

SCRIPT: "Can Women Have it All?"
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MUSIC: Twilight Piano by Lullaby (38 seconds from start of song)

Can women have it all? A fulfilling career and a stable family life? Throughout the generations women have been passing through different circumstances with their career lives depending on their ages and their life restrictions. Some graduate and don't find a job, some other dedicate their whole time to pursue their career and some on the other hand are forced to leave their jobs to build a family. (0:24)

Let's here the story of Rama Taher a fresh graduate from the American University in Cairo. (0:06)

Fade in music: I'm not a girl not yet a woman by Britney Spears (1:26 From Middle of song)

Rama Taher (RT): Well, at first I found it interesting waking up not having any assignments due or catching up any classes. It was so relaxing and stress free, but then after staying a couple of months at home. I started to get bored and I decided to look for an appropriate job; however, I realized that finding a job wasn't as easy as I expected. (0:18)

But apparently, Rama's high expectations did not meet, as she couldn't find a job. (0.04)

RT: However, finding a job wasn't easy as I expected. (0.05)

Most of the fresh graduates whether they are qualified or not are facing difficulties finding a job as Rama because of the limited job opportunities nowadays. (0.09)

RT: let me tell you I graduated with a bachelor degree of Integrated Marketing Communication from AUC with double minors in Business Administration and History. Also, I have a two years experience in the marketing field since I did a lot of internships during my spring and winter breaks. But as you can tell, the problem is not about having the qualifications, it's about the limited opportunities we have in Egypt and as we can call it also its now called the anemic job market. (0:35)

Change of Music: I need a dollar. (1:00 from start of song)

But not everyone who graduates struggles to find a job, May Zekri a 33-year-old interior designer has her own private business and yet she's still unmarried. (0:12)

May Zekri (MZ): My business is actually my number one priority, I have spent like about you know last nine years of my life focusing on my career which I'm still working on to improve my self in the market. (0:14)

So as a result of dedicating her whole time to pursue her career, May didn't not get the chance to get married and build a family and this is also affected her social life as well. (0:10)

MZ: Obviously I don't have the time to start a family and get married and have children. Also, I didn't get the chance to have a good social life and have friends and go out here in Cairo as I'm always traveling abroad seeking only the success of my career by learning and gaining new experience in my field. (0:18)

Change of Music: Marry you (3:23 from start of song)

And finally, moving to the oldest generation who has a whole different story. 56 year old Randa Nazir who left her job after getting married for moving out to another city and for raising her first child and taking care of her other children as well. (0:20)

NAT SOUND: The sound of my steps going up to Randa's house and the sound of the door closed. (0.07)

Randa Nazir (RN): I started my career life with training in a travel agency when I was in my third year of university. I really liked the people as they were really nice teaching me new things and how to work and after a while, I asked them if I could get employed as a part-time. And they actually agreed and gave me this chance although I was still studying. (0:24)

And surprisingly, Randa managed her time between studying and working, as she always wanted to gain new experience. (0:18)

RN: However I used to manage my time between my university and my work, then after I graduated I continued working in this travel agency in which I gained new experiences and met new people who made me learn so many things in my life. (0:16)

Although Randa was very ambitious and yet successful in her career in which she has started since she was a student, but she had to quit her job to start her new life as a housewife. (0:11)

RN: Yes, I was planning to quit my job when I get married and when I get pregnant to give all my effort to my house and to my children. (0.08)

Randa had some reasons to quit her career life and be a housewife. (0.05)

RN: The main reason for quitting my career is that I got married and my husband used to work in Aswan so we had to move out from Cairo leaving my work and to

start my new life with my husband and be a housewife to raise my children and give them all the care they need. (0:16)

Change of Music: Viva La Vida (3:57 from start of song)

Apparently, most women face a lot of challenges when they are caught between choosing whether to focus on their career or to build a family. Rama, May and Randa are going through family pressures and each of them has a different story to share with us. (0:15)

Rama is apparently pressured by her family as they had high expectations from her after she graduates. (0:06)

RT: Let's say that I'm feeling useless and a burden on my parents and I feel that I put them down because they had really high expectations from me after I graduated and they were looking forward to see me employed and in a good position after they have been paying thousands of pounds on my education yearly. They keep pressuring me also on a daily basis by asking me if I get any response from any company, but they just don't understand the chaos Egypt is passing through nowadays. (0:33)

While on the other hand, May has a different story she has family pressures but opposite to these of Rama's. They want her to get married and pay attention to her love life more than putting all her effort in her career life as she has exceeded the thirties and here in Egypt its not accepted or seen as normal in our conservative culture. (0:20)

MZ: My family is pressuring and nagging me all the time. They want me to get married and of course to have children. They always tell me to leave my work because they know I'm always busy and I have no time for anything else but my work and also they want me to focus on my personal life and like to find the right person in order to build a family. As in their point of view, I'm very old as I exceeded the thirties, which is not accepted or seen as normal in our culture. (0:31)

But Randa did not have problems because she was actually expecting to leave her job when getting married to give all of her effort to her husband and children. Although she hopes that her children would appreciate what she did for them one day. (0:14)

RN: I don't really care if they do appreciate it or not, its all about me and what I wanted to do which is to take a good care of them. And its not like I'm waiting for anything in return, but I hope one day they will get to know that I did all of this for them. (0:18)

So, to answer the question can women have it all? The answer is that most of the women cannot actually have it all. Its not the easy to have both the career life and the family life and women can't escape from the family pressures because of our closed and conservative culture. (0:16)

This audio documentary was produced by Farah Abdel Dayem for the audio production course in the American University in Cairo taught by Professor Kim Fox in Spring 2015.
(0:11)

High Music Level and then Fading out: (0:31)