

# The Presence of Palestinian Women in Modern Media

**Sana Izzildin Atari**

Education School, Sakhnin Collage, Jerusalem, Israel

**Email address:**

[sanaatari@yahoo.com](mailto:sanaatari@yahoo.com)

**To cite this article:**

Sana Izzildin Atari. The Presence of Palestinian Women in Modern Media. *Humanities and Social Sciences*. Vol. 11, No. 2, 2023, pp. 52-56. doi: 10.11648/j.hss.20231102.12

**Received:** November 30, 2022; **Accepted:** February 1, 2023; **Published:** April 23, 2023

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**Abstract:** This paper examines "the presence of Palestinian women in the modern media", and this presence is represented in two aspects; the first, in which the woman is the media, and the second, the woman as portrayed by the media. The paper poses main questions: about the extent of the active presence of Palestinian women in the modern media, and if the Palestinian female in the field of media is a decision-maker, another question is how does the work of the Palestinian media affect basic and important women's issues such as education and work and respect for their rights, humanity and dignity, the last question is about the image of women in the Palestinian media. The research followed the descriptive and analytical approach, and reached a number of the most important results: the stereotype of women is still dominant in the Palestinian media, and the Palestinian woman is still far from the real decision-making positions that influence the development and empowerment of women in Palestinian society, and their ability to raise their important and fundamental issues Boldly and consciously. Finally, the paper presented a number of recommendations and proposals, the most important of which are the need for women to reach decision-making centers in the media and communication sectors to counter the prevailing stereotypes about women and the clear discrimination against them, and opening a wider field for women to reach and express themselves through the media, the last recommendation is using the media as a force capable of defending women's rights and the importance of their participation in the development and development of society while maintaining the freedom of the press and expression.

**Keywords:** Palestinian Women, Modern Media, Stereotypes, Decision Making

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## 1. Introduction

Information technology has progressed in recent years greatly and rapidly, and the media has multiplied and diversified and increased its control, and this means increasing the power of the word and its impact on people due to the speed of its spread and its reach as far as possible in moments.

The media has a tremendous ability to influence, change and shape public opinion. The presence of women in the field of media is as necessary as their presence in any field of life, as they are half of society, and they have their own ideas, culture, and issues that must appear and be raised strongly and seriously in the media.

### 1.1. Questions of the Research

This paper examines the "Palestinian women's presence in modern media", and this presence is represented in two

aspects; The first, in which the woman is the media, and the second, the woman as portrayed by the media.

The researcher poses several questions and tries to answer them:

- a. What is the image of women in the Palestinian media?
- b. What is the extent of the active presence of Palestinian women in modern media?
- c. Is the Palestinian female journalist a decision-maker in the media field?
- d. How does the work of the Palestinian media affect women's basic and important issues, such as education, work, and respect for their rights, humanity, and dignity?

This topic requires extensive research, statistics and analysis, as well as analysis of dramas, radio, and what is published in the various media, in order to reach a complete and clear picture of the reality of Palestinian women and their presence in the media.

## 1.2. Importance of the Topic

In recent years, the world has witnessed a revolution in the world of communications and information, which created a greater opportunity for women's participation in the world of communications and mass media. However, these media outlets were used to promote the cultural patterns that prevailed about women, and these media also exploited women for the purposes of advertising and advertising consumer goods and products, and this will continue if women do not participate on an equal basis with men in decision-making in the fields of media and communication in particular and culture in general.

Communication is an effective force in giving women the ability to actively participate in the community development process, and the media is capable of developing women's participation in the decision-making process, influencing public policies and changing prevailing ideas and beliefs about women.

However, it is clear that women are not present in decision-making places in the field of media, which has an impact on policies, content, and the ability to express feminist views. This is an indication of gender inequality and the existence of discrimination against women, and this was manifested in the negative image of women in the media. Audiovisual and written media. [1]

Highlighting and discussing these issues is very important to improve the current situation and raise the level of real participation of Palestinian women in the media and in decision-making, as well as working to raise important and fundamental women's issues in the media, such as their human rights and their right to education and work, and issues of violence, sexual assault and murder on the background honor and others.

## 2. Literature Review

Many studies related to the issue of women and the media have been conducted. Some of these studies dealt with leadership and decision-making in media institutions and their relationship to gender. Who is the decision-maker, and who are the media professionals who are in the top positions? Are they women or men? The results show that the majority of editors in senior positions are men. [2] Other studies have dealt with the role of media in empowering women, and how social media is used to encourage the women entrepreneurs, and how social media became powerful platform for the discussion of women's rights and gender equality, as well as the role of local media in empowering women and integrating them into the development process. [3]

## 3. Media and Women

The issue of women and the media during the past few decades has constituted one of the most prominent issues that occupied the knowledge and political field and the field of women's rights. From distorting the image of Arab women,

and highlighting them negatively on the pages of newspapers, magazines, television screens, and pages of social networks [4].

During recent decades, Arab women have entered various fields of science and work, and the media has had a share in the presence of Arab women as it is an important means of conveying the message and changing society, and it is also the pen through which it aspires to participate.

In building society, and through it, attention is drawn to issues related to women in particular, and society in general, and although Arab women were present in this sector from an early period when it appeared in the Arab world, they still suffer from a number of obstacles that represent them Real challenges that prevent them from having a strong and effective presence in the media sector. In recent years, media institutions have increased, and of course the number of female media workers working in them has increased, but despite the presence of that large number, we still lack serious and constructive proposals by many of these media personalities. [5]

### 3.1. Problems and Obstacles in the Field of Women's Media

There are many problems and obstacles facing women's work in the media, the most prominent of which is the lack of women leaders in decision-making positions. And the lack of knowledge of the media workers about gender issues and their importance, as well as the persistence of negative stereotypes about women even through the new means of media represented in video games, the Internet and video clips.

### 3.2. The Image of Palestinian Women in the Media

Many studies conducted on the image of women in the Arab media indicate that women are presented in the media as a symbol and a tool, and advertisements use women to sell products, and images of violence and scandalous images of women help to market films, and instead of giving priority to social welfare, media Media people's tastes in order to make more money.

The media also focuses on the consumer roles of women, using advertisements and dramas that are employed to raise the voice of consumer and individual patterns and rapid enrichment, which leads to provocation of the receiving audience, at a time when the media can increase women's participation and give them the opportunity to express themselves and make decisions. Through the media and modern communication technology.

As for the image of women in the Palestinian media, it is completely different due to the specificity of the Palestinian situation. The political reality and the priorities of the struggle against the Israeli occupation have made the issue of women and their struggle go backwards.

It is not a priority for the media. Therefore, we do not see radio or television programs dealing with central and crucial women's issues such as work, education, violence and honor killings.

The issue of women is inseparable from the national issue, but rather it is its essence and core. If we do not care about half of society and its basic issues of education, health, security, work and human rights, we will destroy society and the nation, and make its civilizational progress retard by hundreds of years as we marginalize and neglect the energies and capabilities of half of its members.

At the same time, the priorities of the struggle against the occupation have protected women from displaying a commodity in advertisements and in music video clips, as we do not live in a state of luxury that encourages this.

This political reality has determined the image of women in the media. The stereotyped image that we find today of Palestinian women in the audio-visual and print media is the woman, the mother of the martyr and the wife of the prisoner, without identifying her by her name in many cases. The image of the struggling woman was absent from the scene, and the image of the stationed woman appeared, which is much narrower than the image of the struggling woman in terms of work and spatial dimension, as the stationed woman is limited to being present in Al-Aqsa Mosque.

In the various media, the image of women is presented as a victim of the occupation and its practices, but it is not presented as a victim of the reality of gender discrimination [6].

If we look at some Palestinian media websites, we find that women are almost absent, as they are absent in the news, in reports, in interviews, in studies and in photos. According to my conviction, this absence of women can only be justified by the dominance of traditional tribal ideas that consider women a disgrace, as their name is disgraceful, their image is disgraceful, their voice is disgraceful, just as society does not consider them qualified for many professions and jobs, and if they are able to enter them, they are excluded so that they do not compete with or surpass men. So don't give it the chances it deserves.

I reviewed the list of programs on one of the Palestinian radio stations and found that there were about 94 programmes. I did not find any program dealing with women's issues and affairs, or helping to empower them, except for one. Nor is there any program It highlights leading or distinguished female figures, or shows their achievements. The family program, which is considered a woman's program, which includes the kitchen, arranging the house, taking care of children and raising them within social standards, is often repeated. Thus, the media does not address the woman's mind, and does not play a positive role in pushing women's issues forward, but rather monitors her current reality with its negatives and positives. It seeks to perpetuate its traditional roles, ignoring the achievements of some women in the fields of education, work, and intellectual and artistic creativity.

In a study conducted in 2009 on the media coverage of the three Palestinian newspapers: Al-Quds, Al-Ayyam, and Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda on topics and issues related to women, it was found that coverage of a news nature is the dominant journalistic color over the content of media coverage in the

three newspapers, while the press report ranked second with a large difference between The space occupied by each of the news and the report on its pages. The journalistic story declined to constitute only 1.1% of the total published articles. As for the journalistic investigations, they were completely absent from the three newspapers during the monitoring period. By presenting the problems and the opinions of the various stakeholders and the available solutions to address such problems [6]

This reduces and defines the positive role of the media, which can be effective in influencing, changing and shaping public opinion. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out programs to strengthen and support Palestinian women leaders in the field of media, as they represent a means to change the prevailing intellectual and cultural patterns about women in Palestine, and to activate the ability of the media to consolidate Alternative values and practices that encourage Palestinian women to obtain equal opportunities in the economic, social, political and cultural fields. [7]

#### 4. The Influence of the Media on Women

The media is responsible for giving a balanced and non-stereotypical image of women in the media, as the press, radio, television, cinema, theater and the Internet are considered powerful means to demand equality between the sexes, and to highlight the role of women in society, by presenting the bright models of women in all fields, and from here the positive role that women play must be supported The media can play a role in the process of empowering women, and we must continue to search for new methods and methods, to ensure that women's voices are heard. Women working in the field also bear this responsibility Media, as there is an increase in the number of women graduates from journalism departments and media colleges, who work in media institutions at the professional level. [8]

However, although some women have obtained decision-making positions in media organizations, they still have to play a more active and vital role in changing the image that women present in the media, and this increase in the number of women in leadership positions does not mean control over the content of programs. Therefore, it can be said that women's attainment of leadership positions in the media did not give them the freedom to define prevailing social values. [9]

There is no doubt that the changes of the present era and its various demands have helped women leave the house and move to work in institutions and companies and their actual participation in the economic production and the construction process in the country, and this led to changing some of her jobs at home, and creating new double tasks, which required reconciliation and balancing between her role in Taking care of her husband, raising the children and other tasks she undertakes within the home, and between her new role in the workplace.

This, in turn, is supposed to lead to a radical change, and to a change in roles with regard to decision-making in family,

personal and social matters, and this in turn will lead to the emergence of new problems and issues that must be monitored and addressed through reading and analysis.

And if we consider culture as the correct approach to addressing this reality, then language is the symbol that expresses the culture of any society, as it is the language of communication, and it is the language of writing, literature and the arts. The process of social, economic and national advancement, in order to find ways out and solutions for it, since it constitutes half of society.

#### **4.1. Palestinian Female Writers in the Media**

Since the second half of the last century, some names have emerged for Palestinian women journalists who were known as female writers and poets. One of the first Palestinian women to work in the media was writer Samira Azzam, who started her radio career in 1952 at the British Near East Radio station in Limassol, Cyprus. And then she moved to work in several stations, where she moved between Beirut and Baghdad [10]

Among the most famous of them is Liana Badr, born in Jerusalem in 1950. She is a novelist and short story writer. She worked as a cultural editor in the "Al-Hurriya" magazine published by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [11]

The writer Samia Al-Khalili, who was also born in Jerusalem, studied journalism and media at Bir Zeit University, and worked for the Jerusalem newspaper Al-Fajr for 15 years. The Palestinian Radio and Television Corporation as a producer and presenter of political, intellectual and cultural programmes, and as a writer for radio drama. She contributed to the establishment of the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate. [1]

The Jerusalemite writer, Dima Al-Samman, had a career in journalism. She received her education at the Schmidt School, then studied "Linguistics" at Bir Zeit University. She worked in some of the periodicals that were published in Jerusalem, including: New Week Magazine, Ma'a Al-Nas Magazine, Al-Sada Newspaper, and Miraya Newspaper. She served as an elected member of the Administrative Board of the Palestinian Writers Union. She has published many short stories, social articles, and political literature articles in various periodicals published in Palestine and abroad and on the pages of various websites, in addition to specialized studies and reports in the field of education. She published weekly articles under the title "Oriental Woman" in Al-Sinara newspaper published in Nazareth, and some social articles in Al-Quds daily newspaper. Some literary productions are currently published on the electronic pages. [12]

As well as the writer and academic researcher Sanaa Attari (the author of this paper), who was born in Jerusalem, studied at Bethlehem and Birzeit universities, and holds a PhD in literature. She has published many articles and research papers in local newspapers and websites, and is a member of the editorial board of the Outskirts of Jerusalem magazine, which is issued by the committee. Jerusalem is the permanent

capital of Arab culture.

We note that these media women are writers and have a high level of culture and education, and left a clear impact on the media work.

#### **4.2. Media Social Responsibility**

The media has a social responsibility to pay attention to women's issues and help change their reality. We cannot deny the change that has taken place in the direction of giving special importance to changing the image of women in the media, which has enormous capabilities through which it can change the conditions of women if they are properly employed. [13] They influence public policy and private attitudes and behaviors. The media should present a balanced picture of the diversity of women's lives and their contributions to society in a changing world. The work and programs offered by means of communication that perpetuate traditional roles negatively affect women's participation in society, and favorable conditions must be created for them by improving their skills, knowledge and access to information technology, in order to enhance their ability to combat the negative image and eliminate all forms of discrimination. And addressing cases of abuse of power in this industry whose importance and social responsibility are growing in creating an appropriate environment for recognizing women's rights and considering them an essential part of human rights. [14].

The participation of women in various fields of economic, social and political life An essential pillar of development, and this is evident by entering the world of work, which is an essential and complementary part of the workforce in society. It is noticeable that the empowerment of women in development is in a comprehensive and general way, It contributes to enhancing its expected and expected role in the development of the local community, This is thanks to the support and support it receives from various feminist bodies and organizations calling for women's rights, as well as from media institutionsk, The media is considered one of the actors that contribute to raising the level of awareness and increasing the awareness of its masses of the importance of strengthening education for women, as well as contributing to the integration of women in the local development process, as it is considered one of the actors in building the local community. [15]

#### **4.3. Towards a Media Strategy for Women**

In recent years, the world has witnessed a revolution in the world of communications and information, which created a greater opportunity for women's participation in the world of communications and mass media. However, these media outlets were used to promote the cultural patterns that prevailed about women, and these media also exploited women for the purposes of advertising and advertising consumer goods and products, and this will continue if women do not participate on an equal basis with men in decision-making in the fields of media and communication in

particular and culture in general. The media will continue to convey stereotyped images about women and will remain ignorant of the true role that women play in society if the media does not provide significant and important opportunities and capabilities that enable women to progress and achieve equality between them and men by transmitting real images of the sexes that are far from the prevailing cultural and intellectual patterns of parties in addition to respecting human dignity. [1]

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Communication is an effective force in giving women the ability to actively participate in the community development process, and the media is capable of developing women's participation in the decision-making process, influencing public policies, and changing prevailing ideas and beliefs about women. The stereotyped image of women still prevails in the Palestinian media, and the Palestinian media is still far from real decision-making positions that affect the development and empowerment of women in Palestinian society, and is able to present its important and fundamental issues with courage and awareness.

Based on what was presented in this research paper, I present the following recommendations:

- 1) The need for women to reach decision-making positions in the media and communication sectors in order to address prevailing stereotypes about women and their clear discrimination against them.
- 2) Opening a wider space for women to access and express themselves through the media.
- 3) Using the media as a force capable of defending women's rights and the importance of their participation in the development of society while preserving freedom of the press and expression.
- 4) Develop media policies consistent with equality in gender issues.
- 5) Increasing the awareness of media officials and experts of the importance of increasing media coverage of women's viewpoints on various issues and their importance in society.
- 6) Establishing women's media networks as a means of disseminating information, exchanging opinions, and providing support to women's groups working in the media.

Carrying out specialized and in-depth studies dealing with women in the media in all its fields, in order to obtain a clear and accurate picture of reality.

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