

THE ROLE OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM TO SPECIFY THE CORRUPTION ROOTS OF GOVERNMENT IN POLITICAL ISSUES IN IRAQ

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine, from the perspective of Iraqi journalists, the role of investigative journalism in establishing priorities for exposing corruption in government policies in Iraq. In the Iraqi Press Syndicate, the research population consisted of 374 journalists registered with the Iraqi Journalists Syndicate, from which a random sample of 150 was drawn. Corruption types within Iraqi society.

According to the findings of the study, investigative journalism is interested in exposing all administrative corruption and national security corruption issues. As one of the means to advance and develop investigative journalism, Iraqi journalists view it as the most slanted.

Keywords: Investigative journalism, Iraqi corruption cases, Iraqi journalists, Iraqi government policies

Introduction

recently, the Arabian region has been faced a difficult situation due to the lawlessness that has brought nations to their destruction and other countries to disintegrate, as a result of their internal conditions and chaos, the environment of the social states leads to revolutionary movements in social and media areas that many countries have witnessed, or the continuation of demand for revolution[1]. It is launched by certain political forces, with the need for development in reconstruct policies and prepare a new ideology from these revolutionary movements in reconsidering the Arab world, which almost lost its visibility on the global political environment, after a period of fictitious stability, or as a result of the concept of terrorism and previously planned chaos scenarios, which appears recently. There are countries and local and international organizations that target the implementation of these plans for unknown and obscure views[2]. The press plays an important role in the life of societies throughout the world, as it is a source characterized by many features and characteristics in addition to functions, as it is an essential tool through which events and issues that occur inside or outside countries are communicated to the public and changes or behavioral trends are brought about in their awareness of What is going on around them through the various forms of journalism, including print, audio, and video[3].

investigative journalism

When most people consider investigative journalism, they envision crime coverage. This phrase implies a more profound connotation. John Ullman and Steve Honeyman (in Northmore 2001, p. 183) defined investigative journalism as reporting based on one's own initiative and initiative; important issues that some individuals and organizations prefer to remain covert. Their formulation left the door open to the possibility of encompassing anything of public interest. Corruption in politics, the abuse of government authority, the status quo, and even social maladies such as sexism and substance addiction are all fair game[4]. Numerous academicians believe that

internet-based investigative journalism plays a significant role in society, and have therefore written exhaustively on the subject. Journalists should prioritize empowering individuals to make their own decisions and live without government interference. Journalists play a crucial role in empowering individuals by informing them about the operations of government, business, and other powerful institutions. By revealing misconduct, they serve the public interest. In addition, Downie and Kaiser contend that investigative journalism's exposure of government incompetence and corruption can modify ill-conceived programs, save the public money, and terminate the careers of corrupt public servants[5].

investigative journalism in Iraq

Historically and currently, competent correspondents also conduct investigations. John Pilger, an Australian journalist, has published an article in the Sydney Monitor about Edward Hall Smith, an activist who began battling against official corruption and the maltreatment of convict labor in 1826, when Australia was still a colony. However, specialist investigative 'desks' did not begin to develop until a century or more after the news media had become much more established, larger, and diversified. These 'desks' frequently worked on longer stories that required more resources and skills[6]. In the 1960s and 1970s, when the Watergate investigation in the United States and the reporting of investigative journalists Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein received widespread media attention, the term 'investigative journalist' became prominent with the general public. Following a tip, Woodward and Bernstein meticulously documented the extensive illegal activities of former President Richard Nixon and his agents. When Nixon was forced to resign and the book and film based on it, *All The President's Men*, became a cultural phenomenon, Woodward and Bernstein, what they did, and how they did it became the subject of much public debate and envisioning of investigative journalism[7]. Despite the margin of freedom that was made available to the Iraqi media and the great diversity in its press after the events of 2003, it lacks a press with minor exceptions. limited and individual, in addition to what was characterized by incomplete superficial investigations that included ideas and opinions that were not documented[8].

Journalism concept

Journalism, according to Harcup (2008: 2), is a form of communication centered on the exchange of queries and answers. This term is derived from one of the earliest models of communication, Harold Lasswell's transmission model from 1948. Journalism, as previously defined, is the process of communicating with others. The journalist is the emissary, and the readers/viewers/listeners/etc. are the intended recipients; the journalist's media outlet is the source. According to Harcup, a journalist "makes public that which would otherwise be private," i.e., they inform the public about society[1]. Kovac Wenchtel believes that the print or printed press is one of the best media that has an impact on global public opinion. Therefore, it was circulated by many people, regardless of their classes or strata, and their intellectual, cultural and social beliefs. Even if radio and television had a direct and strong influence on the public, this influence is instantaneous[9].

Sources of journalistic processing

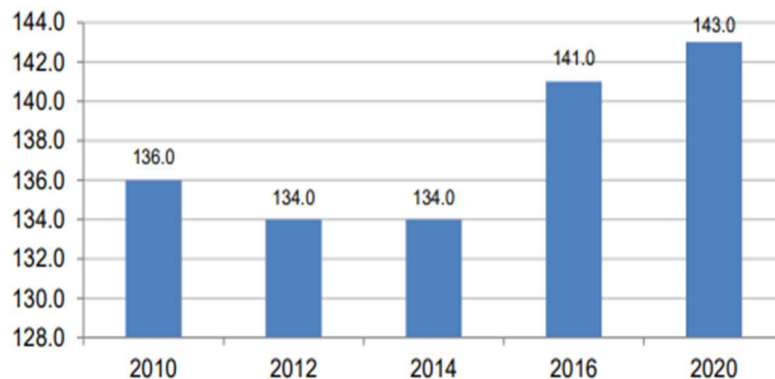
The journalistic source is a fundamental aspect of any news organization. Every item of media

production, whether editorial, processing, or coverage, must establish its credibility by referencing other sources. Selecting trustworthy sources facilitates coverage that strengthens the media's commitment and accountability to the public interest. Journalists are drawn to particular sources based on their relevance to the story at hand and the readers who will be reading the story. Journalists may utilize investigative dashboards, which aggregate data from multiple sources in one location, to locate and verify information more efficiently[10]. Effective investigative journalism requires access to information sources, protection of source confidentiality, physical and digital security for journalists and editors, and meaningful responses by law enforcement and other public bodies to crimes uncovered by investigative journalists. Investigative journalism would be impossible without whistleblowers who expose wrongdoing such as human rights violations, misuse of government funds, and political malfeasance. Journalists agree not to disclose the names or other identifying information of such sources, who frequently provide information under the condition of anonymity[11]. Investigative journalism differs from other types in the following:

- a. Investigative journalism differs from other disciplines in that it focuses on a specific aspect of a case and conducts in-depth investigations of the issues to be investigated in a manner not available in routine investigations[12].
- b. The investigative report differs from other journalistic arts in that the investigative investigation seeks to prove or disprove a certain hypothesis that the journalist proposes, through a well-known mechanism that begins with a question that the journalist asks himself about a topic, and after research and investigation, the hypothesis may be proven correct, or its failure, which gives the story its significance. The significance of being based on substantiation in the first place, as the investigative journalist must attempt to establish every piece of information he presents during his investigation[13].

E-government readiness index

The following graph demonstrates that Iraq has experienced a significant decline in the e-government readiness index over the past nine years, with the rank of its (7) centers falling from rank (136) globally in 2010 to rank (143) in 2020 among the (193) countries included in the 2020 report.



Source: United Nation-Economic & Social Affairs Department-Government Survey, Various Issues

Figure (1) the e-government readiness index of the Republic of Iraq in 2010-2020

The Corruption Perceptions Index is issued annually by Transparency International, and it is a descending index of 100 points that provides a picture of the degree of transparency and the fight against corruption in the countries of the world. Based on this index, the countries of the world are classified in degrees ranging from (0-100), so the presence of a country indicates a degree. A score of 100 indicates that the nation is secure and free of corruption, whereas a low score indicates pervasive corruption and nepotism.

Table (1) Iraq's ranking in the Corruption Perceptions Index for the period (2005-2019)

السنة	الترتيب عالمياً	الرصيد (0-100)	عدد الدول المشمولة بالتقرير
2020	160	21	180
2019	162	20	180
2018	168	18	180
2017	169	18	180
2016	166	17	176
2015	161	16	168
2010	175	15	178
2005	137	22	162

Source: Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index, Various Years

The table observes that Iraq has suffered from the presence of the corruption system and its origins in all aspects of the Iraqi state for more than fifteen years, which is reflected in the Corruption Perceptions Index data, which decreased from (22) points in 2005 to (21) points in 2020.

Investigative Journalism and Exposing Public Government Corruption in Iraq

Iraq is a nation weighed down by administrative and financial corruption, as well as political and business controversies. A specialist in investigative journalism does not have a difficult time selecting topics, but he does struggle with gaining access to information and publishing it in the face of authorities who are willing to threaten him and put his life at risk. Attempts were made to support this essential journalistic work despite the previously mentioned obstacles. The establishment of the Iraqi investigative journalism network in 2011, the country's first investigative journalism network, was one of the most notable initiatives[14]. All financial, editorial, and advisory support for Iraqi investigative journalists to achieve results based on research behind the documented truth and supported by multiple, closely related sources to the subject under disclosure[15].

Research methodology

The researcher used the survey method to analyze, study, and interpret the reality of journalism in the Republic of Iraq and its role in knowing all issues related to corruption of public governments, as perceived by Iraqi journalists, in order to determine the extent of journalists' knowledge of it, as well as the existence and roles of this type of journalism. The study is one of the descriptive studies that relies on analyzing data related to the trends and aspects conveyed by the study community (Iraqi journalists) in order to reach facts that can be used to rectify and fix reality as much as possible, or to develop and update it. According to the nature of the study, random selection was used to select the study sample. The researcher distributed (140)

questionnaires to the study sample in order to reach a reasonable proportion of the study population. After retrieving the number and excluding the invalid questionnaires, the researcher was left with (100) valid questionnaires for statistical analysis, which were considered the actual study sample. The questionnaire was used as the primary instrument for the current study, and it was designed to be filled out by respondents. The questionnaire was evaluated by specialized arbitrators who expressed their observations on some of the wordings included in the initial design of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire comprised of the following four axes:

The first axis: the respondent's personal information

The second axis is the awareness of investigative journalism among Iraqi journalists.

Press exposure of corruption cases is the third axis.

The fourth axis: the press's obstacles from the perspective of Iraqi Iraqi journalists.

The fifth axis: Iraqi investigative journalists' perspectives on how to advance and develop investigative journalism.

Table (2) the dimensions of study measurements

Dimensions of the study	the study numbers	the study period
Follow-up data for investigative journalism	20	20-Jan
Disclosure of corruption cases by the press.	10	10-Jan
Obstacles facing investigative journalism from the point of view of Iraqi investigative journalists.	12	12-Jan
Ways to advance and develop investigative journalism from the point of view of Iraqi investigative journalists.	18	18-Jan

Statistical processors

The researcher unloaded the questionnaire phrases, the study instrument, entered the data into the computer, and then processed it statistically using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program, in addition to determining the frequency tables for the questionnaire paragraphs, identifying all the tabulations cross for the different variables, and determining all the relative distributions. Consequently, the study's statistical measures can be summarized as follows:

- i. Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficient to measure the internal consistency of the study items.
- ii. Extract standard deviations, the mean, and the standard deviation of the mean.
- iii. Extract the various frequency and percentage distributions

Table (3) Frequency distribution according to sex

variables	category	frequency	percentage (%)
gender	male	69	69
	female	31	31
total		100	100%

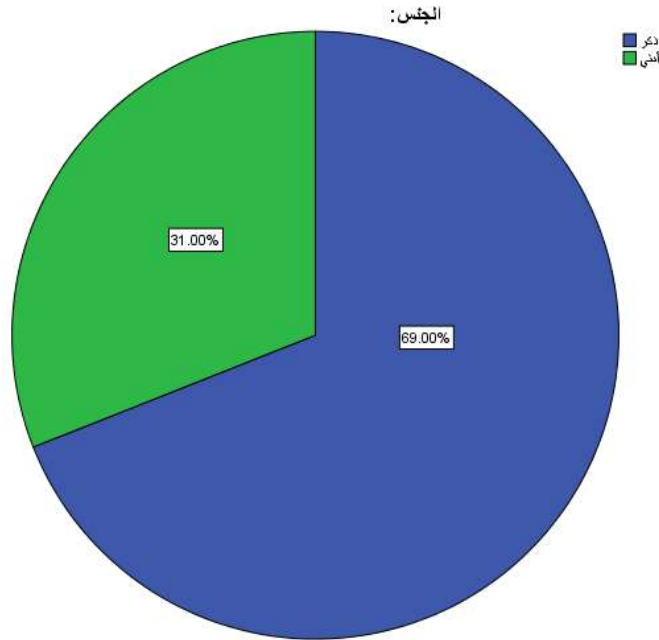


Figure (2) iteration Percentage of the present study samples based on gender

Table (4) analysis of the third axis parameters

	questionnaire	Arithmetic mean	std	weight	T-value	probability (sig)
1	I believe that investigative journalism influences public opinion towards corruption cases.	1.28	0.49	43%	-14.57	0
2	I believe that investigative journalism has an important role in changing official attitudes towards dealing with corruption cases.	1.38	0.55	46%	-11.35	0
3	I believe that there is cooperation and participation between Iraqi society and investigative journalists to uncover corruption cases.	1.48	0.58	49%	-9.01	0
4	There is interest from the Iraqi public in investigative investigations into corruption cases.	1.4	0.59	47%	-10.24	0
5	Investigative journalism has an important role in exposing cases of financial corruption.	1.35	0.56	45%	-11.66	0

6	Investigative journalism is concerned with exposing cases of administrative corruption.	1.49	0.63	50%	-8.13	0
7	I believe that investigative journalism has a very important role in exposing cases of political corruption.	1.31	0.54	44%	-12.66	0
8	Investigative journalism is concerned with exposing corruption in formal and informal institutions.	1.37	0.56	46%	-11.2	0
9	Investigative journalism is concerned with issues of corruption related to national security.	1.59	0.59	53%	-6.98	0
average		1.40556	0.24	47%	-24.43	0

The statistical tests reflected in the standard deviation values indicate that the answer with the highest standard deviation value is related to the statement "Investigative journalism is concerned with exposing administrative corruption cases." Where its standard deviation value was 0.63.

Conclusion

The statistical tests reflected in the standard deviation values indicate that the answer with the highest standard deviation value is related to the statement "Investigative journalism is concerned with exposing administrative corruption cases." Where its standard deviation value was 0.63. Due to the significance of exposing issues of Iraqi administrative corruption, the researcher recommends implementing generalized training courses in all disciplines of investigative journalism in light of the significant variances in the journalists' responses.

The ninth item represented by "Investigative journalism is concerned with corruption issues related to national security" ranked second in terms of the standard deviation of the main question, as the value of the standard deviation for the ninth item was 0.63 and the value of the standard deviation for the fourth item was 0.59, indicating the disparity and dispersion in the answers. It also highlights the significance of investigative journalism in exposing the various types of corruption in the Republic of Iraq, prompting the researcher to advocate for the diversification of investigative journalism training courses and the expansion of investigative journalism for Iraqi journalists. In exposing malfeasance in the Iraqi government.

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