

# MEDIA LANDSCAPE STUDY

YEMEN-2017



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# Introduction

Fake News represents a serious challenge to responsible and professional journalism. This phenomenon is rampant in conflict countries. It often leads to extreme polarization of the conflicting parties. Yemen is a typical case in point. A concomitant phenomenon of the widespread use of the Internet and social media applications is the fabrication of news, which translates into public distrust of circulated news.

This survey, which is carried out by SEMC, shows that this phenomenon is remarkably present as demonstrated by the survey results. A majority of the respondents distrust the media.

The survey shows that the typical consumer of news and other media programs is smart, and cannot be easily misled, however misleading media practices may be. Therefore, it is incumbent upon those working in the field of the media, to exert our best efforts to establish seeking and conveying the truth as our end goal.

Some findings of the survey are interesting as they provide us with a clear picture of the thinking habits of the public and the way the surveyed sample view the various types of media. The survey provides media outlets with the opportunity to reconsider their performance in a manner that enhances public confidence in the media.

In sum, this survey is an attempt to present a clear picture of media performance in Yemen from the vantage point of the target Yemeni audience, hoping that it will constitute a significant contribution and help media outlets reconsider coverage policies, without succumbing to any parochial temptations.

**Mustafa Nasr,**  
**Director, SEMC**

# Executive Summary

Survey findings show that the majority of the Yemenis distrust the media generally. Paradoxically, the rate of media audience seeking information or looking for entertainment remains relatively high.

With the decreasing interest in traditional media, Survey findings show that the Internet (news websites and social media platforms) top the lists of sources of information sought by the Yemeni public. A majority of 86% of Yemenis use the Internet, in urban and rural areas alike.

Facebook proves the most popular social networking platform in Yemen (83%). WhatsApp comes next (80%), followed by YouTube, Twitter, Emo, Telegram, and Instagram, respectively.

The survey, which was conducted by SEMC and covered a sample of 615 Yemeni citizens from 20 governorates, reached important findings concerning the popular and trusted media outlets, in addition to the list of interests.

It was found that women trust the media more than men do. According to results, 39% of women trust the media, compared to 33% of men.

Yemenis recognize a distinction between the most watched and the most credible channels. Aljazeera tops the list of credible and trusted channels, followed by the BBC Arabic, Al-Arabiyya Al-Hadath, Almasdar Online, and Balquis channel. However, Al-Arabiyya Al-Hadath emerges the most watched channel by Yemenis, followed by Al-Jazeera, the BBC, and Al-Arabiyya.

The survey clearly demonstrates a decline of interest in print media at the present stage due to the increasing interest in the new media. Only 30% of the respondents surveyed still rely on print media.

WhatsApp.

Most respondents (81%) watch TV. The ratios of men and women who watch TV are identical. The remaining 20% of respondents who do not watch TV face obstacles, such as power outages, time constraints, and preferring new Internet-based media.

The survey shows that listening to the radio is higher among women. However, like the print media, listening to the radio has declined. Only 27% of respondents still listen to the radio.

Based on the survey sample, Taiz tops the list of Yemeni governorates in the rate of Internet users. Around 92% of the Taizis surveyed use the Internet. Hodeida, by contrast, emerges as at the bottom of governorates in using the Internet, particularly among women. Survey findings show the disparity of rates of Internet users according to sex. Only 69% of women use the Internet, compared to 94% of men.

According to survey findings, Al-Masdar Online is the most visited news website, followed by Al-Mushahid Net, Al-Mashhad Al-Yamani, and the search engine Sahafa net. A large proportion of the surveyed sample do not browse the Internet, and rely mainly on social networking applications such as Facebook and

## **Objectives:**

**The survey aims at investigating the media scene as of the end of 2017 and providing a holistic picture of the current conflict-sensitive media scene in Yemen.**

**It also seeks to present scientifically valid findings on the relation of the Yemeni public to, and the extent of their trust of, the various types of the media. Moreover, it attempts to answer questions concerning the interests of the Yemeni public and the most audience-attracting media outlets.**





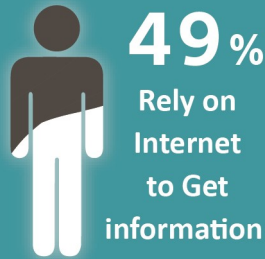
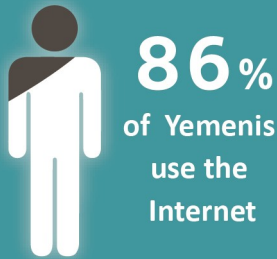
## Yemeni Public Trust in the Media



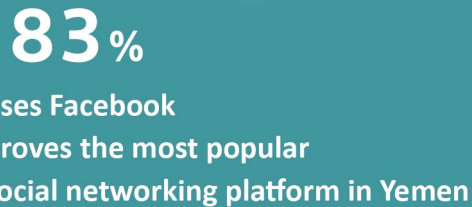
Youth have less confidence in the media



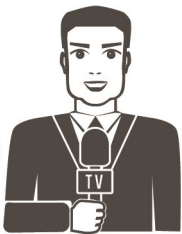
## Public Use of Internet



Men use Internet more than women

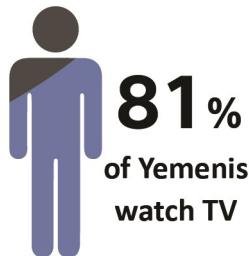


Al-Masdar Online the Most Frequently Visited Website



## Watching Television

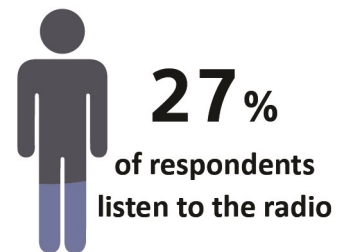
TV has the largest audience



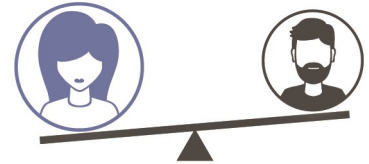
Al-Arabiya Al-Hadath the most watched channel



## listening to the Radio



Women ! the larger radio audience



**59%**

believe that the media do not cover issues that concern them



**73%**

Political news and programs gain the attention of the majority of respondents



**81%**

of the respondents believe that women are fairly represented in the Yemeni media





# Methodology

The research team applied a field survey methodology to investigate the interests of the Yemeni public and their relation to the media. The surveyed sample covered 615 individuals from 20 Yemeni governorates. A questionnaire consisting of 26 questions was prepared and tested on a limited sample of 15 individuals. The questionnaire was revised based on initial results.

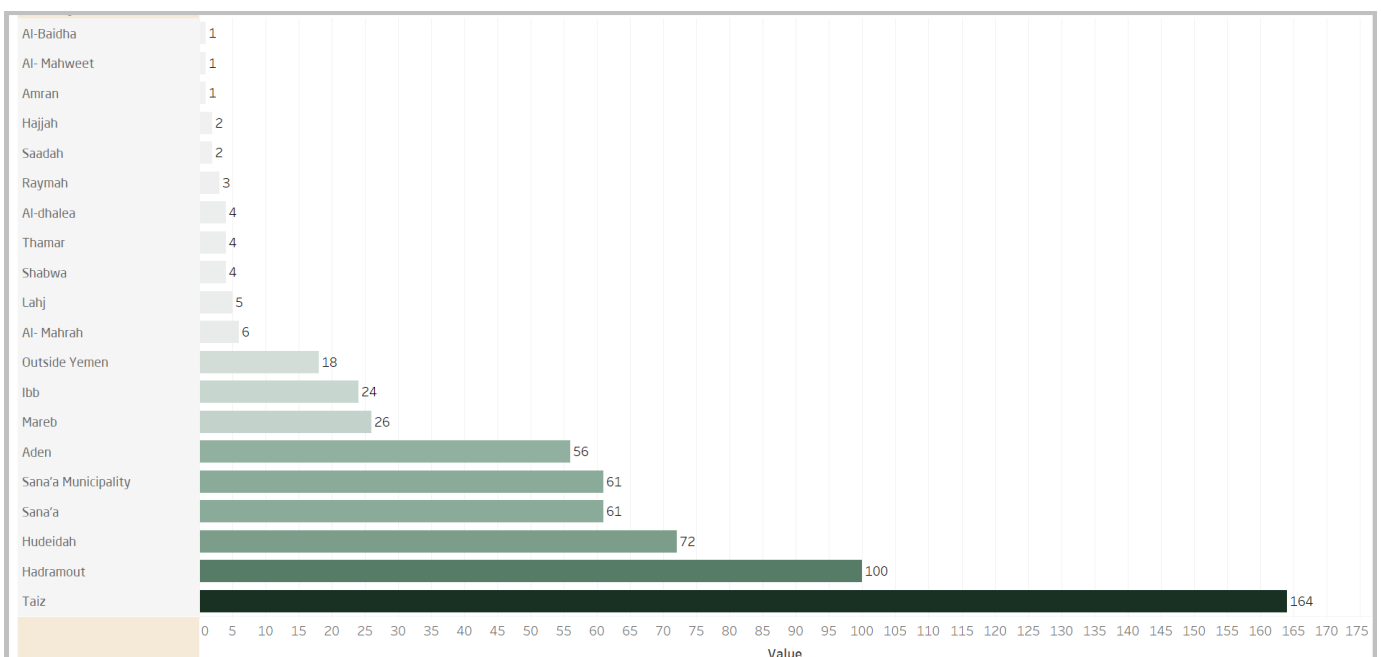
In conducting the field survey, two methods were used in data collection. The first involved filling up the questionnaire online, i.e. reaching up a portion of respondents via the Internet, using social media platforms

(Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp), whereas the second method involved direct physical contacts. The target sample covered 615 individuals, 52% of whom were directly contacted, whereas the remaining 48% were reached through the Internet.

## Survey Sample

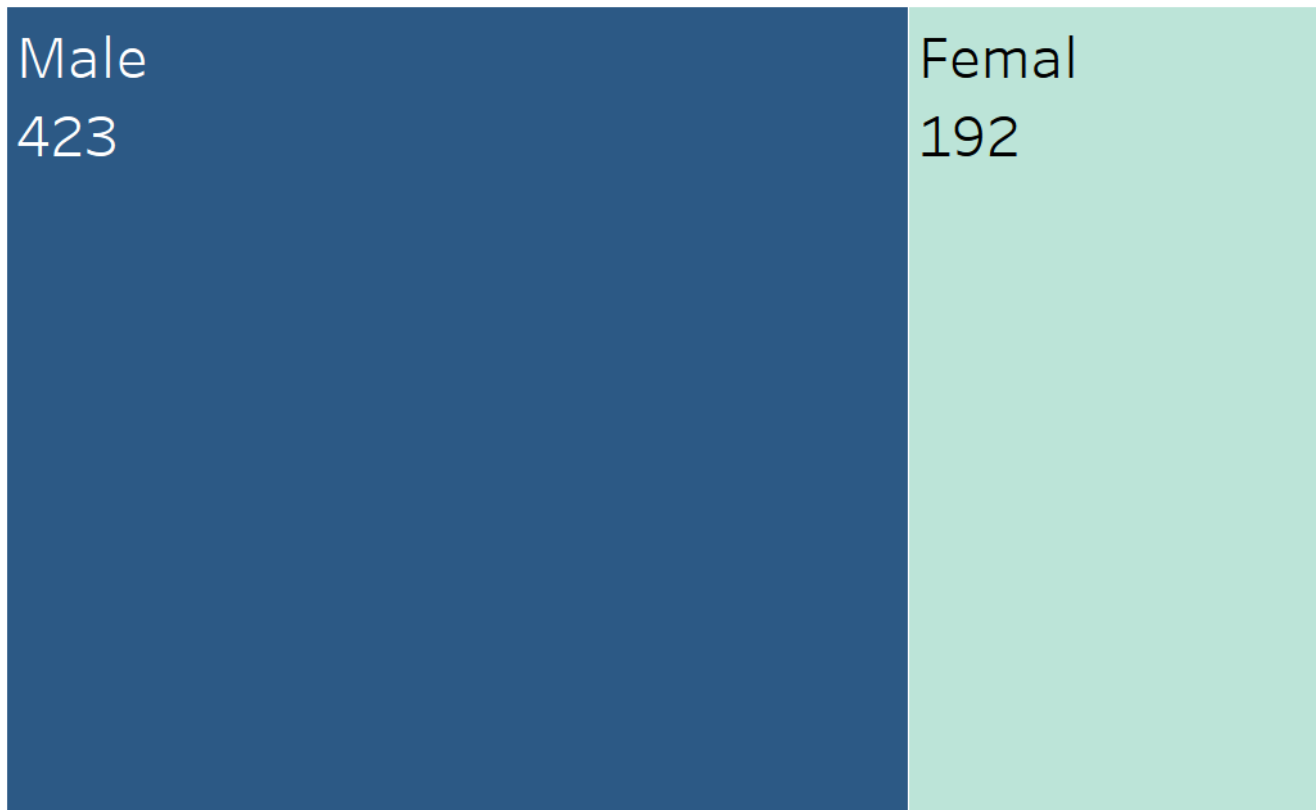
The survey targeted 615 Yemeni citizens from 20 governorates, focusing primarily on the densely populated governorates, i.e. the key governorates (Taiz, Sana'a, Hodeida, Hadhramout, Marib, Ibb, and Aden).

Direct contact was applied to reach re-

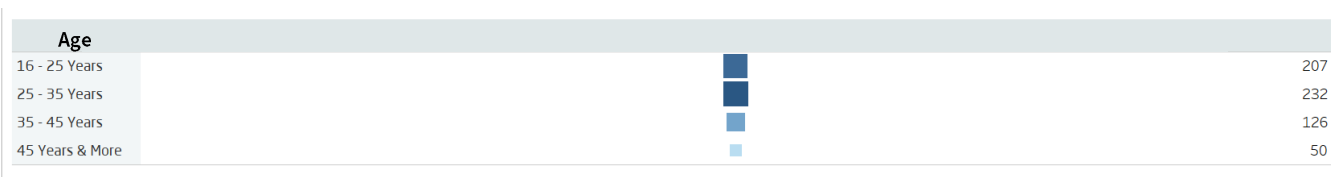


spondents in rural areas. Rural participants represented 22% of the total number of participants, distributed in Taiz, Hodeida, Hadhramout, and Ibb.

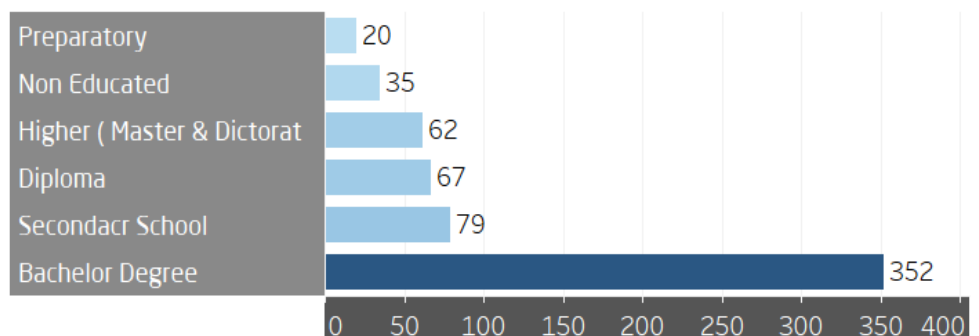
**Women constituted 31% of the total number of participants.**



The distribution of participants by age groups was as follows: 33% of the age group 16-25 years, 37% of the age group 25-35 years, 20% of the age group 35-45 years, 8% of the age group 45 years and more.



Classified according to educational level, 57% of participants hold university degrees (Masters and PhD), 12% have completed their secondary education, 10% hold postgraduate degrees (Masters and PhD), 10% have undergraduate diplomas, 5% have no formal education, and 3% have basic education.



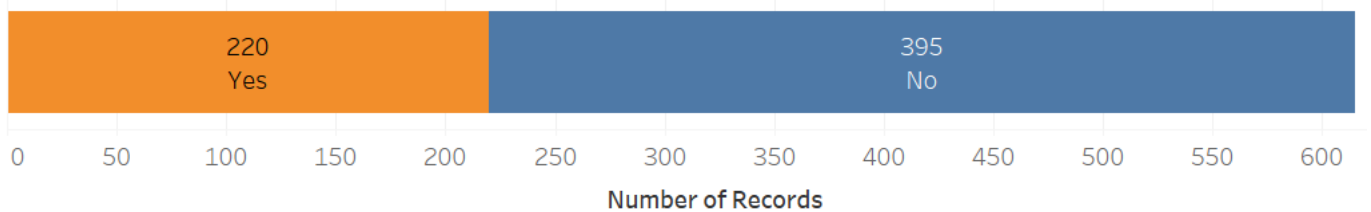
# Findings

## Survey of the media scene in Yemen

# Yemeni Public Trust in the Media

Figure (No. 2) shows that 64% of respondents do not have confidence in the media. This means that the majority has no confidence in the information provided by the media. Respondents provided several reasons for their low confidence in the media, notably unprofessional and biased media coverage. Some respondents thought that most media outlets are owned by political bodies and channel information in line with the agenda of those parties in an unprofessional manner. Respondents believe that the media is politicized and lack professionalism.

Figure (1)



## Women have more confidence in the media

The survey showed that 39% of the of female respondents trust the Yemeni media, compared to 33% of the men who trust the media.

## Older people have more confidence in the media

Results show that older people (more than 45 years of age) have more confident in the media. It is found that 63% of females belonging to this age group trust the

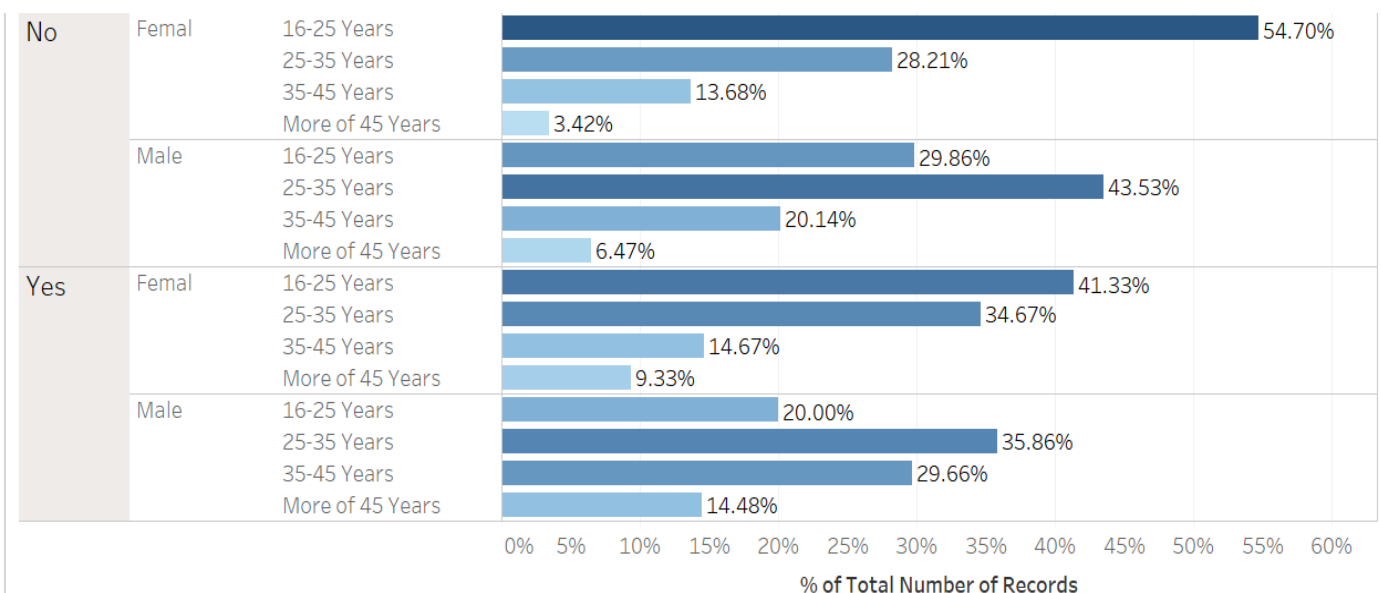


Figure (3)

media compared to 53% of males of the same age group.

Adversely, 67% of the females and 74% of the males aged 16-25 years do not trust the media.

### **Al-Jazeera.. the most trusted channel**

The survey shows that Al-Jazeera is the channel most trusted by the public, followed by the BBC Arabic, Al-Arabiyya Al-Hadath, Al-Masdar Online and Balquis channel, respectively.

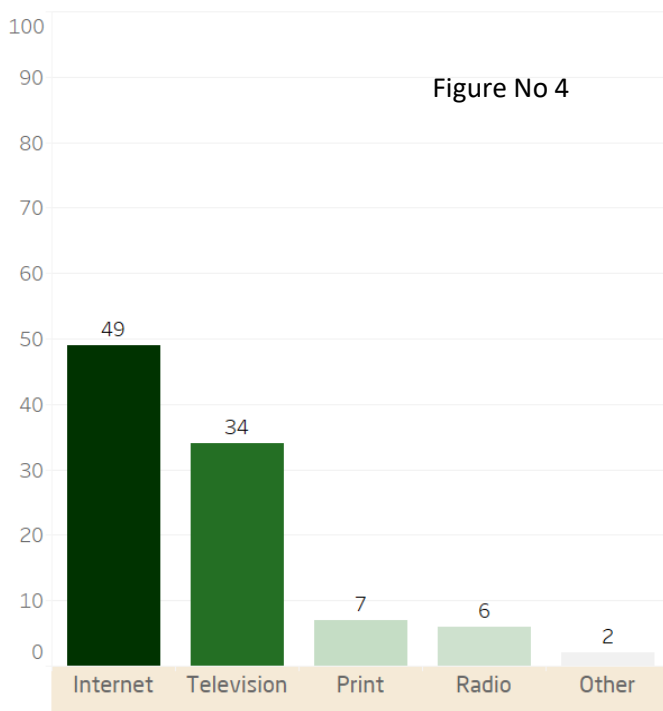
It further shows that 15% of the respondents who trust the media have confidence in Al-Jazeera, compared to 9% who trust the BBC, and 8% who trust Al-Arabiyya AL-Hadath. Each of Al-Masdar online and the Balquis channel are trusted by 4% of the respondents. The remaining 58% of respondents place their confidence in several channels and media outlets.

***When respondents were asked to identify a media outlet in which they***

***trusted,*** 12% designated Al-Jazeera, 10% named Al-Arabiyya, followed by Al-Masirah channel (7%), Al-Arabiyya Al-Hadath (5%), and Suhail channel (4%). Of the remaining percentage, some designated various other channels, while some others maintained they had no confidence in any media outlet.

## Media sources of information/news favored by the public

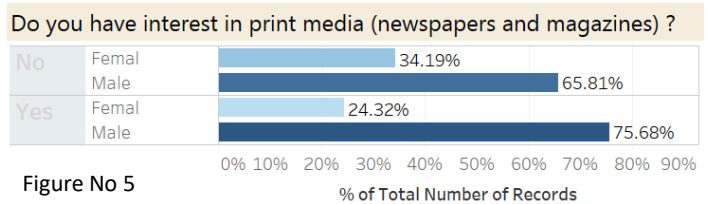
Respondents were asked to designate the types of media which served as their preferred source of information and news. Results showed that the Internet (news websites and social media networks) served as the major source of information and news (49%), followed by television (34%), print media (7%), and radio (6%). The remaining 2% was assigned to other means of obtaining information, including personal sources and friends.



Internet is the most important source of information / News

## Decline of print media

The majority of respondents (70%) reported that they had no interest in print media (newspapers and magazines), while only 30% said they still read newspapers and magazines.



Respondents attributed their lack of interest in print media to high costs, rampant illiteracy, predominance of modern media such as the Internet and television, and the limited access to print media.

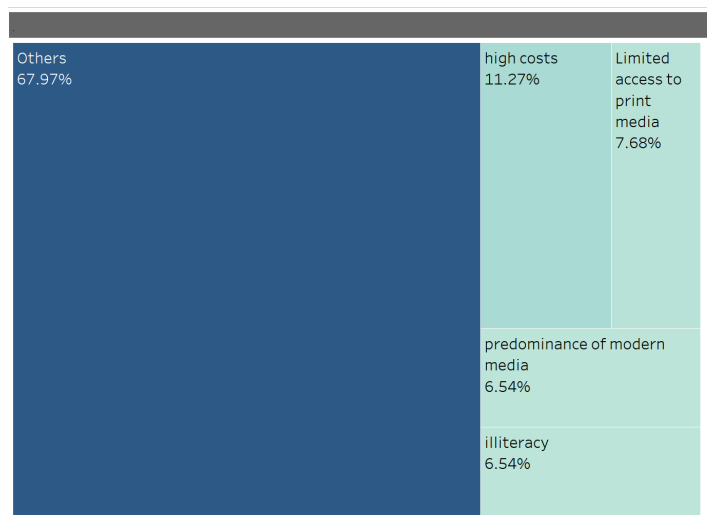


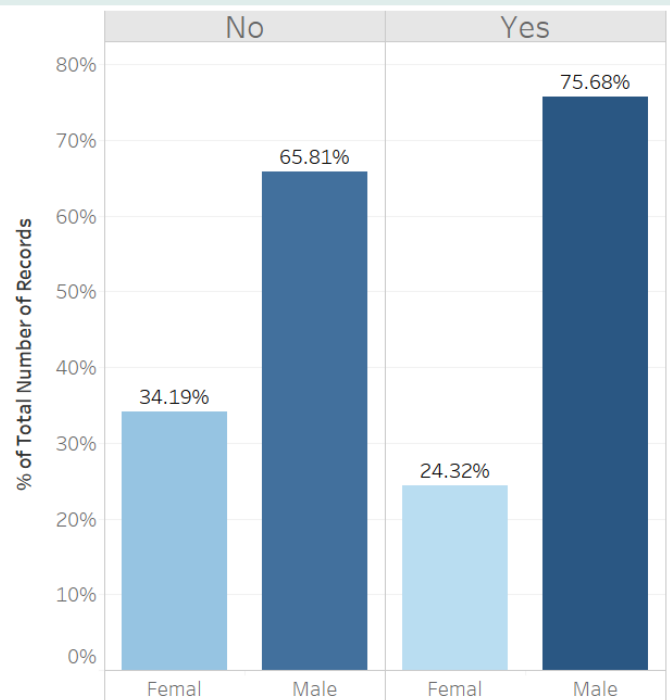
Figure NO 6

Results show that 11% of respondents attributed their lack of interest in newspapers and magazines to high prices, 6% did not read the papers because of their illiteracy, while another 6% reported that they were not interested in print media as they preferred other types of media such as the Internet, television and the radio. Moreover, 7% of respondents reported that lack of access to print media in their districts accounted for their lack of interest in newspapers and magazines. The rest (68%) provided various reasons for declining to read newspapers, including the biased nature of print media, which disseminated partisan views of certain parties, the absence of an independent press, and suppression of dissident voices that led to attempts to channel public opinion in a particular course.

### Men constitute the larger readership of print media

Survey results show that males constitute the larger audience of print media. According to results, 33% of the total number of male respondents read newspapers and magazines, compared to only 23% of the females surveyed.

**Readership of Print Media** Figure (7)



Al-Ayyam newspaper enjoyed the widest readership (20%), followed by Akhbar Al-Youm (12%), Al-Thawra official newspaper (9%), and Aden al-Ghad (6%). The remaining 50% of respondents named other newspapers including Al-Jumhuriya, Al-Masirah, Al-Manbar Al-Yamani, 14<sup>th</sup> October, Al-Jumhuriya, Yemen Today, Al-Arabi magazine, etc.

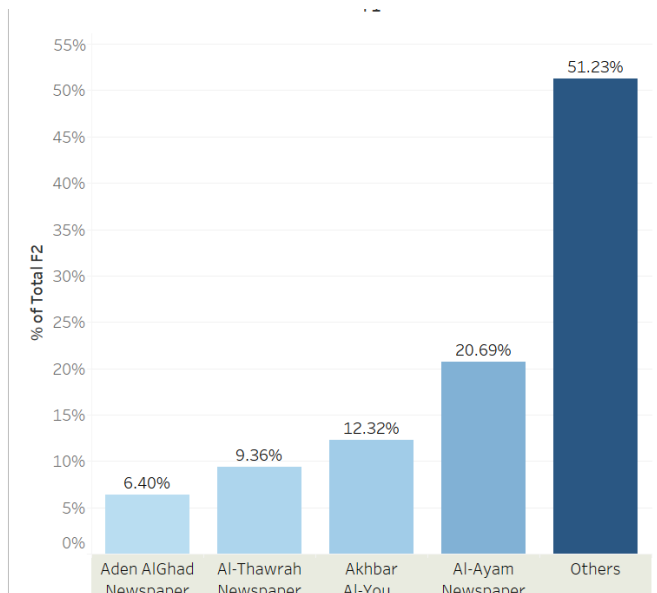
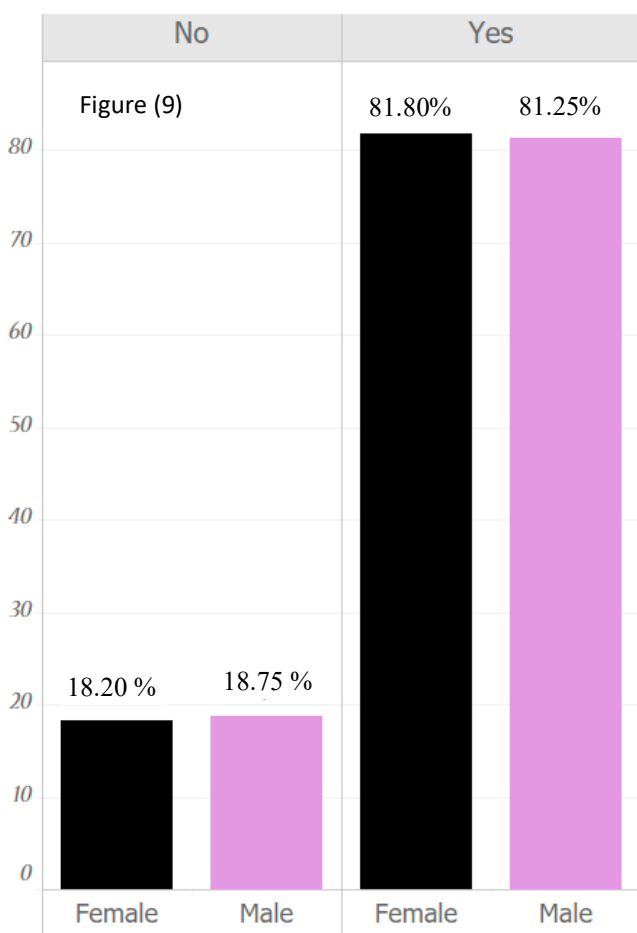


Figure (8)

## Television has the largest audience

Survey results show that 81% of Yemenis watch TV, while 18% do not for various reasons.

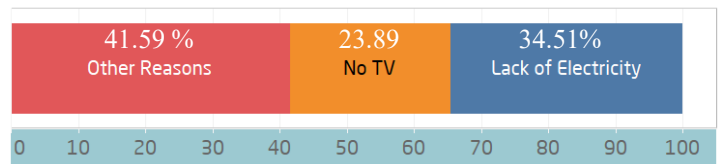
The Figure below shows that male and female respondents show the same ratio of watching television (81% each).



The 18% of respondents who do not watch TV, cited several reasons, including lack of a power source (34%), 28% said they did not have TV sets. The remaining (41%) provided other reasons,

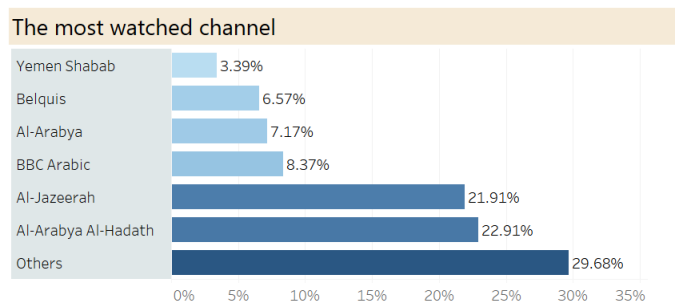
including lack of interest in television, time constraints, and availability of faster alternatives to TV, particularly the Internet, to get access to the news.

Figure (10)



## Al-Arabiya Al-Hadath... the most watched channel

Figure (No. 11) shows that the highest percentage of respondents (22%) watch Al Arabiya Al-Hadath, making it the most watched channel, followed by Al Jazeera (21%), the BBC Arabic (8%), Al-Arabiya (7%), Balquis Channel (6%), and Yemen Shabab (3%). The remaining 29% of respondents watched several channels in varying degrees, including Suhail Channel, Al-Ghad Al-Mushriq, Hadhramout Channel and Al-Saeeda.



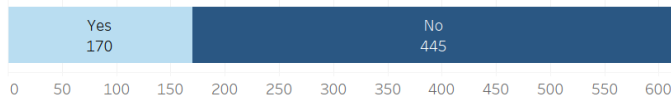
شكل رقم (11)



## Do you listen to the radio?

Figure (No. 12) shows that only 27% of respondents listen to the radio, compared to 72% who do not.

Figure (12)



As Figure (No. 13) shows, the percentage of males who do not listen to the radio is equal to that of females (72% each).

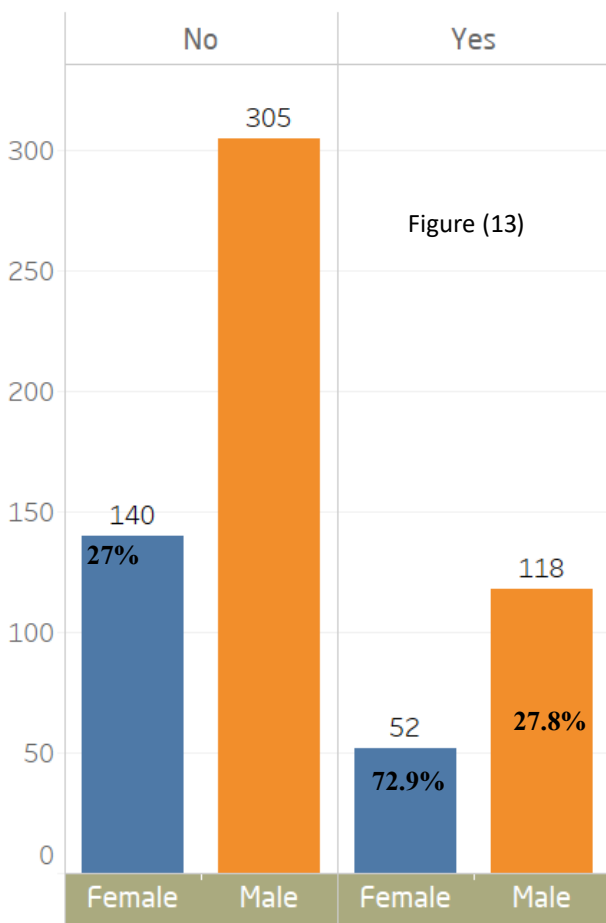
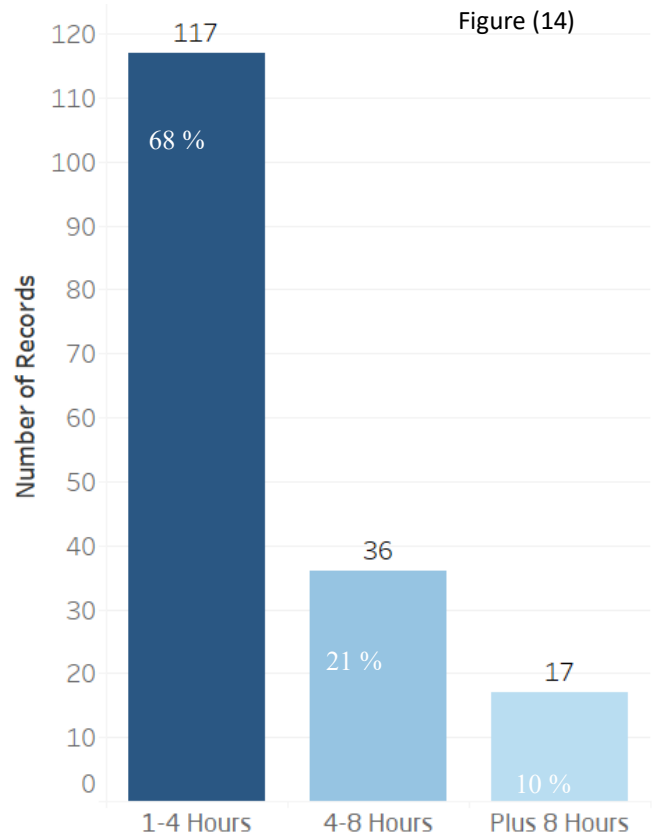


Figure (No. 14) shows that 68% of respondents who listen to the radio

spend approximately 1-4 hours a week listening, 21% spend 4-8 hours, while 10% listen to the radio for more than 8 hours per week.



## Women constitute the larger radio audience

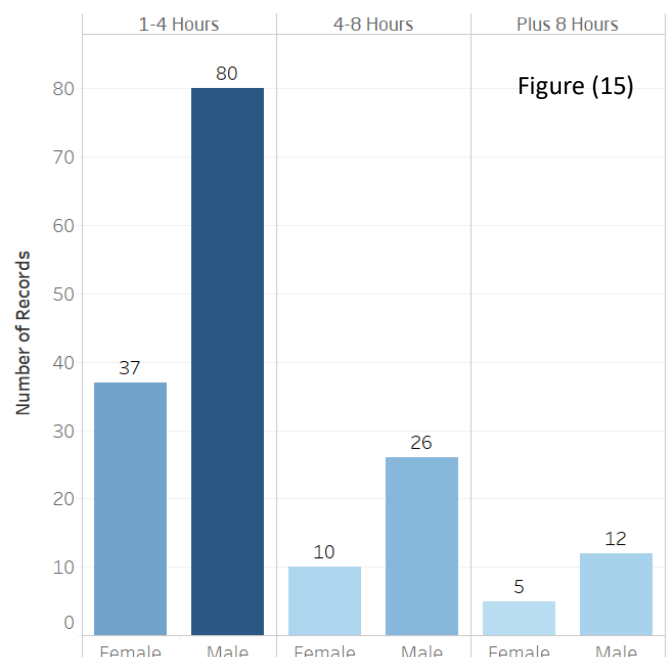
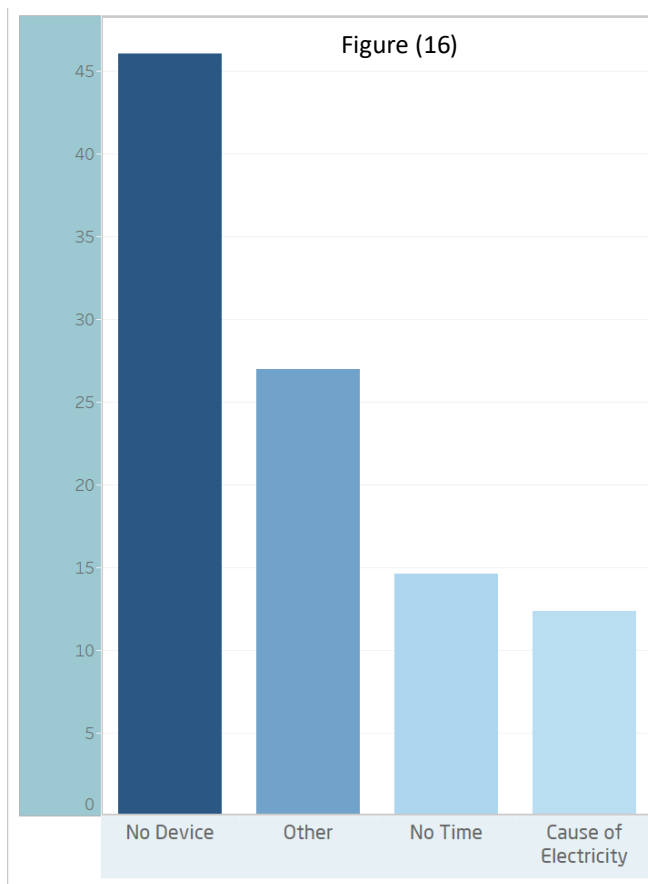


Figure (No. 15) shows that 61% of female respondents, compared to only 27% of males, listen to the radio.

Below Figure (No. 16) shows that 46% of respondents who do not listen to the radio said they did not have radio sets, 12% lack a power source, and 14% do not listen due to time constraints. Additionally, 26% of respondents provided



other explanations of their lack of interest in the radio, particularly availability of faster alternatives to the radio.

### Yemen FM is the most popular radio station.

Yemen FM	% 10
Radio Sayoun	% 07
Monte Carlo	% 05
Al-Ghad Al-Mushriq	% 05
Others	% 72

The Table above shows that Yemen FM enjoys the largest audience (10%), making it the most popular radio station, followed by Radio Sayoun (7%), Monte Carlo (5%), and Al-Ghad Al-Mushriq (5%).

Responses of 72% survey participants designated various radio stations, particularly Radio Al-Mukalla, Watani FM, the BBC, Radio Marib, Barq FM, and other stations.

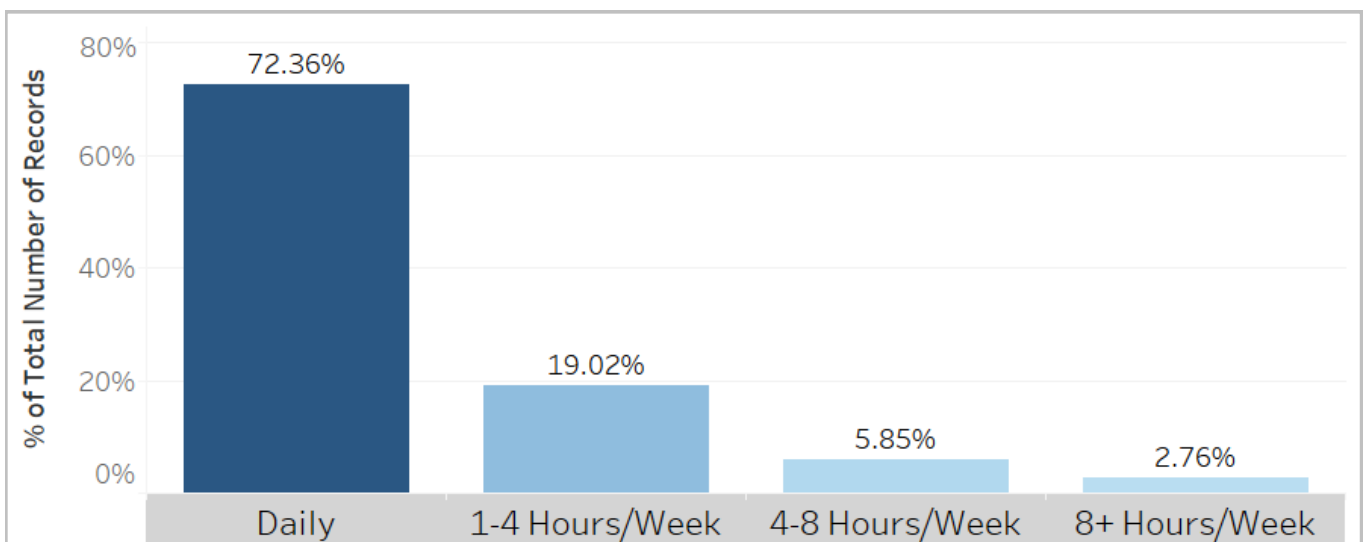
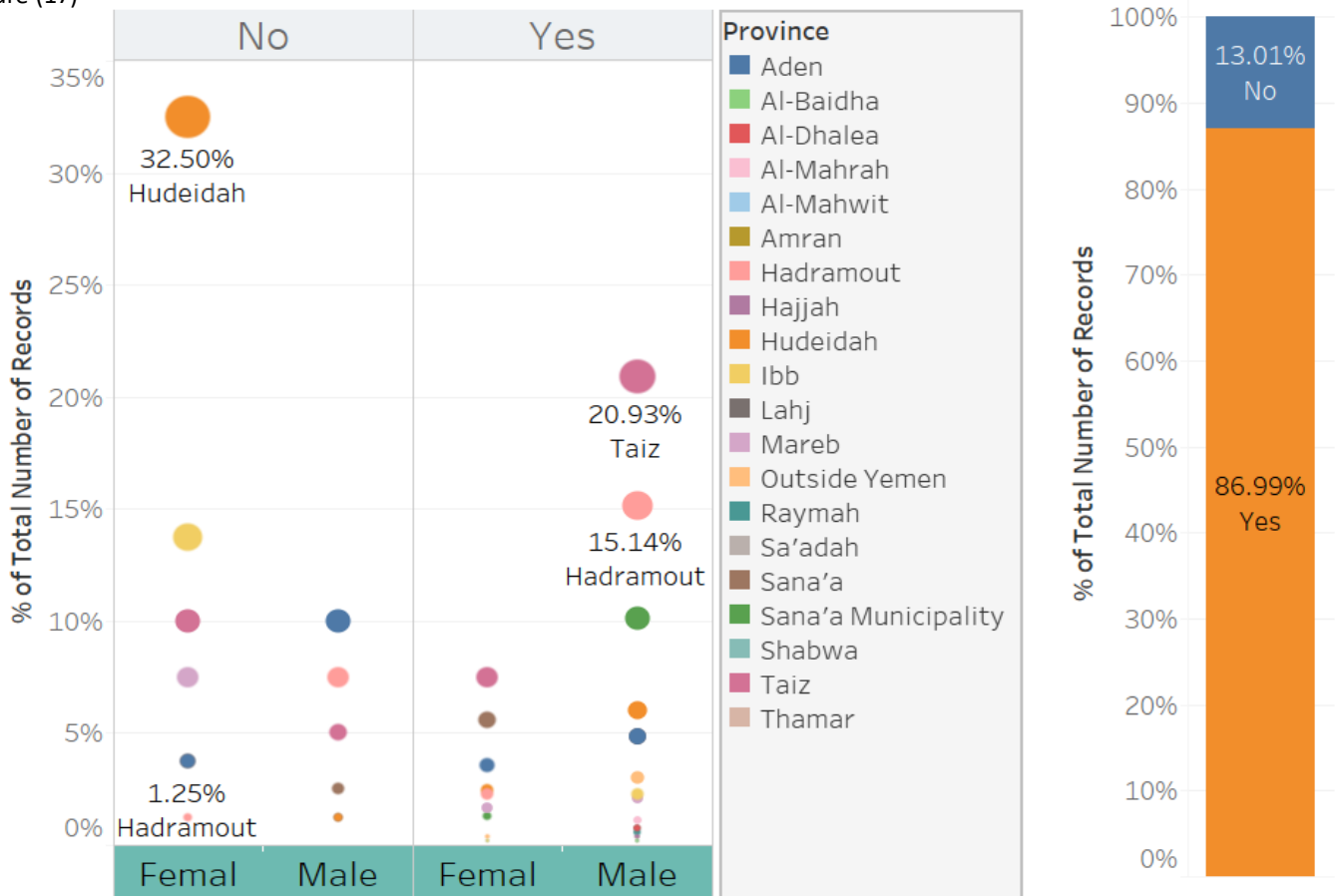
# Internet

75 %

Of People Directly Surveyed Uses Internet

%86 of Surveyed Uses Internet

Figure (17)



## Males surpass females in using the Internet

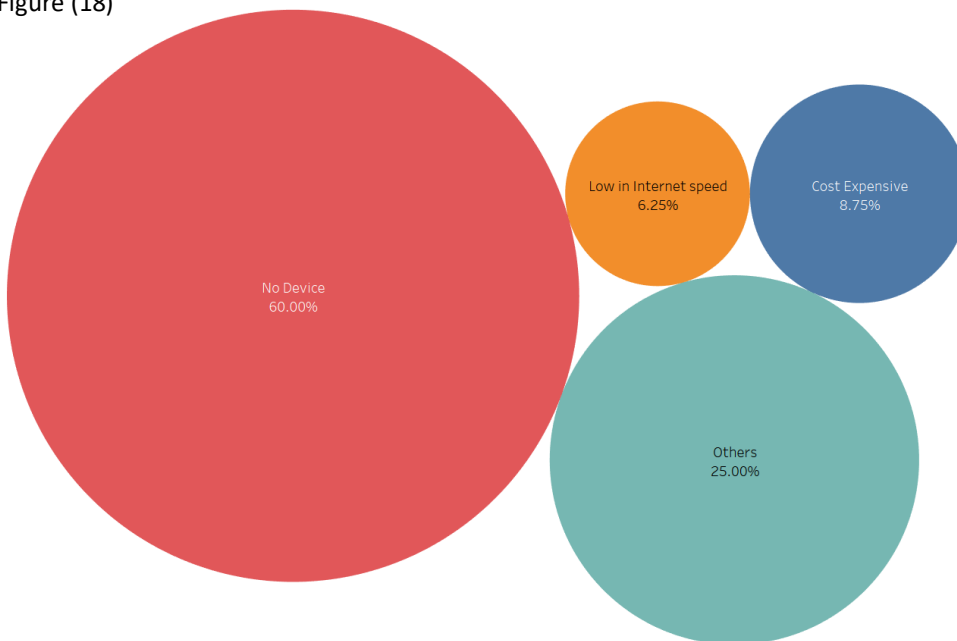
Figure (No. 17) shows that males use the Internet more than females do; 94% of male respondents use the Internet, compared to 69% of females. This shows the wide gap between males and females in having access to the Internet in Yemen due to cultural, social and economic reasons.

## Taiz.. the highest rate of Internet users

The Taiz governorate ranked first in terms of Internet users. Around 92% of participants from Taiz use the Internet. In contrast, the lowest percentage of Internet users, especially among females, was found to be in the Hodeida governorate, where only 61% of participants use the Internet.

Survey results show that 60% of those who do not access the Internet do not have

Figure (18)



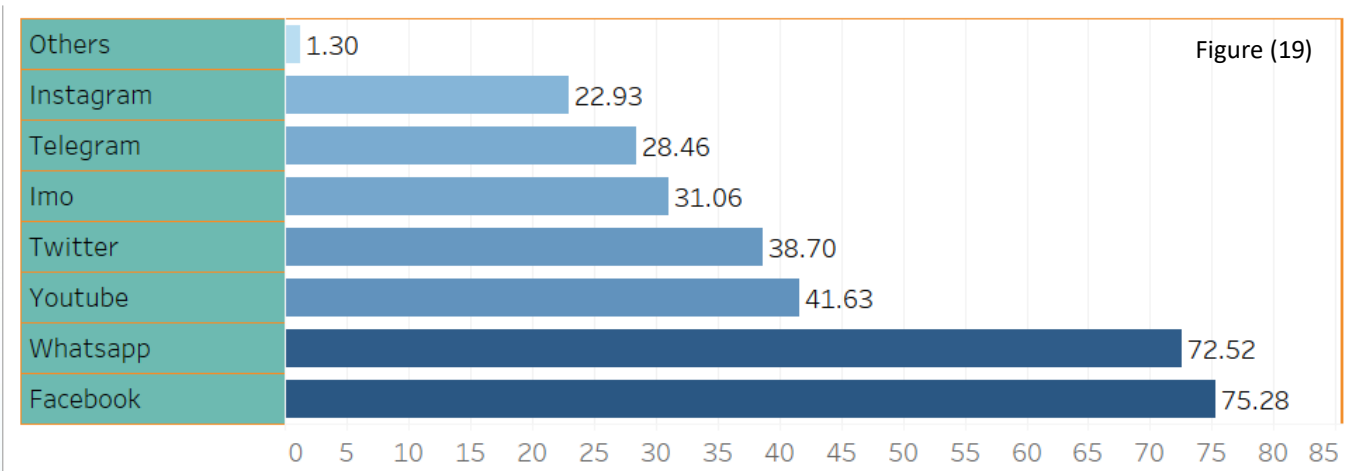
the required equipment, 8% have issues high Internet costs, 6% because of low Internet speed, while 25% provided other reasons, especially Internet illiteracy and government censorship. A low percent-

age of the persons surveyed stated that they use the Internet only on WhatsApp.

## Facebook the most popular social network in Yemen

Figure (No. 19) shows that 75% of the total number of respondents use Facebook, making it the most popular social media network in Yemen, followed by

WhatsApp (27%), YouTube (41%), Twitter (38%), Imo (31%), Telegram (28%), and Instagram (22%).



**17%**

**OF INTERNET  
USERS EITHER  
DO NOT  
BROWSE THE  
VARIOUS  
TYPES OF  
NEWS WEB-  
SITES, BUT RE-  
LY ONLY ON SO-  
CIAL MEDIA  
NETWORKS TO  
GET NEWS**

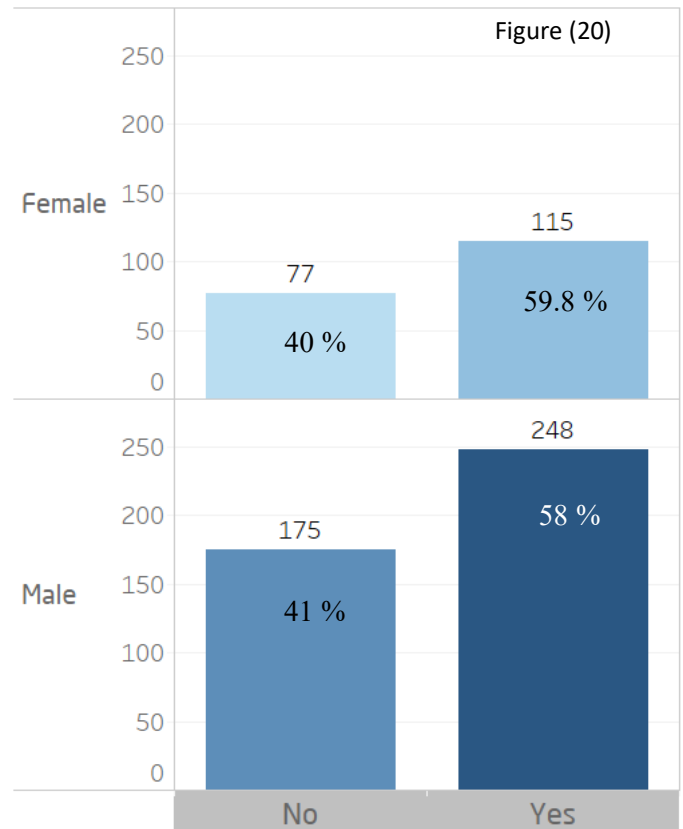
### **Al-Masdar Online - the Most Frequently Visited Website**

Survey results show that al-Masdar Online is the most visited website. It is frequently accessed by 6% of the Internet users surveyed. Al-Mushahid comes next, frequently browsed by 5% of the Internet users surveyed, whereas Al-Mashhad Al-Yamani and Sahafa net which are frequently accessed by 4.6% and 4% users, respectively.

At the same time, 17% of Internet users and targeted respondents stated that they do not visit any news websites, and rely instead on other means to obtain information, including social media networks (Facebook and WhatsApp).

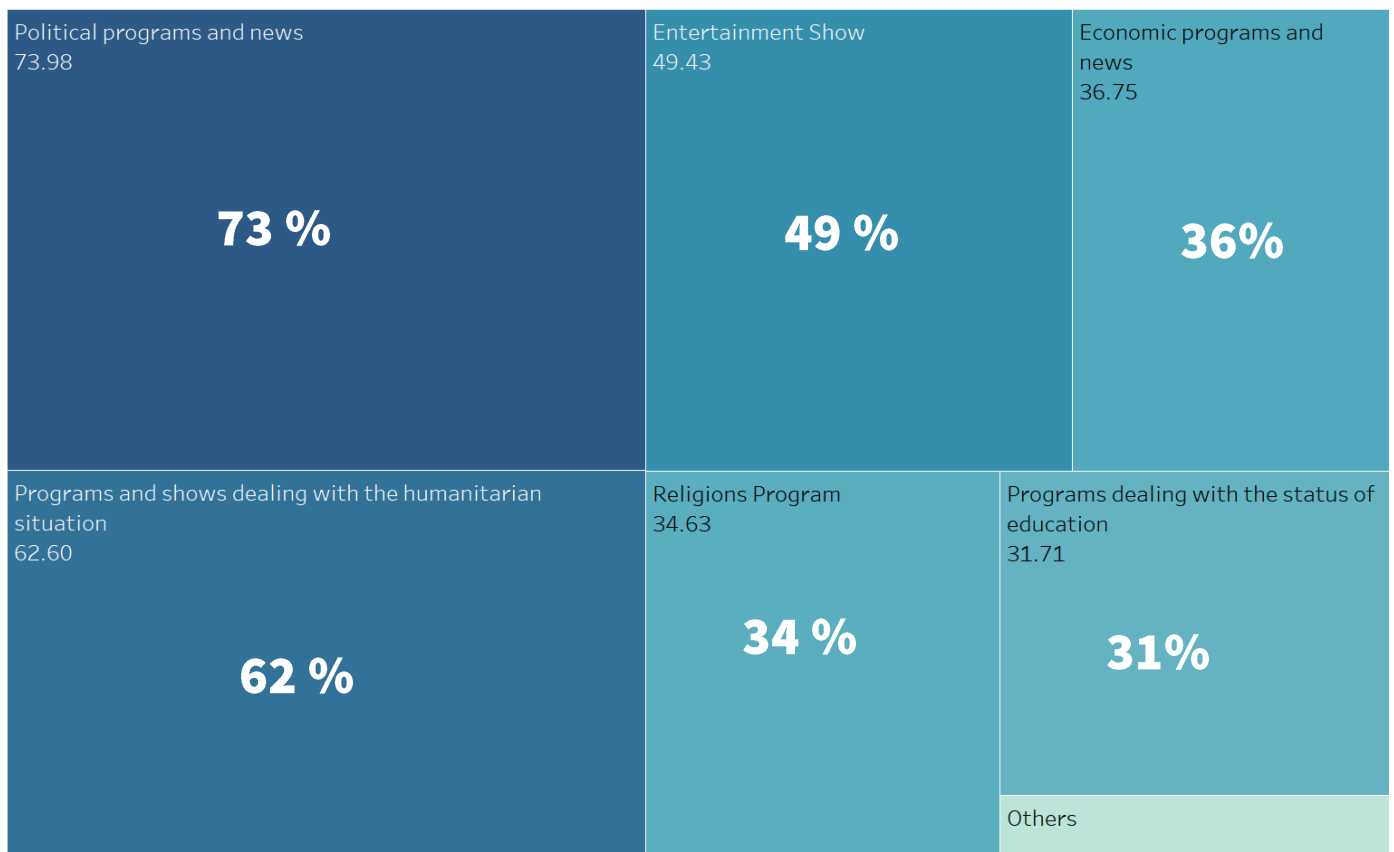
## The media oblivious to people's concerns

Results show that 59% of respondents believe that the media do not cover issues that concern them. Figure (No. 20) demonstrates that 40% of respondents believe that the media do not furnish their information needs. It also shows that 40% of the females surveyed, compared to 41% of the males, believe that the media do not cover critical issues.



## Priorities of the Yemeni Public

Figure (21)



## Political programs and news gain the top interest of the Yemeni public.

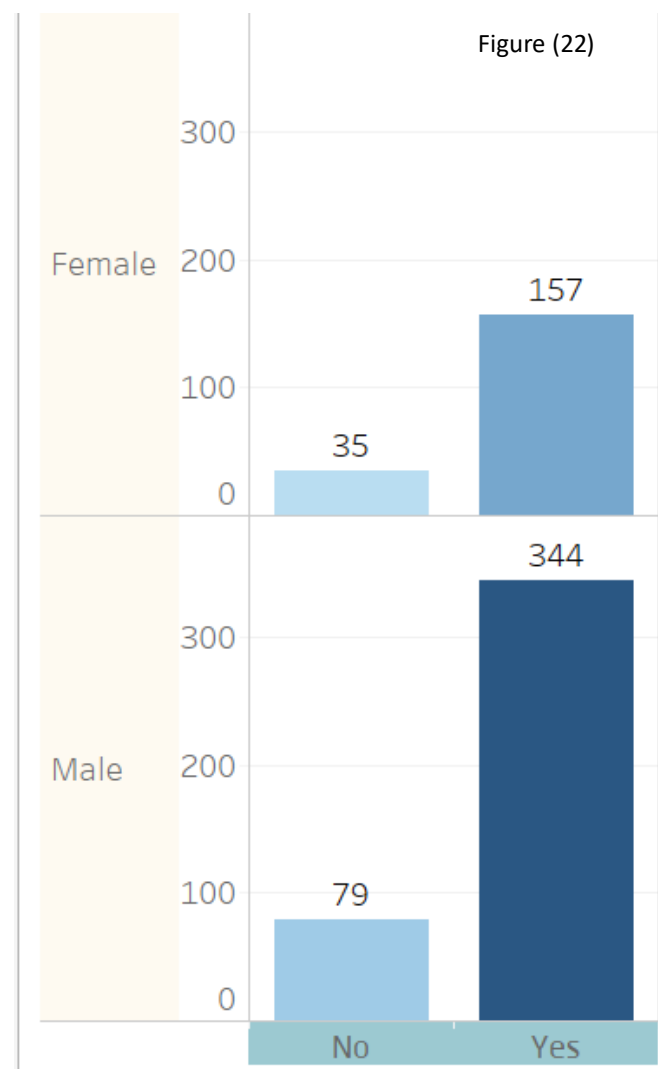
Findings show that political programs still enjoy the highest level of interest among Yemenis.

Figure (No. 21) shows that political news and programs gain the attention of the majority of respondents (73%). Programs and shows dealing with the humanitarian situation come next (62%), followed by entertainment (49%), economic programs (36%), and religious programs (34%). Programs dealing with the status of education gain the lowest level of public interest (31%). Other areas of interest, such as gender issues and sports, are added by 6% of respondents.

### Representation of women in Yemeni media

According to survey results, 81% of the respondents believe that women are fairly represented in the Yemeni media, while 19% believe that women are still underrepresented. In the view of some

respondents in this latter category, this is due to the hierarchal social order. Others attribute the low presence of women in the media field as journalists and leaders to the limited opportunities granted to women. Still some others argue that inadequate training of women in the media accounts for the limited employment opportunities available to them.



# The Yemeni Public's Demands

How can the media serve you better? How can the subject matter presented by Yemeni media be improved?"

Respondents were asked: "How can the media serve you better? How can the subject matter presented by Yemeni media be improved?"

Responses varied considerably. Most answers focused on the following points:

- ⇒ To ensure credibility and to convey the truth in a transparent and professional manner.
- ⇒ To pay the due attention to local community issues and address citizens' concerns.
- ⇒ To introduce cultural and creative programs.
- ⇒ To Highlight humanitarian issues and avoid sensitive political topics which are likely to lead to further disintegration of the social fabric.
- ⇒ To introduce programs that seek to promote development and enhance equal citizenship, focusing particularly on gender equality.
- ⇒ Providing journalists with more space to achieve their creativity potentials.



# Main Conclusions

## **The following conclusions were reached:**

- ⇒ A crisis of confidence permeates the Yemeni public's relation to the media, prompting the former to seek other sources of information than traditional media. They mostly resort to social media.
- ⇒ Political issues constitute the key concern of the Yemeni people, whereas economic issues are ranked fourth in the list of public interest.
- ⇒ The map of the Yemeni media has been redrawn in the context of the current war, in line with the new centers of political and military power in Yemen.
- ⇒ The majority of Yemenis still watch TV, whereas radio audience has declined to 30% of the public.
- ⇒ Most Yemenis believe that Yemeni media do not meet their information needs.
- ⇒ Although some media outlets enjoy a wide following rate, this does not mean the public trust them. Therefore, respondents' answers to questions on the most watched and the most trusted media varied.

# Recommendations

## **The study recommends the following:**

- ⇒ The media shall study their audience and focus on issues that concern them.
- ⇒ The media shall adhere to professional standards to enhance public confidence in them.
- ⇒ Traditional media shall keep up with the fast pace of progress in the field of social media and incorporate new developments in the field.

## About :

Studies & Economic Media Center (SEMC) is a high-profile NGO ,specializing in training in economic and media fields, working towards the enhancement of transparency, good governance, public engagement in decision-making, the creation of professional and free media and empowering youth and women economically..

.....

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# Annexes

- ◆ [Click to Download the Survey Template](#)
- ◆ [Click to Download the Survey Responses -, Open Data shared](#)