when it comes to establishing the special policy and units to address sexual harassment on campus. When exploring the coordination between Ain Shams University and Cairo University concerning establishing the unit and policy, data shows that Ain Shams University did not seek any contact with CU to learn from their experience. The system that these universities are following to establish the units and policies are not the same. For instance, one of the main challenges that is facing the unit at CU is that it is not part of the structure of the university. This means that once a new president takes over, there is a chance that he/she cancels the unit. For Assuit and Ain Shams universities, the situation is different as explained by Ms. Germaine Hadad,

“Our approach is to create institutional mechanisms to protect women and respond to gender based violence. We established a policy on how to deal with sexual harassment cases on campus and a unit in two universities and it has become part of the structure of the university in both Assuit and Ain Shams” (Cairo, April 2017)

Therefore, proper coordination between the universities is highlighted to ensure responsiveness and effectiveness of the services provided by the special units in the three universities. For example, there should not be discrepancies between the support provided to female students at Cairo University and that provided to Ain Shams university when it comes to addressing sexual harassment on campus.

The Regional Center for Training (NPC) and The Ministry of Health and Population-Medical Support

Based on the data collected, the role of medical doctors was highlighted a number of times since they are among the first line responders who receive female survivors of violence. Although secondary research failed to identify the exact role of the Ministry of Health and Population in Egypt in addressing VAW, primary research conducted succeeded in discovering the progress that have been achieved in the medical sector so far.

The MoHP has different sectors and layers. Therefore, it was not easy to identify the sector responsible for addressing VAW. The Regional Center for Training in Family Planning and Reproductive Health (RTC) is the main entity that has been exerting a number of activities with the medical doctors in relation to eliminating violence against women. This center falls under the National Population Council and work closely with the MoHP. Most of the data presented below are the main findings resulting from a very informative interview with Dr. Safaa El Baz; Director of RTC.

The center was established in the late 1980s with focus on issues related to family planning and reproductive health. Since RTC is an entity under the National Population Council, it is considered a governmental entity. RTC was very successful in addressing family planning. The data confirms that over ten years it managed to train around 32,000 doctor across Egypt on the different aspects of family planning. These trainings led to correcting the misconceptions around methods of family planning on ground and created a clear direction for the medical practitioners to follow so that all efforts are exerted in one direction. The support and contribution of the MoHP was crucial to be able to nominate doctors and nurses to participate in the trainings. An important point, similar to the case of CU, is the political will. The data showed that only because the minister of health at that time believed in the cause, the ministry provided all the support

needed and partnered with RTC to conduct nationwide trainings as part of the national efforts to work on family planning.

Although from the first glance, one would argue that RTC is focusing only on family planning, which is not directly linked to VAW, RTC benefited from the lessons learned from the family planning program implemented earlier to develop a special program focusing on eliminating VAW.

“Since Dr. Maya Morsy was in the UN, a program entitled “Safe Cities” was developed in 2011 and she presented the issue of violence against women to the Egyptian society. When we were at the conference, the idea of training the physicians and the nurses, who are among the first to deal with the woman-female survivors- when she goes to the hospital or when she requires medical support...Starting then, the link was established between what we do and VAW”, stated Dr. Safaa El Baz (Cairo, March 2017)

RTC worked on a proposal to involve the medical sector in eliminating VAW and the minister endorsed the proposal in 2014. One of the main achievements of this program is the development of a medical protocol and manual on how to deal with survivors of gender based violence, which is presented in the secondary research in the previous chapter. Data highlighted the production of this manual involved the National Council for Women, the Ministry of Health and Population, the National Population Council, Regional Center for Training and UNFPA.

Apart from working on the development of the manual, RTC conducted a number of trainings, in collaboration with the MoHP, to properly teach the material presented in the manual to the medical doctors and nurses to make sure that the information is well conveyed and understood. Despite the concerns that participants would not be very interested nor interactive

with such topic, Dr. Safaa highlighted that the reactions were exceptional and participants were very engaging in the sessions saying,

“It is too early to know the impact-of the program on the survivors and on eliminating VAW- since it only started in 2014...The impact can be seen on the physicians and the nurses for now. It was surprising to see that they had many questions and that showed their interest in the topic and that they really want to bring change” (Cairo, March 2017)

However, it is important to mention that despite all the trainings conducted until now, there is no guarantee that a trained doctor or nurse will treat the female survivor when she goes to the hospital seeking medical support.

□ *“Till end of 2016, 324 hospitals have been capacitated from the public/general hospitals. By the end of this year, we will finish the 400” mentioned Ms. Germaine Hadad (Cairo, April 2017)*

In addition, there are some planned actions to ensure that the female survivors get the support needed.

“A unit is being established for combating violence against women and it will be part of the ministry’s structure. Till now it is under the Prevention Sector but we met with the head of this sector to dedicate part of this sector to the unit for combating violence against women and we are planning to present it to the minister”, clarified Dr. Safaa El Baz (Cairo, March 2017)

However, the data confirms that only staff at the general hospitals will be trained on this manual, as explained by Ms. Germaine Hadad below,

“When the manual was developed, there was an agreement between all the sectors of the MoHP that the entity providing these services is the hospitals because when the survivors of violence that need medical support do not go to primary health care units, they go the ER or gynecologists in hospitals.

The primary health care unit would refer the woman to the hospital because dealing with cases, especially of sexual assaults, require special treatment to not harm the survivor or mess up with the forensic evidence.” (Cairo, April 2017)

Therefore, coordination between the different health units across the governorates and the public hospitals is a key factor to ensure that the female survivor of violence receive the required medical support needed in a timely manner by a trained staff.

One of the main challenges faced by such programs is the funding. Dr. Safaa confirmed that the national budget would not be able to support such initiative due to the limited resources. Therefore, depending on external funding resources threatens the sustainability of the trainings and the continuation of the program as a whole.

Criminal Justice System

Most of the data reflects on the role of the criminal justice system in addressing cases of violence against women. For the purpose of this study, the criminal justice system consists of the following governmental entities: the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice-including the forensic medicine- and the general prosecution. It is important to highlight the due to the sensitivity of the issue and the type of work of the entities under the criminal justice, the researcher was not able to interview an official from any of these entities, yet data presented were collected from other interviews who reflected on that aspect.

For the **ministry of interior**, based on the secondary research mentioned earlier special units were established to work on combating violence against women. Although the protocol between the MoI and NCW is considered a great achievement and lead to the development of

the new specialized units under the ministry, many of the experts interviewed expressed some concerns on these units.

The units are now decentralized and are present in police stations across the country getting closer to women who might need their support. Nevertheless, the mandate of these units together with the roles and responsibilities assigned to the staff at the unit is not clear even to some of the experts interviewed. Additionally, the data collected did not confirm whether assignment to these units are only restricted to females. Yet, in principle, female officers should contribute to these units in one way or another. The problem is with the low number of female officers graduating, as explained below by Dr. Azza Kamel,

“The number of female police graduates is very few, so you don’t have enough number to cover a lot areas.” (Cairo, April 2017)

Dr. Nehad Abol Komsan also commented saying,

“The female police officers only monitor and they only intervene during occasions. Do they have a role in criminal security? No they do not. Their role is close to mediation and in some cases mediation is not the solution. That’s why it important to analyze this mechanism” (Cairo, April 2017)

For the **Ministry of Justice**, as mentioned in the previous chapter, special department were established to address women’s issues including violence against women. Similar to the unit developed under the MoI, data shows that there are some concerns about these departments as well.

“It very important to have a specialized justice system and to have a specialized judges. But when you check where these units are, they do not have a dedicated budget so it is only a decree” stated Dr. Nehad Abol Komsan (Cairo, April 2017)

However, data collected confirms that the special departments under MoJ are not implemented yet. Only an announcement was made by the ministry but nothing took place on the ground nor are any updates being shared. This raises concerns on whether the policy governing these departments are formulated in the first place since implementation is taking some time.

The forensic medicine, which falls under the MoJ, is one of the sectors that deals with females who suffered from extreme incidents of violence. The data highlights one of the main achievements under the forensic medicine which is the establishment of a 24/7 clinic in Cairo for females survivors of violence. The development of this clinic was supported by UNODC. An official from UNODC commented on this clinic saying,

“In partnership with the forensic medicine, we developed one clinic 24/7 in Cairo for the cases of VAW and it has a waiting area so we can ensure that when the female is at forensic medicine she will go into a specialized clinic and will not go into other unpleasant department and the staff is trained to deal with her” (Cairo, April 2017)

For the **general prosecution**, limited information was found on the efforts exerted by the prosecution to address violence against women. Data presented in the following section highlight the efforts that the international agencies exert in partnership with the general prosecution among others.

Overall, the data collected on the efforts of the criminal justice system mainly highlights the establishment of certain units or departments to address VAW under the criminal justice system. However, the role and the mandate of these units and departments are not clear, which questions the effectiveness and responsiveness of these actions.

International Organizations Support to the National Efforts to Combat VAW

Although the main focus of the study is the efforts exerted by the state organizations to address violence against women, it is important to highlight that some of these efforts are supported by different international organizations. This section will provide a brief overview on the support that some of the main international organizations provide to the national efforts tackling VAW. The organizations covered in this area are UN Women, UNODC and UNFPA. These organizations are selected specifically because secondary and primary data showed their contribution to the national efforts exerted in Egypt.

The data collected from different interviewees including UN Women highlights the role that this entity plays to support the national efforts directed to eliminate violence against women. Apart from supporting the infrastructure of the shelters under the MoSS, as mentioned earlier, the data confirms that **UN Women** contributes to conducting capacity building trainings for the social workers to prepare them to deal with the female survivors of violence. UN Women also works closely with the Ombudsman Office under NCW on creating various awareness raising sessions directed at both men and women to educate them about the issue and its different aspects.

UNODC also provides necessary support to the same office, specifically the hotline service to make sure that it offers support 24/7 not only during official working hours as the case now. In addition, UNODC in Egypt supports the criminal justice system. in Egypt by developing necessary training manuals for different sectors including police officers, prosecutors and judges to educate them about VAW and the necessary steps that should be taken when dealing with female survivors of violence. To ensure sustainability of the trainings, UNODC provides trainings of trainers (ToT) so that knowledge is easily transferred even without its interventions.

Working with the general prosecution specifically, data shows that UNODC supported two items; the development of a data management system and the establishment of coordination mechanism for criminal justice practitioners. The aim of the data management is to provide all the information that would help in reporting effectively on the cases of VAW.

“We hope that by the end of this year this system is ready, -through which- they-the prosecutors- will be able to get out statistics and develop analytical reports on cases of VAW including how the cases are being dealt with at the different levels of the judicial procedure” mentioned an official at UNODC (Cairo, April 2017)

For the coordination mechanism for the criminal justice practitioners, it is still not effective yet. It aims at organizing regular coordination meetings among the focal points of the different entities to coordinate issues related to the criminal justice system response to VAW.

“Once it-the agreement- is approved- we will convene the first coordination meeting and it will take place on a routine basis. The focal points from the different entities will be present at the meeting to discuss the different challenges, gaps and problems that they face and they will try to address it to make it easier for women when they enter the judicial process” stated UNODC official (Cairo, April 2017)

Regarding the support provided to the forensic medicine, apart from the clinic mentioned earlier, UNODC provides trainings to doctors under the forensic medicine sector. These trainings have been able to change the approach through which the forensic doctors operates as explained below,

“Now the forensic medicine is trying to change its approach, through its work with prosecutions they are trying not to be limited to one issue and instead to look into her wellbeing, to be a doctor not an investigator. Now

we are working on developing a comprehensive form for women so that when a woman reaches forensic medicine she gets full examination not only the part that the prosecution requested”, mentioned an official at UNODC (Cairo, April 2017)

Concerning **UNFPA**, as explained earlier briefly, it supports two main elements: the medical response provided to the female survivors of violence and the establishment of special units at some of the universities. For the medical response, UNFPA supported the development of the medical manual and is currently supporting the training of the medical staff at the public hospitals to ensure all the hospitals are covered. UNFPA also provides the special units at the universities with all the necessary materials and equipment to ensure the sustainability of their activities.

The data collected also managed to highlight one of the main activities conducted by UNFPA in support of the National Council for Women. UNFPA is supporting NCW to put an implementation framework for the strategy produced in 2015. This five year plan is being developed with the relevant ministries and includes the input of all the governorates to make sure that the needs of the different governorates are met.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the information presented above, there are various national efforts exerted in response to violence against women in Egypt. Accordingly, this section discusses the main findings of the research while reflecting on the main research question exploring the policies and services on VAW in Egypt and their effectiveness and responsiveness. The discussion is divided into three main subsections: policies, services and challenges.

- **Policies**

- **Constitution and Laws:**

As discussed earlier, the Egyptian constitution includes a number of addressing equality in general and gender equality specifically. Article 11 is the main article that mentions that the states is committed to combat all forms of violence against women. In addition, a number of laws address different kinds of violence practiced against women such as FGM, rape, kidnapping and sexual harassment.

Despite the existence of constitutional articles and legislations to guarantee that women have a fair life that is free from any form of discrimination or violence, law enforcement and translation of these laws into policies and services are essential steps that are still missing in the Egyptian context, as per the data collected. The current legal procedures required to file a report against the perpetrator puts a lot of obstacles in front of the woman and in many cases might discourage her from taking any legal action even if she is fully aware that it is her right. These legal procedures includes the reporting system that is currently in place. The current reporting system refer the survivor to different agencies together with the rest of the criminals. In other words, she gets treated

in the same places where criminals are which put her under a lot of psychological and social pressure.

○ **Strategies**

The research highlighted that a national strategy was developed in 2015 to combat violence against women. Although the strategy involved a number of governmental entities, data showed that a non-participatory approach was taken since the representation of non-governmental organizations was very low.

One of the main protocols highlighted in the strategy is the medical protocol/manual implemented by the Ministry of Health and Population together with the National Council for women and other entities to guide medical practitioners on how to deal with female survivors of violence. Reflecting on the medical protocol, it is a very comprehensive document including a lot of details and information to guide the medical practitioners. However, some of the information mentioned on the available services for women shows that there is lack of coordination between the various designated entities. The main challenge facing this initiative is the lack of sustainable funding. Data highlights that the funds for this initiative will end this year and no plan for additional funds so far, which is a problem faced in many of the programs conducted by RTC.

Following the national strategy to combat violence against women, MoI developed special units to combat violence against women. Although the establishment of these units are considered an important step, data confirms that the role and the mandate of these units are not clear even among the experts interviewed. Additionally, many of the actions mentioned in the executive plan included in the strategy are short term activities.

There are even no updates available on the progress made so far on the ground in the past two years.

○ **Public Universities Policies**

Data shows that three public universities (Cairo University, Ain Shams University, Assuit University) designed a policy to address violence against women on campus, specifically sexual harassment. To implement this policy each university established a special unit to make sure that activities are properly implemented and monitored. However, the study managed to highlight various aspects of Cairo University specifically since it is the first university to implement this policy a couple of years ago. Following its mandate to provide a safe environment for all student and the academic community and following the huge incidents of sexual harassment in Tahrir square, CU considered this period as a window of opportunity to put that policy in place. The policy was immediately endorsed by the president of the university and a special unit was established to make sure that the policy is well implemented. Therefore, political will on the management's level was one of the main factors that contributed to policy implementation in CU.

The policy designed by CU starts with setting the proper scope and definitions of sexual harassment. It also highlights the role and responsibilities of the different members of academic community together with explaining the procedures and working mechanism followed when dealing with sexual harassment incidents on campus. Despite the clarity of the policy and the procedures to be taken when a female is harassed on campus, penalties are only directed towards the students and faculty

members but no clear information on how the unit would deal with the perpetrator if he is a worker in the university or not even part of the university community at all. Apart from the direct legal and psychological support provided to female students when they report an incident, the anti-harassment unit works also on raising the community's awareness about the issue of sexual harassment bringing up a generation who can advocate and fight for women's right to walk freely in the streets.

One of the main challenges faced by CU is that the unit is not an integrated part of the structure of the university. Therefore, the unit is at risk of being canceled whenever a new management takes over.

In addition, there seems to be lack of coordination among the different universities that established these special units. For example, data revealed that neither Ain Shams University nor Assuit University sought the guidance or learned from the model implemented in Cairo University. This reflect lack of coordination among relevant parties and might indicate some sense of competition that prevent these entities from learning from each other. Also, the role of the unit established at Ain Shams and Assuit universities is not clear from the secondary and primary research.

- **Services**

- **Hotline**

One of the main services provided by the Ombudsman office is a hotline through which women should call whenever subjected to any act of discrimination particularly violence. A huge weaknesses of this hotline service is that operates only during official working hours. This means that many survivors would stay for hours and days to be

able to reach the office's support and in some incidents such as rape, the evidence would be lost by that time, in case she would like to legally file a complaint.

○ **Legal Support**

The data highlighted that the Ombudsman office provides its services free of charge. However, there are a number of problems with the office's response to complaints on violence against women. First of all, the capacity of the staff including the lawyers need to be enhanced to be able to deal effectively with the cases of VAW. Sometimes the lawyers deal with the woman as a pure legal case ignoring other important aspects that they need to take into consideration when dealing with such sensitive cases.

Legal support is also provided by the shelter under MoSS, apart from hosting the females, as per the data collected. Although, it has been mentioned in the data collected that there is usual coordination between the Ombudsman Office and the MoSS shelters, the data does not highlight the differences between the consultations provided by the Ombudsman Office and the shelters.

○ **Shelters**

The data confirms that there are eight shelters only across Egypt and no clear plan to establish new shelters, which contradicts what is mentioned in the national strategy to combat violence against women. All shelters work 24/7 and coordinate with other governmental entities to solve the cases received and help the survivors have a normal life as soon as possible. However, the MoSS is currently working on renovating the

shelters to provide a healthy environment for the survivors meeting the quality standards established. In addition, the data highlights that the bylaw governing these shelters need to be reviewed and updated. It is already on the ministry's agenda to update the bylaw. The fact that survivors have to pay for their stay need to be considered. There should be a clear mechanism implemented to clarify the way through which the fees is determined because some of the survivors would not be able to afford it even if the amount is low.

The most dangerous data highlighted, concerning the way the shelters work, is the fact that the staff at the shelters seek reconciliation as the number one solution to deal with the cases received. Believing that breaking up the family is not preferable, in most of the cases, they solve the case in a way that the survivor would reunite with her family or husband even if they are the source of violence that she is exposed to. Although none of the actions is taken without the survivor's consent and the staff follow up on the cases after they leave the shelter, there is no guarantee that this survivor will not be subjected to violence again by the same member. On the contrary, I believe that there is a chance that she is exposed to more violent acts and this time the perpetrator will make sure that she does not have access to any of the support services including the shelters.

○ **Awareness Raising Activities**

Different on ground activities are conducted by the Ombudsman office under the NCW and by the MoSS in different governorates engaging both men and women to raise their awareness of the issue and on the services provided by the office. However,

no clear coordination mechanism is highlighted between the two entities to effectively implement these activities.

- **Forensic Clinic**

One of the main services that have been recently available is a 24/7 forensic clinic in Cairo specialized in dealing with female survivors of violence. In this special clinic women can have a better treatment away from other criminal cases, when it comes to forensic investigations.

- **Other Services**

Concerning the medical support and services provided to female survivors based on the medical protocol discussed earlier, data indicated that training practitioners is still in progress and that practitioners at the public hospitals are the main target. The fact that the trainings still did not cover practitioners at all public hospital put many female survivors at risk of not being properly treated. It is also worth highlighting that private hospitals are not part of the current plan. Data showed that the trainings will be targeting practitioners at the public hospitals only. However, the trainings conducted so far were very well received by the participants and showed that they are interested in the issue and highly willing to contribute to addressing such a problem.

Moreover, data confirmed that the role of the special units under the MoI is not clear including the kind of services that it should provide to female survivors of violence. It also confirmed that the new departments announced under the MoJ turned out to be just an announcement that is still not implemented.

Additionally, sometimes the police officers who deal with survivors of violence are not gender sensitized, despite the trainings conducted so far with a number of officers. Apart from the importance of having a staff that respect women and understand the issue of violence practiced against women with all its aspects, it is important to highlight that the main role of the police to ensure the safety and security of all citizens. As mentioned earlier, when a female report the case in the police station, the next day the harasser's family reached her home to convince her and her family members to reconcile. This raises an important point regarding the confidentiality of the personal information of the female. The harasser's family probably got the female's address from the report she filed, which highlight the gap in ensuring the female's safety and the need for proper mechanism so that this kind of information is not shared by the police.

- **Challenges and Shortcomings**

- The main hotline service available for female survivors by the Ombudsman Office operates only during official working hours and days.
- Reconciliation being one of the main methods used in the shelters is between the female and her husband or family member despite being the main source of violence.
- Not all services are free of charge. For instance, the female survivors have to pay for their stay in the shelters and the amount is decided per case.
- Limited financial resources is one of the challenges that faces a number of entities including the shelters and the Regional Center for Training.
- Lack of effective coordination between the involved entities.

- **Effectiveness and Responsiveness of Policies and Services**

As mentioned earlier, effectiveness revolves around the progress of an entity or a policy to achieve what it planned to achieve to reach its goals while responsiveness reflects on the extent to which the policy or service managed to meet the needs of the target group while at the same time prevent the issue at hand from happening in the future.

Given the discussion presented above and the challenges highlighted, one would argue that generally there are remarkable gaps in the implemented policies and services addressing violence against women in Egypt that negatively affects their effectiveness and responsiveness. The studied policies and services showed that there are various drawbacks in the available policies and services, as highlighted in the challenges, which confirm that the way the Egyptian state addresses violence against women does not meet the needs of the female survivors in an effective and efficient way. For instance, the fact that the main hotline service available to female survivors of violence does not operate 24/7 indicates a huge drawback in terms of the responsiveness of the service. Not only the needs of the female survivors are not met because of this drawback, but also their lives are put at risk since they can get timely support when needed, which is crucial given the sensitivity of the issue. Furthermore, the bylaw governing the shelters under MoSS adds some challenges to some survivors since they will have to pay for their stay in the shelter and in some cases their young sons will not be able to join them.

Additionally, the lack of coordination among the involved entities and the limited financial resources affect the effectiveness of the state's response to eliminate violence against women. For example, as presented in the discussion, there is an overlap between some of the

efforts exerted by the Ombudsman Office and the shelters under the Ministry of Social Solidarity. In other words, both entities provide legal support to female survivors of violence and conduct awareness raising activities on the topic across the governorates, yet the coordination mechanism to provide that service is not indicated, highlighting an ineffective and inefficient way in managing efforts and resources. Moreover, the role of secondary actors is crucial to ensure prevention of violence in the first place and enhance effectiveness of the Egyptian state's response to ending violence against women. However, data shows that still a lot of work needs to be done by secondary actors such as the Ministry of Education to make sure that they contribute effectively to eliminating the problem.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Recommendations

Violence against women is one of the forms of gender based discrimination that deprives women from their right to live freely and participate equally in the society. This research focused on exploring the topic of violence against women in Egypt through studying the state's response to the problem in terms of policies and services to the female survivors of violence.

The first chapter of this thesis introduced the topic and highlighted the main problem statement together with the research question that the study aims at addressing. Women around the world have been subjected to different forms of violence. One in every three women have experienced at least one form of violence in her life (UN Women, 2016). In Egypt, women and girls experience direct and indirect forms of violence against women. Since women should enjoy their basic human right to live a life that is free from any form of violence, different actors have been working in Egypt to address that problem. Nonetheless, the research focused on the state response only as it is committed by the constitution to eliminate all forms of violence against women.

This topic is of high policy relevance and should be prioritized on the state's agenda as it is linked to the state policies and services that address women's rights to enjoy a life free from any form of violence. It is also important to highlight that addressing a sensitive issue such as violence against women, will enhance the country's economic status. Therefore, this research tried to explore the state's response to the issue of violence against women in Egypt and highlight some areas of improvements to ensure better responsiveness and effectiveness.

Concerning the second chapter it mentioned the main conceptual framework and discussed the methodology used throughout the research. This study did not follow a previously designed conceptual framework. The researcher identified the main concepts and angles of the

issue to make sure that scope and the framework of the study is well understood before collecting the data. Moreover, the qualitative approach was used throughout the research process. Prior to the data collection, IRB approval was granted and the researcher made sure that the participants are well informed about the research and that their participation is on voluntary basis. Also, it is important to highlight that the research mentioned the names of the officials who expressed their willingness to disclose their names only. Other participants are kept anonymous as per the agreement with the researcher. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with experts in the field of violence against women in Egypt. The interviewees included officials from the National Council for Women, Ministry of Social Solidarity, and Egyptian Center for Women's Rights among others. Although the research focused on the state's response only, the researcher made sure to interview experts from international entities who work with the government to better triangulate the data and obtain a comprehensive view of the topic. The main purpose behind the interviews was to understand the policies and services through which the different state entities address violence against women. Once data was collected, open coding was used for analysis. Consequently, information was categorized into different themes addressing the research questions to better come up with the findings and the recommendations for the study.

The third chapter presented the relevant literature reviewed. Consequently, the literature reviewed were categorized into main sub-sections including violence against women as a global and health issue; forms of violence against women; factors contributing to the prevalence of VAW; preventive measures; actors involved; overview on the state response in different countries and overview on the state's response in Egypt. Although the literature review explored the scholars' arguments on various angles related to the topic, it highlighted the gap in the available literature exploring the state's response to VAW in Egypt.

Based on the gap highlighted in the literature, the researcher conducted additional secondary research to learn more about the current policies and services on the topic. However, none of the sources used for the additional secondary research were academic or scholarly articles. Following this research, the next chapter (chapter four) presented an overview on the legal framework on VAW and the policies and services provided by the state in Egypt. This chapter outlined the main services provided by the Ombudsman Office under the National Council for Women and the Ministry of Social Solidarity. It also reflected on some of the announcements made by the Ministry of Interior and The Ministry of Justice in their efforts to address VAW. In addition, this chapter presented the main national efforts exerted by different ministries to eliminate VAW based on the information mentioned in the National Strategy on the topic.

Following the secondary research and the primary data collected, the information gathered from the interviewees were analyzed and presented in chapter five. This chapter started with presenting the data collected on the violence against women in Egypt including its definition, forms and reasons behind the problem. Then, it discussed the data collected on the legal aspect of VAW based on the current constitution and articles. In addition, it reflected on the different policies and services offered by the state in Egypt. Therefore, efforts by the following entities were reflected upon and discussed: the Ombudsman Office under the National Council for Women; the shelters under the Ministry of Social Solidarity; Cairo University's Anti-Harassment Unit; the Regional Center for Training in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Population and the criminal justice system. Also, this section included the efforts by three international agencies (UN Women, UNFPA and UNODC) in contribution to supporting the state to address VAW. An important part of this chapter is the policy recommendations presented at the end

based on the main findings of the research. These policy recommendations revolved around two main pillars which are protection and prevention of violence against women in Egypt.

Overall, one could conclude that violence against women is an issue that the state and its various entities have agreed on addressing based on the constitution and the various policies explored and discussed. However, proper coordination and resource mobilization are essential to ensure that the different efforts are well directed in an efficient and effective way that would help in creating an enabling private and public environment for Egyptian women to be able to live freely and contribute equally to the development of the society.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the information presented, lack of coordination and limited resources are two of the main findings of the research. Therefore, it is recommended that the **National Council for Women** establish a **taskforce** including focal points from all the different entities working on addressing VAW to ensure proper representation and participation. It is important that the taskforce/committee resource efficiency and proper evaluation are well considered in all the decisions taken. It will also help emphasize proper performance management through monitoring and evaluating. The taskforce will be responsible for coordinating the efforts and make sure that resources are spent efficiently through proper management of activities instead of having scattered efforts by different agencies. The main role of this taskforce will revolve around the following:

- Review and endorse the new five year action plan being developed with the support of UNFPA. Also, the taskforce needs to make sure that an estimate budget is assigned and available for each item to make sure that all the activities are covered financially.

- Convene regular meetings with all focal points from all designated governmental entities as well as representatives from NGOs and international agencies working on VAW to share any updates and discuss challenges faced on the ground to ensure timely implementation of activities achieving the aimed outcomes.
- Monitor and evaluation activities and actions on regular basis.
- Following up on the draft of the comprehensive VAW law developed and make sure that it does not include any legislative or procedural gaps that would complicate the process or discourage women from taking a legal action. The draft of the law should also include forms of violence that are not properly addressed in the current law specifically domestic violence and forced marriage.

The abovementioned actions will ensure proper planning and implementation of policies and services. However, currently some of the state entities involved in the issue should take note of the below and try to implement the below actions even before the establishment of the special taskforce suggested. The recommendations below tackles two pillars related to VAW; protection and prevention. Although the concepts of the two pillars can easily overlap, protection is more generic and prevention is more directed to the vulnerable group.

Protection

The below recommendations are suggested to ensure better responsiveness and effectiveness of the available policies and services to address violence against women in Egypt.

- **Improvements to the Hotline Service under the Ombudsman Office:**

Given that the hotline under the Ombudsman Office currently does not operate 24/7, and taking note of the special mobile numbers assigned by the MoI and MoSS to provide support to female survivors of violence the below recommendations are highlighted.

- Resources spent on the different lines mentioned above (the special lines under MoI and the hotline under the Ombudsman Office) should be saved and redirected to the hotline service under the ombudsman office. Having a centralized hotline service will ensure proper operation and effective monitoring of the cases received.
- Once the hotline 24/7 service is in place, an on ground communication campaign should take place informing women of different backgrounds of the service and the support that could be provided.

- **Establishment of Specialized Comprehensive Units**

To overcome the long legal procedures and the obstacles in the reporting system mentioned earlier, it is recommended to develop special comprehensive units that have staff from the different first line respondents including MOI, MoJ, forensic medicine, prosecution as well as the social workers, lawyers and psychologists to provide the survivors with the support needed in one place. As a start, one of these units should be established in each governorate operating around the clock to make sure that women have a place to go whenever she is subjected to any form of violence. The establishment of these units should be led by the National Council for Women.

- **Supporting the Shelters under the Ministry of Social Solidarity**

Apart from building the capacity of the staff members, as mentioned previously, the MoSS should work on educating the managerial levels of the associations handling the shelters to be able to mobilize resources to ensure better services in the shelters. Also, public private partnerships should be encouraged between the private sector and the associations.

The partnership could take various directions. It can revolve around providing employment opportunities for females who seek a stable income and career or it can be designed in a way that the private sector companies provide some of the necessities need for the operations of the shelters such as food and beverages.

- **Clarifying the Mandates for Specialized Units for Combating VAW under the Ministry of Interior**

Based on the data collected, the ministry should work on setting a clear mandate for the anti-harassment units that were established. The Ministry should also work on highlighting the role and responsibilities of the officers working under these units and the exact service that they offer to the female survivors. the mandate designed should not only focus on addressing the incidents of VAW, it should also ensure the female's safety and security even after she reports the case to the police and take the necessary actions.

- **Establishment of Specialized Courts/Departments for VAW Cases under the Ministry of Justice**

Based on the data presented earlier, the MoJ should enforce the announcement made earlier and implement special courts or departments to handle the cases on VAW. These courts/departments will prevent women from seeking the same route taken by other criminal cases by providing a better environment that would support women gain their rights and encourage them to report.

- **Better Coordination between Public Universities**

The establishment of anti-harassment units and policies in universities should be better coordinated and implemented. Based on the data collected, it is suggested to include the establishment of these units as part of the laws guiding the organization and the structure of the Egyptian universities. In that way, the units will be more stable as they will part of the universities' structure and services provided will be of equal quality across the different universities.

- **Cooperation between the Ministry of Higher Education, NPC and Ministry of Health and Population**

- **Medical Protocol/ Manual**

The Ministry of Higher Education should cooperate with the MoHP to assign the manual on how to deal with female survivors of violence as part of the curriculum of the faculties of medicine and nursing across Egypt. This will ensure that all the future graduates are aware of the topic and know how to properly deal with survivors regardless of the place that they are working in.

- **House of Reform: Training Personnel at Different Entities**

It is important to consider that based on the information collected many of the staff who receive the female survivors at different sectors need to be well trained on how to deal with and treat the survivors. Although there are some efforts exerted to train different sectors on how to deal with cases of violence against women, personnel is one of the main houses of

reforms that needs to be capacitated across the various sectors to ensure proper management of cases and better delivery of services provided. It also important to conduct joint workshops between these different employees so that they can have a full picture about the role of each entity and realize how their work fit into the bigger picture. Among the staff that needs massive trainings on a national level are the following:

- Social Workers at the shelters (MoSS)
- Police Staff (MoI)
- Judges (MoJ)
- Prosecutors
- Medical practitioners
- Ombudsman Office lawyers and employees

Prevention

Prevention is another main pillar that needs to be well studied and considered by policy makers when it comes to addressing violence against women since it is a multidimensional issue that is linked to different societal issues. Therefore, the below recommendations are suggested as part of working on preventing the occurrence of violence against women incidents in the first place.

- **Updating Schools Bylaws and Educational Curriculum- Ministry of Education**

As part of contributing to eliminating violence against women the MoE should work on the following aspects:

- **Schools Bylaws**

Since violence is being the norm in our society, as per the data collected, new bylaws should be developed and implemented in all schools to create a culture that promotes

“zero tolerance” to any form of violence practiced in the schools. In other words, teachers and staff should not use any violent methods when treating students. Also, students who treat others with any form of violence should be properly punished. The bylaws should also include extreme actions taken against the teachers, principals or any perpetrator who harass students within the school. Consequently, students will be raised on respecting each other and on understanding that violence should not be accepted. Therefore, male students would end up in becoming advocates for women’s rights to live a life free from any form of violence and female students would learn to speak up whenever they are subjected to violence in their public or private lives.

- **Educational Curriculum and Activities**

The educational curricula should be thoroughly revised to ensure that human rights principles are properly reflected. In other words, stereotypical gender roles should be removed and proper gender roles should be reflected as a way of enhancing principles of tolerance and accepting the other among the future generations, which would definitely positively address violence against women. Even the school activities should give the freedom to girls to choose what they play or learn, instead of limiting them to certain activities such as the cooking classes.

- **Strengthen the Role of Media and Communication**

Based on the data collected, the Egyptian media play an important role in shaping the Egyptian mindsets through the different programs and series aired. Therefore, there should be a media

policy that is well designed and implemented to ensure the proper portrayal of women in the different programs and series with a special focus on violence against women. It is worth noting that there is no clear indication on the state agency that is responsible of supervising the media content, yet it is a topic that needs further analysis.

Furthermore, once effective and responsive policies and services are in place, strong communication campaigns should be executed. These campaigns should include on ground campaigns as well as television and radio public service announcements that raise the Egyptian woman's awareness about the policies and services offered for her so she know the necessary steps that she should take once subjected to any of the direct forms of violence to be able to successfully gain her rights.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings of this study it would interesting if future studies could address the following topics:

- The impact of the current policies and services on the female survivors of violence in Egypt
- A detailed analysis of the shelters in Egypt
- The role of education and media in shaping the mindsets of the future generations and its impact on violence against women
- The problem on unsustainable funds for development programs addressing violence against women

Annex I

CASE #2016-2017-095

 THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

To: Maha Rateb
Cc: Mariez Wasfi
From: Atta Gebril, Chair of the IRB
Date: March 19 , 2017
Re: Approval of study

This is to inform you that I reviewed your revised research proposal entitled "Violence Against Women in Egypt: Policies and Services" and determined that it required consultation with the IRB under the "expedited" heading. As you are aware, the members of the IRB suggested certain revisions to the original proposal, but your new version addresses these concerns successfully. The revised proposal used appropriate procedures to minimize risks to human subjects and that adequate provision was made for confidentiality and data anonymity of participants in any published record. I believe you will also make adequate provision for obtaining informed consent of the participants.

This approval letter was issued under the assumption that you have not started data collection for your research project. Any data collected before receiving this letter could not be used since this is a violation of the IRB policy.

Please note that IRB approval does not automatically ensure approval by CAPMAS, an Egyptian government agency responsible for approving some types of off-campus research. CAPMAS issues are handled at AUC by the office of the University Counsellor, Dr. Amr Salama. The IRB is not in a position to offer any opinion on CAPMAS issues, and takes no responsibility for obtaining CAPMAS approval.

This approval is valid for only one year. In case you have not finished data collection within a year, you need to apply for an extension.

Thank you and good luck.



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Annex II

Interview Questions:

- How do you define violence against women in Egypt and what are its different forms?
- What are the reasons behind the prevalence of violence against women in Egypt?
- How does violence against women affect the survivors, their families and the society at large?
- What do you think of the legal aspect of the issue?
- What are the current policies to address VAW in Egypt?
- How does your entity address VAW?
- What are the services that your entity provide to female survivors of violence?
And how do these services impact the lives of the female survivors of violence?
- What are the main challenges that your entity face to address VAW?
- What are the main areas of improvements that you think your entity should consider to better address the problem?
- Does your entity collaborate with other partners to address the issue? Elaborate on the partnership/collaboration based on your experience
- How do you assess the donor relations and their interest in such an issue?

Annex III

List of Interviews

- **Eng. Hanaa Refaat**; General Manager, NCW President's Office and Secretary General's Office
- **Dr. Maha Al Said**; Head of Anti-Harassment Unit, Cairo University
- **Dr. Safaa El Baz**; Director of Regional Training Center for Family Planning and Reproductive Health
- **Ms. Nehad Aboul Komsan**; Lawyer and Head of the Egyptian Center for Women's Rights (ECWR)
- **Dr. Azza Kamel**; Writer and Head of Appropriate Communication Techniques (ACT)
- **Ms. Germaine Haddad**; UNFPA Assistant Country Representative
- Three officials at the Ministry of Social Solidarity
- An Official at the Ombudsman Office-NCW
- An official at UN Women
- An official at UNODC

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