

Women in Development and Peace



Issue (8)
February - 2023

- **Innovations and Women's Needs**
- **Yemeni Women in the Fields of Development**
- **Women and Heritage Protection**
- **Women in the Yemeni Media and the Challenges they Face**

Yemen Information Center 2023
www.yemeninformation.org



Editorial Board:

Editorial board presidency:

- Dr. Mohammad Hadi Al-Akhrash

Editorial board

- Afrah Borji
- Yasmine Abdulhafeez

Translators:

- Abdullah Obad • Manal Aqlan
- Wedad Babaker • Samar Faisal

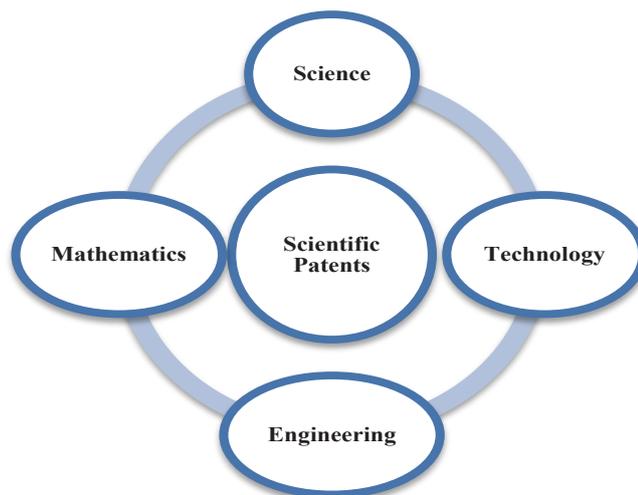
Technical Director

Hani Al-Nashiry

• **Innovations and Women's Needs**

According to a new study published in “Science”, despite their small number compared to men inventors, women in the field of scientific research, especially biomedical sciences, seek to find solutions to some of their health problems and to meet their own needs. The report provides evidence that fewer women hold biomedical patents, leading to a reduced number of patented technologies designed to address problems affecting women. The gender gap in the field of research and innovation is reflected in market demands, and thus in the beneficiaries of these inventions.

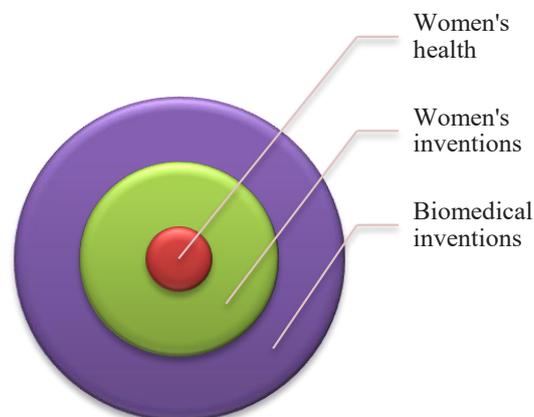
Although patents in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) increased among women in the United States of America, from 6.3% in 1976 to 16.2% in 2010, the number of men with patents still outnumbers women by far. To a large extent, this reflects the lack of continuity of some women in scientific careers and the world's loss of many outstanding girls who could have become like “Marie Curie” and who followed her path.



To identify which inventions are female-focused, male-focused, or neutral, researchers analyzed 441,504 medical patents filed from 1976 through 2010 using machine learning. They show that patented biomedical inventions created by women are up to 35% more likely to benefit women's health than biomedical inventions created by men who tend to overlook or downplay the medical needs of women. These patents are more likely to address conditions like breast cancer and postpartum preeclampsia, as well as diseases that disproportionately affect women, like fibromyalgia and lupus.



After researchers from McGill University, Harvard Business School, and the University of Navarra in Barcelona, had examined the scientific research published in the field of biomedical sciences between 2002 and 2020, it was found that women’s biomedical inventions are more likely to focus on women’s needs and the beneficiaries of the invention are governed by the inventor’s gender. In addition, women are more likely to come up with biomedical inventions that may lead to patents that benefit women’s health. Hence, the underrepresentation of women among inventors would greatly affect women’s health.



- **Women are a Minority in the Field of Innovation**

The report indicates that across inventor teams of all gender mixes, biomedical invention from 1976 to 2010 focused more on the needs of men than women. Our calculations suggest that had male and female inventors been equally represented over this period, there would have been an additional 6,500 more female-focused inventions. “Unfortunately, previous research has shown that women are a minority in the field of innovation in the United States of America, whether in medical sciences or in other fields, and the gap is expected to continue in the number of inventions targeting women’s health in the future,” according to co-author Rembrandt Koning, an Assistant Professor at Harvard Business School.

“Many researches shed light on the lack of women’s representation in the field of innovation. We found that across inventor teams of all gender mixes, biomedical invention from 1976 to 2010 focused more on the needs of men than women. During the same period, male-majority teams produced hundreds of inventions focused on the needs of men than

those focused on the needs of women. These male inventors were more likely to generate patents that addressed topics like prostate than “cervix.” Male inventors also tended to target diseases and conditions like Parkinson’s and sleep apnea that disproportionately affect men,” Koning said.

John-Paul Ferguson, an Assistant Professor at the Desautels College of Administration at McGill University, stated, “some progress has been made about the gap between the inventors of men and women, and the aim of this study is to answer the question: Is the increase in the number of women in the field of biomedical sciences and in the number of inventions targeting women attributed to women? Or are their occurrences just a coincidence?” He added, “it is necessary to encourage girls and women to join the field of scientific professions and enroll in schools and institutions.”

In a statement to “Science”, co-author Sampsa Samila, professor at the Business School (IESE) in Barcelona, said, “women are interested in the major fields of medicine, but in this study, he and his colleagues did not examine the aspects on which women focus. Rather, they found that even in the narrowly defined fields, women were able to find ways to innovate for women.



The findings of the analyzes of the previous study in the field of invention showed that the patents of the women-only teams target diseases that affect women more than 16% of the total sample selected for the study.

• **Diseases Affect both Men and Women**

In an article in the New York Times, Linda Griffith, a bioengineer in gynecological research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, refuses to classify diseases as gynecological, and therefore concern only women. She believes that science should not differentiate between diseases that affect women, men, or both.

According to Koning, the world lacks inventions that target women’s needs or that can be applied to their advantage. Many cutting-edge diagnostic tools and treatments for conditions such as atrial fibrillation and flutter were designed primarily for men, and therefore, the increase in the number of women inventors will help in the emergence of inventions that benefit both sexes to the same extent.

Emerging female inventors, on an equal footing, produce ideas for both sexes, but gender stereotypes lead women to not obtain male-centered patents. The same applies to men in not obtaining female-centered patents. This may be due to differential selection in patenting, rather than to differences in the knowledge and experience with which women contribute to invention.

• **Yemeni Women and Literary Writing**

Recently, the Yemeni arena has witnessed the publication of a number of literary novels and poetry collections by new emerging Yemeni women writers, the most prominent of which was “Blind Mirror” by Ahlam Al-Maqaleh, “A Woman in Jasmine Shadow” by Somia Taha Yassin, “Virgin Hymns” by Saba Hamzah, and others. Yemeni women writers

face many difficulties that may cause them to be frustrated or may push them to stop writing or think twice before embarking on the experience of publishing a new book.

Yemeni women writers and poets endure many challenges in looking for support and subsidies in order for their works to be printed and published. Somia Taha Yassin, author of "A Woman in Jasmine Shadow," said, "the lack of support and being subject to censorship more than male writers are among the challenges we encounter. Going through the experience of printing and publishing a book was very difficult to the extent that it makes me think twice before taking any new step."

Ahlam Al-Maqaleh complains about society's view of women writers and poets. She mentioned that she is often blamed with words such as "shameful and forbidden," and is often described as being immature or bold. People always forget that she speaks the pure language of the heart, thereby making her readers feel what she and other people feel. On the role of the Ministry of Culture in supporting writers, she said, "the Ministry often neglects talented people and marginalizes their suffering and pain. It does not even honor the symbols of literature and struggle. The ministry does not remember honoring them until their death, if it remembers them at all."

In the same vein, the writer, Safaa Al-Habal, who is awaiting the release of her new story, "My Destiny a Butterfly." She said, "when I visited the Ministry of Culture, the sheer magnitude of the catastrophe shocked me. The ministry is not like the ministry, and nothing there has to do with culture. Regarding the support of the Ministry of Culture, Al-Habal added, "I do not know if it supports other writers, but some of my colleagues and I did not receive any support nor did we find any cooperation. The ministry did not provide any initiative seeking to develop and support writers."

Nour Nouri, a writer from Hadhramout known for her patriotic writings, has a more detailed opinion on society's view. She explained that society's view of women when they write is shaped according to the nature of its members. Societies in which patriarchal culture is prevalent believe that writing is something trivial. The educated and open societies believe that women have the right to write whatever they want, and to show openly their viewpoints and standpoints by any possible means. Nouri added, "most of women writers do not find a way to display their writings except through personal means, and few of them publish in newspapers through what they send to pages owned by readers."

Mr. Abdulbari Taher, head of the General Writers' Association, attributed this neglect and absenteeism to which women are exposed to the existing illiteracy rate that the country suffers from. He also pointed out that illiteracy rate among women has reached 70%, and that this illiteracy stands as an obstacle to knowledge, culture and participation. "Women are absent, whether in the General Writers' Association or the Union of Writers or Journalists," he concluded.

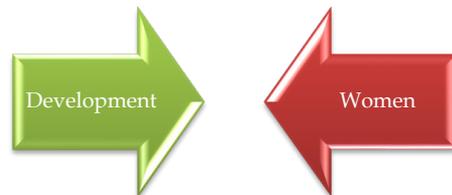
• **References:**

- Scientific American, Do Women's Innovations Focus on Women's Needs? August, 2021, <https://www.scientificamerican.com>
- Yemeni Women: A Cultural Movement Facing Challenges, Ali Awaida, February, 2014, <https://www.noonpost.com>
- Surveys and opinions of a number of interested and social researchers in the field of scientific innovations.

• Yemeni Women in the Fields of Development

Yemeni women are witnessing transformation and change, as is the case in other countries, especially in the Middle East and North Africa. This stage represents an opportunity to build an inclusive society for economic gain. Attempts to empower Yemeni women have contributed to bridging the gap that occurred previously as a result of the successive crises and conflicts that exhausted Yemen.

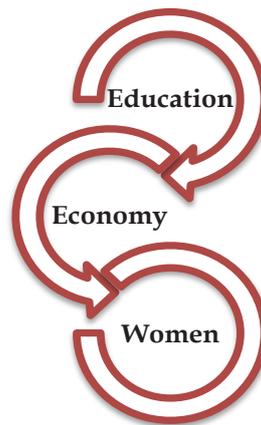
For many years, Yemen has been occupying the last ranks in the global indicators related to gender gaps, especially during the past years. There are still great challenges that hinder its launch to a new stage. Thanks to the importance of gender equality, Yemen has placed it on the top of its priorities to lay the foundations for a civilized state and society based on the integration of all its members in the service of society. Therefore, it seeks to involve women in all fields of work, just like their male counterparts.



• Brief Assessment of the Cultural Norms and Gender Independence

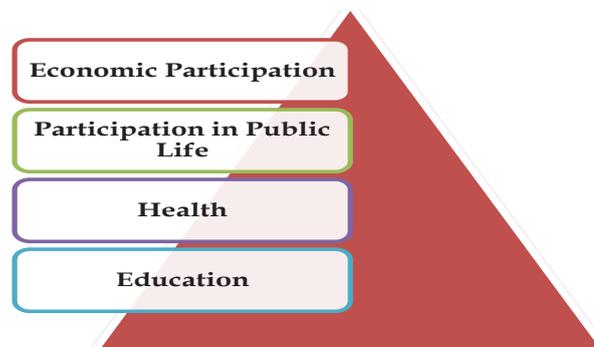
Yemen was one of twenty countries that participated in a rapid qualitative assessment on gender and economic decision-making, which formed the reference for the 2012 Development Report. Nearly 4,000 people from 97 countries around the world participated in focus groups aimed at seeking answers to questions about gender norms, strategic life decisions, education and participation in economic activities.

The field work in Yemen was carried out by the Yemeni Women's Union. The sample included 200 participants in two urban communities in Aden and Ibb, and two rural communities in Amran and Dhamar. In each site, six groups held discussions and interviews with specialists and citizens separately for men and women, adolescents and adults. They provided information that sheds light on the possibility of changing gender norms, in addition to how individuals and societies deal with the ongoing crises and the weakness of the local economy. These discussions aimed to develop a strategy for integrating women's participation in economic decisions and activities.



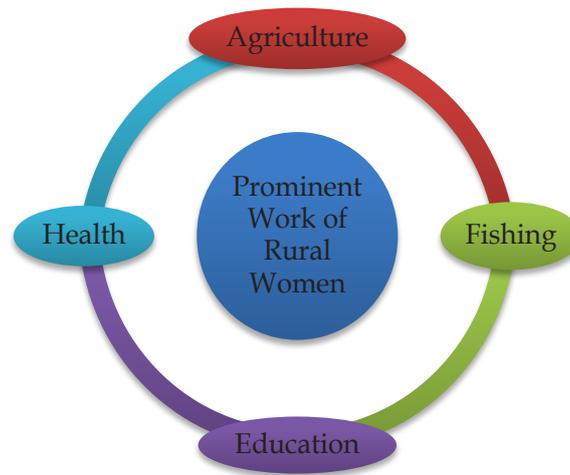
• The reality of Yemeni Women Economic Projects

During the decades after the revolution and independence, the conditions of Yemeni women witnessed remarkable improvement in many areas, the most important of which are education, health, and the level of participation in public and economic life. Despite the deteriorating conditions and the widespread poverty, especially in rural areas, women still suffer from discrimination and economic and social marginalization. They have been exposed to the manifestations and consequences of poverty more than men. They have also been excluded from economic independence and decision-making opportunities. They also continue to bear double burdens in managing family affairs, and in playing productive and reproductive roles.



Official Data on the Economic Status of Women

- 7.23% women within the labor force.
- 6.24% women of the total number of workers.
- 8.2% unemployed women, and 12.5% unemployed men.
- 8.2% women out of the total wage earners.
- 28.3% women work in the private sector and government organizations, and 9.3% women work in the government and public sectors.
- 94.7% women work in the agricultural, fishing and forestry sectors out of the total female workers in the private sector and governmental organizations.
- 18.3% women work in education, and 24.9% women perform health and humanitarian work.

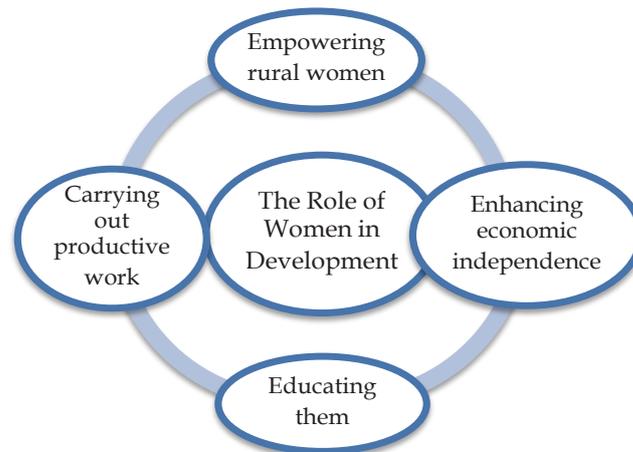


The most prominent jobs and professions that Yemeni women occupy within the society are the following:

- Educational field;
- Health field;
- Agricultural field;
- Humanitarian work; and
- Other household chores (e.g. raising livestock, cooking, cleaning the house, fetching water, etc.).

Some of the general objectives related to the reinforcement of women's economic employment and incorporation in development were:

- Empowering rural women;
- Enhancing women economic independence; and
- Educating women about their economic and social roles, and carrying out productive work.



Regarding evaluating the general goals related to the economic independence, the results were as follows:

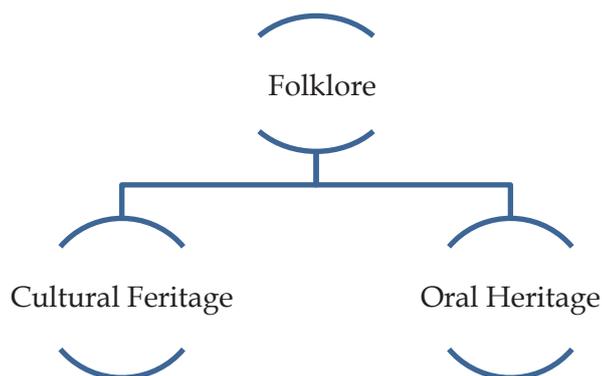
- The women have participated actively, which contributes to developing the skills of poor women, the success of a large number of trainees in setting up their own projects, and improving the productive work in rural and urban areas.
- Yemeni women have achieved great achievements in development. They have also played many roles in economic stabilization. They contributed to launching small projects, such as: handicrafts, knitting, etc. Such projects provide women with a source of income during crises, wars, power outages, and lack of oil resources. In addition, traditional women industries have produced a solar oven powered by solar energy. Therefore, Yemeni women remain the superwomen who try their best not to live at the mercy of circumstances.

• References:

- Yemeni Women, World Bank Blogs, 2014, <https://blogs.worldbank.org>
- National Strategy for Women's Employment, Republic of Yemen, United Nations Development Fund.
- Women, work and sustainable development goals, International Labor Organization, October 2015.
- Yemeni Women: a Cultural Movement Facing Challenges, Ali Aweida, February 2014, <https://www.noonpost.com>

• Women and Heritage Protection

Altorath is an Arabic concept which corresponds to its English equivalent (folk-lore). It was adopted by the Academy of the Arabic Language, and it is used to denote living folklore and creativity. This heritage has taken two different patterns, the first known as “oral heritage”, and the other as “cultural heritage”, according to the classification of many researchers in the field of heritage.



The researcher Asmahan Aqlan Al-Alas mentions, in the introduction to her book that presents the cultural heritage of Adeni women, which is a PhD thesis in modern and contemporary history, in the College of Arts, University of Aden. “The book targeted the cultural heritage of women, intending behind this approach to the image that women drew for themselves or society drew it to her. In other words, the woman’s image of herself and her image in the eyes of others, with the aim of standing before her, modifying it and re-employing it after reading it in a contemporary way. Alexander Crabb said, folklore is a historical science, in that it is gathered from public mouths. It also sheds light on the human past and uses the methods of measurement that govern all scientific, natural, and historical events. It wants to create the intellectual history of human, not as exemplified by the prestigious writings of poets and intellectuals, but by the less visible voices of the public.”

The researcher used the social approach, which corresponds to the reality of popular heritage and is consistent with the historical approach, in extrapolating the factors that contributed to the formation of the framework and structure of popular culture. It gave some attention to the literary sociology approach to get acquainted with the content of women’s production and its true images.

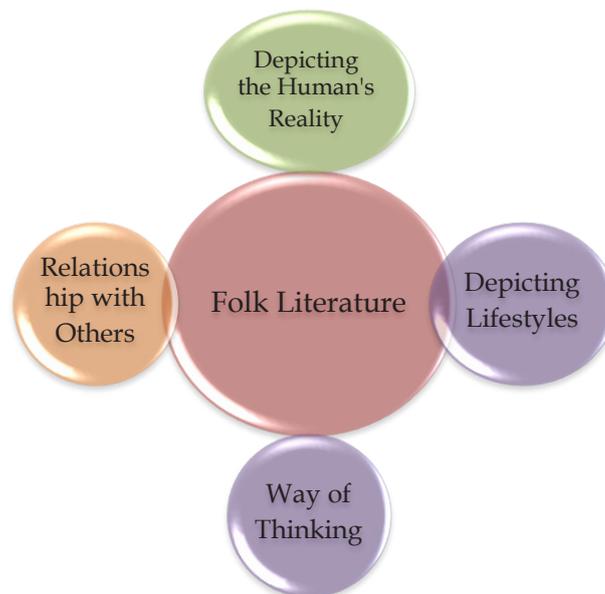
The researcher used a focus sample of narrators in her search for the oral heritage of women. As she says, it is a complex social and psychological task, which requires the trust of these narrators in the researcher and his ability to manage the dialogue and stimulate their memory. Perhaps the emotional relationship between the researcher and the city of Aden constituted an important factor in facilitating communication with the researched samples and facilitating the research task, which varied in the requirements of research in folklore and extended to various tools, methods and conditions.



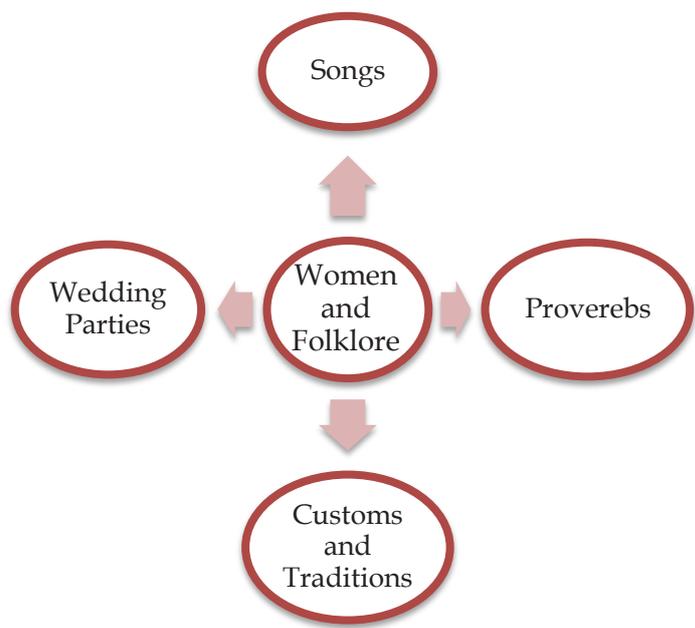
For the privacy of Aden (city and port), the research was singled out only in the heritage of Adeni women and it did not expand to include the heritage of Yemeni women in other cities. Thus, she hopes that her book will constitute a strong motivation for those interested and researchers to think about many similar studies of the heritage of Yemeni women in other cities, or to move towards comparative studies between the heritage of women in Aden and Yemeni cities similar to or different from them. The oral heritage contained two parts, the first part includes songs and proverbs, while the second part includes the cultural heritage of women and it is divided into social customs and traditions, clothes, cosmetics and adornments.

- **Folk Literature, Songs and Proverbs**

Folklore literature is known as a collection of literary arts that have been termed “Folklore” because it is said by the public and in a popular language that expresses social phenomena. It also represents a source for depicting of human’s reality, lifestyle, thinking, relationship with the variables around him and the limits of his relationship with others.



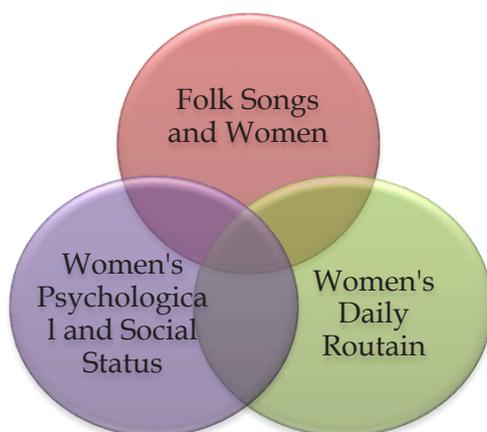
This literature has specific social and cultural functions, reflected in its highlighting of customs and traditions, its keenness on criticism and social and political reform, its transmission of personal and public experiences. Hence, it contributes to increasing women’s social awareness and developing their critical and political thought.



The folklore song is a prominent landmark in folk literature. As the contents and characteristics of this literature meet and it contains the word, music and dance rhythm. It is a way to get to know the social level, through its topic, vocabulary, linguistic structures, and music related to its melodies, weights and the occasion in which it was said.

The content of women’s songs is closely related to two things, the first: the existence of a relationship between women’s performance of their songs and their practice of their daily life tasks. The second: the existence of a link between these songs and the psychological and social status of women.

Figure Showing the Relationship between Folk Song and Women



The songs of “Mullalah” (as it is called in the Adeni dialect) come at the forefront of the songs that women relate to. And it was named as well, because the woman begins these songs with a musical chant as an entrance, using the word “Laila Laila Lalab La Labi”. In addition, the “Handala” (lullaby) hour for children is an appropriate hour for women to formulate and chant their songs, as a kind of soothing to her child and a way to bring pleasure to her.

In her study of these songs, the researcher Aqlan noticed that they carry deep meanings

by expressing a clear need in the woman's soul and by including a philosophical view that reflects her concerns. However, it symbolizes a remarkable social dimension for her.

- **Examples of “Handala” (lullaby) Songs:**

In her analysis of these songs, the researcher found that the woman in some of them had unconsciously translated her feeling of her inferiority, resulting in fact from the methods of early education and the sources of socialization that the family and society pursued towards her in general. Through which she expressed, without realizing, negative attitude of this female being. The research touched on the songs of weddings and occasions, including the wedding song whose beginning begins with: “Hadeni wa hadani wa don.” These events found their way to express women's conditions in the form of folk songs that are sung on these occasions. At the same time, it reflected different concepts and visions, which showed women through general social attitudes, or specific social practices and customs.

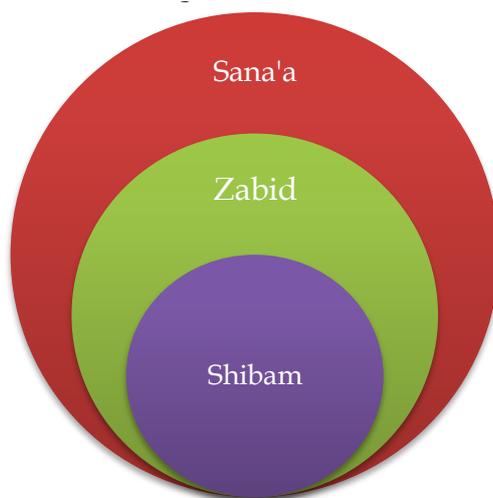
Examples include social and political songs, which brought women out of isolation at home to interact with contemporary events. They are lyrical outcome that presented a different image of women who did not ignore the political conditions that Aden experienced or were affected by. Women practice this art like other members of society, but they are distinguished in their relationship with it in that they transmit it through generations.

Regarding proverbs, they are the epitome of the human experience in all its circumstances. They summarize people's experience in a brief artistic image that is easy to memorize, circulate and draw lessons from. Moreover, women have a remarkable relationship with Yemeni proverbs. They are an expression of the woman's relationship with her social reality, and the degree of her interaction with it and its influence on it and being affected by it, as woman is part of the social system of society with all its interactions and circumstances.

- **A woman's Experience in Protecting Heritage**

Harbiye Al-Himyari, heritage protection activist, submitted her documents to enroll in the College of Engineering, but she did not tell her parents until she had secured her admission to the college. She said “When they found themselves faced with a fait accompli, when I chose a different profession, they did not object and they realized how happy I was with this choice.”

Due to the damage happened to cities during the country's ongoing conflict, worsening environmental degradation and economic collapse, Three of the 52 World Heritage Sites that the United Nations Culture and Education Agency (UNESCO) has listed as “in danger” are in Yemen. They include the ancient city of Sana'a and its great mosque, which was built in the 7th century and is famous for being the first after the cities of the two campuses of Makkah and Madinah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As for the other two sites, they are the historical cities of Zabid and the ancient walled city of Shibam, which are also classified as “in danger”. This made Al-Himyari and her team in a race against time.



The UNESCO Cash for Work project has already succeeded in rehabilitating and restoring 162 buildings in each of: Sana'a, Shibam, Zabid and in Aden. UNESCO's initial objectives were to survey the damage to some 8,000 buildings of historical interest. The organization has achieved that goal and aspires to increase the number of buildings to 16,000, especially since many buildings in Yemen have been bombed during the conflict.

Another objective of the project is to provide long-term employment opportunities for about 4,000 young people. According to United Nations statistics, more than two-thirds of the population of Yemen, numbering 29 million people, is under the age of 30, but statistics indicate that, starting in 2019, about a quarter of young people are unemployed.

When Al-Himyari traveled six hours from Sana'a to Zabid, she found the houses, which had served as meeting places for members of the local community, are in extremely poor condition. The walls have collapsed, some of the once beautiful ceilings painted in bright colors have collapsed, and some buildings are about to collapse. Al-Himyari says that one of the biggest challenges she has faced is obtaining the materials needed to restore these buildings to their former glory.



The work was slow and stressful. The architecture had to be reconstructed and restored carefully, taking into account the historical aspect. Moreover, rebuilding the roofs and replacing the damaged foundations and columns with materials imported from outside Yemen (Saudi Arabia), a process that takes three months in itself. She had to accomplish all this

while taking care to ensure that the structure did not collapse on the people still living inside. There are also security concerns that accompany the rebuilding and reconstruction of a country in the midst of the conflict. Local coordinators have to negotiate with the various factions to ensure that Al-Himyari and her team are able to reach the desired sites safely. Even the preparatory work involves a lot of risk, as 3D scans should be carried out in order to properly assess the damage to the building. Al-Himyari sometimes uses drones for this purpose, but the conflict means that she needs permits to use drones.

In addition, there is a great dearth of trained workers especially those who specialize in building methods and historical restoration. “Young people do not maintain these traditional building skills. They view them as unsuitable career fields,” says Al-Himyari. Instead of waiting, Al-Himyari trains them herself. She manages a team of 24 people and so far she has helped train 211 engineers, carpenters and specialists, almost half of whom are female.

Al-Himyari noted, “I was surprised by the number of women who wanted to join these training opportunities, which are traditionally male-only fields. I live in a conservative society and there is a presumption that no woman wants to work in this field. I am proud of the fact that I am helping to preserve the historical civil landscape in Yemen for future generations. Despite the various challenges and difficulties, this work gives me an overwhelming feeling of happiness.”

• References:

- Woman Trying to Save her Country’s Heritage from Loss, BBC News Website, November, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast>

• Women in the Yemeni Media and the Challenges they Face

Yemen Information Center (YIC) conducted a scientific study on women working in Yemeni media and the difficulties they face. This is one of the areas of study and research that the center is interested in conducting. Through that research, many scientific discoveries were made in this area, and the following is a brief overview of the study's findings and its theoretical framework:

• *Research Summary:*

Women have an important role that they can play with distinction in all sectors, making them an active component in the field of sustainable development. They have numerous challenges with their male partners that have a negative impact on the performance of their vital function in society, despite the fact that their abilities are demonstrated by contemporary reality in many issues of modern life.

It is difficult to deny the role of the media and its importance in modern life in terms of guiding societies, and the important role that women can play in the field of media in its various means. Over the past few years, it is noticeable that much of what is presented about women through various media, in addition to what is included in modern artistic and dramatic works, has been dominated by special trends characterized by focusing on the image of women that may not correspond to reality. Moreover, most of the dramas focus on marginal issues without paying attention to their main pivotal issues, marginalizing and obscuring of their modern life roles that show their true competency and their actual ability to combine their multiple roles in life. Therefore, it was important, and necessary to change how women were portrayed in the media, based on the following:

- Ensuring that there is a strong political will for change, which is manifested in legal and protective requirements.
- Developing legislation and laws at ensuring the protection of women's status in the media.

The results also showed that the rate of women's presence in Yemeni private TV channels as media correspondents is very limited, because it did not exceed 3%, compared to their male coworkers, who achieved a rate of 97%. This is a very high percentage in the field of the media reporter profession. Furthermore, the results indicated a weak level of female presence as a media broadcaster compared to her male coworker, because she achieved 12% in being a broadcaster on Yemeni TV channels, compared to her male coworker, who achieved 88% of the total sample. This decline may be due to the customs and traditions of Yemeni society that do not encourage the appearance of women in the media.

In addition, the results revealed that the presence of women compared to men in three important media professions revolves around: filming, preparing and producing television programs, which is characterized by very limited and low levels compared to their male coworkers who achieved a high rate in all these professions.

Therefore, it is important to have joint cooperation with the concerned authorities in order to improve and activate the role of the media in highlighting women in the desired image despite their different cultures, provided that this can be achieved through making more efforts to show them in more developed and positive attitudes and by giving them the right to be present in the field of media to exercise their positive and active role as their fellow men and to benefit the society as a whole.



- **The Image of Women in Modern Media:**

It is hard to deny the effective role of media in modern life. The Philadelphia Creative Salon, through a panel discussion on women and media, hosted models and examples of Jordanian media women and leaders in their field, who have already made a significant impact in their field of work with the aim of delivering their high-end professional message to be circulated in a way that suits the environment and aspirations of Jordanian women.

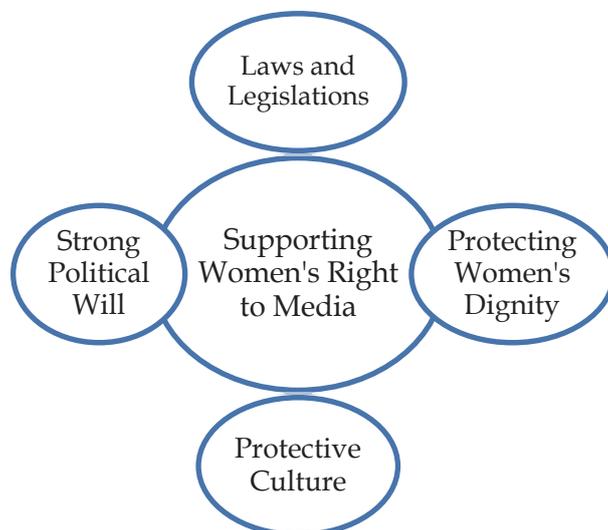
However, what has been noticed recently is that most of what is presented about women through various means of communication and media - in addition to what is included in modern artistic and dramatic works - has been dominated by negative orientations.

These practices undoubtedly have a direct negative impact on women that extends beyond the environment, because they drive them to feel inferior and to believe that their work should be limited to the limits of the body. In this context, many specialized psychological studies confirm the direct relationship between the growth of sexual exploitation of women and the creation of an image centered around the body, such as cinematic films, advertisements, the Internet, video clips, and soap operas. The stereotypical advertising images that perpetuate interest and inferiority are in conflict with the discourse that calls for the participation of women in the advancement of society and access to decision-making positions. Accordingly, this negative image of women in the media, particularly that presented by some satellite channels, causes the recipient to feel conflicted.

- **Laws of the Audiovisual Field:**

The laws specific to the audiovisual field suffer from a significant shortcoming in providing legal protection for the image and dignity of women in the media, which requires amending the audiovisual communication law, and that Articles (2) and (67) thereof include clear and precise provisions on the obligation to preserve women's right to media, and to arrange penalties for violators. In addition, the guidelines referred to in Article (49) of the same law must include requirements stipulating respect for human rights, not infringing on

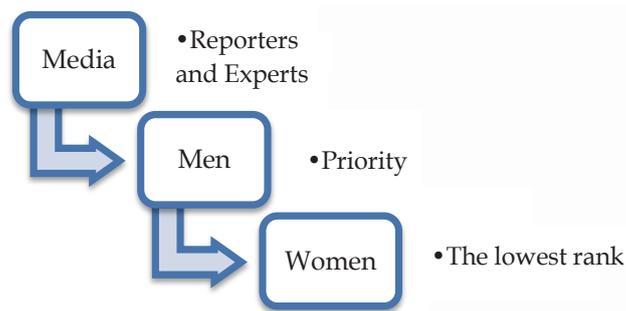
the dignity of women in audiovisual media, and stipulating penalties for violators, whether in the public pole or private broadcasting. The Higher Commission for Audiovisual Communication must ensure that the contractors are disciplined for these requirements in a way that guarantees the protection of women and young people from all kinds exploitation.



Despite their importance, laws and legislation cannot alone guarantee an improvement in the portrayal of women in the media or foster a national public opinion in favor of their participation. Hence, it was necessary to put in place protective cultural policies that work to change mentalities, and seek to spread a culture of protecting the dignity of women from all manifestations of humiliation and exploitation in all fields. Such policies need to adopt a participatory approach that is accessible to the various institutions of society, including civil associations, families, and schools. Additionally, programs aimed at providing female role models are also important in building a national public opinion that respects women and their contributions in society, away from exploitation and humiliation.

A study conducted by the BBC Media Follow-up Department concluded that the belief that media is a fair profession for women hides the fact that their influence is limited in the field of news. For example: at first glance, the Russian media usually appears to be a field that gives equal opportunities to women and men, with a large number of smart and elegant female broadcasters. However, women are actually fewer in terms of the number of correspondents and experts than men, and they are not as important as men are in mainstream print and broadcast media, the BBC found from follow-up on the day that the research was conducted.

This was not limited to Russia, but the results of the study indicated that several countries, including Italy, Iran, Uzbekistan and Britain, were not only dominated by news about the men, which reflects their status in public life. Rather, men were usually the ones covering the “serious” news that could bring its presenters and writers fame as well.



The findings chimed with some of the findings of the International Media Monitoring Project, a nongovernmental organization, which had found that women make up only 24 percent of those we hear about in the news, even though they make up half the population. The result of the study revealed more diversity between the sexes in presenters, broadcasters, and guests, and some countries with a conservative culture, such as Saudi Arabia, had a number of female broadcasters on their television. However, the BBC's media follow-up department notes that women are better represented in the news on social networks, and that many of the contributors and writers on social networks are women.



Figure showing media activity of women through social media

Radhwan Boujuma'a, a researcher at the Faculty of Mass Communication at the University of Algiers, conducted a field study on the reality of women in the audiovisual media. The results showed that men predominated in serious programs dealing with political and economic issues, while women tended to less serious topics. The percentage of women's presence as an active personality from outside the media institutions reached 19%, while the presence of women as media material appearing on Algerian television channels did not exceed 20.3%, and 13.1% on the radio.

• References:

- Do Women in the Media Receive Equal Representation Compared to Men? 2015, BBC Website <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/worldnews>
- Wahiba Solaimani, Women's Presence in TV Channels, Al-Shorouk, Algeria, 2019.
- Mohammed Hadi Mohammed, Women in Yemeni Media, and the Challenges they Face, Yemen Information Center, 2022.



YIC@yemeninformation.org
yemeninformation.org