

The Gender in Higher Education Institutions

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Until the middle of the twentieth century, gender and women's studies in the Arab region faced great challenges represented by the nature of Arab societies based on discrimination and the liberation and independence movements that were the greatest concern at that stage.

Despite all this, feminist activists at the time made calls to institutionalize women's studies in Arab universities, during the Arab Women's Conference in Cairo in 1944, and demanded that a chair be allocated to the study of gender. Later, the founding of the journal Gender Society in 1986 helped to be Women's studies are strongly present in many universities and colleges around the world.

This was a contributing factor to the continuation of the calls that accompanied the Arab feminist struggle through multiple stages, to expand women's and gender studies, as educational curricula and academic research multiplied in the region. The beginning was in Palestine through the Women's Studies Program in 1994, then the program was transformed in 1988 into The institute grants a master's degree in gender and development, and starting in 2014 it became the first institute to offer a bachelor's-level program in women's studies.

As a result of this first Arab experience; Several Arab universities have offered various programs offering diplomas and master's programs in women's and gender studies, and this reflects an optimistic idea about some Arab universities, and the extent of their interest in women's issues and developing them academically and scientifically.

Despite the importance of the scientific content provided by Arab academic institutions on women's and gender studies, they continued to face challenges represented by the nature of the negative social and political environments, limited resources, inequality at the institutional or development and training levels, and security unrest in some countries.

In addition to the need for these studies to be further supported and developed on a quantitative and objective level, after the fragility of some established research centers led to the production of research dealing with women and gender, which would be accepted by governments and some influential and controlling parties in them, such as women's rights in religion, or the influence of Enlightenment ideas on the role of women in the public sphere, or by focusing on the role of women in social protection programs, or refraining from teaching feminist movements locally and not paying attention to them as they deserve, and being content with teaching their models in the West or in the regions of Southeast Asia.

Developing Arab research centers concerned with gender studies after diagnosing the strengths and weaknesses and in a way that is consistent with women's needs across multiple stages, especially in Arab countries that are witnessing political and social transformations, will help provide a solid scientific description of the reality and problems of Arab women, as well as provide scientific solutions, through research. Solid academic studies reflect the quality of research effort produced by both women and men.

It will also make Arab universities think tanks that provide scientific advice to decision-makers in the region to improve the situation of women in light of their priorities and needs, especially with regard to the conditions of women who are victims of armed conflicts, women (refugees and displaced women), marginalized women in the countryside and slums and non-urban areas, women who are victims of terrorism and extremism, as well as issues Related to the reality of women locally in light of the specificity of each Arab country, as well as the larger issue; The issue of cultural and societal reform and the rejection of discriminatory religious discourse.