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Audio Documentary final script

Online dating in Egypt

This audio documentary is about online dating in Egypt with focus on Tinder, a dating application. Our aim was to inform our listeners on the updated trends in the dating scene in Egypt, as well as show how society views online dating. We also tried to uncover the advantages and disadvantages of online dating and whether or not it's worth a try.

Nour Omar (NO): Hi, I am Nour Omar.

Youssef Helmy (YH): And I am Youssef Helmy.

NO: Today we are going to talk about online dating in Egypt, particularly the use of Tinder, a dating application.

YH: Dating has never been easy in Egypt. Our society is becoming more and more Westernized, but social norms in dating still prevail. Despite the stigma that comes with it, Tinder, a dating application, is becoming very popular in Egypt.

MUSIC: Fade in Blue Giraffe, then fades out. (1:00)

NO: It all started with dating websites like Love Habibi and Metro Date, but became even more popular when Egyptians started using Facebook as their own personalized dating website.

YH: So recently, Nour got a marriage proposal on Facebook. When he did not get a response, he messaged her father asking for her hand. Why don't you tell us more about this experience, Nour?

SFX: Facebook message (00:02)

NO: To be honest, I have always heard these stories about men trying to find brides on Facebook, but never in a million years would I have thought I would be on of their targets.

YH: With technology progressing, dating applications like Tinder are becoming more and more appealing to the younger generations.

YH: Mariam Wahby, a 21-year-old Integrated marketing communication IMC student at The American University in Cairo AUC, Found some interesting people on Tinder.

Mariam Wahby (MW): "I did find some good-looking men, but there were some men which it was kind of strange there was just pictures with men and their abs like there is not even a face on them or like pictures of cartoons, and it's kind of creepy." (00:15)

NO: Your dating profile is all about marketing, how you present yourself to others, and whether or not you stand out. And apparently pictures of Abs and cartoons is not the way to go. I think Youssef has some insight on this specific topic. So, he recently downloaded Tinder to try it out. So, tell us how did you step up your account and if you have any tips, please share.

MUSIC: Fade in Blue Giraffe, then fade out (00:50)

YH: Well in the beginning I thought that one could go on it without a profile picture, but of course I found the opposite. One has to have a good profile picture of himself, also not one or two but like a minimum of three to four so people know that your account is not fake. Finally, you have to have a good bio that will grab the attention of other users that you want to swipe right on your account.

NO: A study conducted by leisure portal, Wagoal on sixty countries revealed that Egyptian men have the highest chance of meeting a partner online, since Egyptian women have been found to be the most communicative on dating websites. This could be explained by the pressure put on women in our society to find a husband by a certain age or suffer the fate of an arranged marriage. Back to Youssef, so were you lucky on Tinder?

SFX: Tinder notification (00:03)

SFX: Clock Ticking (00:05)

MUSIC: ME 2 Fade in, then fades out (00:32)

YH: Unfortunately, I wasn't even though I really don't need it in my life but I decided to give it a try for the sake of the documentary to gain insight. Honestly in my opinion people that use it don't have any social life and couldn't get a date without the application. I almost had a match but all she wanted was a hookup, and basically, I wasn't into her at all.

YH: Now back to Mariam, she started using Tinder after a friend's recommendation.

MW: "The first time I tried using Tinder, was a friend recommended it to me, I thought it was kind of weird and it's something outside my comfort zone overall, but then I said why not I had nothing better to do, my love life was not going anywhere, so I thought why not." (00:14)

NO: Reasons for downloading Tinder differ from one person to the other. For example, Nancy Yasser, a University of art and design graduate, decided to go on Tinder after she broke up with her boyfriend.

MUSIC: Arabic Action Fade in. (00:05)

Nancy Yasser(NY): "I was in a four-year long relationship, it was really abusive." (00:06)

NY: "I was just constricted to this one person." (00:04)

NO: Nancy used Tinder to meet new people and broaden her social circle. Just like many other girls, Nancy knew very well the stigma that follows.

MUSIC: Arabic Action Fade in. (00:26)

NY: "I downloaded the app. And at first I didn't tell anyone." (00:03)

YH: Mariam also felt the same way.

MW: "I wouldn't willingly admit that I am on Tinder because I know the judgment that comes with that." (00:07)

NO: Omar Assem, a Business student at AUC, initially downloaded Tinder abroad, and even though he hasn't deleted the application since he's been back, he's not keen on using it in Egypt.

Omar Assem(OA): "I just go through it from time to time to see if I matched with someone or not." (00:06)

OA: "Here it's not the same at all, people are scared to admit they are on Tinder because it's socially looked down upon." (00:07)

MUSIC: Arabic Action Fade in (1:00), then Fade out

YH: Mariam's story is not done, while she was using Tinder, she found something in common in all the people she talked to.

MW: "They used to get afraid if this is a fake account or someone is pranking them." (00:05)

NO: Catfishing is inevitable on such applications, anyone can be hiding behind a screen and pretending to be someone they're not. So, this was the only way they felt they were safe.

MW: "The first thing a guy would say is send me your Facebook account, send me your WhatsApp number." (00:06)

NO: In the virtual world, privacy is very limited. Online dating websites and applications require their participants to share their photos, likes, and dislikes, which eliminates the mystery that was once there in dating. Now people are swiping left and right based on photos and information that are not enough to determine whether the person is right for you or not.

YH: Mariam portrays a great example of ruining the mystery with any guy she meets on Tinder. The moment she starts talking with a guy, she needs to search his name on social media.

SFX: Keyboard Typing (00:05)

MW: "You need to understand who that person is, it's like an automatic reaction."(00:05)

NO: She also tends to avoid guys who have no mutual friends with her, and that's where Facebook comes in handy.

MUSIC: Motivation FADES IN, then FADES OUT (1:20)

MW: "What makes Facebook interesting is that you get to know common friends between you, so you would understand if they are in the same social circle." (00:08)

YH: Sometimes it's difficult maintaining a relationship with someone who is outside from your social community. That's what Omar learned the hard way.

NO: Omar met two girls on Tinder, one which he connected with and the other not so much. Let's start with the one he liked.

OA: "I liked her a lot and I think we had chemistry, but just things didn't work out." (00:05)

OA: "We drifted apart a little bit because we have different friend groups." (00:03)

YH: Now the other girl, Omar felt like she was a bit different from what she seemed on Tinder.

OA: "I guess she seemed supercool when we chatted and like she was very different in general." (00:06)

OA: "she wasn't as interesting as she seemed on her profile." (00:03)

NO: Now that's something that doesn't happen to you if you prefer the traditional way of dating.

YH: speaking of traditional dating, we wanted to interview someone to give us an idea about how dating was back then, without technology and with a much less freedom.

NO: Youssef interviewed his Aunt, Nanis El Badawy, about how the dating scene was back in her time.

SFX: Flashback sound

Nanis El Badawy (NB): "it's much different than it is nowadays, because back then we didn't have like internet, mobile phones, it was just like landlines. it was much harder to communicate, especially back then people were much more conservative, dating was not very accepted." (00:14)

MUSIC: Upbeat Corporate FADES IN, THEN FADES OUT. (00:50)

YH: It's hard to say which way is better, online dating or the traditional dating. What we know for sure is that a lot of people are giving applications like Tinder a shot.

NO: Maybe it's a way of rebelling against our social norms, or an easier way to meet people. And even though not one person we interviewed had a successful relationship on Tinder, there's a hashtag

"#tindersuccessstory" that includes many wedding and engagement photos of people who met on the application.

YH: So, for all the people on Tinder, don't give up, your pictures might end up on the hashtag.

NO: For those of you who aren't, including myself, there's no shame in trying. Well except here in Egypt.

NO: This audio documentary was produced by Nour Omar and Youssef Helmy for the Audio Production course at The American University in Cairo, taught by Professor Kim Fox in the Spring semester of 2018. Special thanks to Mariam Wahby, Nancy Yasser, Omar Assem, and Nanis El Badawy. Music by Julian Avila, Akashic Records, and Inspire corporate.