

## Challenges of reforming the Iraqi economy as reflected by the Iraqi electronic press: An analytical study from the entrance of the constructive press

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### Abstract

The study aimed to identify how the Iraqi electronic newspapers dealt with the challenges of economic reform in Iraq and the solutions they presented from the constructive press approach. The study used a quantitative and qualitative content analysis tool for a sample of newspapers (Al-Sabah and Al-Mada) for the period from 1/4/2022 to 31/4/2022. The study revealed that the most important challenges of economic reform in Iraq are: (reliance on oil alone as the only source of development and the government's failure to maximize non-oil revenues) came first, followed by (the exacerbation of unemployment and high rates of poverty) secondly, then (the deterioration of the climate for foreign and local investment) third. While the most important economic reform proposals and solutions presented by the newspapers were: (stimulating and supporting the agricultural and industrial sectors) first, (reducing dependence on oil as the only source of development) secondly, and then (encouraging and supporting the private sector) third. The study found that (48.4%) of the economic issues focused in their written narrative on (solutions and reform proposals). The most important goals of journalistic treatment were: (the developmental goal), then (the guiding goal). While (government officials) and (government academic specialists) were the most prominent (sources of information) economic, as (press report) came first in (press arts) used. Whereas newspaper websites neglected the use of (video, graphs, info graphics, and hypertext) in their presentation of economic topics.

**Keywords:** economic reform, economic media, constructive journalism.

### Introduction

The economic situation in Iraq represents a complex challenge that is no less important and complex than the political and social scene. The sharp rise and fall of oil prices in global markets has caused many shocks in the economy, as it is a rentier economy that relies on oil exports to a very large extent. As well as the huge material cost in the war on terrorism, in addition to weak infrastructure, neglect of the private sector, sectarian quotas that resulted in unqualified people taking over the management of the economic file, the pervasiveness of corruption mafias, and the exacerbation of unemployment with the high rates of poverty.

And since the economy is the lifeblood of life and a source that reflects the strength of nations and the basis of their progress and prosperity, the media had to fulfill their constructive and oversight responsibility by following up on citizens' economic concerns and burdens,

diagnosing the causes, and providing solutions and recommendations that help the legislative and executive authorities to carry out their tasks entrusted to them to take important decisions through Explanation of the economic reality in word and sincere image, far from distortion, intimidation, amplification and excitement.

Here, the essence of constructive journalism emerges as a new journalistic style whose mission is to provide possible solutions, after investigating the causes, as well as being a journalism concerned with “follow-up” and providing citizens with information about the stages of project growth and its importance in the economy and its provision of job opportunities, and its feasibility in the near and far future, within an analytical framework Indicative aim to avoid economic and financial damage before it occurs.

### ***Study problem and questions***

The report of the Iraqi Media House (52) indicated that the local media's coverage of the economic crisis facing the country since the spread of the Corona pandemic, and the subsequent collapse of oil prices and the decline in global trade (before the Ukrainian-Russian crisis in 2022 AD), was media coverage through a "political perspective". These media also failed to provide clear and discreet coverage, in a language that the public could understand. It was a coverage packed with political conflicts, aimed at targeting opponents and exchanging accusations. (Iraqi Media House, 2022), so the study problem is determined by a main question: How did the Iraqi electronic newspapers' websites deal with the economic problems in Iraq? Did these newspapers employ the constructive press approach in terms of clarifying the causes of these problems and ways to reform?

### ***Importance of the study***

1. The importance of the study is through monitoring and diagnosing the economic problems posed that concern the Iraqi public opinion, the solutions offered by newspapers, and the possibility of their application on the ground. This represents the necessary basis for determining the required remedies to implement reforms on the Iraqi economy.
2. Also, this study is based on new and modern concepts that still need more understanding, interpretation and scientific application of the constructive press approach and its role during crises. Its results may help the legislative and executive responsible bodies to take appropriate decisions through the proposed solutions presented by the press regarding the economic reality and the tools for this reform.

### ***Objectives of the study***

The main objective of the study is to monitor and analyze the trends of Iraqi electronic newspapers handling the study sample of the challenges facing economic reform, and the required reform policies presented by them in terms of form and content.

### ***Procedural concepts of the study***

1. **Economic reform:** procedurally defined: as a set of policies aimed at eliminating internal and external economic imbalances, by following a set of policies to reallocate resources, with the aim of raising production efficiency, within the framework of liberalizing the national economy, and its dependence on market mechanisms, and limiting the role of the state in life Economic.
2. **Economic media:** It is specialized media that provides the masses with news, facts, information, trends and opinions on various economic issues by focusing on the causes, results and economic phenomena at all times, whether in cases of prosperity and

economic prosperity or in cases of stagnation and crises, and it is carried out by media institutions through qualified cadres. In the media and academically specialized in the economic field, based on numbers, data and economic indicators.

3. **Constructive journalism:** It is a purposeful type of journalism that highlights the positive outcomes of a particular news story by answering the question (what is the solution?) in addition to the report's five questions (who, what, where, when, and why?) using information and data. It was dealt with in an indicative analytical framework aimed at avoiding economic and financial damages.

### *Previous studies*

1. Study of Amal Buhamoud, Maha Al-Rashed (2022): It aimed to identify how the Bahraini daily newspapers deal with economic policy and reveal the frameworks for their treatment using the media framework theory and the media survey method. The most important results of the study were that the issue of (refining the tunnels) ranked first in the solutions frameworks presented by the study with a percentage of (19.5%). Objective persuasion was also the highest in persuasion methods (Al-Rashed, 2022).
2. The study of Zainab Ahmed Abd, Abdel-Zahra Faisal (2022), which aimed to shed light on the causal relationship between the international dimension and the national dimension of the calls for economic reform in Iraq and the impact of international organizations in this field. The researcher used the inductive descriptive analytical method. Its most prominent results were that the instability of the political and security conditions negatively impacted on the continuity of implementing economic reform programs and their follow-up and monitoring of their outputs (Faisal, 2022).
3. The study of A. Damstra & M. Boukes (2021) aimed to monitor the relationship between economic news and the economy, and the future expectations of the public using the follow-up study method for the period 2002-2015. Where (127,120) articles in Dutch newspapers were analyzed. It concluded that the use of negative news leads to more pessimism, while positive news leads to important effects on future judgments (Damstra, 2021).
4. While Ibrahim, S. A. E. S (2021) study aimed to analyze the methods of digital media in presenting national project campaigns. The study relied on the methodology of using the survey method on a sample of Egyptian university youth. The study concluded that the most important reasons for following up on national project campaigns are through digital media, because they raise feelings of belonging to the homeland, identifying the most important national projects that affect economic growth, and obtaining various information (Ibrahim, 2021).

### *Conceptual framework of the study*

#### *First: The challenges of economic reform in Iraq*

The United Nations defined economic reform as "the processes that aim to bring about fundamental changes in the methods of resource mobilization and redistribution in a manner that guarantees the requirements of society in the short and long term. In the sense of making changes in economic policies that begin with the application of stabilization policies in order to find solutions and address short-term imbalances that the country is suffering from it and ends with structural adjustment policies in order to address the deep imbalances in the long term."

The Iraqi Federal Economic Reform Law also defined it as "the restructuring of the Iraqi economy in accordance with the principles of modern economy and the requirements of transition to a market economy, ensuring the expansion of the production base through the adoption of market mechanisms, liberalizing foreign and internal trade, and ensuring fair

competition." (Imran S., 2019: 488).

The excessive dependence on oil alone (85%) of the budget revenues contributed to the exposure of the Iraqi economy to macroeconomic fluctuations (World Bank, 2021). In addition to the widespread poverty in Iraq in recent years due to unemployment.

As well as the exacerbation of this phenomenon caused by displacement. The number of displaced people after 2014 reached about six million, according to the United Nations report (IOM, 2021). The government was forced to reconstruct the liberated areas, which were subjected to complete collapse. Preliminary estimates of the extent of damages sustained by government buildings and services up to May 22, 2016, indicate more than \$30 billion. Moreover, the country basically lacks modern infrastructure, and the existing ones are insufficient and ineffective. Electricity is still at its lowest levels in terms of production and distribution due to rampant financial and administrative corruption. As well as poor planning and management (National Investment Commission, 2021: 20).

The fluctuation of government investment spending and the weak rates of capital formation also represent an economic challenge because it is an important part of public spending, and one of the components of the general budget in Iraq and contributes to the establishment of development projects and the development of existing facilities and institutions. Investment spending is mainly based on spending on infrastructure, in addition to spending on productive projects (Ministry of Planning, 2019: 39-56).

The imbalance in the economic structure poses another serious challenge. Where we find clear weakness in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors and their low growth rate (Chehayeb, 2022: 167). Despite the decrease in annual inflation in Iraq during the last statistic for the month of February 2022, according to (economics trading), where it reached (5.1%) after it was (5.3%), the continuous increase in the general level of prices of goods and services has led to a decrease in purchasing power. For the Iraqi dinar, in addition to the rise in government spending that is financed through open cash issuance, with the limited supply of goods and services, and the inflexibility of the production system.

The role of the private sector in the overall economic development activities is still weak. Whereas Iraq's environment is not conducive to competition at the level of companies and comprehensive development. Iraq's performance in the ease of doing business rating has declined significantly in recent years, especially in the categories of "getting electricity" and "paying taxes" (World Bank Group, 2020: 6). There are also many determinants that affect the investment climate despite the availability of investment capital.

Where the factors (administrative and financial corruption - security and political stability - insufficient infrastructure - and the weak legislative and legal environment conducive to investment) played an important role in not attracting investment locally and internationally, and thus Iraq lost one of the important economic development factors. Also, the imbalance in the structure of the general budget (the gap between revenues and expenditures) represents a serious challenge due to the expansion of operational expenditures and the rise in military expenditures in light of backward production methods and limited productivity. Therefore, the deficit problem from the point of view of the International Monetary Fund is a main factor for the structural imbalances in the economy (Ministry of Planning 2019: 11).

### ***Second: The duality of media and the economy***

Economics is a highly sensitive and dangerous subject, and everyone should be careful

and objective when dealing with it. Therefore, it has become necessary to focus on the positive aspects and constructive solutions in dealing with economic issues. Just as the negatives are often dealt with extensively and in depth, we must also not lose sight of the focus on creativity in handling, and solutions to problems, not the problems themselves.

The link between the media and the economy is a strong one, as the economy has become part of the media industry, and the media is part of the economy industry, a link imposed by the data and achievements of the modern era. The media, which deals with the specialized aspect of the economy, has left the corridors of academic institutions due to what the economic crises the world has witnessed today.

This prompted the media to harness all its energies to follow up on these crises as a partner in bearing their negative and positive results, and the main focus of the attention of all sectors that the media deals with, starting from the ordinary citizen who affects the volume of distribution, and ending with the major companies that have the most influence in advertising (Al-Sayed, 2020: 16).

### ***The importance of the constructive press approach in economic reforms***

Constructive journalism is defined as “news that highlights the positive consequences of a negative or sad news story.” Therefore, constructive journalism combines the traditional oversight function of the media with the potentially positive side of the story. Since it is impossible not to cover negative stories, however, constructive criticism is key to dialogue, not only through reporting on current events, but also through comprehensive professional interpretation of the news (Allam, 2018). Where “it is telling the truth about the news by presenting the whole story with solutions to it, and the government’s moves to solve it” (Zaki, 2018).

The five questions of the press report include (who - what - where - when and why), and the sixth question has been added, which is "What is to be done now?" Which avoids the reader entering the maze of thinking about the problem at hand and the psychological state they may live in, especially in the absence of hope in confronting the problem” (Levitz, 2015). That is why the constructive press is a reliable model for presenting economic issues and the causes of their problems, and possible solutions to them in a positive way far from Despair and pessimism. This does not mean that facts are falsified and the negatives and defects are ignored; As the diagnosis of the disease is the most important reason for knowing the type of medicine. It also highlights the importance of this type of journalism in covering the Iraqi economic affairs for many considerations, including the successive crises that Iraq has gone through, whether they were Political or security crises, in addition to economic crises, the importance of this type also emerges in transitional democracies, where the importance of the media increases in times of crisis, because of their enormous impact on public behavior, and their societal responsibility in educating and guiding the public.

## **Methodology of the study**

### ***First: Type and Method of Study***

This study belongs to the descriptive research that aims to monitor and analyze the employment of Iraqi electronic newspapers for the constructive press approach in addressing the challenges of economic reform in Iraq in order to obtain scientific results that are interpreted in an objective way.

The study also uses the survey method, with its descriptive and analytical branches, by monitoring the content and form of using electronic newspapers for the entrance and basics of

constructive journalism. The survey approach provides the possibility of conducting quantitative, qualitative and statistical analysis of the content.

***Second: The study community***

It was represented in the Iraqi electronic newspapers websites. In view of their abundance, the two researchers conducted a preliminary exploratory study to find out the most important of these sites. The study included (23 electronic newspapers). After conducting exploratory monitoring of these sites, the government newspaper Al-Sabah and the leftist Al-Mada newspaper were chosen, because they differ in ownership patterns between the pro-government official, and the left-wing private property, and for the ease of use of the search feature in them with the ability to specify search options as well as browsing speed, with Constant updating of the site.

***Third: Spatial and temporal limits of the study***

The spatial boundaries were in the Federal Republic of Iraq. While the temporal boundaries were from 1/4/2022 to 31/4/2022, a period in which the economic situation in Iraq witnessed difficult conditions as a result of the failure to approve the 2022 budget on time, and the repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the increase in the prices of goods and services.

***Fourth: Data collection tool***

After reviewing the previous studies, and the preliminary results of the survey, the researcher designed a content analysis tool, within the framework of the sample survey method for all data related to the study, and it was divided into two categories:

1. Content categories (what was said?): which focused on the content of words, ideas, trends, values and goals.
2. Categories of form (how was it said?): It focused on the form of journalistic treatment, the sources of information on which the newspapers relied, the journalistic arts used, in addition to the means of highlighting, and methods of persuasion.

***Fifth: Units of analysis and method of counting Measurement***

1. Units of analysis: The subject unit was chosen as the unit of counting to identify the volume and frequency of reform issues raised in the two newspapers.
2. Counting and measuring method: The researchers used the criterion of repetition as a counting method, which allows reconstructing the content in terms of form, numbers and numbers, to reach quantitative results that facilitate interpretation and achieve the objectives of the study.

***Sixth: Validity and reliability procedures for the content analysis tool***

1. The validity of the analysis: the questionnaire was designed according to specific categories that contribute to achieving the objectives of the study and answer its questions. Then define the categories of content analysis procedurally by relying on solid scientific references and sources or defining them sometimes from the researcher's point of view in a way that does not lead to conflicting and overlapping terms. Then he presented it to a group of specialized professors, to indicate its suitability to the subject of the study.
2. The stability of the analysis: The researchers considered the temporal application by re-analyzing a sample of (10%) of the total subjects after (15 days) of the initial analysis, and the stability rate reached (89%). The diversity of specialization of researchers also contributed to the stability of the analysis, as the first researcher specialized (Master of

Economics) in the categories related to the economic aspect, while the second researcher specialized (PhD in media) in the media aspect.

**Seventh: The results of the study:**

**3. Challenges of economic reform in Iraq**

**Table No. (1) Challenges of economic reform in Iraq**

The challenges of economic reform in Iraq	Al-Sabah		Al-Mada		Total	%	No.
	R	%	R	%			
Reliance on oil alone, and the government's failure to maximize non-oil revenues	18	17.3	11	19.2	29	18	1
Exacerbation of unemployment and high rates of poverty	16	15.3	8	14	24	14.9	2
The deteriorating climate for foreign and domestic investment	14	13.4	5	8.7	19	11.8	3
Imbalance of the general budget structure expenditures and revenues	9	8.6	8	14	17	10.5	4
Dumping the Iraqi market with imported products	12	11.5	3	5.2	15	9.3	5
Without mentioning the challenges of reform	10	6.7	5	8.7	15	9.3	5
Weak infrastructure and deteriorating business environment	7	6.7	4	7	11	6.8	6
Political conflicts and the dominance of corruption mafias	4	3.8	5	8.7	9	5.5	7
Government borrowing with huge interest	4	3.8	1	1.7	5	3.1	8
The crisis of the displaced and the costs of rebuilding their areas	0	0	3	5.2	3	1.8	9
Quotas and crowding out technocrats	2	1.9	1	1.7	3	1.8	9
Government slackness and the enormity of the administrative apparatus	2	1.9	1	1.7	3	1.8	9
Oil smuggling and money laundering	3	2.8	0	0	3	1.8	9
External and internal debt	1	0.9	1	1.7	2	1.2	10
privatization of the public sector	1	0.9	1	1.7	2	1.2	10
The erosion of the central bank's reserves of the dollar	1	0.9	0	0	1	0.6	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table No. (1) shows that the government newspaper (Al-Sabah) dealt more with issues of economic reform with (104) topics. While the topics of the leftist newspaper (Al-Mada) amounted to (57) topics. The most important challenges of economic reform from the point of view of the two newspapers were as follows:

- 1.1. **Dependence on oil as the sole source of development:** It came first with a rate of (18%), and its percentages were close in the two newspapers. As Al-Sabah believes that “salvaging the Iraqi economy and correcting the course of fiscal and monetary policy requires a real revolution to change its structure and transfer it from a rentier economy that depends on oil as a main source of revenue to a diversified economy” (Al-Hashimi, former finance minister, 2022: 5). Al Mada also warned against neglecting the industrial sector, whose contribution to the GDP did not exceed \$2 billion annually. As one third of the state companies are completely disabled, and the rest suffer from poor feasibility and depend on subsidies for their continuity (Al-Mada, Al-Ali, 2022: 1).

- 1.2. **The exacerbation of the phenomenon of unemployment and high rates of poverty:** It

came second with a rate of (14.9%) of the total sample of the study, and its percentages were close between the two newspapers. Where (Al-Sabah) sees in its headlines that (unemployment is a waste of energies) (Gerry, 2022: 6). Thus, the aggravation of the phenomenon of unemployment is one of the most important reasons for the high rates of poverty.

- 1.3. ***The deterioration of the foreign and local investment climate:*** It came third with a rate of (11.8%). Al-Sabah discussed the determinants of foreign investment flows, including the existence of a direct relationship between the index of economic freedom and foreign direct investment flows. There is also a positive relationship between GDP growth and foreign direct investment flows (Al-Sabah, 2022: 5).
- 1.4. ***The imbalance in the structure of the general budget (expenditures and revenues) and the delay in its continuous approval:*** It came fourth with a rate of (10.5%), and its percentage was the highest in the Al-Mada (14%). It warned that the delay in approving the general budget greatly affects the completion of investment projects and confuses economic activity and called for the enactment of (the emergency support law) "with the aim of achieving food security, alleviating poverty, creating job opportunities, and resuming work on stalled and lagging projects."
- 1.5. ***(Dumping the Iraqi market with various imported products), and (without mentioning the challenges of reform):*** These two categories came in fifth place with a percentage of (9.3%). Where the two newspapers deliberated at times to address the most important economic measures aimed at reforming the Iraqi economy without focusing on the challenges. It also cautioned that the accumulation of luxury and low-quality goods in the local markets has greatly drained the hard currency. In addition to fighting the local product, and the reluctance of the private sector to produce.
- 1.6. ***Weak infrastructure and deterioration of the business environment capable of stimulating the private sector:*** It came sixth with a rate of (8.6%). The newspapers focused on the electric power file, which hinders Iraq's chances of progress and stability. It also showed the state's inability to provide public services and maintain sewage networks. And thus reduced opportunities to stimulate the private sector.
- 1.7. ***Political conflicts and the dominance of corruption by mafias over resources:*** It came seventh with a percentage of (5.5%). Where the two newspapers warned that Iraq has lost hundreds of billions of dollars over the past years due to administrative and financial corruption, and the large number of fake projects.
- 1.8. ***Government lending with huge interest:*** It came in eighth with a rate of 3.1%. Where the huge benefits of loans cause the reluctance of most private sector companies and small and medium enterprises, because "encouraging investments, providing soft loans for national industrial and agricultural projects, and expanding tax exemptions contribute to supporting the national product."
- 1.9. ***The categories*** (the crisis of the displaced and the costs of rebuilding their liberated areas), (quotas and crowding out technocrats in managing the economic file), (governmental slack and the enormity of the administrative apparatus), and (oil smuggling and money laundering) ranked ninth with a rate of (1.8%). It is noted that (the crisis of the displaced) did not receive any repetition in the government newspaper Al-Sabah. While the category (oil smuggling and money laundering) did not receive any repetition in the leftist newspaper Al-Mada.
- 1.10. ***The categories*** (external and internal debt) and (privatization of the public sector) came tenth with a rate of (1.2%). The two researchers attribute to the low ratio of (debt) because Iraq in this period has disposed of a large part of its foreign debts. The category (privatization of the public sector) also did not receive the expected importance due to the political and security conditions witnessed in that period of demonstrations and

protests that did not allow creating more crises with a segment of citizens.

- 1.11. ***Erosion of the central bank's reserves of the dollar:*** It came in last place with a rate of (0.6%). The researchers attribute the lack of appearance of this category in the study sample to the fact that the period before it (the end of 2021 and the beginning of 2022) witnessed a rise in Iraqi oil exports with the increase in its prices internationally. In addition to the policies of the Central Bank that contributed to the arrival of the Central Bank of Iraq's foreign exchange reserves to (82) billion dollars.

## 2. Economic reform proposals in Iraq

**Table No. (2) Economic reform proposals**

Economic Reform Proposals	Al-Sabah		Al-Mada		Total	%	No.
	R	%	R	%			
Stimulating the agricultural and industrial sectors	29	27.8	13	22.8	42	26	1
Reducing dependence on oil alone	14	13.4	8	14	22	13.6	2
Encouraging and supporting the private sector	11	10.5	8	14	19	11.8	3
Revaluation of the dinar against the dollar	6	5.7	4	7	10	6.2	4
Budget reform and expenditure streamlining	4	3.8	5	8.7	9	5.5	5
Limiting weapons and providing a safe environment for investment	6	5.7	3	5.2	9	5.5	5
The use of audit institutions to detect corruption	7	6.7	2	3.5	9	5.5	5
Keeping economic positions away from quotas	5	4.8	4	7	9	5.5	5
Banking system repair	5	4.8	1	1.7	6	3.7	6
Stay away from routine and activate governance	4	3.8	2	3.5	6	3.7	6
Without mentioning economic reform solutions	4	3.8	2	3.5	6	3.7	6
Not to participate in international loan programs	4	3.8	1	1.7	5	3.1	7
Reducing foreign labor and encouraging local	4	3.8	1	1.7	5	3.1	7
Diversification of government revenues	1	0.9	1	1.7	2	1.2	8
Reform and activate the tax system	0	0	2	3.5	2	1.2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table No. (2) indicates the most important economic reforms from the point of view of the study newspapers:

- 3.1. ***The category*** (stimulating and supporting the agricultural and industrial sectors) came in the first place with a rate of (26%), and their percentages were close in the two newspapers. Al-Sabah newspaper focused on the great economic returns of the agricultural sector and that it is "inexhaustible oil" (Al-Rubaie, 2022: 6). Al-Mada also believes that allocating 140 billion Iraqi dinars to central markets will contribute to providing job opportunities for about 70,000 people (Al-Bayati, 2022: 3). It is noted that this reform is consistent with the result (1) and (2) in Table No. (1). As supporting the agricultural and industrial sectors contributes to reducing dependence on oil as the only source of development, as well as reducing unemployment and poverty in the country.
- 3.2. ***It came second in the category*** (reducing total dependence on oil as the only source of development) with a rate of (13.6%). This category is related to the previous

category with a slight difference that its topics focused on development stimuli in Iraq, which made it necessary for programmers of the Iraqi economy to seek in two tracks, the first of which is the establishment of an Iraqi sovereign oil fund, and the second is to diversify the sources of national income for the non-oil sectors (Al-Sabbah, 2022 : 10).

- 3.3. **The category** (encouraging and supporting the private sector) came third with a rate of (11.8%). Al-Sabah believes that "opening up the private sector and making it a real partner in development, as well as amending some legislation and enacting laws to equal wages and guarantee for all workers in the private sector, similar to their counterparts working in the public sector" (Al-Hashemi, Al-Sabah, 2022: 6).
- 3.4. **While the category** (reevaluation of the Iraqi dinar against the dollar exchange) came fourth with a rate of (6.2%). As Al Mada sees that floating the Iraqi dinar and letting it take its real value in the Iraqi market is the solution, because it keeps the state honorable, monitoring and balancing the exchange rates of the local currency compared to foreign ones, and at the same time it reduces the state's direct and continuous intervention, and makes the economy tend to stability. It also requires the state to encourage local industry and agriculture, leading to local self-sufficiency (Rasheed, 2022: 6).
- 3.5. **Fifth came** (reforming the general budget and streamlining expenditures), (limiting arms to the state and providing a safe environment for investment), (the use of international audit and control institutions to detect corruption), and (removing senior economic positions from quotas) with a rate of (5.5%).
- 3.6. **While the categories of** (reforming the banking system and enacting deterrent laws for the work of banks), (staying away from routine and activating electronic governance), and (without mentioning economic reform solutions) came in sixth place with a rate of (3.7%).
- 3.7. **The two categories of** (not engaging in international loan programs) and (reducing incoming foreign workers and encouraging local ones) were replaced by (3.1%) of the total sample.
- 3.8. **Finally, the category** (diversification of government revenues from taxes and others) came eighth with a rate of 1.2%, as did the category (reform and activation of the tax system) with the same percentage.

#### 4. **The direction of journalistic treatment of economic reform issues in Iraq**

The data in Table (3) show that the direction of treatment of reform issues was biased against the government at a rate of (48.4%). Where newspapers see that the government is responsible for the deterioration of the economic situation. This bias was clearly shown in Al-Mada newspaper. While the balanced side of journalistic treatment came second with a percentage of (31%), while the side biased to the government came in last with a percentage of (20.4%).

**Table No. (3) The direction of journalistic treatment of economic issues**

Processing direction	Al-Sabah		Al-Mada		Total	%	No.
	R	%	R	%			
biased against the government	47	45.1	31	54.3	78	48.4	1
balanced	35	33.6	15	26.3	50	31	2
biased in favor of the government	22	21.1	11	19.2	33	20.4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>	

5. *Objectives of journalistic treatment of economic reform issues:*

**Table No. (4)** *Objectives of the journalistic processing used*

Objectives of journalistic processing	Al-Sabah		Al-Mada		Total	%	No.
	R	%	R	%			
Progressively and developmental	37	35.5	7	12.2	44	27.3	1
directive	27	25.9	7	12.2	34	21.1	2
interpretative	15	14.4	18	31.5	33	20.4	3
more than one goal	6	5.7	14	24.5	20	12.4	4
informative	11	10.5	7	12.2	18	11.1	5
educational	8	7.6	4	2.4	12	7.4	6
<b>Total</b>	104	100	57	100	161	100	

The data of Table No. (4) indicate that the (developmental and developmental) goal has been ranked first with a percentage of (27.3%). This was prominently shown in the government newspaper Al-Sabah. The goal (guiding) came second with a percentage of (21.1%). Notably in Al-Sabah newspaper, which focused during its treatment of economic issues on drawing the attention of officials and decision-makers through guidance and counseling on adopting the correct behaviors to improve the Iraqi economy.

The (interpretive) goal was close to the guiding goal by (20.4%), and it appeared clearly in Al-Mada newspaper, which reflects the newspaper's interest in presenting all opinions about the economic problem, discussing its dimensions and proposals to solve it through dialogue and investigation. While the category (more than one goal) came in fourth place with a rate of (12.4%), especially in Al-Mada newspaper, whose topics contained more than one goal during its treatment of economic issues. The (news) goal came fourth with a rate of (11.1%), which indicates that the goals of the two newspapers were beyond mere delivery of economic information. In addition to the diversity of journalistic arts used to address economic issues.

And in the last arrangement, the (educational) goal was solved by (7.4%), which is a low percentage that reflects the seriousness of the economic situation in Iraq, which requires finding developmental and developmental solutions, through guidance and interpretation, and not only through education and dissemination of economic information.

6. *Focusing the editorial narrative in addressing the issues of economic reform*

**Table No. (5)** *focus of the editorial narrative*

direction of the editorial	Al-Sabah		Al-Sabah		Total	%	No.
	R	%	R	%			
Focus on solutions and reform proposals	55	52.8	23	40.3	78	48.4	1
Focus on reform challenges and causes	34	32.6	18	31.5	52	32.2	2
Focus on the affected and the beneficiaries	15	14.4	16	28	31	19.2	3
<b>Total</b>	104	100	57	100	161	100	

It is clear from Table No. (5) that the editorial narrative focused on mentioning possible solutions and economic reform proposals by (48.4%), and this percentage shows the newspapers' interest in answering the question (What is the solution?). While the percentage of the editorial narrative that focused on the challenges and causes of economic reform was (32.2%). While the category of editorial narrative, which focused on those affected and beneficiaries of the reality of the Iraqi economy, ranked last with a rate of (19.2%), as it appeared clearly in Al-Mada newspaper.

### 7. *Sources of information adopted by the study newspapers*

**Table No. (6) Sources of Information (Al-Sabah N = 104, Al-Mada N = 57)**

Information Sources	Al-Sabah		Al-Mada		Total	%	No.
	R	%	R	%			
government officials	36	34.6	26	45.6	62	38.5	1
Government specialists and academics	28	26.9	11	19.2	39	24.2	2
Non-governmental specialists and academics	23	22.1	8	14	31	19.2	3
Delegates, reporters and newspaper writers	20	19.2	5	8.7	25	15.5	4
locals	7	6.7	6	10.5	13	8.1	5
Economic documents, studies and reports	3	2.8	3	5.2	6	3.7	6
Arab and foreign portals and websites	1	0.9	4	7	5	3.1	7
Non-governmental specialized research centers	2	1.9	1	1.7	3	1.8	8
Governmental specialized research centers	1	0.9	1	1.7	2	1.2	9

The data of Table No. (6) indicates that (government officials) was the first source on which the study newspapers relied in their coverage of economic problems, at a rate of (38.5%). It was followed by (specialists and government academics) with a percentage of (24.2%), The third category (non-governmental specialists and academics) came in with a percentage of (19.2%). The two newspapers of the study agreed on the arrangement of the first three sources, which means their heavy reliance on government sources as a source of official information. Thus the control of these sources (the president and his deputies, the prime minister and his ministers, the speaker and his deputies, members of provincial councils, government bodies and institutions, general managers, the central bank, government banks).

The category (delegates, correspondents and newspaper writers) came fourth with a rate of (15.5%). To reflect the desire of the study newspapers to rely on their own sources in dealing with economic problems. While the category (local citizens) fell to the fifth rank with a rate of (8.1%). It also recorded (documents, studies and economic reports) a low rate of (3.7%).

**Finally**, the categories (Arab and foreign portals and websites), (non-governmental specialized research centers), (governmental specialized research centers) ranked in the last three places, respectively. Which also confirms the decline of logical arguments in the methods of persuasion used (Table No. 7), and also explains the delay of (the educational goal) in Table No. (4).

### 8. *Methods of persuasion used*

**Table No. (7) Methods of Persuasion**

Processing direction	Al-Sabah		Al-Mada		Total	%	No.
	R	%	R	%			
mixed	38	36.5	27	47.3	65	40.3	1
emotional	36	34.6	17	29.8	53	32.9	2
logical	30	28.8	13	22.8	43	26.7	3
Total	104	100	57	100	161	100	

Table No. (7) shows the release of (mixed persuasion methods) that combine the logical and emotional methods, reaching a percentage of (40.3%). Emotional methods came second with a percentage of (32.9%). Which indicates that a large number of topics were dealt with using symbols, slogans, linguistic methods, and semantics.

While the lowest percentage was for (logical methods), which got (26.7%). Which indicates that the orientation towards the recipients lacked various evidence, not showing all aspects of the subject, and the absence of sufficient statistics and numbers.

### 9. *Journalistic arts used*

**Table No. (8) used journalistic arts**

Objective of journalistic processing	Al-Sabah		Al-Mada		Total	%	No.
	R	%	R	%			
report	47	45.1	39	68.4	86	53.4	1
Articles	28	26.9	6	10.5	34	21.1	2
simple news	12	11.5	7	12.2	19	11.8	3
Investigation	10	9.6	2	3.5	12	7.4	4
news story	4	3.8	1	1.7	5	3.1	5
talks	3	2.8	2	3.5	5	3.1	5
<b>Total</b>	104	100	57	100	161	100	

It is clear from Table No. (8) that the art of (press report) was the most used, and its percentage was (53.4%). Then came second (the press article) with a percentage of (21.1%). While the simple news came third with a percentage of (11.8%). It was followed by fourth (press investigation) with a rate of (7.4%). While (news story) and (press talks) came fifth with a rate of (3.1%).

The results indicate that the study newspapers did not only highlight the essential and main aspects of the topics, but also tried to describe the circumstances associated with the event, as well as answer the question (why?), which is the most important feature of the press report.

### 10. *Elements of electronic visibility employed by Iraqi electronic newspapers:*

**Table No. (9) Electronic Accentuation Elements**  
(Al-Sabbah = 104, Al-Mada = 57)

electronic highlighting elements	Al-Sabah		Al-Mada		Total	%	No.
	R	%	R	%			
Related Topics	104	100	57	100	161	100	1
pictures	53	50.9	38	66.6	91	56.5	2
info graphic	1	0.9	0	0	1	0.6	3

The data of Table No. (9) indicates that (related topics) came first with a percentage of (100%), which allows the browser to navigate to these topics with ease. While (photos) came second with (56.5%). As for (info graphic), it was (0.6%). It is noticeable that there is a complete absence of the elements (hyperlink), (video), (tables), and (graphs), despite their importance in supporting economic issues.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The study showed that the Iraqi economy suffers from an imbalance in its structure, due to its reliance on oil revenues only, which is the main financier of development programs and government investment spending. While the rest of the other sectors (non-oil) contribute only a small percentage of the GDP. This affected the production structure, due to the rentier nature of the Iraqi economy, which led to a decrease in the contribution of the agricultural sector and the manufacturing sector to maximizing the gross domestic product, which led to high rates of unemployment and poverty in Iraq.
2. The study also showed the imbalance in the structure of the general budget, and the

- emergence of the phenomenon of deficit due to the growth of spending by a greater percentage of public revenues, which requires reducing public spending and rationalizing its items by addressing waste and diversifying sources of public revenue.
3. The results also showed that the Iraqi newspapers had achieved part of the principles of constructive journalism by answering the question (what is the solution?). At the same time, we find that this press focuses on matters outside the economy with political motives, and the reason for this is the incompetence of some journalists or their lack of experience in the economic field, or by virtue of their affiliation with the parties to which they belong, and these represent a threat to the media, and to the economic reality.
  4. The Iraqi electronic press did not employ the advantages of electronic publishing, Where absent (tables, graphs, videos, hyperlinks, and info graphics). These advantages give a dimension to economic topics because they help readers to understand, analyze and draw conclusions.

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