

Female genital mutilation (FGM): Is it still an existing problem in Egypt?

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Abstract

Background: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is one of those traditional practices whose origin can be traced back to antiquity. The worst types of FGM are practiced in Sudan, Egypt and Nigeria. The international movement against FGM gained momentum in the past two decades, and attempts were made to increase public awareness of the procedure and its complications. In addition, laws were passed in Egypt to criminally charge practitioners who perform FGM.

Objectives: The aim of this study was to describe frequency, prevalence, complications of FGM and awareness of the women at the clinic visit about the latest update (2016) of the Egyptian law that criminalizes it.

Methodology: This was a cross sectional study of women in their childbearing years (18–45) who attended the Gynecology and Obstetrics outpatient clinics at Fayoum University hospitals between January 1st and December 31st, 2018. After giving their consent, one hundred women attending the clinic received a medical examination and structured interview related to their views and plans regarding FGM of female children.

Results: Sixty two percent of women participants reported that they had been circumcised. In 88% of cases, the participant's mother was the person who made the decision to have their daughter circumcised. The most common type of circumcision reported was type II, in 86% of cases. Regarding intent to have a female child circumcised, 32% reported that they would have their own daughter circumcised.

Conclusion: Despite Egyptian law that criminalizes FGM, the know potential for serious complications of the procedure, including death, and the efforts of governmental, non-governmental, and international organizations to combat the use of FGM, one third of the women interviewed still planned to have their daughter circumcised.