

The Labour Market for Youth in Egypt: Evidence from the 2012 School to Work Transition Survey

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Executive Summary

This study presents an analysis of data from the ILO–Mastercard Foundation Work4Youth School to Work Transition Survey (SWTS) fielded in Egypt in November and December 2012. The study was commissioned by Silatech with the intention of identifying issues from the SWTS data set that would be of relevance to policymaking relating to youth employment, and making suggestions for future empirical work.

The study begins with an overview of the educational attainment and economic activity of Egyptian youth, disaggregated by sex and age group. The following sections offer, for each level of educational attainment, a more detailed analysis of economic activity. The disaggregations are undertaken for males and females separately and, where appropriate, age group. They cover:

For those in employment

- Employment status (contractual employment with pension, contractual employment without pension, non-contractual employment, employer, own account worker, and unpaid family worker), occupation, and size of establishment;
- Pay;
- Full-time or part-time work;
- Subjective assessment of qualification for the job, job satisfaction, and whether actively seeking alternative employment;
- Time to current job.

For the unemployed

- Desired type of employment;
- Length of job search;

For the inactive

- Reason for inactivity.

The SWTS data show that virtually all out-of-school male youths are economically active (98 percent of those aged 25-29) with a low youth unemployment rate by international standards (5.6 percent under the strict ILO definition, 6.4 percent under the relaxed one). By contrast, only 58 percent of female youths are economically active and only 31 percent are employed. Twenty seven percent are unemployed, 16 percent under the strict definition, and a further 11 percent under the relaxed one. In contrast to males, the level of education and marital status are important for the determination of the economic activity of females. The higher the level of educational attainment, the higher are the rates of economic activity, employment, and unemployment. Married females are much more likely to be economically inactive than single females, for all levels of education.

Underemployment, in the sense of working part-time and wanting more hours, does not seem to be a significant issue for Egyptian youth. But the large numbers of well-educated youth, university graduates in particular, working in non-contractual employment might be interpreted as evidence that many are underemployed in the sense of their jobs not making adequate use of their skills.

These findings are already well known. The Egyptian labour market has been the subject of a vigorous flow of empirical studies for many years. In particular, the latest round of the Egypt Labor Market Panel Study (ELMPS), whose architecture has much in common with that of the SWTS, was fielded only a few months before the SWTS and, unsurprisingly, but perhaps reassuringly, the findings from the two studies do not differ. Adventitious validation of the design and

implementation of the SWTS in a country as well-researched as Egypt would have been a positive outcome if the original intention to undertake a regional synthesis had been undertaken.

Although this study was not commissioned as a critique of the SWTS, it does seem relevant to step back and consider whether the contours of the knowledge that can be derived from household surveys such as the SWTS and the ELMPS are sharp enough to provide the depth of understanding required for policymaking relating to employment. The answer is that, for at least two sets of issues important in Egypt and elsewhere, the standard household survey approach is inadequate or, at least, insufficient. It needs to be complemented by intensive studies that can illuminate issues more sensitively at the level of the individual.

One such set of issues concerns the determinants of the low employment rate of females. Hypotheses are not lacking. Some stress supply-side factors: the unwillingness of females to accept employment that does not assure their reputational safety, their unwillingness to accept employment that conflicts with their household responsibilities, and the unwillingness of some males to allow their wives to work at all. Others draw attention to demand-side factors: employers' perception of females expecting shorter hours and exhibiting higher rates of turnover and absenteeism, and the costs imposed on employers by compliance with legislation intended to benefit women with children. Still others stress custom: the influence of traditional stereotypes may cause certain occupations to be closed to females with no objective justification.

It is reasonable to suppose that all of these sets of factors potentially may be influential, that their impact may vary systematically with level of education, that they may differ in urban and rural locations, and that they may vary asystematically in apparently similar contexts. It is not to be expected that standard survey methods of the kind used by the STWS and ELMPS could inform an understanding of these issues sufficiently nuanced to provide an authoritative guide for policymakers. A very different approach is needed. A more promising tool would be the rich-context interview used by disciplines such as sociology and social anthropology.

A second set of issues that needs closer investigation relates to underemployment. Underemployment in the sense of working part-time and wanting a greater number of hours can be quantified relatively uncontentiously. This does not seem to be a serious problem for Egyptian youth. Underemployment in the sense of jobs not making adequate use of the ability and skills of those employed is another matter. A finding that many university graduates in Egypt are working in "informal" employment would suggest that disguised unemployment is a significant problem, to be added to open unemployment as an issue for policymakers. However, the quality of employment forms a multidimensional continuum and the crude classifications used for statistical analysis can lead to misleading conclusions.

Further, there is the problem, particularly acute in Egypt, that credentials are no guarantee of the possession of skills of value in employment. In particular, given the very low quality of much university education in Egypt, it is likely that many university graduates are no more productive than their peers who entered the labour force after completing secondary education. Indeed, the loss of several years of work experience might even put some at a disadvantage.

1 Introduction

In May, 2011, the Work4Youth project was established as a partnership between the ILO Employment Policy Department and the MasterCard Foundation Youth Learning Program, with a USD14.6 million budget provided by the latter and a five-year time horizon. The objective of the project is to improve understanding of issues relating to youth employment at the national, regional, and global levels by conducting nationally-representative sample School to Work Transition Surveys (SWTS) of young persons aged 15–29 in 28 target low and middle-income countries. They are primarily intended to raise data on the personal characteristics and economic activity of the respondents after the completion of formal schooling. The items in the survey instrument relate to the respondents' desire, or lack of desire, for employment in general and types of employment in particular, the measures the respondents have taken to seek employment, their success in obtaining employment, and the quality of employment when obtained. As background, the survey instrument captures personal data including sex, age, educational attainment, and urban or rural location. In some countries, the surveys of young people have been complemented by surveys of their potential employers.

A key feature of the project is the use of a common template for the survey instrument. As anticipated, the template has been modified in individual member countries to ensure that the survey instrument is adapted to the national context, but there is sufficient communality between the national versions to provide a basis for comparisons. The administration of the survey, and the drafting of survey reports, has been left to member countries, but the involvement of a key ILO staff member as designer of the survey template, coordinator of the execution of the surveys, contributor to the survey reports, and editor, has promoted comparability as well as quality control. The project has built on experience acquired with a number of pioneering individual-country surveys undertaken previously by the ILO.

The SWTS have generated a treasure trove of data whose analysis will inform the objectives and priorities of policymakers and will facilitate the formulation of evidence-based policies. The present study is intended as the precursor to a synthesis of SWTS findings for four countries in the Middle East and North Africa region: Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Territories, and Tunisia. As such, it has objectives that are more limited than those of Barsoum, Ramadan, and Mostafa (2014). This provides a comprehensive analysis of the Egyptian SWTS data set and gives details of the methodology.

2 Overview

2.1 The Egypt SWTS 2012

The Egypt SWTS was fielded by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), the Egyptian national statistics authority, in November and December of 2012. Coincidentally, a follow-up round of the Egypt Labor Market Panel Survey (ELMPS) was fielded a few months earlier in the same year, also by CAPMAS, and it is instructive to compare the findings of the two surveys.

The Egypt SWTS sample consisted of 5,198 respondents aged 15–29, 3,132 male and 2,066 female. The difference in the number of males and females is difficult to understand, given the representative nature of the household survey. The weighted populations, 12,240,000 males and 11,696,000 females, are more balanced but, curiously, the balance is achieved by a strong tendency to assign higher weights to females than to males, the average male and female weights being 3,908 and 5,661, respectively. Such a difference is anomalous since sampling weights are determined by geographical values related to clustering and they have nothing to do with sex.

| | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 15–19 | 31.1 | 38.2 | 34.6 |
| 20–24 | 36.4 | 40.7 | 38.5 |
| 25–29 | 32.5 | 21.1 | 27.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 12,240 | 11,696 | 23,936 |
| Respondents | 3,132 | 2,066 | 5,198 |

Note: *n* is the size of the Egyptian subpopulation represented by the respondents in the column, taking account of the sampling weights. The number of respondents is supplied so that a check may be made on cell sizes.

The figures give rise to a further concern. Assaad and Krafft (2013b) and Krafft and Assaad (2014), in their analysis of the data from the 2012 round of the ELMPS, find that a decline in fertility had caused the 15–19 and 20–24 age groups to be numerically smaller than the 25–29 age group in 2012. The distributions in Table 1.1 are not consistent with their findings.

As a pragmatic matter, these sampling concerns will be put aside in the analysis that follows and the data will be taken at face value. It is unlikely that the anomalies have a significant effect on the conclusions. Throughout, the tables use the sampling weights to present disaggregations of the relevant subpopulation in terms of percentages. Inevitably, in some of the more detailed analysis, disaggregation leads to small cell sizes. For this reason, each table contains details of the number of SWTS respondents, in addition to the size of the subpopulation represented. This should allow an assessment of robustness that is more accessible than the provision of standard errors. Where the underlying number of respondents is under 10, the column has been tinted. Where it is under five, it has been blanked out altogether.

It has been taken for granted that all labour market analysis should be disaggregated simultaneously by sex, education, and age. If this were not self-evident, it is confirmed by the findings discussed below. It is particularly helpful that the SWTS defines youth as including the 25–29 age group, which is elsewhere usually treated as adult. This is invaluable in the case of

university graduates since few have much time since graduation by the age of 24. The inclusion of the 24–29 age group is also useful for those with less than tertiary education, since it provides a view of their trajectory a few years into the labour force. Perhaps future SWT surveys might include the 30–34 age group as well, partly to act as adult controls for comparison, but also to allow the trajectories to be traced a little further.

Table 1.2 presents educational attainment by sex and age. The Egyptian educational system starts with a compulsory component of nine years known as basic education: six years of primary school, perhaps preceded by kindergarten, followed by three years of lower secondary, called preparatory. Upper secondary education is divided into secondary general and secondary technical (also known as secondary vocational) streams. The former allows access to tertiary education, while the latter is intended to be terminal. The educational attainment of youth is generally much greater than that of the older population. About 30 percent have tertiary education, most of it received in universities, and another 40 percent have completed secondary education. Fewer than 25 percent have failed to complete basic education.

| | Male | | | Female | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| Illiterate | 6.5 | 5.7 | 7.5 | 5.2 | 8.7 | 14.7 |
| Read and write | 4.8 | 4.5 | 7.6 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 4.4 |
| Primary | 10.8 | 8.9 | 8.4 | 7.3 | 6.2 | 5.6 |
| Preparatory | 5.2 | 7.6 | 5.3 | 7.4 | 7.1 | 6.0 |
| Secondary technical | 11.9 | 36.6 | 40.7 | 11.8 | 33.5 | 31.0 |
| Secondary general | 0.2 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 0.3 | 1.9 | 2.2 |
| Tertiary non-university | 0.1 | 3.9 | 4.9 | 0.0 | 4.7 | 4.8 |
| University | 0.0 | 13.6 | 21.4 | 0.0 | 17.2 | 29.3 |
| Still enrolled | 60.4 | 17.1 | 1.4 | 65.2 | 17.8 | 2.1 |
| <i>Primary or preparatory</i> | <i>5.8</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>7.5</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>0.0</i> |
| <i>Secondary training</i> | <i>2.1</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>0.5</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>0.0</i> |
| <i>Secondary technical</i> | <i>25.7</i> | <i>1.0</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>23.8</i> | <i>0.5</i> | <i>0.0</i> |
| <i>Secondary general</i> | <i>14.9</i> | <i>0.4</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>18.9</i> | <i>0.2</i> | <i>0.0</i> |
| <i>Tertiary non-university</i> | <i>1.8</i> | <i>0.7</i> | <i>0.1</i> | <i>1.8</i> | <i>0.8</i> | <i>0.7</i> |
| <i>University</i> | <i>10.2</i> | <i>15.0</i> | <i>1.1</i> | <i>12.6</i> | <i>15.1</i> | <i>1.0</i> |
| <i>Postgraduate</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>0.2</i> | <i>0.0</i> | <i>1.2</i> | <i>0.4</i> |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 3,806 | 4,458 | 3,976 | 4,465 | 4,755 | 2,476 |
| Respondents | 972 | 1,142 | 1,018 | 792 | 834 | 440 |

2.2 Economic activity

Table 1.3 presents economic activity by sex and age group. Before discussing its contents, it is appropriate to raise some issues relating to employment and unemployment that are recurring themes throughout the present analysis.

| | Male | | | Female | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 49.1 | 70.4 | 91.6 | 11.9 | 20.5 | 30.7 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 0.0 | 3.8 | 12.0 | 0.4 | 3.7 | 8.6 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 0.1 | 4.1 | 9.9 | 0.0 | 3.1 | 6.7 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 32.9 | 45.2 | 50.7 | 6.2 | 7.7 | 7.3 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 0.3 | 1.4 | 4.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.1 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 1.9 | 5.6 | 8.0 | 0.0 | 0.9 | 0.2 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 13.3 | 10.2 | 6.6 | 5.4 | 5.2 | 6.8 |
| Unemployed - strict | 2.1 | 7.2 | 5.5 | 3.7 | 17.3 | 15.3 |
| Available, not seeking | 2.0 | 2.3 | 0.8 | 5.3 | 10.9 | 11.2 |
| Inactive student | 45.6 | 13.1 | 0.7 | 61.3 | 16.0 | 1.9 |
| Inactive non-student | 1.2 | 7.2 | 1.4 | 17.8 | 35.3 | 40.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 3,806 | 4,458 | 3,976 | 4,465 | 4,755 | 2,476 |
| Respondents | 972 | 1,142 | 1,018 | 792 | 834 | 440 |

2.3 Categorizing employment

Conventionally, those in employment may be disaggregated into four subcategories: employees, employers, own account workers, and unpaid family workers. However, in all countries, the quality of employment is an important consideration. SWTS respondents were asked whether they had contracts and this permits a disaggregation of the employee category into contractual employment and non-contractual employment. It would have been helpful if they had been asked whether the contracts were written or verbal, but the Egyptian SWTS was among the first of the surveys and this refinement had not yet been added to the standard SWTS instrument. It is tempting to use the term “formal” or “regular” to describe contractual employment, and “informal” or “irregular” to describe non-contractual employment, but one should be wary of making such a simple distinction. The difference between verbal contractual employment, and non-contractual employment is not well-defined and could vary among respondents according to their subjective interpretation of the question.

Given that most Egyptian youth, especially females, express a preference, often a strong one, for working in the public sector, one would wish to subdivide contractual employment into such employment in the public and private sectors. Unfortunately, the Egypt SWTS data set does not actually reveal whether those in employment are employed in the public sector. Those who were unemployed and seeking work were asked where they wished to work if they found a job, with the public sector being listed explicitly (and always being the dominant choice). Likewise those still in education were asked the same question (with similar results). But there is no parallel question for those in employment. The inclusion of such a question was a refinement made to the standard

SWTS instrument after the fielding of the Egyptian survey. Instead, the contractual category in the present analysis has been disaggregated into those whose contracts included pension provision and the remainder. The former category should act as a proxy for employment in the public sector and, possibly, high grade private sector employment.

It would also have been desirable to subdivide those without contracts into better quality regular employment and poorer quality or irregular employment on the lines of Assaad and Krafft (2013a). However, it is very difficult to design a survey instrument that allows the identification of a fissure between good quality informal sector employment and irregular employment. The very heterogeneity of employment in informal labour markets makes such a distinction hazardous, except on an arbitrary basis.

For example, an attempt to use part-time work as a means of identifying poor quality employment fails when it is found that most part-time workers in the Egypt SWTS reported that they would not wish to work additional hours. Those who do are matched in their numbers by full-time workers who also seek extra hours. Equally, a self-reported assessment of being overqualified for the current job is too subjective to serve as a criterion of underemployment. Many university graduates in non-professional jobs describe themselves as overqualified, but the reality is that in Egypt, as in other countries with mass provision of university education, professional employment is not a realistic aspiration for many graduates, especially those who have studied less technical disciplines such as commerce (very popular in Egypt) and those from the more marginal institutions. There is also a potential problem that subjective and objective assessments of over-qualification or under-qualification may diverge dramatically (see Box 1.1).

Likewise, dissatisfaction with the current job—SWTS respondents were asked whether they were very or somewhat satisfied or dissatisfied—is no basis. Respondents may be dissatisfied, not because there is anything the matter with their present job, but because they would prefer to be working in contractual, rather than non-contractual, employment. Or because they feel that they are ready for a job with greater responsibility and higher status. Or because there is little scope for career development, as must be the case in much non-contractual employment, given the small size of most establishments.

Similarly, expression of a wish to change jobs, also asked of SWTS respondents, is not a reliable indicator. Many respondents in contractual employment express such a wish, as do many of those in non-contractual employment who state that they are satisfied with their jobs. Similarly also with actively looking for a new job, for the same reasons.

Thus the high rate of transition between informal employment and irregular employment found by Assaad and Krafft (2013a), using successive waves of the ELMPS, may have as much to do with the difficulty of categorizing individuals as to substantive changes in economic activity. In particular, it is very easy to conclude that construction workers are in irregular employment, given that the construction sector depends on its labour force exhibiting high rates of internal mobility. Repeated limited spells of employment is not pathological. That is how the construction industry works, in Egypt as elsewhere, as Assaad himself has observed (Assaad, 1991).

Box 1.1 Subjective and objective assessments of over-qualification and under-qualification

Subjective and objective assessments of over-qualification and under-qualification may lead to very different conclusions. Respondents in employment were asked the question “Do you feel your education/training qualifications are relevant in performing your present job?” In the present analysis, the respondents’ replies have been taken at face value. Overall, 61.5 percent felt appropriately qualified, 35.2 percent overqualified, 1.1 percent underqualified, and the remaining 12.2 percent thought that the question was not applicable.

However, Barsoum, Ramadan, and Mostafa (2014) present a very different picture. They report that 52.3 percent were appropriately qualified, 8.8 percent overqualified, and 38.9 percent underqualified.

The reason for the divergence is that Barsoum, Ramadan, and Mostafa base their assessment on the respondent’s occupation, and they link this to an official ILO occupation-education correspondence. Thus, for example, technicians are deemed to require university education. In the Egypt SWTS sample, 77.8 percent of technicians have less than tertiary education and are therefore deemed to be undereducated. However, when these respondents were asked directly how they felt, 74.8 percent felt appropriately qualified, 23.6 percent overqualified, 0.5 percent underqualified, and 1.1 percent thought the question not applicable.

Doubtless, there may be multiple reasons for the divergence, but an obvious one is that the occupation-education correspondence may be more appropriate for countries with advanced procedures and practices for certification and licensing than for countries at the level of development of Egypt. Take nurses, for example. Until recently, in industrialized countries, nurses were secondary school graduates who had served a nursing apprenticeship (it was not actually called an apprenticeship, but that is what it was) attached to a hospital where they mixed hands-on training with off-the-ward tuition. Nowadays, but relatively recently, qualified nurses are expected to have bachelor’s degrees. And where do they earn them? In the former nursing schools, which have now acquired degree-granting powers, not always with a commensurate enhancement in standards: “A third of university-trained nurses are being rejected for jobs in the National Health Service because they are unable to answer simple maths questions such as how many 15mg tablets are required to make up 30mg” (London Sunday Times, 8 June 2014). There are many such technical occupations which do not require the veneer of a bachelor’s degree and so the apparent under-education in Egypt may not in fact be a matter of concern.

2.4 *Categorizing unemployment*

Most out-of-school males in the Egypt SWTS have sought and found employment of some kind, of varying quality. In a country such as Egypt, where unemployment benefits are not available to those in the informal sector, unemployed males are under pressure to accept whatever employment that is on offer. The proportion of males reporting being unemployed, using the strict ILO definition of not having a job, being available for work, and having recently sought work, is low, and not much higher if one considers the relaxed definition of unemployment, which removes the requirement that the individual should have actively sought work. Likewise, the proportion of inactive males is small. Among those aged 25–29, the percentage of inactive males not in school is tiny, 1.4 percent.

By contrast, only 27 percent of out-of-school females are in employment of any kind, and a quarter of these are unpaid family workers. Nineteen percent are unemployed using the strict ILO

definition, a further 12 percent are unemployed using the relaxed definition, and 42 percent are inactive. There are several general explanations, not mutually incompatible, for the poor employment outcomes of females.

In the case of married women, one is that their husbands do not wish them to work, irrespective of any employment opportunities that may be available.

Another is that females are prepared to work only in an environment that assures, to use Assaad's phrase, their reputational safety. Social norms are responsible for females declining to work in an environment that is not sufficiently regulated to be considered suitable and seemly in their eyes and those of their families. According to this view, females have difficulty finding employment, not because they have high reservation wages, but because they have restrictive reservation working conditions. Again according to this view, the fact that the public sector is overwhelmingly the first choice of sector of unemployed females available for work is because it is seen as most likely to provide appropriate conditions. Amer (2007) attributes the reduction in female labour force participation between 1998 and 2006 to the contraction in public sector employment. Assaad and Krafft (2013b) provide the same explanation for the further reduction in female labour force participation between 2006 and 2012.

These are both supply-side explanations. In addition, there is a demand-side explanation that employers have reason to discriminate against the employment of women on account of female-specific non-wage costs. Women are subject to relatively high turnover, partly due to the fact that they typically marry young—the majority of those in the SWTS were married by the age of 24—and then tend to become economically inactive. They may desire for shorter hours than men, they may exhibit higher rates of absenteeism, and there may be extra costs of compliance with legislation intended to benefit females with children (Assaad, 1993).

The explanation matters. If the supply-side view is correct, the implications are mixed. The low rate of economic activity represents an underutilization of human resources. On the other hand, Egypt is a labour-surplus economy, as evidenced by the significant migration rates of males. This is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, given that the young population will continue to be responsible for a vigorous flow of new entrants to the labour force. A high rate of voluntary unemployment then has the benefit of alleviating problems caused by a failure of the economy to generate new jobs in sufficient numbers.

On the other hand, if the explanation is demand-side, the high level of unemployment represents a major social problem, and the high rate of economic inactivity likewise, to the extent that some of the inactive females are really discouraged unemployed and would seek employment if employment prospects were better.

Those who were unemployed were asked the reason for their unemployment. Table 1.4 summarizes the responses. The most common response, by far, was that there were no jobs available. However, the ambiguity in this response renders it uninformative. Did the respondent really mean that, absolutely, there were no jobs available, as might be the case if the demand-side explanation is correct? That all available jobs had first been offered to males, and those left over to some fortunate females, employers accepting the extra non-wage costs. Or did the response mean that there were no available *jobs of the kind acceptable to females*?

| | Strict | Relaxed | Total |
|---|--------|---------|-------|
| Requirements for job were higher than education/ training received | 0.02 | 0.09 | 0.05 |
| Not enough work experience | 0.06 | 0.10 | 0.07 |
| Not enough jobs available | 0.69 | 0.56 | 0.64 |
| Considered too young | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Being male/female | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
| Discriminatory prejudices (for example, disability, religion, race, appearance, family situation, etc.) | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.03 |
| Low wages in available jobs | 0.02 | 0.01 | 0.02 |
| Poor working conditions in available jobs | 0.07 | 0.06 | 0.07 |
| Did not know how or where to seek work | 0.04 | 0.12 | 0.07 |
| Other (SPECIFY) | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 1,173 | 778 | 1,950 |
| Respondents | 208 | 137 | 345 |

It would appear that standard survey methods are unlikely to resolve this issue, however well-designed the survey instrument, and that the problems calls for a different approach. But if one looks for enlightenment to the sociological literature relating to female issues in Egypt or, more generally, the MENA region, one looks in vain. There is much lofty discourse on social and political status—on feminism, attitudes, empowerment, and social change—but next to nothing of value in the present context. Perhaps the way forward is to return to a subset of unemployed or inactive SWTS females and conduct unstructured in-depth interviews.

2.5 *Economic activity by education and sex*

Returning to Table 1.3, it will be seen that about 40 percent of out-of-school females in each age group are inactive. Only about 30 percent are employed (less in the case of those aged 20–29) but, compared with males, of those who are employed, a relatively high proportion have secured contractual employment. This is especially true of those aged 25–29. The number of females reporting being unemployed is much higher than that for males, particularly when the relaxed definition is used.

Of course, the figures in Table 1.3 conceal major variations by level of educational attainment, especially in the case of females. The remaining sections of this report treat each educational level in detail. At the risk of making the issues seem less complex than they are, the three components of Table 1.5 offer a summary. It standardizes on the 20–29 age group, and it should be kept in mind that in the case of tertiary graduates, this group contains many with little labour market experience, while at the other end of the spectrum, those with basic education or less, this group has been out-of-school for at least five years.

Table 1.5a presents disaggregated figures for out-of-school males aged 20–29. For the sub-tertiary levels, the employment rates are high and the inactivity unemployment rates mostly very low. Only for the university and tertiary non-university levels are the unemployment rates high, and this is to be expected for two reasons. First, many have only just graduated and have had little time to search. Second, with their relatively large investment in human capital, there is much at stake and the returns to a successful search potentially high.

| | University | Tert NU | Sec Gen | Sec Tech | Prep | Primary | < Prim |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------|---------|--------|
| In employment | 71.5 | 79.7 | 92.8 | 90.4 | 88.0 | 92.3 | 93.7 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 19.8 | 19.2 | 6.7 | 7.6 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 0.8 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 16.4 | 12.0 | 6.9 | 6.1 | 8.0 | 1.6 | 1.4 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 26.1 | 37.1 | 58.2 | 54.3 | 63.0 | 69.5 | 62.9 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 1.6 | 2.9 | 6.1 | 3.2 | 2.0 | 3.5 | 5.0 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 3.4 | 3.2 | 8.3 | 7.6 | 9.6 | 9.2 | 10.9 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 4.3 | 5.3 | 6.7 | 11.6 | 4.7 | 7.4 | 12.7 |
| Unemployed - strict | 20.9 | 10.2 | 7.2 | 3.5 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 1.6 |
| Available, not seeking | 3.4 | 3.7 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 0.0 |
| Inactive | 4.3 | 6.4 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 8.5 | 3.8 | 4.8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 1,486 | 371 | 176 | 3,251 | 549 | 730 | 1,052 |
| Respondents | 378 | 95 | 46 | 834 | 134 | 189 | 275 |

Note: Tert NU = tertiary non-university, Sec Gen = secondary general, Sec Tech = secondary technical, Prep = preparatory, < Prim = less than primary.

Of course, the fact that employment rates are generally high does not in itself mean that the employment outcomes can be considered satisfactory. The issue of the appropriateness of employment will be investigated further in the education-specific sections that follow, which will look at the level of job satisfaction reported by the respondent, level of pay, whether the job is considered a good match to the qualifications of the respondent, and whether the respondent is looking for a replacement job.

In the case of females, marital status has a crucial impact on economic activity and accordingly separate tables are presented for those who are single and for those who are married. Table 1.5b presents a summary for those who are single. In many countries, the pattern of economic activity for single females is similar to that for males, especially when controlling for education. Not so in Egypt. Employment rates are much lower and unemployment and inactivity rates much higher.

| | University | Tert NU | Sec Gen | Sec Tech | Prep | Primary | < Prim |
|------------------------------|------------|---------|---------|----------|------|---------|--------|
| In employment | 43.7 | 27.9 | 8.0 | 33.2 | 22.8 | 29.4 | 25.9 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 14.2 | 9.3 | 0.0 | 4.2 | 8.8 | 3.4 | 0.0 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 13.5 | 2.5 | 8.0 | 7.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 11.3 | 16.0 | 0.0 | 17.5 | 3.7 | 18.0 | 16.1 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 0.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 2.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 1.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.2 | 10.3 | 7.9 | 9.8 |
| Unemployed - strict | 36.4 | 36.7 | 32.9 | 25.2 | 3.9 | 0.0 | 1.6 |
| Available, not seeking | 12.1 | 12.9 | 26.8 | 15.6 | 23.9 | 19.3 | 2.8 |
| Inactive | 7.8 | 22.6 | 32.3 | 26.0 | 49.5 | 51.4 | 69.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 1,172 | 224 | 67 | 992 | 138 | 151 | 395 |
| Respondents | 208 | 38 | 12 | 179 | 26 | 26 | 70 |

| | University | Tert NU | Sec Gen | Sec Tech | Prep | Primary | < Prim |
|------------------------------|------------|---------|---------|----------|------|---------|--------|
| In employment | 24.0 | 17.5 | 9.1 | 15.6 | 1.7 | 24.0 | 23.3 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 14.0 | 4.3 | 0.0 | 3.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 10.0 | 8.9 | 0.0 | 1.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 0.0 | 4.4 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 4.4 | 1.9 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.1 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 2.3 | 1.1 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 0.0 | 0.0 | 9.1 | 8.0 | 0.0 | 17.3 | 19.2 |
| Unemployed - strict | 30.5 | 14.9 | 19.7 | 15.3 | 3.3 | 0.0 | 2.2 |
| Available, not seeking | 15.2 | 9.6 | 0.0 | 12.9 | 13.9 | 11.2 | 5.9 |
| Inactive | 30.3 | 58.0 | 71.2 | 56.2 | 81.1 | 64.9 | 68.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 363 | 117 | 55 | 1,276 | 330 | 264 | 577 |
| Respondents | 64 | 21 | 10 | 221 | 57 | 45 | 99 |

Table 1.5c presents the corresponding disaggregation for married females. Very few married females with sub-tertiary education report employment of any kind. Those who do are mostly unpaid family workers. Further investigation reveals that these are mostly living in rural areas and engaged in agricultural work, many part-time. By contrast, the employment rates of university and tertiary non-university graduates are relatively high, but still much lower than those for single females. Those employed are outnumbered by those unemployed, as with single females.

Those in employment generally found their jobs within a few months. While a minority in contractual employment, especially the more educated, engaged in an extended job search, most of those in non-contractual employment found their jobs with a month, in the case of males, and two months, in the case of females (Table 1.6). By contrast, those that are unemployed tend to have been unemployed for a year or more, many for more than two years (Table 1.7).

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|---------------------------|---------|------------|-------|---------|------------|------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | Pension | No pension | None |
| < 1 month | 30.2 | 32.8 | 57.0 | 26.3 | 18.6 | 41.5 |
| < 3 months | 21.3 | 18.6 | 18.1 | 19.6 | 18.7 | 19.6 |
| < 6 months | 7.7 | 12.6 | 7.9 | 9.3 | 12.8 | 7.5 |
| < 1 year | 7.2 | 8.2 | 5.7 | 15.2 | 10.2 | 6.1 |
| < 2 years | 16.2 | 12.8 | 4.8 | 16.2 | 7.9 | 10.0 |
| > 2 years | 16.8 | 14.3 | 5.4 | 12.1 | 26.2 | 12.9 |
| Other | 0.6 | 0.7 | 1.1 | 1.3 | 5.7 | 2.4 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Estimated median (months) | 2.8 | 2.8 | 0.9 | 4.1 | 5.3 | 1.7 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 648 | 601 | 5,284 | 403 | 312 | 823 |
| Respondents | 168 | 142 | 1,357 | 70 | 55 | 148 |

Note: '< 3 months' means 'at least 1 month but < 3 months', etc. The estimated median assumes a uniform distribution in the median category.

| | Males | | Females | |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| | Strict | Available | Strict | Available |
| < 1 month | 6.7 | 6.6 | 3.9 | 4.7 |
| < 3 months | 5.8 | 4.1 | 1.9 | 2.9 |
| < 6 months | 14.4 | 14.9 | 7.5 | 8.5 |
| < 1 year | 18.3 | 9.6 | 7.5 | 7.6 |
| < 2 years | 20.5 | 36.5 | 21.6 | 28.8 |
| > 2 years | 34.4 | 28.2 | 57.7 | 47.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Estimated median (years) | 1.2 | 1.4 | > 2 | 1.9 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 619 | 107 | 1,366 | 728 |
| Respondents | 158 | 28 | 243 | 130 |

| | Urban | | Rural | |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| | Strict | Available | Strict | Available |
| < 1 month | 5.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 6.0 |
| < 3 months | 2.6 | 5.1 | 1.4 | 1.2 |
| < 6 months | 10.3 | 8.1 | 5.3 | 8.7 |
| < 1 year | 7.6 | 6.4 | 7.4 | 8.4 |
| < 2 years | 22.3 | 29.5 | 21.1 | 28.3 |
| > 2 years | 52.3 | 48.1 | 61.9 | 47.3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Estimated median (years) | > 2 | 1.9 | > 2 | 1.9 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 595 | 315 | 771 | 413 |
| Respondents | 105 | 54 | 138 | 76 |

This suggests that the characteristics of the unemployed may be different from those of the respondents in employment. A candidate for such a characteristic is location, since it is possible that those living in rural areas, especially females, might have fewer employment opportunities than those living in towns. However, a disaggregation of the search duration data for females by location (Table 1.8) suggests that in fact there is not a great difference.

The low unemployment and inactivity rates of males, coupled with the fact that only five percent are employed part-time and seeking longer hours, suggests that youth unemployment is not actually a serious issue for them in Egypt, although, of course, as will be seen below, the quality of employment may be an issue. As will be seen in the sections that follow, disaggregation by level of educational attainment does not greatly affect these conclusions. At all educational levels, inactivity and unemployment rates are low.

For females, the patterns are more complex. Educational attainment has a strong effect on their outcomes. The lower the level of attainment, the higher is the inactivity rate and the lower is the employment rate. For females, marital status is also a major factor, with inactivity rates much higher for married females than for single ones and employment rates much lower. Many of those who are unemployed have been unemployed for a long time and are not actively searching.

3 University graduates

Having previously nationalized foreign interests, the Nasser administration took the two main Egyptian banks into public ownership in 1960 and most of the rest of the economy in 1961 (Ikram, 2006). To promote a supply of high-level manpower, the administration decided in 1961 to offer university graduates a guarantee of public sector employment. In 1964, a similar guarantee was extended to secondary vocational graduates and graduates of technical institutes. Initially, the numbers of university and secondary technical graduates were small enough for them to be absorbed easily. In time, however, the flows became excessive and the guarantees unsustainable. Waterbury (1983) cites an official report as stating that 8,000 agricultural degree holders and 11,000 secondary agriculture graduates sought employment with the Ministry of Agriculture in 1975, in response to an expressed need for 261 of the former and 495 of the latter.

Despite the scale of the excess supply, successive administrations were slow to address the problem. Eventually university and secondary vocational graduates were made to queue for their jobs, and the queuing period became progressively longer. This led to high rates of youth unemployment, although it is possible that the official figures may have been inflated by graduates taking undeclared employment in the private sector while retaining their positions in the queue. At the same time, public sector employment was made less attractive by allowing real wages to fall, although this policy has been undermined by the toleration of public sector employees having second jobs (Assaad, 1997). Despite these measures, public sector employment became and remained excessive. Ikram (2006) cites a report in the Egyptian Mail in December, 1998, that stated that there were five million public sector employees in Egypt, but only two million jobs.

Despite the desuetude of the guarantee, university enrolments have continued to increase in response to social demand. With about 21 percent of males and 29 percent of females in the 25–29 age group, university graduates form a substantial and growing part of the population.

University education is of particular interest to policymakers because its cost is very high, compared with that of basic and secondary education. There is everywhere a question of whether, considering costs and benefits, it might be better to reduce the portion of the education budget allocated to higher education and to use the funds to improve the quality of primary and secondary education. In the most recent international comparison available, Egypt ranked thirty-eighth of 49 participating countries in the 2007 TIMMS evaluation of mathematics attainment at grade 8, more than a standard deviation below the mean (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, 2008).

In Egypt, as in many countries, there is also the related question of whether the university education budget is being spread too thinly. Perhaps it would be better to reduce its scale and improve its quality. It is worth noting that according to the authoritative QS world university rankings, Egypt has only one university in the top 500, the American University in Cairo (ranked 348).

Table 2.1 presents the overall distribution of university graduates by sex and age group. The 356 SWTS respondents in the 25–29 age group represent a population of 1,615,000 university graduates, implying an annual flow of new graduates of over 300,000. This is a challenging figure for the labour market to absorb each year, given that the numbers of university graduates retiring each year is tiny in comparison. As in other countries with mass provision of higher education, a large proportion of university graduates, particularly those from the marginal institutions, must be prepared to enter non-professional occupations. The problem has been exacerbated by the fact that, until relatively recently, Egyptian universities were primarily focused on the provision of the

credentials that facilitated public sector employment and even now tend to be deficient in the development of productive skills (Assaad, Krafft, and Salehi-Isfahani, 2014).

Table 2.2 provides a disaggregation of university graduates by economic activity. Most of those in the 20–24 age group will have graduated relatively recently and for this reason the discussion will focus on the 25-29 age group. Table 2.2 shows that a negligible number of males, and not many females, are economically inactive. Unemployment is a significant problem for males, with 16 percent so classified under the strict definition and another 2 percent under the relaxed one. But their problems are minor compared with those of the females, with only 53 percent employed, 23 percent unemployed under the strict definition, and another 10 percent under the relaxed one.

| | Males | Females |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| 20–24 | 41.2 | 52.6 |
| 25–29 | 58.8 | 47.4 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 1,486 | 1,564 |
| Respondents | 378 | 277 |

| | Male | | Female | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| | 20–24 | 25–29 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 57.4 | 81.4 | 27.6 | 53.3 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 13.2 | 24.4 | 7.8 | 18.7 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 12.1 | 19.3 | 7.4 | 8.2 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 27.1 | 25.4 | 9.4 | 8.2 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 0.0 | 2.8 | 0.0 | 1.4 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 1.3 | 4.8 | 2.2 | 0.7 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 3.7 | 4.8 | 0.8 | 2.1 |
| Unemployed - strict | 27.8 | 16.0 | 43.1 | 25.4 |
| Available, not seeking | 5.1 | 2.2 | 15.2 | 9.8 |
| Inactive | 9.7 | 0.5 | 14.2 | 11.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 612 | 873 | 822 | 742 |
| Respondents | 155 | 223 | 144 | 133 |

| | Single | Married |
|------------------------------|--------|---------|
| In employment | 59.9 | 33.8 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 21.4 | 21.6 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 21.4 | 12.2 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 11.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 2.1 | 0.0 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 1.1 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 3.0 | 0.0 |
| Unemployed - strict | 27.4 | 21.3 |
| Available, not seeking | 8.2 | 15.0 |
| Enrolled | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Inactive | 4.5 | 29.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 503 | 210 |
| Respondents | 91 | 37 |

Note: the few respondents who were widowed, divorced, or separated females are not included in this table.

We will consider first issues relating to the quality of employment of those in employment, then issues relating to unemployment, and finally those relating to inactivity. But before we start, it is useful to take a further look at the females, disaggregating them by marital status. Table 2.3 shows that those who are single, two-thirds of the 25–29 age group, have significantly different outcomes from those who are married. Only five percent of single females are inactive, compared with 30 percent of those married. 60 percent are in employment, compared with only 34 percent. 36 percent of both groups are unemployed, using the relaxed definition, but a greater proportion of single females are unemployed under the strict definition.

3.1 Employment

As can be seen from Table 2.2, male employees are distributed fairly evenly among the three contract-status categories, but for females it is a different matter. The largest category is pensionable contractual employment, with non-pensionable contractual employment also important, and relatively few with no contract. When disaggregated by marital status, it can be seen that single females are more like males, while married females are heavily concentrated in pensionable contractual employment.

The message is fairly clear, and will be supported by investigation of the unemployed and inactive: with its security, its congenial working conditions, including undemanding expectations of work-rate, wide range of benefits, including pensions, and ludicrously early (given a conditional life expectancy of a further 17 years) retirement age of 60 (though this is being reconsidered), employment in the public sector remains very attractive for males as well as females. As will be seen, a handful of those unemployed express a preference for working for an international organisation, where employment can be expected to have similar characteristics. But there are two further factors that are potentially of crucial importance to many females.

One is supply-side: the institutionally regulated working environment makes public sector employment acceptable to many young women, their husbands, and their families in a way that much private sector employment is not. The notion of a reservation wage is well established. In the case of many young females in Egypt, the influence of reservation working conditions may be even stronger and more relevant. It may go a long way to explaining the differences in economic activity outcomes for males, single females, and married females.

The other factor is demand-side: public sector employers may be more willing than private employers to bear the non-wage costs of females and thus less likely to discriminate against them.

Most males in contractual employment are working as professionals or technicians (Table 2.4a). Of those in non-contractual employment, the proportion is much smaller. Many report being service workers, mostly in trade, and some report manual occupations.

The proportion of females in contractual employment working as professionals is even higher than that of males (Table 2.4b). Two thirds are working in education, and the majority of the remainder in health. Among those in non-contractual employment, the majority have secured professional jobs. Most of those in other occupations are working as clerks rather than in service or manual occupations. Overall, the figures indicate that female university graduates have a greater tendency than males to remain unemployed rather than work in a sub-professional occupation.

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Legislator, administrator | 3.5 | 0.0 | 1.8 | 68.9 | 45.8 | 0.0 | 6.7 |
| Professional | 72.4 | 64.0 | 26.9 | 13.6 | 25.4 | 0.0 | 47.2 |
| Technician | 9.3 | 7.1 | 7.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 6.7 |
| Clerk | 9.2 | 2.4 | 7.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.5 |
| Service worker | 3.5 | 9.7 | 15.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 32.9 | 10.2 |
| Agricultural, skilled | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.5 | 17.5 | 0.0 | 47.7 | 4.5 |
| Craft worker | 2.0 | 0.0 | 19.4 | 0.0 | 10.1 | 9.3 | 7.8 |
| Operative | 0.0 | 2.8 | 11.4 | 0.0 | 10.5 | 10.2 | 5.4 |
| Elementary worker | 0.0 | 14.0 | 7.1 | 0.0 | 8.2 | 0.0 | 6.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 213 | 169 | 221 | 24 | 42 | 42 | 711 |
| Respondents | 55 | 42 | 56 | 6 | 11 | 11 | 181 |

Note: 'Pension' denotes contract with pension; 'No pension' denotes contract without pension. Tinting indicates that this type of employment had fewer than 10 respondents in total.

Table 2.4b: Occupation, female university graduates aged 25–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Legislator, administrator | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | | | 0.0 |
| Professional | 79.3 | 73.6 | 55.4 | | | | 71.5 |
| Technician | 14.0 | 8.2 | 0.0 | | | | 8.7 |
| Clerk | 3.5 | 13.8 | 36.1 | | | | 10.4 |
| Service worker | 0.0 | 0.0 | 8.4 | | | | 5.6 |
| Agricultural, skilled | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | | | 0.0 |
| Craft worker | 3.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | | | 2.3 |
| Operative | 0.0 | 4.3 | 0.0 | | | | 1.5 |
| Elementary worker | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | | | 0.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 166 | 138 | 60 | | | | 395 |
| Respondents | 29 | 24 | 11 | | | | 70 |

Note: Tinting indicates that this type of employment had fewer than 10 respondents in total. Categories with fewer than 5 respondents are left blank.

Table 2.5: Establishment size of employed university graduates, by sex and contract type

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|----------------------|---------|------------|------|---------|------------|------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | Pension | No pension | None |
| < 5 | 4.1 | 2.4 | 38.1 | 0.0 | 4.3 | 47.3 |
| 5–9 | 1.6 | 4.9 | 22.6 | 0.0 | 8.1 | 26.3 |
| 10–49 | 15.9 | 21.1 | 26.6 | 45.6 | 38.8 | 17.3 |
| 50–499 | 33.7 | 33.5 | 12.6 | 42.8 | 32.7 | 0.0 |
| 500+ | 39.1 | 25.7 | 0.0 | 8.0 | 13.1 | 0.0 |
| Do not know | 5.5 | 12.3 | 0.0 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 9.1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 213 | 169 | 221 | 166 | 102 | 60 |
| Respondents | 55 | 42 | 56 | 29 | 18 | 11 |

Table 2.6: Monthly pay of university graduates in LE, by sex and contract type

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|----------------------|---------|------------|------|---------|------------|------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | Pension | No pension | None |
| < 300 | 0.0 | 10.2 | 3.7 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 0.0 |
| 300–499 | 5.4 | 5.7 | 9.8 | 4.3 | 15.4 | 34.8 |
| 500–999 | 36.2 | 22.4 | 50.2 | 66.8 | 39.9 | 45.1 |
| 1000–2999 | 54.5 | 59.3 | 34.3 | 23.9 | 39.8 | 20.1 |
| 3000+ | 3.9 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Estimated median | 1308 | 1395 | 864 | 805 | 872 | 669 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 209 | 140 | 194 | 124 | 102 | 60 |
| Respondents | 54 | 35 | 49 | 22 | 18 | 11 |

Note: The estimated median assumes a uniform distribution in the median category.

Tables 2.5 and 2.6 present data on establishment size and pay. The gap between the pay of males and that of females is surprisingly large. For both sexes, those in contractual employment tend to earn more than those in non-contractual employment. This may be because the former tend to work in larger establishments than the latter, and large establishments tend to pay better than small ones. It is not possible to determine from the SWTS data why, again for both sexes, the median pay for those in non-pensionable contractual employment is a little higher than that for those in pensionable contractual employment but, if the two categories are proxies for the private and public sectors, it is possible that there may be a sorting effect of the kind encountered in Jordan (Dougherty, 2010). If the private sector recruits according to ability, while the public sector relies on credentials, the former can be expected to cherry-pick the more able and pay them accordingly.

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Full time | 98.5 | 90.1 | 90.7 | 86.5 | 82.4 | 100.0 | 92.8 |
| Part time, content | 1.5 | 4.8 | 5.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.3 |
| Part time, want more | 0.0 | 5.2 | 3.8 | 13.6 | 17.6 | 0.0 | 3.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 213 | 165 | 214 | 24 | 42 | 42 | 699 |
| Respondents | 55 | 41 | 54 | 6 | 11 | 11 | 178 |

Note: Full-time is defined as 35+ hours per week.

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|-------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Full time | 80.3 | 83.2 | 100.0 | | | | 80.3 |
| Part time, content | 19.7 | 9.7 | 0.0 | | | | 14.3 |
| Part time, want more | 0.0 | 7.2 | 0.0 | | | | 5.4 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 154 | 138 | 60 | | | | 384 |
| Respondents | 27 | 24 | 11 | | | | 68 |

Tables 2.7 and 2.8 investigate evidence of underemployment. Table 2.7 shows that the great majority of both sexes are working full-time, using 35 or more hours per week as the criterion. Among those working part-time, many report not wishing to work additional hours. As a consequence, very few of either sex could be described as being under-employed, in the sense of involuntarily working part-time.

Table 2.8 sets out the responses to the question of whether the respondent felt overqualified, appropriately qualified, or underqualified for his or her work. Nearly all of those in pensionable contractual employment feel appropriately qualified. A greater number, but still a minority, of those in non-pensionable contractual employment feel overqualified. However, the majority of males, and a substantial minority of females, in non-contractual employment feel overqualified. At face value, then, this table suggests substantial underemployment, in the sense that many respondents state that they are not making full use of their skills.

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Appropriate | 90.4 | 66.1 | 15.7 | 47.1 | 35.0 | 0.0 | 51.2 |
| Over-qualified | 9.6 | 31.3 | 82.3 | 52.9 | 65.0 | 90.7 | 46.9 |
| Under-qualified | 0.0 | 2.6 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.6 |
| Not applicable | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 9.3 | 1.2 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 213 | 169 | 221 | 24 | 42 | 42 | 711 |
| Respondents | 55 | 42 | 56 | 6 | 11 | 11 | 181 |

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Appropriate | 88.9 | 75.2 | 56.9 | | | | 76.3 |
| Over-qualified | 11.1 | 20.5 | 43.1 | | | | 22.2 |
| Under-qualified | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | | | 0.0 |
| Not applicable | 0.0 | 4.3 | 0.0 | | | | 1.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 166 | 138 | 60 | | | | 395 |
| Respondents | 29 | 24 | 11 | | | | 70 |

However, there must be doubts as to whether such a conclusion is truly warranted. The sheer scale of the number of new university graduates entering the labour market each year means that in Egypt, as in other countries with mass higher education, the rate of growth of professional jobs may not match the rate of growth of the supply of graduates. As a consequence, as elsewhere, many graduates must seek employment in occupations associated with lower educational attainment in previous generations, even if they are highly skilled. It is not in the interest of higher education institutions to warn their students that many will never find professional employment, and so disappointment and feelings of being overqualified are inevitable. Add to this the fact that not all university graduates are in fact highly skilled. In Egypt, as elsewhere, the increase in provision may have resulted in less able students gaining access to higher education, and it is also possible that the value added by the less technical courses in the more marginal institutions may not be high. For these reasons, also, it is not surprising to find large numbers of graduates in sub-technical occupations. This is a world-wide phenomenon not peculiar to Egypt.

Table 2.9 presents level of job satisfaction by type of employment and sex, and Table 2.10 summarizes the responses to the question of whether the respondent had looked for a new job in the past 30 days. Unsurprisingly, most of those in contractual employment express satisfaction with their jobs and are not looking for new ones. Half of males in non-contractual employment express dissatisfaction, and half are looking for a new job, but these two groups do not coincide. 40 percent of those dissatisfied are not looking, and nearly as many of those who are satisfied or neutral are looking.

Females in non-contractual employment appear to be happier with their lot than the males. A smaller proportion is dissatisfied and a much smaller proportion actively looking for a new job. This would seem to provide evidence that females are more selective than males. If the job does not

suit them, they will not take it, while males are under greater pressure to take jobs, rather than remain unemployed or be inactive.

Table 2.9a: Job satisfaction by type of employment, male university graduates aged 25–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Very satisfied | 68.3 | 28.8 | 6.9 | 48.0 | 19.3 | 16.5 | 33.2 |
| Somewhat satisfied | 20.0 | 49.8 | 36.0 | 52.0 | 34.4 | 19.1 | 33.9 |
| Neutral | 2.0 | 6.5 | 3.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 25.1 | 4.8 |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 7.8 | 14.9 | 27.7 | 0.0 | 37.1 | 18.5 | 17.8 |
| Very dissatisfied | 1.9 | 0.0 | 25.8 | 0.0 | 9.3 | 20.8 | 10.4 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 213 | 169 | 221 | 24 | 42 | 42 | 711 |
| Respondents | 55 | 42 | 56 | 6 | 11 | 11 | 181 |

Table 2.9b: Job satisfaction by type of employment, female university graduates aged 25–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Very satisfied | 83.5 | 20.4 | 18.5 | | | | 47.6 |
| Somewhat satisfied | 13.3 | 70.9 | 47.3 | | | | 39.0 |
| Neutral | 3.2 | 4.4 | 0.0 | | | | 2.9 |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 0.0 | 4.3 | 34.2 | | | | 6.8 |
| Very dissatisfied | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | | | 3.8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 166 | 138 | 60 | | | | 395 |
| Respondents | 29 | 24 | 11 | | | | 70 |

Table 2.10a: Looking for new job, by sex and contract type, employed male university graduates 25–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Looking | 7.2 | 21.7 | 49.2 | 17.5 | 35.8 | 53.2 | 28.5 |
| Not looking | 92.8 | 78.3 | 50.8 | 82.5 | 64.2 | 46.8 | 71.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 213 | 169 | 221 | 24 | 42 | 42 | 711 |
| Respondents | 55 | 42 | 56 | 6 | 11 | 11 | 181 |

Table 2.10b: Looking for new job, by sex and contract type, employed female university graduates 25–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Looking | 0.0 | 12.8 | 20.1 | | | | 9.9 |
| Not looking | 100.0 | 87.2 | 79.9 | | | | 90.1 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 166 | 138 | 60 | | | | 395 |
| Respondents | 29 | 24 | 11 | | | | 70 |

3.2 Unemployment

Unemployment weighs far more heavily on female university graduates than on their male counterparts. Whereas 21 percent of males are unemployed under the strict definition, and another three percent are unemployed, not looking for work, but available, the corresponding figures for females are 35 percent and 13 percent.

However, there is some evidence that the higher incidence for females is to some extent a matter of choice. Respondents were asked to name the sector in which they wished to work, the choices being own account, public sector, private sector, international organization, NGO, or family business or farm. Since the choices were recorded as mutually exclusive, the fact that the public sector is the preferred choice does not rule out the possibility that the respondent might be willing to work in the private sector, or vice versa. Thus the responses are merely indicative, but nevertheless informative. Only nine percent of females strictly unemployed express a desire to work in the private sector, and only three percent of those available, whereas 30 percent of males, both those strictly unemployed and those not looking but available, express a desire for private sector jobs. For many females, the reputational safety of public sector employment may be a decisive factor, while some males may be attracted to the private sector by the prospect of higher pay and greater opportunities for career development.

Table 2.11: Unemployed university graduates, desired type of employment by sex

| | Males | | Females | |
|----------------------|--------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| | Strict | Available | Strict | Available |
| Public | 69.0 | 70.2 | 87.4 | 93.8 |
| Private | 29.7 | 29.8 | 9.4 | 2.6 |
| International/NGO | 1.3 | 0.0 | 3.2 | 0.0 |
| Does not matter | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 310 | 50 | 543 | 197 |
| Respondents | 79 | 13 | 95 | 36 |

Note: 'Strict' means unemployed according to the strict definition. 'Available' means available for work but not actively looking.

| | Males | | Females | |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| | Strict | Available | Strict | Available |
| < 1 month | 5.1 | 11.9 | 1.8 | 3.5 |
| < 3 months | 5.2 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 3.5 |
| < 6 months | 16.6 | 0.0 | 7.5 | 15.2 |
| < 1 year | 11.9 | 12.0 | 10.3 | 16.2 |
| < 2 years | 24.6 | 42.9 | 30.3 | 25.7 |
| > 2 years | 36.7 | 33.2 | 48.3 | 36.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Estimated median (years) | 1.5 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.5 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 310 | 34 | 543 | 149 |
| Respondents | 79 | 9 | 95 | 27 |

Note: The estimated median assumes a uniform distribution in the median category.

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|----------------------|---------|------------|------|---------|------------|------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | Pension | No pension | None |
| < 1 month | 22.2 | 21.6 | 29.0 | 24.0 | 18.2 | 20.1 |
| < 3 months | 36.1 | 16.8 | 19.6 | 20.7 | 22.1 | 43.9 |
| < 6 months | 9.0 | 7.3 | 14.2 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 18.4 |
| < 1 year | 3.8 | 13.9 | 6.8 | 16.6 | 9.4 | 0.0 |
| < 2 years | 14.4 | 18.2 | 10.9 | 23.9 | 7.6 | 0.0 |
| > 2 years | 12.5 | 22.3 | 17.6 | 10.7 | 29.6 | 17.6 |
| Other | 1.9 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 8.9 | 0.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 213 | 169 | 221 | 166 | 138 | 60 |
| Respondents | 55 | 42 | 56 | 29 | 24 | 11 |

Note: '< 3 months' means 'at least 1 month but < 3 months', etc.

For all of the unemployed respondents, the greatest obstacle to finding employment is reported to be a shortage of available jobs. In the case of females there is ambiguity as to whether this reflects a true demand-side shortage caused by employers discriminating against them, or a supply-side rejection of jobs that do not have acceptable working conditions.

Table 2.12 shows that most unemployed of both sexes are long-term unemployed, in the sense of having been searching for work for over a year. Table 2.13 shows that most of those in employment found it relatively quickly. This again suggests that being unemployed has more to do with the characteristics of the individual than the state of the Egyptian labour market.

3.3 Inactivity

Only 0.5 percent of male university graduates aged 25–29 are inactive and only 11.5 percent of females. Inactive respondents were asked the main reason for being inactive. Table 2.14 presents

the responses for those not enrolled in school and not available for work, with the responses for females disaggregated by marital status. Not much can be inferred in the case of males, with the 'other reason' category being dominant, but given their small number it does not matter, anyway. In the case of females, most, especially those married, cite family responsibilities.

| | Males | Females | | |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|---------|------|
| | All | Single | Married | All |
| Family responsibilities | 0.0 | 61.9 | 88.8 | 77.5 |
| Pregnancy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.1 | 3.0 |
| No desire | 13.8 | 24.4 | 0.0 | 10.2 |
| Other reason | 86.2 | 13.8 | 6.1 | 9.3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 51 | 76 | 105 | 180 |
| Respondents | 11 | 13 | 18 | 31 |

4 Secondary technical graduates

Secondary technical schooling, also known as secondary vocational, dominates the provision of secondary education in Egypt. It received enormous impetus in 1964 when graduates of secondary technical education were given a guarantee of public sector employment similar to that which had been extended to university graduates three years earlier.

In the 1960s, it was widely thought that providing the less academic secondary students with occupational skills in school would make them more employable on graduation and so mitigate a potential problem of youth unemployment. The World Bank and its regional counterparts were prominent and influential advocates of this doctrine. It was also hoped that the policy would do something to diminish the social demand for higher education and staunch its inexorable growth.

In many countries, the vocationalization of secondary education met resistance from young people and their aspirational families, who saw secondary education as a stepping-stone to higher education and high status employment. However, in Egypt the public sector employment guarantee assured its popularity.

The arguments for vocationalization of secondary education have long been discredited and it is now largely accepted that, in a world of continuous change, basic skills such as literacy and numeracy are far more valuable for most people. As a consequence, the international agencies that at one time sponsored vocationalization have mostly withdrawn their support. Nevertheless, educational policy in Egypt has continued to promote this type of secondary education. Although the guarantee of public sector employment, like that given to university graduates, is now in desuetude because it has been impossible to sustain, the secondary technical stream still accounts for roughly half of the enrolment of students in upper secondary education in Egypt and the great majority of upper secondary graduates in the labour force.

Table 3.1 presents a disaggregation of out-of-school secondary technical graduates by sex and age group. Most of those who graduate from secondary technical do so at the age of 18, so the following discussion will focus on the 20–24 and 25–29 age groups.

Table 3.2 provides a disaggregation by economic activity. Eighty-five percent of males aged 20–24 are in employment and 96 percent of those aged 25–29. However, only 8 percent of the younger age group, and 20 percent of the older one, are in contractual employment. The days of guaranteed public sector employment are long gone, at least for these age groups. Most of the rest are in non-contractual employment, and a significant minority are self-employed or unpaid family workers. At 9.2 percent, a significant proportion of the younger age group is inactive. The corresponding figure for the older age group is negligible. The proportion unemployed is low for both age groups, using the strict definition, and under six percent using the relaxed one.

| | Males | Females |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| 15–19 | 12.3 | 11.2 |
| 20–24 | 44.1 | 60.6 |
| 25–29 | 43.7 | 28.2 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 3,704 | 2,884 |
| Respondents | 945 | 512 |

| | Males | | Females | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|
| | 20–24 | 25–29 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 85.0 | 95.6 | 25.8 | 19.9 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 3.6 | 11.7 | 4.5 | 4.2 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 4.3 | 8.0 | 4.6 | 2.2 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 53.3 | 55.4 | 10.3 | 6.7 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 2.3 | 4.1 | 0.0 | 1.5 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 6.8 | 8.4 | 0.8 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 14.8 | 8.3 | 5.5 | 5.4 |
| Unemployed - strict | 3.9 | 3.2 | 19.2 | 19.0 |
| Available, not seeking | 1.9 | 0.3 | 13.8 | 15.0 |
| Inactive, not in school | 9.2 | 0.7 | 41.2 | 46.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 1,633 | 1,618 | 1,592 | 767 |
| Respondents | 421 | 413 | 280 | 136 |

| | Single | | Married | |
|------------------------------|--------|-------|---------|-------|
| | 20–24 | 25–29 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 36.9 | 22.2 | 15.4 | 16.0 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 4.8 | 2.4 | 3.8 | 4.0 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 9.2 | 2.4 | 0.8 | 2.4 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 19.8 | 10.7 | 1.4 | 3.0 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 0.0 | 4.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 0.9 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 2.2 | 2.2 | 8.8 | 6.6 |
| Unemployed - strict | 22.9 | 32.2 | 16.8 | 12.7 |
| Available, not seeking | 14.8 | 17.9 | 12.9 | 13.0 |
| Inactive | 25.4 | 27.7 | 55.0 | 58.3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 743 | 249 | 810 | 467 |
| Respondents | 134 | 45 | 139 | 82 |

By contrast, among females, the employment rate of females is very low—26 percent for the 20–24 age group and 20 percent for the 25–29 age group. As Table 3.3 shows, the lower figure for the older age group is partly attributable to the fact that a greater proportion is married, and married females have higher inactivity rates than single ones. But even among the single females, a much lower proportion of the older age group is in employment and the proportion unemployed, using either the strict or the relaxed definition, is much higher. There is no obvious reason for this. Such a comparison is not possible for other educational levels because there are not enough out-of-school single females in both age groups. The majority of those in the younger age group not in employment declare themselves to be unemployed, using the relaxed definition, while the majority of the older age group are inactive.

It appears that, while males seem to have no serious problem, the labour market is not providing enough job opportunities for female secondary vocational graduates, despite their high inactivity rates. Once again, there is ambiguity as to whether the underlying reason is demand-side or supply-side, or perhaps a combination of both. The shortage of jobs may be caused by employer discrimination against females, but it is also possible that the high unemployment rate of females may be attributable to their selective approach to employment and more restrictive reservation working conditions.

Comparing the labour market outcomes for secondary technical graduates with those of university graduates, it appears that, in terms of economic activity, they differ little for males. Of course one would expect the university graduates to tend to have higher status occupations. For females, comparing the 25–29 age groups, the employment figure for secondary technical is much lower, the inactivity rate much higher, and the unemployment rate, relaxed or strict, fairly similar. If the supply-side explanation of female unemployment is correct, the differences may be attributable to a lower proportion of acceptable jobs among those on offer, or a narrower definition of acceptability among the less educated, or a mixture of both.

4.1 Employment

The majority of males with jobs are in non-contractual employment. Nearly half of these are craft workers, the majority in construction. Fifteen percent are in contractual employment, and 12 percent are unpaid family workers, mostly in agriculture. Other important sectors are manufacturing and trade.

For females, also, non-contractual employment is the largest category, but it accounts for a much smaller proportion than for males, and the jobs are mainly non-manual, service workers, mostly in trade, being the biggest occupational category. About a third have secured contractual employment, mostly as health technicians and clerks. The few professionals are in education. Nearly a quarter of females are unpaid family workers, almost all in agriculture.

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|-------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Legislator, administrator | 0.0 | 2.2 | 0.2 | 24.9 | 15.3 | 0.0 | 2.5 |
| Professional | 1.4 | 4.0 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 0.8 |
| Technician | 36.3 | 20.5 | 2.4 | 7.5 | 7.7 | 4.2 | 7.3 |
| Clerk | 7.5 | 4.1 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.3 |
| Service worker | 19.5 | 22.6 | 18.4 | 7.0 | 22.1 | 18.0 | 18.6 |
| Agricultural, skilled | 1.3 | 1.5 | 11.2 | 22.6 | 5.8 | 66.9 | 16.7 |
| Craft worker | 6.1 | 10.0 | 42.5 | 30.7 | 12.7 | 6.6 | 29.7 |
| Operative | 20.6 | 18.7 | 17.2 | 7.3 | 24.7 | 4.4 | 16.2 |
| Elementary worker | 7.4 | 16.5 | 7.0 | 0.0 | 10.1 | 0.0 | 6.8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 248 | 198 | 1,766 | 103 | 247 | 376 | 2,939 |
| Respondents | 65 | 45 | 453 | 28 | 65 | 98 | 754 |

Table 3.4b: Occupation, female secondary graduates aged 20–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Legislator, administrator | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | | 0.0 | 2.0 |
| Professional | 0.0 | 10.9 | 10.6 | | | 0.0 | 5.8 |
| Technician | 64.8 | 37.4 | 5.1 | | | 0.0 | 19.9 |
| Clerk | 25.2 | 19.8 | 11.6 | | | 0.0 | 12.3 |
| Service worker | 0.0 | 0.0 | 48.0 | | | 0.0 | 19.6 |
| Agricultural, skilled | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.4 | | | 97.0 | 24.2 |
| Craft worker | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.3 | | | 3.0 | 1.6 |
| Operative | 10.1 | 25.7 | 18.2 | | | 0.0 | 13.0 |
| Elementary worker | 0.0 | 6.2 | 1.8 | | | 0.0 | 1.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 104 | 91 | 216 | | | 129 | 563 |
| Respondents | 16 | 16 | 41 | | | 23 | 100 |

Table 3.5: Establishment size, secondary technical graduates 20–29, by sex and contract type

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|----------------------|---------|------------|-------|---------|------------|------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | Pension | No pension | None |
| < 5 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 50.6 | 0.0 | 12.4 | 56.6 |
| 5–9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 23.3 | 0.0 | 5.6 | 15.6 |
| 10–49 | 16.0 | 27.0 | 18.0 | 18.8 | 26.3 | 15.1 |
| 50–499 | 21.5 | 29.6 | 3.8 | 63.0 | 35.9 | 7.5 |
| 500+ | 43.7 | 32.2 | 2.1 | 6.7 | 12.5 | 5.3 |
| Do not know | 17.3 | 9.2 | 2.3 | 11.6 | 7.3 | 0.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 248 | 198 | 1,766 | 104 | 91 | 216 |
| Respondents | 65 | 45 | 453 | 16 | 16 | 41 |

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|----------------------|---------|------------|-------|---------|------------|------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | Pension | No pension | None |
| < 300 | 1.5 | 7.0 | 2.7 | 6.9 | 31.5 | 38.0 |
| 300–499 | 10.4 | 10.3 | 15.8 | 12.9 | 8.2 | 24.5 |
| 500–999 | 38.1 | 50.3 | 52.7 | 63.1 | 52.1 | 37.3 |
| 1000–2999 | 50.1 | 32.4 | 28.8 | 17.2 | 8.2 | 0.0 |
| 3000+ | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Estimated median | 1000 | 825 | 799 | 739 | 599 | 398 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 229 | 184 | 1,550 | 89 | 81 | 202 |
| Respondents | 60 | 42 | 396 | 14 | 14 | 38 |

Note: The estimated median assumes a uniform distribution in the median category.

Most employees of both sexes, especially those in non-contractual employment, are working in small establishments (Table 3.5) with relatively low rates of pay (Table 3.6). For males, a comparison of Tables 3.6 and 3.6 shows that the proportionate difference in the pay of university graduates and secondary technical graduates is much greater in contractual employment than in non-contractual employment. Most of both sexes are working full-time. Only five percent of males and seven percent of females are working part-time and wanting extra hours (Table 3.7). Fifty eight percent of males and 44 percent of females feel overqualified for their jobs. Negligible proportions feel underqualified.

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|-------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Full time | 98.4 | 97.3 | 91.7 | 85.3 | 84.7 | 89.1 | 91.4 |
| Part time, content | 1.7 | 2.7 | 3.5 | 11.3 | 4.6 | 6.1 | 4.0 |
| Part time, want more | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.8 | 3.5 | 10.6 | 4.8 | 4.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 230 | 193 | 1,709 | 100 | 247 | 376 | 2,855 |
| Respondents | 60 | 44 | 437 | 27 | 65 | 98 | 731 |

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Full time | 100.0 | 80.7 | 93.5 | | | 46.5 | 79.9 |
| Part time, content | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.3 | | | 48.6 | 13.2 |
| Part time, want more | 0.0 | 19.3 | 4.2 | | | 4.9 | 6.9 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 97 | 91 | 216 | | | 129 | 556 |
| Respondents | 15 | 16 | 41 | | | 23 | 99 |

Table 3.8a: Job qualification by sex and contract type, male secondary technical graduates aged 20–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|-------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Appropriate | 84.4 | 63.8 | 28.0 | 68.0 | 35.5 | 27.8 | 37.2 |
| Over-qualified | 12.1 | 36.2 | 67.2 | 28.7 | 56.8 | 63.7 | 57.7 |
| Under-qualified | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.2 | 0.4 |
| Not applicable | 3.5 | 0.0 | 4.6 | 3.4 | 7.7 | 6.3 | 4.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 248 | 198 | 1,766 | 103 | 247 | 376 | 2,939 |
| Respondents | 65 | 45 | 453 | 28 | 65 | 98 | 754 |

Table 3.8b: Job qualification by sex and contract type, female secondary technical graduates aged 20–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Appropriate | 94.8 | 81.3 | 46.3 | | | 7.7 | 51.3 |
| Over-qualified | 5.2 | 18.7 | 50.9 | | | 83.0 | 44.4 |
| Under-qualified | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.8 | | | 0.0 | 1.1 |
| Not applicable | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | | 9.3 | 3.2 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 104 | 91 | 216 | | | 129 | 563 |
| Respondents | 16 | 16 | 41 | | | 23 | 100 |

Table 3.9a: Job satisfaction by type of employment, male secondary technical graduates aged 20–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|-------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Very satisfied | 60.4 | 15.6 | 9.1 | 40.2 | 21.7 | 22.4 | 17.7 |
| Somewhat satisfied | 33.2 | 63.1 | 53.5 | 45.0 | 51.2 | 37.9 | 49.9 |
| Neutral | 3.2 | 6.3 | 7.9 | 0.0 | 7.2 | 12.5 | 7.7 |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 3.2 | 10.8 | 19.5 | 14.9 | 13.2 | 23.4 | 17.4 |
| Very dissatisfied | 0.0 | 4.2 | 10.0 | 0.0 | 6.8 | 3.8 | 7.4 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 248 | 198 | 1,766 | 103 | 247 | 376 | 2,939 |
| Respondents | 65 | 45 | 453 | 28 | 65 | 98 | 754 |

Table 3.9b: Job satisfaction by type of employment, female secondary technical graduates aged 20–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Very satisfied | 66.4 | 29.7 | 12.1 | | | 30.3 | 29.7 |
| Somewhat satisfied | 28.5 | 45.1 | 62.7 | | | 45.6 | 50.2 |
| Neutral | 0.0 | 12.4 | 5.5 | | | 4.3 | 5.1 |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 5.2 | 12.9 | 17.9 | | | 15.9 | 13.5 |
| Very dissatisfied | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.8 | | | 3.9 | 1.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 104 | 91 | 216 | | | 129 | 563 |
| Respondents | 16 | 16 | 41 | | | 23 | 100 |

The pattern of job satisfaction by type of employment is similar to that for university graduates. Both sexes tend to report being very satisfied if they have pensionable employment, and somewhat satisfied if they have non-pensionable contractual employment. Even those in non-contractual employment tend to be satisfied, with the proportion higher for females than for males, suggesting once again that females are more selective. Only 22 percent of males and 8 percent of females are looking for replacement jobs, and, as with university graduates, some of those looking express satisfaction with their current jobs.

Table 3.10a: Looking for new job, by sex and contract type, male secondary technical graduates 20–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|-------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Looking | 4.9 | 16.8 | 27.9 | 14.9 | 15.4 | 17.4 | 22.4 |
| Not looking | 95.2 | 83.2 | 72.1 | 85.1 | 84.6 | 82.6 | 77.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 248 | 198 | 1,766 | 103 | 247 | 376 | 2,939 |
| Respondents | 65 | 45 | 453 | 28 | 65 | 98 | 754 |

Table 3.10b: Looking for new job, by sex and contract type, female secondary technical graduates 20–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Looking | 0.0 | 0.0 | 17.5 | | | 4.3 | 7.7 |
| Not looking | 100.0 | 100.0 | 82.5 | | | 95.7 | 92.3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | | | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 104 | 91 | 216 | | | 129 | 563 |
| Respondents | 16 | 16 | 41 | | | 23 | 100 |

4.2 Unemployment

Only five percent of males are unemployed, even using the relaxed definition, while 19 percent of females are unemployed using the strict definition and 33 percent using the relaxed one. The distribution of employment preferences among unemployed secondary technical graduates is very similar to that for university graduates. Both sexes overwhelmingly express a preference for public sector employment, almost exclusively so in the case of females. For all of the unemployed respondents, the greatest obstacle to finding employment is reported to be a shortage of available jobs. However, in the case of females, there is the usual ambiguity as to what this actually means.

Table 3.11: Unemployed secondary technical graduates, desired type of employment by sex, 20–29

| | Males | | Females | |
|----------------------|--------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| | strict | available | strict | available |
| Own account | 3.3 | 8.8 | 0.0 | 1.2 |
| Public | 72.1 | 78.3 | 93.0 | 91.8 |
| Private | 24.6 | 12.9 | 7.0 | 7.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 115 | 34 | 452 | 335 |
| Respondents | 29 | 9 | 81 | 59 |

Table 3.12: Unemployed secondary technical graduates, length of search by sex

| | Males | | Females | |
|--------------------------|--------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| | Strict | Available | Strict | Available |
| < 1 month | 6.6 | 0.0 | 2.5 | 2.9 |
| < 3 months | 3.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| < 6 months | 3.3 | 0.0 | 3.9 | 2.9 |
| < 1 year | 31.9 | 23.0 | 2.4 | 2.7 |
| < 2 years | 17.4 | 46.2 | 3.3 | 24.9 |
| > 2 years | 37.2 | 30.8 | 88.0 | 66.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Estimated median (years) | 1.3 | 1.6 | > 2 | > 2 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 115 | 3427 | 452 | 220 |
| Respondents | 29 | 7 | 81 | 39 |

Note: The estimated median assumes a uniform distribution in the median category.

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|----------------------|---------|------------|-------|---------|------------|------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | Pension | No pension | None |
| < 1 month | 33.1 | 37.5 | 55.4 | 22.2 | 19.1 | 43.9 |
| < 3 months | 11.1 | 20.3 | 18.7 | 22.3 | 0.0 | 19.4 |
| < 6 months | 6.1 | 15.7 | 7.4 | 12.6 | 19.2 | 1.8 |
| < 1 year | 10.6 | 0.0 | 7.5 | 17.8 | 12.8 | 5.7 |
| < 2 years | 15.8 | 9.9 | 6.2 | 5.3 | 4.3 | 15.3 |
| > 2 years | 23.3 | 16.6 | 4.5 | 19.9 | 38.7 | 13.9 |
| Other | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 5.9 | 0.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 248 | 198 | 1,766 | 104 | 91 | 216 |
| Respondents | 65 | 45 | 453 | 16 | 16 | 41 |

Note: '< 3 months' means 'at least 1 month but < 3 months', etc.

As with university graduates, most unemployed secondary technical graduates could be described as long-term unemployed (Table 3.12). Given that most employed secondary technical graduates found their jobs quite quickly (Table 3.13), especially the majority in non-contractual employment, one is led to the same conclusion as that for university graduates: being unemployed has more to do with the characteristics of the unemployed individual than the Egyptian labour market.

4.3 Inactivity

The distribution of the reasons for inactivity given by secondary technical graduates is also similar to that for university graduates. For males, the dominant category is 'other reason'. Most are aged 20–29. Less than one percent of males aged 25–29 are inactive. For females, the dominant response is family responsibilities, with 'no desire' also being a substantial minority response for those who are single.

| | Males | Females | | |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|---------|------|
| | All | Single | Married | All |
| Family responsibilities | 0.0 | 57.3 | 85.9 | 78.5 |
| Pregnancy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.7 | 4.1 |
| Illness | 10.6 | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.6 |
| No desire | 2.4 | 36.3 | 7.6 | 15.3 |
| Other reason | 87.1 | 6.4 | 0.0 | 1.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 147 | 246 | 688 | 968 |
| Respondents | 38 | 45 | 119 | 170 |

5 Preparatory graduates

Preparatory education in Egypt is the three-year lower secondary cycle following primary education that completes what is known as basic education. In principle, preparatory graduates should graduate by the age of 16. Of those still attending school, the SWTS does not separate preparatory students from primary students, but from Table 1.2 it is reasonable to suppose that substantial numbers of the 15–19 age group are still at the preparatory stage.

Table 4.2 shows that the employment rate for males is high, even for the youngest age group. Most are in non-contractual employment, but a few of the oldest age group have progressed to employment with contracts. A negligible proportion of males are unemployed, even using the relaxed definition. Likewise, apart from a few in the 20–24 age group, not many are inactive.

By contrast, the employment rate of females is very low and, being strongly adversely affected by marriage (Table 4.3), decreasing with age. In the sample, only one of the 57 married females aged 20–29 had a job. Most females are inactive. Very few of those unemployed and available for work were actively seeking employment.

Table 4.1: Preparatory graduates by sex and age group

| | Males | Females |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| 15–19 | 26.5 | 40.5 |
| 20–24 | 45.5 | 41.2 |
| 25–29 | 28.0 | 18.3 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 747 | 816 |
| Respondents | 181 | 145 |

Table 4.2: Economic activity of preparatory graduates by sex and age group

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|
| | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 95.7 | 83.2 | 95.9 | 20.9 | 9.5 | 7.0 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 3.6 | 3.4 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 0.0 | 3.7 | 15.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 87.4 | 65.0 | 59.9 | 8.4 | 3.2 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 0.0 | 1.0 | 3.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 1.9 | 6.9 | 14.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 6.4 | 6.6 | 1.5 | 10.9 | 2.6 | 3.6 |
| Unemployed - strict | 0.0 | 3.6 | 0.0 | 8.2 | 4.8 | 0.0 |
| Available, not seeking | 2.0 | 0.9 | 2.0 | 7.8 | 16.6 | 15.5 |
| Inactive, not in school | 2.2 | 12.4 | 2.1 | 63.1 | 69.1 | 77.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 198 | 340 | 209 | 331 | 336 | 149 |
| Respondents | 47 | 82 | 52 | 59 | 60 | 26 |

| | Single | | Married | |
|------------------------------|--------|-------|---------|-------|
| | 20–24 | 25–29 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 26.0 | 14.2 | 2.5 | 0.0 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 12.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 5.1 | 0.0 | 2.5 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 8.8 | 14.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Unemployed - strict | 5.3 | 0.0 | 4.9 | 0.0 |
| Available, not seeking | 20.7 | 32.4 | 15.6 | 10.3 |
| Inactive | 48.1 | 53.4 | 77.0 | 89.8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 101 | 37 | 224 | 107 |
| Respondents | 19 | 7 | 39 | 18 |

5.1 Employment

Given that so few females are employed, the discussion of employment outcomes will be confined to males. Most are manual workers in small enterprises in non-contractual employment (Tables 4.4 and 4.5) with a pay distribution much lower than that for secondary technical graduates (Table 4.6). Virtually all are working full-time or part-time and content with the hours (Table 4.7). Most felt appropriately qualified for their jobs (Table 4.8), but a few felt overqualified. Most are satisfied with their jobs and only nine percent are actively looking for better ones. Overall, the outcomes appear to be in line with what might be expected, given the current level of development of the Egyptian labour market.

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|---------------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Legislator, administrator | | 0.0 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 |
| Professional | | 0.0 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Technician | | 0.0 | 1.2 | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 |
| Clerk | | 9.6 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.9 |
| Service worker | | 28.3 | 21.5 | | 22.8 | 30.3 | 22.1 |
| Agricultural, skilled | | 0.0 | 10.7 | | 7.5 | 53.9 | 12.1 |
| Craft worker | | 8.6 | 40.2 | | 8.1 | 0.0 | 31.2 |
| Operative | | 8.6 | 23.3 | | 39.7 | 0.0 | 21.8 |
| Elementary worker | | 44.8 | 3.1 | | 22.0 | 15.8 | 10.4 |
| Total | | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | | 44 | 346 | | 52 | 26 | 483 |
| Respondents | | 7 | 86 | | 13 | 7 | 117 |

Table 4.5: Establishment size, male preparatory graduates aged 20–29, by contract type

| | Pension | No pension | None |
|----------------------|---------|------------|------|
| <5 | | 6.9 | 64.0 |
| 5–9 | | 0.0 | 18.7 |
| 10–49 | | 9.6 | 8.4 |
| 50–499 | | 46.6 | 3.3 |
| 500+ | | 36.9 | 1.2 |
| Do not know | | 0.0 | 4.4 |
| Total | | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | | 44 | 346 |
| Respondents | | 7 | 86 |

Table 4.6: Monthly pay of male preparatory graduates aged 20–29 in LE, by contract type

| | Pension | No pension | None |
|----------------------|---------|------------|------|
| < 300 | | 0.0 | 5.4 |
| 300–499 | | 0.0 | 10.3 |
| 500–999 | | 91.4 | 57.8 |
| 1000–2999 | | 8.6 | 25.2 |
| 3000+ | | 0.0 | 1.4 |
| Total | | 100 | 100 |
| Estimated median | | 774 | 797 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | | 44 | 307 |
| Respondents | | 7 | 76 |

Note: The estimated median assumes a uniform distribution in the median category.

Table 4.7: Full or part time, male preparatory graduates aged 20–29

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Full time | | 100.0 | 89.7 | | 92.8 | 86.5 | 91.2 |
| Part time, content | | 0.0 | 6.8 | | 7.2 | 13.5 | 6.4 |
| Part time, want more | | 0.0 | 3.5 | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.5 |
| Total | | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | | 44 | 342 | | 52 | 26 | 479 |
| Respondents | | 7 | 85 | | 13 | 7 | 116 |

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Appropriate | | 63.1 | 78.3 | | 76.3 | 100.0 | 78.5 |
| Over-qualified | | 0.0 | 12.7 | | 8.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 |
| Under-qualified | | 8.6 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 |
| Not applicable | | 28.3 | 9.1 | | 15.7 | 0.0 | 10.8 |
| Total | | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | | 44 | 346 | | 52 | 26 | 483 |
| Respondents | | 7 | 86 | | 13 | 7 | 117 |

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Very satisfied | | 43.8 | 17.3 | | 23.9 | 27.7 | 21.2 |
| Somewhat satisfied | | 46.6 | 51.0 | | 60.7 | 46.8 | 52.2 |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | | 9.6 | 19.7 | | 7.2 | 25.4 | 17.1 |
| Very dissatisfied | | 0.0 | 11.9 | | 8.1 | 0.0 | 9.4 |
| Total | | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | | 44 | 346 | | 52 | 26 | 483 |
| Respondents | | 7 | 86 | | 13 | 7 | 117 |

| | Contract | | | Employer | Own | Unpaid | Total |
|----------------------|----------|------------|------|----------|------|--------|-------|
| | Pension | No pension | None | | | | |
| Looking | | 0.0 | 11.7 | | 6.6 | 0.0 | 9.1 |
| Not looking | | 100.0 | 88.3 | | 93.4 | 100.0 | 90.9 |
| Total | | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | | 44 | 346 | | 52 | 26 | 483 |
| Respondents | | 7 | 86 | | 13 | 7 | 117 |

5.2 Unemployment

Nothing can be said about the unemployed male preparatory graduates because there are only three such respondents under the strict definition and five under the relaxed one. There are three unemployed females under the strict definition and 14 under the relaxed one. Despite their modest level of educational attainment, nearly all of the females express a preference for finding work in the public sector. All had been unemployed for at least a year. By contrast, 77 of the 94 male employee respondents had found their jobs within six months.

5.3 *Inactivity*

| | Males | Females | | |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|---------|------|
| | All | Single | Married | All |
| Family responsibilities | 0.0 | 63.1 | 89.0 | 84.0 |
| Pregnancy | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 1.6 |
| Illness | 9.5 | 7.8 | 2.6 | 3.6 |
| No desire | 0.0 | 21.3 | 6.4 | 9.2 |
| Other reason | 90.5 | 7.8 | 0.0 | 1.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 46 | 69 | 69 | 342 |
| Respondents | 12 | 13 | 13 | 60 |

As with other levels of education, family responsibilities are cited as the most common reason for inactivity among females, with a lack of desire also being reported among those single, while the few inactive males cite other reasons.

6 Other levels of educational attainment

The number of graduates of other levels of education is relatively small and so a detailed discussion of their labour market outcomes is not feasible.

6.1 Tertiary non-university

Only five percent each of males and females aged 25–29 report tertiary non-university as their educational attainment. Table 5.1 presents the overall distribution by sex and age. Most had completed their studies by the age of 21 or 22.

Table 5.2 presents the distribution of economic activity by sex and age. Most males are in employment, at least by the time they reach the age of 25. Those employed are mostly working in technical, service, or craft occupations, in roughly even numbers.

Table 5.1: Tertiary non-university by sex and age

| | Males | Females |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| 15–19 | 1.2 | 0.0 |
| 20–24 | 46.8 | 65.3 |
| 25–29 | 52.1 | 34.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 376 | 340 |
| Respondents | 96 | 59 |

Table 5.2: Economic activity of tertiary non-university by sex and age group

| | Male | | Female | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| | 20–24 | 25–29 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 68.7 | 89.5 | 14.5 | 43.0 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 12.7 | 25.0 | 6.8 | 9.1 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 7.2 | 16.3 | 2.2 | 9.3 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 38.2 | 36.1 | 5.4 | 24.6 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 4.3 | 1.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 0.0 | 6.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 6.3 | 4.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Unemployed - strict | 17.2 | 4.0 | 34.9 | 18.5 |
| Available, not seeking | 5.2 | 2.3 | 12.9 | 9.5 |
| Enrolled | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Inactive | 8.9 | 4.2 | 37.8 | 29.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 176 | 196 | 222 | 118 |
| Respondents | 45 | 50 | 38 | 21 |

By contrast, relatively few females are employed, the proportions employed, unemployed, and inactive being closer to those for secondary technical graduates than for university graduates. The higher employment rate for the older age group may appear anomalous, given that a higher proportion of the older age group is married and married females tend to be inactive. This should

be regarded as a small cell size artefact, but, for what it is worth, the explanation is that all the single respondents are economically active and fewer are unemployed. Of those in employment, most are in technical occupations, mostly in health or education. Seventy five percent of the males and nearly all the females are satisfied with their jobs. Only 15 percent of males, and none of the females, are dissatisfied and looking for a new job.

The cell sizes for unemployed tertiary non-university graduates are too small to permit meaningful analysis. Most of the inactive females cite family responsibilities. The remainder say that they had no desire to work.

6.2 Secondary general education

Secondary general education is important in Egypt in that its graduates are the feedstock for university enrolment, but it makes little direct contribution to the labour force. In the SWTS, only three percent of males and two percent of females report this level of attainment. Thus a detailed analysis of the findings relating to this group is not feasible. Table 5.3 presents the overall distribution by sex and age. Table 5.4 presents the distribution of economic activity by sex and age group for those aged at least 20. Most of the 46 males have found employment, but only two of the 22 females. The females are evenly split between being unemployed and inactive.

| | Males | Females |
|----------------------|-------|---------|
| 15–19 | 3.9 | 11.2 |
| 20–24 | 45.0 | 60.6 |
| 25–29 | 51.1 | 28.2 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 183 | 137 |
| Respondents | 48 | 25 |

| | Male | | Female | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| | 20–24 | 25–29 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 94.8 | 91.0 | 12.5 | 0.0 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 4.9 | 8.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 4.2 | 9.3 | 6.5 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 63.1 | 53.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 0.0 | 11.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 8.4 | 8.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 14.2 | 0.0 | 6.0 | 0.0 |
| Unemployed - strict | 5.2 | 9.0 | 26.3 | 28.5 |
| Available, not seeking | 0.0 | 0.0 | 14.6 | 14.9 |
| Inactive | 0.0 | 0.0 | 46.7 | 56.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 83 | 94 | 83 | 39 |
| Respondents | 22 | 24 | 15 | 7 |

6.3 Primary graduates

About nine percent of SWTS males and seven percent of females are primary graduates. With compulsory education now extended to preparatory education, these figures should fall in time. Table 5.5 gives the distribution of economic activity by sex and age group. Virtually all males are employed. Assaad, Binzel, and Gadallah (2010) suggest that this is to be expected since low-attainment males tend to drop out of school when presented with an opportunity for appropriate employment. Most are in non-contractual employment, but there are also significant numbers of self-employed and unpaid family workers. 61 percent found their jobs within a month and 87 percent within six months. Ninety four percent are working full-time or part-time and content with their hours. Only three percent are sufficiently dissatisfied with their jobs to be actively seeking new ones.

Only a quarter of females are employed, half of them as unpaid family workers, all but one of these in agriculture. The majority of females are inactive, 80 percent citing family responsibilities and most of the remainder expressing no desire to work. About 10 percent are unemployed, using the relaxed definition, but very few using the strict one.

Table 5.5: Economic activity of primary by sex and age group

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|
| | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 98.2 | 91.0 | 93.9 | 29.9 | 24.9 | 24.5 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 0.0 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 0.0 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 1.9 | 0.0 | 3.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 70.3 | 68.9 | 70.3 | 14.2 | 7.6 | 11.8 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 1.0 | 1.0 | 6.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 4.6 | 11.6 | 6.4 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 20.4 | 8.6 | 6.1 | 14.1 | 13.6 | 12.6 |
| Unemployed - strict | 1.0 | 2.1 | 2.5 | 4.8 | 2.0 | 0.0 |
| Available, not seeking | 0.0 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 9.0 | 12.5 | 15.6 |
| Inactive, not in school | 0.8 | 4.0 | 3.6 | 56.4 | 60.5 | 60.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 412 | 396 | 334 | 328 | 296 | 137 |
| Respondents | 108 | 102 | 87 | 57 | 51 | 24 |

6.4 *Less than primary*

Table 5.6 gives the distribution of economic activity by sex and age group of those with less than complete primary education. The general pattern of the outcomes is fairly similar to that of primary graduates.

| | Males | | | Females | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|
| | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 | 15–19 | 20–24 | 25–29 |
| In employment | 95.4 | 88.7 | 97.4 | 32.8 | 26.3 | 25.0 |
| <i>Contract with pension</i> | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Contract, no pension</i> | 0.0 | 0.9 | 1.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| <i>Employee, no contract</i> | 70.3 | 58.5 | 66.3 | 18.8 | 9.3 | 4.8 |
| <i>Employer</i> | 0.8 | 1.7 | 7.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.3 |
| <i>Own account</i> | 3.7 | 10.0 | 11.5 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 0.0 |
| <i>Unpaid family worker</i> | 20.6 | 17.6 | 9.0 | 14.0 | 15.8 | 18.9 |
| Unemployed - strict | 0.9 | 3.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.2 | 1.3 |
| Available, not seeking | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.7 | 4.1 | 5.8 |
| Inactive, not in school | 3.7 | 7.7 | 2.6 | 65.5 | 66.5 | 67.8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>n</i> (thousands) | 432 | 455 | 597 | 357 | 557 | 473 |
| Respondents | 113 | 120 | 155 | 63 | 96 | 84 |

7 Conclusions

Unsurprisingly, dissection of the SWTS data leads to the same findings as those derived from the ELMPS that preceded it by a few months. Both find high employment rates for males, with non-contractual employment the dominant work category. Even for university graduates it accounts for nearly half of jobs. Apart from university graduates, who may take their time, most find jobs within a few months at most of search.

Both surveys find low employment rates for females and high inactivity rates, especially among those with low educational attainment, and high unemployment rates, especially among those with high educational attainment.

The big question, then, is the same for the SWTS as for the ELMPS: what do all the numbers mean? When one stands back, and looks at the scene as a whole, what does one see? Alternative assessments are possible.

7.1 *Pessimistic assessment*

Under the pessimistic view, even the near full-employment of males may be an illusion in that many may be underemployed. In view of the restrictions placed on access to unemployment benefits in Egypt, there is pressure on males to accept whatever jobs may be on offer, even substandard ones, rather than remain unemployed. This could account for the fact that large numbers of male university graduates are in non-contractual employment in jobs that do not match their educational attainment.

With regard to females, the large numbers of unemployed would be ascribed to a combination of a shortage of jobs and employers' discrimination against females on account of their higher rates of turnover, absences on maternity leave, reluctance to work long hours, and non-wage costs associated with statutory requirements for the provision of day care and transport.

7.2 *A more moderate assessment*

A more sanguine view would be that the labour market outcomes of the SWTS respondents appear overall to be very much in line with what one would expect in an economy at the level of development of Egypt. The fact that most males are in non-contractual employment is entirely to be anticipated. Even the presence of many university graduates in the non-contractual sector is not a surprise, given the mass expansion of higher education and the limited ability of under-resourced institutions to add value to the output of secondary education that is of poor quality by international standards. Under the circumstances, it is inevitable that many university graduates will end up in jobs for which they feel overqualified, rather than in the professional or technical employment that they expected, given their educational credentials. Relatively few males reported being sufficiently dissatisfied with their jobs to be looking for new ones. Relatively few of those working part-time wanted additional hours.

With regard to females, according to the moderate view, the outcomes are as to be expected, given the influence of social norms relating to the characterization of what may be considered to be an appropriate and acceptable job for a female. Further, as might be expected, the strength of the influence of these norms on economic activity is inversely related to the level of educational attainment. In the case of married females, social norms may dictate that they should not seek employment at all, except as unpaid family workers. To this extent, the low employment rate of

females may be less a matter of an absolute scarcity of jobs but a scarcity of jobs that assure their reputational safety by meeting their restrictive reservation working conditions.

Many unemployed females have been unemployed for a long time and might better be classified as inactive. Perhaps some are staying on the books just in case an elusive public sector job somehow comes their way.

Social norms may also have an adverse impact on female employment through the closure of certain occupations simply as a matter of custom. Craft occupations, in particular, may be thus affected. Five hundred and seventy one SWTS respondents in non-contractual employment report working in craft occupations, and only two are female. There is evidence that, for some such occupations, the force of custom in Egypt is so great that some find it inconceivable that a woman should be employed in it. This seems to be the conclusion that should be drawn from the SWTS question that asked whether, in their current job, the respondents felt that a woman had equal opportunities to a man for being promoted or being successful. Of the 571 craft workers in non-contractual employment, 287 just said that the question was not applicable (virtually all the rest said greater opportunities for men). Of the 287, 118 were secondary technical graduates, and it is possible that, by streaming males and females into different types of occupational training, the schools themselves are helping to perpetuate, even reinforce, occupational stereotypes.

7.3 *Discriminating between the assessments*

Perhaps the most important knowledge gap lies in the ambiguity of interpreting the assertion of unemployed females that their unemployment is attributable to a shortage of jobs. It is doubtful that standard survey methods can provide an answer. They cannot capture the context with the richness and sensitivity required to resolve the issue. It would appear that in-depth, unstructured interviews are required, perhaps returning to a subset of the unemployed SWTS females.

7.4 *What of the future?*

It is doubtful whether any supply-side initiatives could have any effect on a significant scale, except as a zero-sum game in which employment opportunities are reallocated among individuals. The provision of training may make its beneficiaries better equipped in the competition for jobs, but only at the expense of those who would otherwise have obtained them. It may reduce the internal training needs of employers, but it is unlikely to have significant impact on the total number of jobs available.

In Egypt, as elsewhere, macroeconomic factors are fundamental. Much depends on the capacity of the Egyptian economy to generate new jobs. The economy has done relatively well recently. Although there was a slowing of economic growth in 2011, the economy has not suffered the lost half-decade experienced in much of the rest of the world. However, it is unlikely for the foreseeable future that it will generate professional and technical jobs in sufficient numbers to match the output of graduates from the universities. As a consequence, the feelings of many that they are overqualified for their jobs will persist.

Much will depend on future demographics. As a result of a decline in fertility, the current 15–24 age group is less numerous than its predecessors. However, Krafft and Assaad (2014) warn that an echo formed by the progeny of the large cohort currently aged 25–29 will soon be entering the labour market, and, longer term, there is evidence that the fall in fertility rates has been reversed in

the past five years. And much also will depend on migration: on there being opportunities for migration, and on the willingness of Egyptians to take advantage of those opportunities.

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