



The Role of Iraqi Media in Enhancing Stability in Iraq from the Perspectives of Iraqi Elites: Descriptive Analysis

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دور الإعلام العراقي في تعزيز الاستقرار في العراق من منظور وجهات نظر النخب العراقية؛

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خلاصة

أدى التغيير السياسي الذي شهده العراق بعد الغزو في ٩ إبريل/نيسان ٢٠٠٣ إلى خلق نوع فريد من وسائل الإعلام التي شجعتها قوات الاحتلال الأمريكية بشكل واضح وتميزت بالانتماء الحزبي والولاءات الشخصية. أصبحت معظم وسائل الإعلام بمثابة أبواق السياسيين للترويج لأفكارهم ومشاريعهم، أو حتى لمهاجمة المنافسين. وبالتالي، أصبح الجمهور في حالة حيرة وعدم اطلاع على الأخبار الجارية، لأن كل قناة أو وسيلة نقل تبث الأخبار من وجهة نظرها الشخصية أو الدينية أو السياسية. تستخدم الدراسة تصميم البحث الوصفي (المسح) الذي يهدف إلى تحليل تقييم دور الإعلام العراقي في تشكيل اتجاهات الجمهور العراقي نحو قضية الطائفية من وجهة نظر النخب. ويخلص البحث إلى أن غالبية وسائل الإعلام، وخاصة القنوات الفضائية، لها أنماط أيديولوجية ودينية معينة. تقوم المؤسسات الإعلامية العراقية بنقل ونشر المفاهيم التي تشجع على التحريض الطائفي دون الاهتمام بكيفية حل المشاكل المذهبية.

Abstract

The political change in Iraq after the invasion on 9 April 2003 resulted in the creation of a unique kind of media that was clearly encouraged by US occupying forces and characterised by partisan affiliation and personal loyalties. Most of the media outlets have become politicians' mouthpieces for promoting their ideas and projects, or even for attacking rivals. Consequently, the public became confused and unaware of the actual news because every channel or outlet incorporated the news from its personal, religious or political views. The study utilizes a descriptive research design (a survey) aiming to analyse the assessment of the role of the Iraqi media in shaping the attitudes of the Iraqi public towards the issue of sectarianism from the elites' perspectives. The paper concludes that the majority of the media, and in particular the satellite TV networks, have certain ideological and religious patterns. Iraqi media organisations transmit and publicise concepts that encourage sect incitement without much concern about how to solve doctrinal problems. **Key words: Iraqi media, Iraqi elites, descriptive analysis, stability**

1. Introduction

The main feature of the Iraq's media landscape today is a painful picture of the practises that carry intense media discourse. It works for the sake of sectarian and ethnic affiliation. The agenda service is programmed to achieve the specific objectives (Al-Marashi & Keskin, 2008). The aim of these agendas is to influence the public opinion and to achieve personal political objectives and interests (Al-Rawi, 2013). The aim of most activities of the Iraqi media from the viewpoint of Iraqi citizens is to cultivate division and sectarianism among the people, to deceive the individuals, to steal the wealth of the country, to change the ideas, beliefs, customs and traditions of the people, and to spread what is loaded with toxins, with Satanic plans hidden in the media (Haddad, 2014).

The aim of the current media is to brainwash Iraqi people and feed them with the devastating agendas. These media are supposed to be followed by announcing the people's loyalty to these media outlets and to the owners of these media outlets, whether political parties, countries that own these media, or beneficial individuals (Al-Tahmazi, 2017). From a civilian point of view, the Iraqi media after the civil war have become the mouthpiece of financial agencies or their affiliates. Since the occupation of Iraq in 2003, there has been a lack of intellectually honest format and content channels in Iraqi media (Al-Tahmazi, 2016). The American occupation was the cause of the birth of a large number of media, and of every means that arose to achieve a specific goal. Iraqi media have turned their attention away from the fundamental issues that could help the country to rise after dozens of wars (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2014). Iraq's media did not focus on improving Iraq, producing a new generation of qualified citizens and intellectuals who believe only in the homeland which worships individuals (Adwan, 2019). The military force that the army holds is no longer the only one to determine the fate of the battle. It is not only the military power that defines the winning side between the fighting parties (Lawler, 2003), but also the intelligence that each side has on the other, and the extent of its spread and effect is what decides the war of all kinds (Ahmed, 2020). Misinformation can defeat people and armies if it is meant to do so. Homeland is the antithesis of sectarianism when the system of sectarianism prevails over the homeland (Abdel Wajid Amin, 2020). Iraq's post-occupation scene was not years of construction, democracy and human rights, but years of political contention and brutal massacres, ignition and perpetuation of sectarian and ethnic warfare (Alwan, 2017), destruction of the Iraqi state's infrastructure and destruction of the administrative apparatus system, and the creation of plans and crises (Dahmani, 2017). The Iraqi media have fallen into the trap of political, partisan, sectarian and national conflict for reasons related to the background of certain parties and their foreign agendas (Al-Nasiri, 2015) and the failure of many of them to engage in partisan work in Iraq and their inability to practice democracy. Despite the reproduction of satellite channels and the diversity and multiplicity of media, which is a healthy phenomenon if this diversity is to build a new Iraqi individual, raise his awareness, deepen his love for Iraq and protect Iraq from the risk of division (Mohamed Sakban Abdel Sayed, 2019). However, the Iraqi media have become media platforms to fuel political struggles between parties, sects, nationalities and religions. (Lunis, 2018). Iraq witnessed the emergence of partisan and religious media outlets with sectarian loyalties that spread a culture of community loyalty, in addition to independent and stateless media (Messenger & Abdullah, 2015). The most dangerous thing is the race of parties, sects and creeds to set up radio and satellite channels, most of which shed light on the culture of the sect and cancel each other out of many justifications (Adwan, 2019). These new media outlets have a presence that varies relatively between certain segments of society, and each of these means has a strategy through which the sect, party or movement that emanates from or promotes its ideas is adopted (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2014). This situation raised many questions about the role of the new Iraqi media in addressing the issue of sectarianism among the public (Al-Marashi & Keskin, 2008). Due to the lack of the previous studies on the role of Iraqi media in the fight against terrorism, this research focuses on the Iraqi media and their role in addressing sectarianism. The aim of the study is to provide codified scientific indicators on the role of Iraqi media in confronting sectarianism by extrapolating the views of the Iraqi elite in assessing the role of Iraqi media in confronting sectarianism. In addition, this research attempts to identify the most reliable methods used by the elite to follow the most important events and to assess the growing importance of internal and external political issues facing Iraqi society.

2. Research questions

In this research, a number of questions that revolve around the nature of the Iraqi elite's dealings with the Iraqi media are given. Through the research sample, answers to these questions that shed light on the nature of the Iraqi media and its relationship to sectarianism are meant to be given:

- 1- What is the Iraqi elite's assessment of the role of the Iraqi media in tackling sectarianism?
- 2- What is the difference between the political and academic elite in the evaluation of the Iraqi media?
- 3- Do the Iraqi media provide any sectarian implications?
- 4- Do the Iraqi media use a sectarian language?

3. Literature Review

In the essence, the sectarianism conflict in Iraq based on a rivalry between those who claim to adhere to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and those who claim to adhere to the people of his family (Ahlu-bait)(Al-Tahmazi, 2017). This sectarian conflict in the recent history is supported by Ottoman Empire and Safavid state (Ali, 2019). Indeed, in their ethical disparity the Ottoman and the Safavid states was not close to what the Prophet's

companions and his family called for together (Haddad, 2014). Both were ancient tyrannical states that had no resemblance to the Islamic State that we know of during the time of the Prophet (PBUH) and his successors (Lawler, 2003). Sectarianism is one of the most important barriers to knowing the truth, and it is one of the most important obstacles that prevents a person from moving towards correct understanding or accepting the truth if it is revealed to him (Ahmed, 2020). Generally, sectarianism is as a feeling in the heart, based on a history of falsehood teaching most ignorance, a formation based on hatred and hypocrisy, and political support for authoritarian rulers motivated by dispersing the nation to facilitate its leadership (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2014).

3.1 Conditions that caused sectarian war in Iraq after 2003

The current Iraqi political elites began the early stages of the formation of the new Iraqi state following the occupation of the United States on 9 April 2003 (Al-Nasiri, 2015). This goal was accomplished by working within the framework of what has been called (sectarian quotas). That was the main seed of the outcome of the political process that began after the creation of the Transitional Governing Council in Iraq (Dahmani, 2017). The US occupation administration had the upper hand in the chaos of the political process in Iraq (Amin, 2020). The Americans contributed to the nature of the political system on which it was based. This clearly threatened the civil peace of Iraq. These sectarian quotas have had a severe impact on social security, political, social and economic dimensions that have been seriously influential (Alwan, 2017). Meanwhile, the Iraqi constitution, full of "traps, lapses and negatives" offended the homogeneity and unity of political visions (Lunis, 2018). The effects of the constitution have also been reflected on Iraqi society, which has made a profound difference between the parties to the political process (Abdel Sayed, 2019). Likewise, the constitution was the reason for not agreeing on a number of paragraphs concern human rights, historical rights for some ethnic and religious groups, then it becomes a threat to civil peace (Al-Dulaimi, 2004). Sectarian quotas also deepened the lack of trust between the parties in the political process, leading parties to form Military wings and maintain their militias and armed elements, to use them against opponents and competitors, despite the lack of need for this method of action following the removing of the previous regime (Kitan, 2019). This issue reflected negatively on the overall political process and on its credibility with the Iraqi public opinion, as well as its threat to social security (Al-Hamami, 2013). All this led, in years after the political process, to the failure of Iraqi political parties and forces to agree on a genuine national project free from pivotal, sectarian and ethnic polarization, which was the most prominent feature of the Iraqi political parties and forces' action programmes (Ali Ahmed, 2018). Sectarian quotas have clearly affected Iraqi society and this has emerged as a result of sectarian, ethnic and regional polarisation. The situation has reached the level of civil war between the ethnic and sectarian components of Iraq in general terms. During the years 2005 to 2007, it led to an escalation of the phenomenon of religious exaggeration and the spread of its manifestations in the context of pivotal and sectarian, polarisation, along with a clear contradiction in the spread of practises (Klausen, 2014). The occupying forces have Given the Iraqi people, for example, the principles of equality, justice, democracy, freedom, patriotism and the like. This is not consistent with tribal values and other customs that have prevailed over the past generation, as well as its impact remains in the depths of the soul and memory (Hartwell & Barkley, 2011).

3.2 Features of the Iraqi media discourse after the American occupation

The Iraqi media scene has become a painful portrayal of practises that contain intense and programmable media discourses in favour of sectarian and ethnic affiliation rather than for the benefit of the country. Many political parties in Iraq have not understood the nature of political action and the practise of democracy (Al-Tahmazi, 2017). Unfortunately, this media diversity in Iraq has turned to paths that serve only the Iraqi parties and their political agenda. The phenomenon of external media financing has profoundly affected the future and independence of the Iraqi media (Fattah, 2004). This funding aimed to achieve political objectives against the interests of the country, and some newspapers and satellite channels have been supported by the occupation or by nearby countries, so that funding has become a privilege for survival. If the sectarian strife to kill innocent people in car bombs is a crime against the humanity and the homeland, then the media strife of that has been caught up in the Iraqi media; it is also a heinous crime, no less than the cold-blooded murder of Iraqi citizens (Jassim & Adai, 2017). This is because media strife is trying to stir up sectarian strife and has contributed significantly to real differences between people. This situation leads to the emergence of partisan and religious newspapers with sect-based loyalties that spread the culture of sect loyalty only (Adwan, 2019). The most dangerous characteristic of Iraqi media is the race of parties, and sects to set up radio and satellite channels,

most of which herald the culture of the sect to which they belong (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2014). In addition, the sedition of the foreign sect media fire and some Arab media channels encourage hatred discourse and sedition, so that the Iraqi scene becomes an explosive media scene and an open space for sects, nationalities and religions to fight together (Al-Marashi&Keskin, 2008).The media landscape was not isolated from Iraqi political life, such as sectarian, ethnic and religious quotas in government administration, education, health and economics (Al-Rawi, 2013). It is undoubtedly the policy of the Americans since their entry into Iraq, embodied in the "Bremer" Law on High-End State Management (Al-Tahmazi, 2016). These law-deepened quotas to fuel the civil war and divide Iraq into pieces in addition to the permission to launch satellite channels and freedom of the media in Iraq (Al-Tahmazi, 2017).This freedom has been invested against the homeland and the unity of its citizens. The Iraqi media worked for the benefit of religious and nationalist parties and blocs that viewed their religious, national and ethnic interests above the interests of the homeland (Al-Tahmazi, 2017). This is through sectarian, racist and propaganda speeches, so that the Iraqi media landscape is close to the political scene. Shi'ite, Sunni, and Kurdish channels defend their sect and nationalism. As a result, these satellite channels have been transformed into media platforms to fuel political conflict between parties, sects, nationalities and religions, and an instrument of inciting sect warfare and perpetuating a culture of quotas and interests, stirring up instincts and psychological motives by exhuming the past, selecting events and dual standards (Fattah, 2004). Here it is necessary to stop at basic phenomena when discussing the situation of satellite channels in Iraq, namely that these satellite channels were born in a political context of conflict under occupation (Haddad, 2014). An environment has produced media patterns replicated from the political reality of Iraq. The nature of the political process based on the sectarian quotas (Hartwell & Barkley, 2011). This often leads them to express their parties and blocks away from the logic of neutrality in dealing with news, events and facts (Klausen, 2014).As for the financing of this satellite channel, it is known that satellite channels need huge amounts to secure equipment, studios and staff costs. What is surprising, however, is the emergence of dozens of satellite channels immediately after the occupation (Lawler, 2003). Political parties and individuals have established these channels in all at once which call for the suspicion that there are regional parties and international factors behind the creation of these channels (Ahmed, 2020). Moreover, the lack of professionalism in these satellite channels has affected the type of media discourse, its political orientation, its cultural dissemination and its professional depth (Melki & Jabado, 2016). It has been characterised by poverty, weakness in performance and lack of qualified media cadres (Ryan & Switzer, 2009). Moreover, the lack of media ethics and noble mission of these cadres is due to bias towards their sect and nationality or their political party, without taking into account impartiality and objectivity (Sherwani & Qaradakhly, 2019). Hence, the phenomenon of religious satellite channels with sectarian orientations stemming from different religious references has given rise to new problem. Media discourse was dominated by sect or separatist content, the authorization of sect fighting, and the affiliation of sect and nationalism (Al-Hamami, 2013).They are all trying to use a propaganda method based on the excitement of emotions and the absence of others religious group (Jassim & Adai, 2017).

3.3 Factors influencing media channels on collective awareness.

Many analysts and historians believe that during the American occupation of Iraq, strategic planning of the occupying force focused on creating marginal or fundamental problems in the Iraqi community, but without realising its deadly implications for the Iraqi people (Dahmani, 2017). In the media field, the US occupation of Iraq had more than one pillar, but its policies were the strongest, most deadly, and fatal, opening the way through the media to an Islamic heritage full of cultural faults (Messenger & Abdullah, 2015). As a result, the occupation has used all its capabilities and plans to serve this active cornerstone strategy. The satellite channels established after the occupation of Iraq were the most prominent supporters of the project to resurrect complicated history in front of a people that not accustomed to a culture of respect for different doctrinal and ethnic groups (Abdel Wajid, 2020). The circumstances that qualified the Iraqi media for this role, are as follows:

i. Supporting the occupying forces to create new Iraqi media

From the first months of the invasion, the occupation began to support emerging media outlets. In 2003, Paul Bremer, Iraq's civilian governor, made a decision to spend 2% of Iraqi oil revenues annually (approximately USD 2 billion) on media financing either directly or through advertising campaigns (Alwan, 2017). In Iraq, it was referred to as the US spending programme, in addition to information, equipment and training support.

ii. External support

Many Iraqi media has received a lot of aid from regional countries, but it is not limited to material support and information only; it was also a matter of politicisation and ideology (Ahmed, 2018). The best that can be cited

is the statement by Mr Moayad Al-Lami, head of the Iraqi Journalists Syndicate, that there are external entities that spend four hundred million dollars annually on Iraqi media, including satellite channels, newspapers and radio stations. Moreover, this number is not included in the US spending programme (Kitan, 2019).

iii. Adopted approach

The discourse presented by these satellite channels had a major impact in drawing people's attention and attracting them to follow their programmes presented (Lunis, 2018). Satellite channel discourse has powerful political and religious implications. The media channels always encourage a culture of cruelty and vengeance, and incite hatred and hostility towards others (Mohamed & Sayed, 2019). For these purposes, a method of sect propaganda is used that draws millions, especially from the public and the ignorant (Adwan, 2019).

iv. Sectarian trench

The sectarian scourge, which attempted to decay the structure of Iraqi society, played a major role in increasing the viewing space of these satellite channels (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2014). It has been promoted in its newsletters, programmes, guests and news coverage. This negatively affected the life of Iraqi society and increased the state of damage in the awareness of Iraqi entity, which led to an increase in rupture within Iraqi society, following what happened to it after the occupation (Al-Marashi & Keskin, 2008).

v. Violent situation on Iraqi scene

The heat of the Iraqi streets and the serious human and material losses caused by the terrorist bombings that have spread throughout Iraq have been car bombs, explosive devices, explosive belts and assassinations (Al-Rawi, 2013). These events were an enormous amount of media coverage and programs that these satellite channels took advantage of in order to form a public opinion consistent with its objectives of widening the gap between the components of the Iraqi people (Al-Tahmazi, 2016).

4. Methodology and Results

The study is part of a descriptive research design, which aims to monitor and analyse the assessment of the Iraqi elites concerning the role of the Iraqi media in shaping the attitudes of the Iraqi public towards the issue of sectarianism. The study uses the media survey method to study trends and to evaluate the Iraqi elite (politicians, media professionals and academics) about the role of Iraqi media in addressing sectarianism. The researcher relied on two types of sources for the collection of data and information:

- 1- Primary sources:** In order to address the analytical aspects of the subject matter of the study, the researcher used primary data from the main study tool (the questionnaire), which was specifically designed for this purpose, to be distributed to (250) respondents from the Iraqi elite. The sample size was determined to be (250) observations because the researcher believes that this sample size is appropriate due to the homogeneity of demographic variables among the elite groups in terms of educational level and economic and social level as they belong to a homogeneous social class.
- 2- Secondary Sources:** The researcher relied on the theoretical framework for the study of secondary data sources, i.e. books, Arabic and foreign related references, as well as periodicals, scientific research, articles and previous studies dealing with the subject matter of the study, and on reading on various websites. In the study, the researcher relied on a stratified sample that deliberately selected for a number of considerations, the most important of which is the equality of respondents in elite types. As a result, the researcher chose 100 political elites, 100 from the media elite, and 50 from the university elite. The choice was made in such a way as to consider as possible equal representation between men and women. There was 36 corrupt questionnaire forms, replaced by valid questionnaires to complete the study population. Many statistical procedures and methods have been used to achieve the objectives of the study and to answer the questions. The Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS), the arithmetic mean and the standard deviation were used to determine the deviation of the responses of the study sample individuals for each of the questionnaire paragraphs and for each of the main axes of the questionnaire on its mean arithmetic simple tables. The sample's educational level varied, it includes 10 with a middle school degree; bachelor's degree was 135. As for the number of high-level education, the Master's degree holders, was 51, and the Doctor's degree was 54. For the age range of the sample selected, the number of people ranging between 25 and 35 years old was 34 and the number of age range between 35 and 45 years old was 79. The people with range of age 45-55 were 74. , As for 55- and more, it was 63. The questionnaire was based on a set of questions to the respondents to analyse their opinion on the role of Iraqi media in shaping collective awareness of sectarianism. Since 2003 until now, Sectarianism has killed thousands of Iraqis and led to the loss of Iraq's wealth. The questions the researcher asked the respondents were addressed as follows: **The first** question was "what is the nature of the Iraqi elite's follow-up to the Iraqi media?" In this

question, the aim is to identify the time that the sample would spend watching the Iraqi media, television or any other means. The answer varied, so the ratio of the sample member watching one hours a day was 29. 5% and 28.9% for the group of two hours a day watching Iraqi media, and 32.4% for the group of more than three hours a day. The ratio of the sample group that they watching Iraqi media only one hour a weak was 9.2%.The questionnaire paper included questions specifying the type of media that the respondents had followed, whether they were newspapers, electronic sites or satellite channels. The answers were as follows: 4.2% of respondents follow newspapers, and therefore the nature of the cultural pattern in which newspapers are distinguished affects them more than any other medium. As for electronic magazines, the percentage of followers was 11.2%. Perhaps this is an indication that the proportion of electronic follow-up is expanding at a higher rate than the paper-based newspaper due to the modernity that occurred in Iraq after 2003.The percentage of followers of periodicals who have lost a lot of prestige recently, but are still considered by many to be a source of information more than others, so the percentage was 2.9 % of the total sample. The percentage of followers of Iraqi radio stations was calculated in the sample, was 3.6%, and they believe that radio stations still enjoy (their sobriety) and that their intellectual proposals can be trusted. As for the percentage of followers of the satellite channels, this was the largest percentage, as it was 78.1% of the respondents. The high percentage of followers to satellite channels is due to the nature of the direct image effect of this media. The nature of the integration of news content and stunning imagery has been widely used by the Americans either during the occupation or by political parties that directly strive to influence the viewers in order to have a direct impact, whether in the period of security crises or in elections (Kim, 2011).The second question in the questionnaire was whether the Iraqi media, providing sectarian content during the hours of daily broadcast, and how the Iraqi media deal with news or film material. The following questions addressed to the respondents were presented in the table below.

No	Question	Mean	St Deviation	Rank
1	Iraqi media publishes a percentage of ideas that raise sectarian conflicts	5.2	1.23	First
2	Iraqi media broadcast religious rhetoric that stirs up sectarianism	4.96	1.10	Third
3	Iraqi media focus on statements by Iraqi politicians raising the issue of sectarianism	4.35	1.3	Second
4	Iraqi media affiliated with religious and political parties are contributing to the formation of sectarian opinions	3.88	1.93	Fifth
5	Iraqi media have tackled the issue of sectarianism with balance	3.26	2.01	Fourth
6	Articles of the Iraqi constitution on sectarian quotas have an influential role to play in some Iraqi media dealing with sectarian issues.	٢,٩٥	1.93	Sixth
7	Iraqi media address sectarian issues with relative impartiality	2.76	1.82	Seventh
8	Iraqi media publish articles, films and reports that limit the promotion of sectarian ideas	2.03	1.72	Eighth

Table (4.1): Arithmetic Averages and Standard Deviations of Questions Provided by the Iraqi Media.

It is clear from the table above that the paragraph answered by the respondents, which is “if the satellite channels and other media platforms publish reports, films and interviews that raise sectarianism among the civilian population”. The answer was commensurate with the reality of the situation in Iraq caused by the American invasion, as ethnic, national, division in sect groups, and each ethnic group was condemned by the other groups and called for support against their opponents (Fischer-Tahir, 2014).Another issue that emerged from this table is the extent to which the provisions of the Iraqi constitution have had an impact on the strengthening of sectarism, as political quotas have led to ethnic, sectarian and national polarizations. This led to a rupture of Iraq between the wills of non-national orientation (Isakhan, 2009). Because every nationality or sect has strong supporters and sympathisers from neighbouring and regional countries who are trying to strengthen the ethnic and sectariangroup, to which they belong in Iraq in order to gain political influence in Iraq (Najjar, 2009).The other thing in the above table is that there is a loss of media professionalism on many satellite channels. Some of them have taught people how to make local bombs to avenge the police or the army in the provinces (Recchia, 2018). Some of these media platforms are searching in history for complicated and inappropriate challenges and concerns of modern times, and the sympathising nature of religion among Iraqi citizens makes them believe in historical stories that may have emerged in a completely different environment

from the current situation (Ezzat, 2015). The **third** question is about role of the Iraqi media in facing sectarianism. The question comes in this form “what is your opinion about the role of the Iraqi media in facing sectarianism?” This question includes some of the sub-questions through which an understanding of the range of the media coverage of sectarianism from the point of view of important figures in Iraq is sought. The figure below introduces some details about this question.

No	Question	Mean	St. Deviation	Rank
1	Iraqi media have a positive impact on public beliefs and opinions	1.85	1.7	Eighth
2	The media attaches great importance to what it publishes in order to put an end to sectarian strife	1.77	0.97	seventh
3	The media are interested in informing the public about the dangers of sectarianism	1.53	0.91	First
4	The Iraqi media launched a national campaign to mobilize against the spread of sectarianism	1.49	0.87	Ninth
5	Iraqi media are participating in the dissemination of awareness of the dangers of sectarianism	1.59	1.02	Fifth
6	The Iraqi public trusts Iraqi media.	1.56	1.06	Second
7	Iraqi media promote ideas that reject sectarianism and promote national unity	1.68	1.03	Sixth
8	Professional performance standards are available in Iraqi media organisations to counter sectarianism	1.54	1.01	Third

Figure (4.2): Arithmetic Averages and Standard Deviations of Questions about the Role of the Iraqi Media in Facing Sectarianism. Overall, it must be said that religious-based satellite channels have waged a permanent struggle to prove facts from more than a thousand years ago, in order to establish certain convictions in the minds of viewers and to pass them on from generation to generation. This is what what the Iraqi media channels have done from trying to return to stirring up the ideological dispute now (Baum, 2012). Therefore on an ongoing basis, is yet another effort to foster the political conflict in the region between the poles that raised the slogan of a sect identity, and the followers of the satellite channels believed it (Abdel Wajid Amin, 2020). While political parties and powers may have the right to own their own media for the purpose of promoting their objectives and programmes, trying to utilise their sectarian affiliation to the escalation of political and social conflict places them in the circle of accusations of stirring up sectarianism and threatening civil peace (Al-Nasiri, 2015). This can be seen in the figures in the above table. The question ‘Iraqi media has a positive impact on public beliefs and opinions’ which puts all Iraqi satellite channels in charge of promoting the civil war in Iraq (Ahmad, 2016). Ziyad al-Ajili, Head of the Journalistic Freedoms Observatory, said on 13/02/2019 that satellite channels, radio stations, newspapers and news agencies usually use terms, vocabulary and expressions that intentionally provoke excitement through the use of incitement to violence that offends people or an ethnic or political group (Ismael & Ismael, 2009). Many of the respondents link the rise of sectarian media discourse, to the decline of the state media, which should be capable of forming a comprehensive national awareness. Whereas, in the years of sectarian tension in Iraq, the sects shared the territories after the emergence of the phenomenon of forced displacement, and the residential neighbourhoods became sectarian identities (Kim, 2011). In the light of this division, Iraqi satellite channels have mapped out their tracks and pre-determined their audiences. Sectarian satellite channels have directed their discourse to a specific social component that has attracted a wide audience, in the absence of what is known as state media (Fischer-Tahir, 2014). The **fourth** question in the list was, “Do Iraqi media use sectarian language?” In this context there are some facts need to be highlighted”. The "Iraqi Media House Foundation", in its 14th TV monitoring report entitled "Knights of Hate" extended the monitoring of the content of the talk shows on Iraqi satellite channels during the first half of 2019. Approximately 455 episodes of various talk shows were watched by 15 local satellite stations broadcasting from and outside Iraq, and about 25,026 TV minutes were watched, dialogues and statements by 319 guests were featured among politicians and members of the House and Government, academics, journalists, experts, and political and security analysts. The report reached a number of conclusions, including the fact that the programmes, with their various channels, followed the same events, where 7 channels out of 15 episodes of Tikrit Liberation were broadcasted within one week, and 11 channels broadcast episodes of Mosul Liberation within two weeks. The report also found that about 90 % of the guests on the channels that broadcast from a particular sect were close to them. In addition, it was observed that

about 85 % of the guests from the political forces-funded channels, which their political representatives in Parliament or members of the funded parties or political analysts of the same sect. These programmes had a clear, sectarian discourse in all its dimensions. Even if some Iraqi media channels have tried to hide a sectarian approach in general, they will soon return to a sectarian approach when the simplest problem in governance or administration in Iraq arises (Sherwani & Qaradakh, 2019). The aim of the channels here is to sow hatred of the people against the government and to manipulate collective awareness in favour of sectarian parties or regional and international agendas. The following table displays the main details about the above question:

No	Question	Mean	St. Deviation	Rank
1	Iraqi media uses sectarian language that causes political crises	4.33	1.3	Third
2	A media speech fuelled and programmed for good sectarian affiliation	4.29	1.4	Fourth
3	A media speech fuelled and programmed for good ethnicity	4.18	1.6	Fifth
4	Iraqi media is characterized by the lack of language of unified, inclusive national discourse	4.13	1.7	Seventh
5	Iraqi media adopt the language of culture of loyalty to the sect.	٣,٩٧	١,٠١	Sixth
6	Iraqi media adopts the language of a media discourse that includes sectarian connotations	٣,٧٥	1.5	Second
7	The Iraqi media adopts a balanced media language that does not have sectarian symbols	1.69	1.6	First

Figure (4. 3): Arithmetic Averages and Standard Deviations for Questions about the Use Sectarian Language Iraqi Media It is clear from the above table and through follow-up that Iraqi channels do not necessarily include a direct call for violence during media coverage. It takes an indirect form, however, through symbolic terminology, which still has a potentially dangerous force for fuelling and escalating conflict (Isakhan, 2009). In addition, the media discourse that overshadowed the map of news, dialogue and documentary programmes in the Iraqi broadcasting sector is characterised by an attempt to generalise concepts, formulas and vocabulary that seek to instil a culture in which a generation creates an inherent contradiction in the interpretation of social phenomena (Ahmad, 2016). The most prominent methods of promoting a culture of violence and terrorism embodied is the use of contradictory vocabulary and intellectual content of historical with sectoral dimensions (Al-Nasiri, 2015). In addition, the use of the associated photo and film material clearly shows the seriousness of the messages addressed to the already divided audience. The media incitement to violence is evident in the content of the discourse through several stages, including the transmission of false, amputated and distorted information, the formation of the stereotyping of the other and the psychological preparation of hatred (Amin, 2020).

5. Conclusions

The results of the questionnaire, based on the questions and sub-questions concerning the majority of the study sample following the Iraqi media in a number of times a day, showed that the elite follow-up media channels which take more than two hours, reflecting the interest of viewers in the issues and programmes presented by media channels that are likely to affect their daily lives. Satellite channels also helped citizens raise their problems, show their sufferings, and give them hope that a solution would be found. This contributed directly to Iraqi media channels' elite follow-up, which raised their political and social concerns (Ezzat, 2015). Furthermore, the visual media, whose programmes and broadcast times focused on life situations and living problems, and those which are required to directly demonstrate and observe current events due to the benefits of satellite channels, have greater importance than any other means (Baum, 2012). The results also indicated that the most prominent feature of some Iraqi media is the publication of a number of issues that address the question of sectarian conflict. The questionnaire results generally indicate that Iraqi media tend to supply media content to enhance sectarianism. This is because Iraq's political parties and religious groups own and support Iraqi media (Recchia, 2018). Moreover, the role of the Iraqi media is not often linked to the advancement of neutral views in the presentation of its media materials. This makes it a media window calling for specific political and sectarianism principles and orientations (Lehmann, 2005). This is particularly due to the media materials in which these media circles presented are linked to fundamental issues that have a bearing on their political orientations and stem from the political, social and sectarian pressure and strain. On the basis of the above results, the following recommendations can be posited: first, the current Iraqi media need a long time to

complete their tools in a way that enables them to meet the multiple needs of the public. Second, most media are not concerned with raising awareness and promoting the spirit of belonging to the country. Third, most media outlets lack objectivity and report the news from the point of view of the institution or party it represents. Fourth, Iraq's media lack a deep culture of anti-terrorism, sectarian, and ethnic intolerance. Fifth, many newspapers are owned by parties, nationalities and political trends, which are characterised by limited media discourse and poor performance (Najjar, 2009). Moreover, most media workers and their staff are neither qualified nor trained for correct media discourse. Sixth, the Iraqi media lack impartiality and are often biased towards one party over another. Seventh, the occupation helped the Iraqi media to be part of the sectarian and clan circle, especially after the authorities took over by the Iraqis have lived abroad and who had settled in many countries and acquired their nature, heritage and customs, as well as the duplication of their loyalty between Iraq and the countries that had previously embraced them.

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