

## Involvement Women in Intangible Heritage Preservation Nubian Woman Study Case

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ملخص:

### مشاركة النساء في الحفاظ على التراث غير المادي

يتناول هذا البحث أهمية إشراك المرأة في عملية الحفاظ على التراث غير المادي، حيث تنقل المرأة العديد من أشكال التراث الثقافي غير المادي وتحافظ عليها وتفسرها وكذلك تعيد انتاجها بين الأجيال من خلال عملية تربية الأطفال وممارستها للأنشطة المختلفة في الحياة اليومية. كذلك تعتبر المرأة الحافظ والحارس الأساسي للكثير من المعارف التقليدية المتعلقة بالتراث غير المادي في معظم المجتمعات مثل انتاج الحرف اليدوية، وممارسة الفنون المتنوعة، ومعرفة اسرار الطب الشعبي، ولا يقتصر الأمر على الحفاظ على أسرار هذه الممارسات التقليدية ونقلها، بل يبتكرون أيضاً في تطوير هذه الممارسات لتناسب متطلبات جميع العصر الحديث مع الحفاظ على الأصالة. وقد أولت منظمة الأمم المتحدة للتربية والعلم والثقافة "اليونسكو" اهتمام خاص من خلال برامجها واتفاقياتها على دور النساء كمنتجات وحافظات وناقلات ومفسرات للتراث غير المادي .

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(Involvement Women in Intangible.....)

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كذلك من الضروري الاهتمام بمجالات التراث الغير مادي التي تشارك فيها المرأة والتأكيد على الاهتمام بتلك المجالات حيث إن تجاهلها له عواقب وخيمة على الممارسات الثقافية المميزة للمجتمعات، خاصة مع تأثير العولمة واختفاء العديد من الممارسات التقليدية. وقد أكدت نتائج الدراسة الميدانية التي أجريت في عام 2017 بثلاث قرى نوبية بمحافظة أسوان على وعي النساء بالنوبة بمفهوم التراث وبأدوارهن في الحفاظ عليه وحرصهن على تعليمه لأطفالهن، والاكتر من ذلك اقترحن العديد من الافكار عن كيفية مشاركتهن في حفظ التراث الذي يعبر عن هويتهم الثقافية.

**Abstract:**

The Involvement women in several domains of intangible heritage has a vital impact in the world today. Women transmit, preserve, and interpret many forms of intangible cultural heritage between generations in most cultures through the process of bringing up children.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization "UNESCO" has given importance to preserving the intangible heritage, following the recommendations made since 1989 to safeguard traditional cultures. The intangible heritage has an impact on people's conscience and practices, too it has social and economic secrets. Furthermore, UNESCO affirms that women play important roles as bearers, providers, and reproducers of intangible heritage in societies. Therefore, the 2001 Synthesis Report: "Activities in the Field of Women and the Intangible Heritage" confirms that a better understanding of living heritage is achieved through women and their practice of daily activities.<sup>2</sup> In 2003, UNESCO member states adopted a convention to preserve or protect cultural heritage.<sup>3</sup> UNESCO also emphasizes, through its programs, the need to involve women in the process of preserving, transmitting, and interpreting intangible heritage.

**Keywords:** - *Women involvement- Intangible Heritage- – Heritage preservation.*

**Introduction** – In all cultures, women are the primary custodians of much traditional knowledge related to intangible heritage such as recipes, handicrafts, weaving, art, and the practice of folk medicine. Not only do they preserve and transmit the secrets of these traditional practices, but they also innovate in developing these practices to suit the requirements of all modern elements while preserving authenticity.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize the interest in those important roles of women in the elements of the intangible heritage, as ignoring these roles has dire consequences on the distinctive cultural practices of societies, especially with the impact of globalization and the disappearance of many traditional practices. In addition to the death of many older generations who possess much oral knowledge and daily traditional practices, this leads to the loss of many features of the local heritage that play a role in shaping identity.

The research aims first, through the theoretical approach, to define intangible heritage and the role of women in transmitting and preserving heritage. Second: Discussing the programs launched by UNESCO, which emphasize the necessity of empowering women in the process of preserving the intangible heritage. Third, highlighting the most important areas in which women participate in the transmission of intangible heritage. Finally, the analysis of a field study on three Nubian villages in Aswan Governorate reflects the awareness of Nubian women about their roles in preserving, transmitting, and interpreting cultural heritage. The study is based on analyzing the conventions concerning

intangible cultural heritage and the value of involving women in the process of transferring and preserving the intangible heritage and a review of the most important areas in which women's participation in the intangible heritage is prominent. It is also based on the qualitative method by, focus group interviews, participation by observation and recording, in addition to open-ended questions that help provide accurate answers to investigate women awareness about heritage and their roles in preservation process.

The qualitative analysis provides appropriate ways to understand lifestyles, changes in society, people's behavior, and stories, so it was used in this research to give a clear vision through the women themselves about their vision of their participation in their local heritage.<sup>5</sup>

According to the UNESCO definition of intangible heritage is *"The living traditions and expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendent. They include the oral, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge, and practices concerning nature and the universe, or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts"*.<sup>6</sup>

Intangible heritage is inherited through the activities of daily life, which are the main expressive means of cultural identity. It is also an emotional and socialist cultural experience transmitted between generations through different skills, the practice of acquired rituals that affect individuals and groups and enable them to live and understand their culture and feel their uniqueness.<sup>7</sup>

The intangible heritage is mostly orally conveyed from generation to generation and enriches cultural diversity and human inventiveness by involving local communities, ethnic groups, women, and individuals who engage in producing, preserving, and recreating it. Moreover, the intangible heritage reflects communities' creativity in coping with social and cultural environment changes and their interfacing with nature and history. The practices of intangible heritage enhance a sense of identity and reflect the uniqueness of societies. In addition, it forms an inspiration source for diverse aspects such as oral traditions, traditional knowledge, religious and social practices like healing rituals, language, expression, poetry, stories, songs, dance, music, along with material skills in and traditional crafts that guarantee of sustainable development. <sup>8</sup>

The tangible heritage has an effective impact in preserving the identity of societies, but it is threatened by the obliteration of cultural identities, the impact of globalization, and the rapid changes in the rhythm of daily life, which lead to the loss of many intangible heritage elements. Therefore, it must be recorded, preserved, and presented to future generations. Likewise, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of women's participation in preservation programs. <sup>9</sup>

Women in different cultures and social classes transmit and preserve heritage through the exercise of their daily household taking care of the family and raising children. Through this role, they are able, unintentionally, to transfer the various forms of intangible heritage between generations,

moreover, their ability to renovation in line with the daily changes in environment, culture, society, and the world.<sup>10</sup>

The nature of women's domains in intangible cultural heritage varies in different cultures. Despite, the prominent role of women in transmitting knowledge and heritage through their daily activities, not all women's intangible heritage is known, and the main issues of women's intangible heritage are mostly related to livelihoods. Therefore, since the end of the twentieth century and the advent of the twenty-first century, UNESCO programs emphasize and focus greatly on women's involvement as providers, transmitters, and reproducers of intangible heritage through daily practices.<sup>11</sup>

In 1975 the First United Nations Conference on Women was opened in Mexico City, Mexico. They approved the celebration of International Women's Year at this conference. The main theme was "Equality, development, and Peace". The objectives of the conference were to involvement women in strengthening international peace, eliminating racism and discrimination.<sup>12</sup> In Beijing, 1995 The fourth world conference on (Women: Action for Equality, Development, and Peace), was held on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The conference declaration included 38 points related to women's issues, the most important of which are:

- Freedom, justice, and development for women

- Acknowledging women's voices everywhere, knowing the diverse roles of women and the circumstances surrounding them.
- Promoting the advancement, empowerment, and women participation in all fields in all the world
- Eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against women, children's rights, and equality for both men and women.
- Emphasizing the implementation of Nairobi's conference (1985) plan the women's development.
- Empowering women and providing freedom of thought and religion.
- Designing effective and efficient programs that enhance women's empowerment and development.
- Providing basic education and lifelong literacy for girls and women.
- Reducing dangerous traditional habits on women and girls.
- Cooperation between civil society organizations and governmental sectors to implement projects that serve the advancement of women.<sup>13</sup>

Despite the two decades between these two conferences, issues related to gender and its relationship to development began to gain more clarity. However, the interactions between culture and development and the roles of women in preserving, creating, and transmitting living cultures through



their daily practice have not received the attention they deserve.<sup>14</sup>

In conjunction with the Beijing Conference 1995, UNESCO held its 28th session in 1995; women's programs have become one of the most priorities of UNESCO as it is the only organization in the United Nations that plays a role in culture.

It has developed programs that promote the role of women in development and intangible heritage.<sup>15</sup>

The Stockholm Conference was held on the recommendation of UNESCO in 1998 on "cultural policies and development" stressed the necessity of affirming that: -

- Cultural policy is one of the basic columns of a development strategy.
- Encouraging creativity and participation in cultural life.
- Supporting policies and practices for protecting the tangible and intangible heritage and cultural industries.
- Promotion and protection of cultural diversity.<sup>16</sup>

In 1999, at the General Conference for UNESCO at its 29th session a symposium was held in Tehran, Iran, entitled "The Role of Women in Transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage", under support of the UNESCO Intangible Heritage Unit and the Iranian National Committee for UNESCO. Symposium objected to support and improve intercultural dialogue, as well to exchange opinions and diverse experiences concerning

women's roles in maintaining and transmitting intangible cultural heritage.

Among the main objectives of the symposium:

- Evaluating the various women's roles in domains of intangible cultural heritage around the world and unifying, enhancing those roles in transmitting this heritage.
- Examining women's role in of intangible cultural heritage transmission across generations.
- Connecting the social organizations of women and following up the areas in which the intangible cultural heritage is expressed and transmitted.
- Studying the interrelationship between domains of culture and society and women's roles in transmitting intangible cultural heritage.
- Investigating various means to preserve the intangible cultural.
- Creating urgent actions to identify the priorities by UNESCO and Member States. <sup>17</sup>

Based on the recommendations of the Tehran Symposium, the Iranian National Committee submitted a project proposal to study the role of women concerning intangible cultural heritage. The project was approved at the 30th General Conference (1999). The idea of the project is to present feasibility studies around "Women, Intangible Heritage and Development" in six regions of the world to have recommendations and take real steps towards supporting women as a main pillar in the maintenance and development

of intangible heritage. In 2001, the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO and the Intangible Heritage Section at UNESCO held the International Expert Meeting in Tehran to consider (Women, Intangible Heritage and Development). They aimed to provide an informal assembly to evaluate the feasibility study of the 1999 proposed project by Iran in six UNESCO regional offices in Apia (Pacific), Accra (Africa), Beirut (Arab States), Mexico (Latin America), New Delhi (Asia), Tashkent (Asia) middle). The studies gave a general idea about institutions and research related to women's domains intangible heritage and development in the six regions concerned previously through the answers to the designed questionnaire. In addition, it presented various recommendations for future steps that should be taken in this area in each region.<sup>18</sup>

One of the most crucial future goals of the " Women, Intangible Heritage and Development Project" is the need to raise awareness of the importance of women roles in the intangible heritage. In addition, this study provided many examples of women roles as transmitters of intangible cultural heritage in various fields. For instance, language, ethics, behavioral patterns, religious beliefs, and values. In the synthesis report the experts discussed the study of the various problems and obstacles affect the preservation of heritage, the economic and social development and provide some possible solutions.<sup>19</sup> In the same year 2001 UNESCO released a document "Activities in the Domain of Women and Intangible Heritage". Accordingly, UNESCO has

launched many policy initiatives concerning the role of women in preserving the intangible heritage.<sup>20</sup>

Women are presenting an essential role in cultural diversity and the dynamism of cultural heritage. Their role concerning intangible heritage has special value and includes codes of ethics, language, behavioral patterns, religious beliefs, and value systems. Furthermore, women rehabilitate, recreate, safeguard, and pass the intangible culture to future generations, particularly within local cultural contexts. Therefore, women's role is a key creator of cultural identities, especially in the domestic domain and the family which are influential channels for the conveyance of identities through the life cycle, rituals, religious expression, oral literature, oral narration, oral history, language, accent, health, and healing, traditional cosmetic, costumes and fashion, food, housing construction, maintenance and decoration, and mourning skills.<sup>21</sup>

In October 2003, *The Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage* was adopted at the 32nd session of UNESCO's General Conference. The convention objectives are.

- (a) Protecting the intangible cultural heritage.
- (b) Respect practices of intangible cultural heritage of different communities, groups, and individuals.
- (c) Improving awareness about the value of the intangible cultural heritage at all levels.
- (d) Offering international supports and cooperation.

Regarding the relationship of women to the intangible heritage in this conference, among the 257 elements of

traditions included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, only 62 relate women to the intangible cultural heritage. In all the lists of intangible heritage, out of 298 items, only 72 are associated with women. On the other hand, there are several common practices of intangible heritage between men and women in local communities. For example, rites of passage in many African tribes where women participate in dancing to music played by men, yet the element is listed as related to men.<sup>22</sup>

In 2003, an expert meeting in “Gender and Intangible Cultural Heritage” was held by UNESCO to discuss one of the elements included in the preservation of intangible heritage related to the ritual practices that are based on social and cultural backgrounds. Many of ritual and social practices harm the rights of women and girls, who the Beijing 1985 declaration assured “Reducing harmful traditional practices.” Such practices made feminists raise their objections, for example, in the case of female circumcision. The debates in this meeting took place around women's rights activists and feminists to end discrimination against women. The discussions emphasized the necessary agreement on whether culture does not justify gender inequality. Additionally, discuss women's rights when drafting international conventions and laws. Experts at that meeting put forward a proposal that “women responsible for and documenting intangible cultural heritage should be involved, as well as in designing policies to safeguard this heritage.”<sup>23</sup>

In the Strategic Plan 2010-2011, UNESCO stressed once again the importance of the link between women and

intangible heritage, and the recommendations included emphasizing:

1 -The participation of women has clearly and actively increased in the process of making culture and creativity.

1-Encouraging the member states of the 1972 UNESCO convention to increase women's participation in the World Heritage Committees and heritage conservation initiatives.

2- Incorporating gender equality into the development and implementation of capacity building activities for museums.

3- Increasing opportunities for women to acquire administrative experience in museums.<sup>24</sup>

Based on UNESCO's efforts in intangible heritage preservation which view women as a fundamental carrier, supplier, and interpreter of the heritage in local societies, where the role of the women is a producer of identities and culture that appears in various ways of living heritage and can be seen daily. There are various roles in domains of the intangible heritage in which women participate such as:

**Arts Performance:** Including music, traditional songs on musical instruments, and folkloric songs, and dances, poems during events, festivals, weddings, and funerals, and composing oral traditional poems.<sup>25</sup> At performance, such as theatre and dance, many female artists perform works of traditional significance while innovatively fusing new aspects. Women resume intangible heritage through methods that fit in harmony with contemporary contexts.<sup>26</sup>

**Folk Healing:** Refers to healing practices including general and specified knowledge of herbal medicine and pharmacopeia. Traditional or folk healing system is what people do when they are ill. It is a common system that spreads in all indigenous cultures in the world. It is a combination of beliefs with a social dimension that are customarily passed on oral. Folk healing is still practiced till now in parts of North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia relying to some extent on supernatural occurrences and established practices used for centuries along with developed beliefs around those practices.<sup>27</sup> Regardless of social class, women spend most of their time witnessing the beginning and end of life during the pregnancy months and looking after the sick kids. Since the prehistory and till now in primitive tribes, most of the women were the healers of the family and sometimes for the tribe. Besides, they cared for the children, did the housework, while men were the hunters and protectors of the family. Women in traditional societies tolerate ecological stresses; therefore, they are experts as herbalists. They have knowledge and rituals that are helpful to calm the pain and suffer. They are experts in many medicinal plants that are collected or purchased from specialty stores as spice dealers and used for treatment, or they use various materials familiar with housekeeping, for example, different oils that have pacifying and warming impacts such as olive oil, mint, and coffee. The plants and herbals boiled and mixed with honey for drinking or applied to the skin. Traditional women's healers' treatments are not only limited to physical problems like infertility, childhood,

sexual difficulties, and other diseases, but also include the cure of mental problems, life challenges, spousal clashes, and depressions. Predominantly, traditional women healers interpret these problems because of the evil eye or wizardry.<sup>28</sup>

**Traditional Cosmetic and Beauty Care:** Since ancient times until now in rural areas and traditional communities' women are fond of beauty. This fondness of beauty is not only limited to the use of cosmetics but also to knowing the mystery of nature that helps them to increase their beauty relying on the plants for natural cosmetics. In addition to that, prepared and produced various herbal cosmetics from their environment which were easily obtained, cheap, and have no side effects, so wealth was not particularly a condition for the use of perfume and cosmetics. Adornment tools and cosmetics played a noted role that counted as a significant aspect in the lives of women extending them not only for beauty purposes but also as means for healing and ritual practices in traditional societies. The most famous herb is Henna, used as a treatment for hair and changing its color naturally as well as body tattoos.<sup>29</sup> Kohl was used widely by men, women, children, and babies as traditional methods of beautification. It was worn for many reasons as a protection from the evil eye besides a cure for the eyes.<sup>30</sup>

**Rituals and Ceremonies:** Including practicing customs, traditions, rites, and ceremonies starting from the birth of a child, toddler's first steps, circumcision, initiation, weddings, farewell, condolences, mourning, burials, and second marriage of a widow with the youngest brother of the dead



husband.<sup>31</sup> The role of traditional women is illustrated in essential ceremonies and rituals associated with the life cycle. As well, various societies emphasize women's role as participants in religious rites and political issues. Generally, women are spirit mediums, officiated as priestesses, and playing a vital role in creating the syncretism inherited indigenously. There is a major issue when covering the role of the women in rites, worships, and traditional beliefs that they succeeded in reconfiguring the realities of the influence, the power and the new form of the heavenly religions' spirituality and the negotiation to create a balance between heritage and religion preserving the heritage and keeping the religion at the same time as custodians and transporter of heritage.<sup>32</sup>

**Language and Expressions:** Language is a fundamental part of the living heritage of each nation. It is a method of communication, and at the same time, it reflects the world's vision. Language forms the cultural expressions, value system, and the identity of individuals and people. Women have significant participation in preserving the language; they transfer the heritage of the values at the early stages of the kids' ages through sharing the humanizing phenomenon of the language with the children as they are considered the first nurturer of the children. Women teach the kids the first words, narrate epic stories and fairy tales, tell the proverbs, and perform songs. Accordingly, women are considered the great and essential contributors to the formation of ideologies and perpetuation of socialization.<sup>33</sup>

**Profession and Craftsmanship:** Include all spheres dominated by women, for instance, housing construction and decoration, food products from the local environment like vegetables, plants, and fruits, besides cattle-breeding and producing milk and meat products, goat cheese, and baking bread. Besides, women's skills in traditional craftsmanship including designing and sewing national clothes such as garments, clothes and textiles, carpets, rugs made from wool, leather, pottery, making dishes and cups from wood, clay and leather, mats, and palm trees products.<sup>34</sup>

The previous spheres highlight the diverse contributions of women to the intangible heritage. Certainly, these practices are not limited to women only, but both men and women share many activities according to the role of gender in society.

The field study was in 2017 with Nubian women, Egyptian Nubia, is a region located in southern Egypt, from Aswan city to the border of Sudan. They were resettled in villages far from the Nile due to the construction of the High Dam in Aswan. Nubia is distinguished by its distinct culture, whether tangible or intangible, and its unique people, and is considered a magnet for many visitors.<sup>35</sup>

The villages of the study were (*Nagaa Al-Ghalab, Nagaa El Mahata and Sohil Island*) through interviews with focus groups of craftswomen, participation in observing, recording, and photographing. The study confirmed that women are aware of their role in preserving and transmitting heritage

through their daily gathering. They are practicing handicrafts, speaking the Nubian language, or gathering them on multiple occasions and practices of the distinctive culture of their community in partnership with men.

First focus group of traditional craftswomen in The Association of Society Development in *Nagaa Al-Ghalab* located in west Aswan. This association plays a major role in preserving the distinctive Nubian handicrafts based on palm fronds, designing baskets and other tools used in daily life. The head of the association is a well-known man in the village; the craftswomen gather from early morning until afternoon to design Nubian household products that have been passed down through generations. During work, they exchange conversations in the Nubian language and practice designing and decorating the products with elements of the Nubian heritage in addition to modern touches as a renewal of the heritage. Women stated that heritage is a culture that has been practiced since ancient times till now, such as handmade products that women produce, heritage is identity, monuments that are considered a legacy of previous generations, traditions, values. They are aware about the uniqueness of Nubian culture heritage, including language.

The Nubian language consists of different languages and is spoken in several regions such as East Darfur, the northern Nubian mountains in Sudan, and the Nile Valley in northern Sudan and southern Egypt. There are two dialects of the Nubian language "Kenzi" and "Fadiji", the speakers of the two dialects did not necessarily understand each other.<sup>36</sup> Older women spoke only Nubian and Arabic poorly, while

women in their thirties and forties speak both Nubian and Arabic. They pointed out the danger threatening the disappearance of the Nubian language, which distinguishes their culture, due to the use of the Arabic language in education.

Thus, their children understand Nubian through family upbringing, but they cannot speak it. Therefore, some women took the initiative to establish classes to teach the Nubian language to preserve the identity and so that it would not disappear with the next generation. The traditional crafts of daily life products that were used in the past as an essential part of the Nubian house and are now reproduced for the market and tourism and are considered part of their personal income.

They also emphasized their role in preserving the Nubian heritage of various foods and drinks, such as the famous Nubian *Abrieh* drink, which women prepare for the month of Ramadan, a mixture of bread and lemon juice. *Jackut/ed* is the most famous Nubian dish of *Mulukhiyah* or okra with fried eggs. They also emphasized their interest in preserving the traditional Nubian clothes, especially the Nubian *jarjar*, and women are keen to brag about it, especially at weddings, because it reflects an authentic Nubian culture. Today, women are weaving *jarjar* again, not only as a traditional form of clothing, but also for sale in tourist markets, where tourists are eager to buy them.



Figure. (1)



Figure. (2)

Palm fronds workshop, *Nagaa Al-Ghalab*

Source. @ Nubian woman



Figure (3) Palm leaf dyeing

Source. @ Nagwa Bakr

Second focus group with traditional craftswomen in *Nagaa El Mahata village*, they stated their participation in heritage preservation through their daily life of using the Nubian language and songs, stories of the grandmothers, so children learn it, and it does not disappear with the spread of Arabic education and the use of technology. The women indicated their pride that the Nubian language was one of the factors of the victory of the October 1973 war when it was used as a code to communicate during the war. They also confirmed their participation in the transmission of heritage through their daily practice of producing distinctive Nubian accessories made of beads and inherited from the grandmothers. Also, they do not work in the production of wicker dishes as they do not have palm trees. They are skilled in handmade beads design in the form of colorful accessories that reflect the elements of the ancient Nubian environment, such as triangles inspired by the waves of the Nile and the surrounding hills. Likewise, they are clever in traditional cosmetics such as Nubian Perfume *Khomra* which is made of certain materials that come from Sudan with a beautiful smell, as well as a material from crocodile plait. The materials are mixed in their way and buried underground for several months and given to the girl on her wedding day and lupine as a mask for skin.



Figure (4)



Figure. (5)

### Beads design as accessories, *Nagaa El Mahata.*

**Source. @Nagwa Bakr**

Third Focus group of traditional craftswomen in Sohil Island, they said that the heritage is old monuments that could be seen on the island and art inscriptions. Habits, traditions, festivals associated with the Nile, all that they learned from mothers and would be taught to daughters and sons as Nubian language, different myths and stories about the River Nile and celebration connected with it. Heritage is also traditional clothes like *Jarjar* and Nubian cosmetics like *Khomra and Henna*, that they still use. As well as their experience with the secrets of the various herbs that they use as a home remedy for many diseases, and some of these herbs are imported from Sudan.

The total number of the participants in the field work are 21, and most of their answers related to awareness of the concept of heritage ranged between (identity language customs, crafts, traditional clothes, cosmetic methods of living, festivals, old tales' value and food, buildings, monuments, houses, and the River Nile). The 21 respondents realized heritage as intangible, while 7 respondents indicated tangible heritage that included (Nubian House and its decoration, monuments, handcrafts products). There were 4 unique answers that associated heritage with nature reflecting the relation between the environment and cultural landscape which includes (the River Nile and Palm trees).

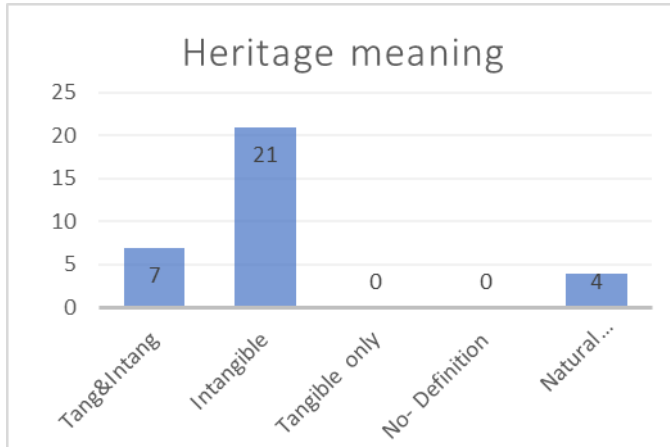
The following table shows the assessments of interviewees' realization of heritage meaning as tangible and intangible or intangible, tangible only, intangible and natural heritage, done by the researcher.

Heritage Definition.	Answers
Tangible &Intangible	7
Intangible	21
Tangible only	0
Non- Definition	0
Natural heritage	4

**Figure. (6). Assessments of interviewees' realization of heritage meaning, done by the researcher.**



The following figure shows the statics of interviewees' realization of heritage meaning as tangible and intangible or intangible, tangible only, intangible, and natural heritage.



**Figure. (7) Statics for the result of interviews, discussions, done by the researcher.**

The field study reflects the full awareness of Nubian women about their role in preserving the intangible heritage. They are keen to pass on everything they learned from grandparents to future generations in their villages and have individual initiatives to preserve their distinctive heritage. Moreover, they presented suggestions to engage them in the process of interpreting and preserving the intangible heritage in museums or any heritage institutions.

Women expressed how their practice of some elements of the intangible heritage at the present time contributed to their daily income. Some of them are looking to participate in the major exhibitions of heritage products that are held in Cairo, and some of them have already participated in those

exhibitions. Most of them dream of traveling to share their local heritage in international fairs.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This research examined the importance of the involvement of women in the preservation and transmission of intangible heritage. Through literary reviews, the concept of intangible heritage was addressed, and UNESCO programs were analyzed, which emphasized the need for women to participate in the process of heritage preservation. Also, theoretically, light was shed on the most important domains of intangible heritage in which women participate in the process of preservation, transmission, and interpretation, and finally a field study with women from Nubian villages who presented their vision for themselves in the process of preserving intangible heritage and how attention to their engagement in heritage preservation programs will help maintain the identity of their community. Women play a vital role in transferring, preserving, and interpreting intangible heritage, especially in local communities. The intangible heritage does not only recall of the past, but it is also an inventor forming the shape of the future and women as heritage carriers combining the best future with the best past. Therefore, UNESCO has been keen, through its reports and conferences, to design programs that encourage, and support women's participation in intangible heritage interpretation in institutions concerned with heritage and museums. It also clarified in its programs the most important areas in which women participate in the interpretation of intangible heritage. So, it is important to support private programs and policies to

enable women to preserve intangible heritage as well as the culturally based on socioeconomic development programs to help them perform their role as heritage bearers. For instance, Nubian women have expressed their desire to participate in the process of heritage preservation and interpretation and participate in heritage-related events in museums and cultural institutions.

Moreover, they mentioned that the process of reproducing the heritage contributes to their daily economy through participation in exhibitions concerned with handicrafts, the income from teaching Nubian language and the establishment of modern artistic bands that care about the Nubian art heritage. Such proposals play a major role in improving the income of women in those villages and preserving the living heritage. On the other hand, they contribute to the process of sustainable development, one of the most important agendas of countries at the present time. So, it is crucial to raise awareness of women's involvement in preserving intangible cultural heritage to a wider audience.

The research recommends that:

- There must be gender equality in intangible heritage, not only in the activities and workshops concerned with preservation, but also in terms of economic development and obtaining a financial compensation commensurate with the effort expended in the production of traditional crafts.
- Women must be empowered effectively in preserving and presenting heritage, for example, field work with

local craftswomen to collect their knowledge and experiences and study their proposals about their personal vision for their participation in preserving the intangible heritage and achieving an economic return.

- Researchers' female in the field of intangible heritage must be involved in documenting and preserving this heritage, especially since women are more able to communicate with each other.
- Despite the fear of the impact of technology on heritage, technology provides many advanced tools in documentation and recording that will enable the rapid recording of endangered knowledge and practices.
- It is necessary to put forward a project to take quick steps in recording the intangible traditional knowledge from the memory of the grandmothers before their departure and the disappearance of many of the practices associated with them.

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