

Readership of News on the Websites of Iraqi Universities, an Applied Study on the Teachers of the Faculties of the University of Dhi -Qar

¹Ammar Hamad Jabr, ²Shukrya Kawkaz Khudhur Al-Sarraj

¹College of Mass Communication - University of Baghdad, amaralhachamy75@gmail.com

²College of Mass Communication - University of Baghdad, <mailto:Shukriakawkaz@yahoo.com>

Abstract

News is the basis for all other journalistic skills. The news story, article, or journalistic inquiry would not have been discovered without the press news. The accelerating trend towards employing the features of the global network of the Internet, which are represented by speed, interaction, and the use of multimedia, prompted many institutions to create their websites, as the interface and channel became the most used in various fields, intending to improve its performance. Determining the levels of leadership is a degree of importance, as it determines the extent to which the public reads the journalistic arts. Particularly, press news, as the study reveals the audience's demographic characteristics, the level of readership, and the audience's motives and preferences from news on websites, as well as the achieved gratifications and factors Influencing the readership.

Keywords: Readership, news, websites, Iraqi universities.

Introduction

Media audience studies have a significant and prominent place among media studies, and readership research in particular is of great importance. In terms of determining the extent to which the public receives press, materials and their follow-up to these materials, as well as enabling press institutions to reconsider determining their priorities. By identifying, the characteristics of the receiving audience and its reading preferences, and the factors that affect the process of its exposure to media messages, and striving to emulate these characteristics. This has become an essential requirement, in light of the great competition between media institutions that seek to win over the audience, after realizing the existence of a relationship between the reader and written material, whether in the traditional or electronic press, and the research works on studying newsreaders on the websites of Iraqi

universities. By determining the characteristics and characteristics of the demographic audience, and determining their motives, preferences, and gratifications achieved as a result of their exposure to news in these sites, where these characteristics can affect the increase Or a decrease in the readership of information, according to each variable.

First: the methodological framework of the study

The study Problem

News published on websites is one of the results of the growing technological developments, the digital revolution and the accompanying prosperity in communication technologies, which produced a new communicative reality. Iraq, one of the important things; It determines the extent of the audience's turnout, its follow-up to this journalistic art. The reasons and motives for

this turnout, and determines the audience's preferences from it, and the results of this are put in front of the communicator to take into account when formulating and presenting news. The research problem is represented in a main question that "What is the level of the respondents' reading of news in Dhi- Qar University website? Which requires determining the demographic characteristics of the respondents and revealing the extent of their impact on newsreaders. The factors affecting the readership, the motives for exposure, the preferences, and the gratifications achieved because of reading this journalistic art, by conducting a survey on a sample of Dhi-Qar University teachers; In order to reach the objectives of the study.

Importance of studying

The importance of this study stems from the importance of the phenomenon that is subject to research "news readability in the websites of Iraqi universities". The importance of determining the level of news readership in the websites of Iraqi universities, and providing accurate data and detailed information to the departments of government universities websites about the public. Their preferences, needs and motives for reading news, as well as The importance of the study comes from being a scientific application of the hypotheses of uses and gratifications theory.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the research are to know the extent of news readability on the websites of Iraqi universities, to identify the motives, preferences and gratifications resulting from reading the news, and to identify the factors affecting its readership, as well as an accurate description of the demographic characteristics of readers.

Study type and method

This study belongs to the descriptive studies, which depend on the survey method, both descriptive and analytical, and a branch of the survey method was used, which is the mass media audience survey, which aims to know the communicative behavior of the public and

know its preferences, and its views regarding the media materials it provides.

Study community

The study community is represented by the news readers on the University of Dhi Qar website from the teaching staff, and the study was applied to an intentional sample of the teachers of the University of Dhi Qar. Read the news on the university's website, and (120) forms were distributed, from which the researcher retrieved (102) and excluded (2 A damaged form, so that the sample size is (100) respondents, they were distributed among the different faculties of the university.

The limits of the study

The limits of the spatial study are represented by the limits of the University of Dhi Qar, which is located in the center of the province of Dhi Qar, which is one of the Iraqi government universities, which includes (21) colleges in various disciplines, which are suitable to generalize the results of the study to the rest of the universities. From 3/15/2022 to 3/30/2022.

The theoretical framework of the study

Uses and Gratifications Theory

This research is compatible with the theory of uses and gratifications, where its objectives and questions coincide with the hypotheses of this theory, which can be used to achieve the objectives of the research. This theory is based on the fact that the public is active and not passive. This theory is based on a set of assumptions, namely:

1. The members of the public are active in the communication process, and their use of the media achieves them intended goals that meet their expectations.
2. The link between the public's desire to satisfy a specific need and the choice among the media for a particular medium is due to the audience itself, and the selection of the means is affected by the individual differences of the audience.

3. The theory assumes that the public is the one who chooses the media and the content that satisfies his desires and needs. Thus, it is the individuals who use the means of communication, not the ones who use them.

4. The public can determine its motives, interests and benefit from exposure, and it is he who can feed researchers the actual image of his use of the media.

5. This theory assumes that the prevailing cultural norms in society can be inferred by the public's use of different means of communication and not by the content of the communication messages provided by the different means (Ismail, 2003, p. 254). The introduction to uses and gratifications aims at the following:

1. Explanation of the public's use of the various means of communication in order to satisfy their needs, and assume that the public is active, choosing what suits it from the means that satisfy its needs and motives.

2. Defining and explaining the motives for exposure to a particular medium, and the interaction that occurs as a result of exposure.

3. Emphasis on the result of using communicative means in order to have a deep understanding of the communicative process. (Al-Dulaimi, 2016 AD, p. 254)

4. Revealing the interrelationship between the motives for use, the patterns of exposure, and the gratifications achieved.

5. Knowing the role of mediating factors and their impact on uses and gratifications. (Al-Hajj, 2020AD, p. 93)

The concept of Readership

The study of the audience of media readers occupies an important place in media research, and that this has been clear since the thirties of the last century, and it has grown in the last five decades of it, since the growing sense of the power of the media and its relationship with the public (Abdul Hamid, 1993, p. 7). Readership research was based on Marketing objectives at first, and based on the desire of some major

institutions, to measure the volume of distribution, (Abu Al-Majd Faraj, 2018 AD, pg. 442). Readership research constitutes the most prominent media trends, and one of the most important channels, which enables the press institution to determine its priorities, as the institution strives to develop its producer. In order to reach the reader to the fullest, and with the presence of competition between media institutions. The need for readers' research increases, and the attempts of media institutions to find out the reasons for the decline and decrease in the number of readers, and to know the influences that caused this increase, and these attempts have resulted in the so-called (readership). , which deals with the study of the public's characteristics, characteristics, interests and various needs. (Al Yamani, 2018 AD, p. 85)

It was mentioned in Webster's Dictionary: Readership: meaning "the audience of readers" or "the audience that reads a blog, reads a column, reads a publication, or reads by a writer, and an estimate of the total number of readers, with the characteristics and characteristics of these readers (Webster Dictionary, 2022).

Readership is defined as "determining the extent to which a particular newspaper is read, by studying the different characteristics of the reader, as well as the conditions and motives for using newspapers, the gratifications achieved, interests, and reading preferences." (Al-Khulaifi, 2008, p. 288), and the term "readiness" refers to the reader of the newspaper primarily. We find that the readership research is concerned with studying the readers of a specific topic, with the aim of determining their different characteristics, the motives for their use of newspapers, their interests, reading preferences. The gratifications they have (Sharura, 2020 AD, p. 8), and the newspaper reader is "the person who reads a newspaper every day, or most days, or when it is issued, and the person who reads all, or most of its pages, or at least reads its headlines" (Said, Abdo, and Fathi, 2019, p. 32).

The dimensions of reading motives are defined by main categories: (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997, p.p420-432).

1. Efficiency and self-efficacy beliefs: It includes three sub-categories: self-efficacy, which means the individual's belief that he is capable of success, challenge, which is concerned with the voluntary desire and willingness to read difficult and complex materials, and avoidance of reading intended for reading activity.

2. The goals of reading: they include the internal motivation, which is represented by the individual being curious and interested in the activity for himself, and the external motivation, which is intended to read to obtain rewards and privileges, and the goals of education, which are concerned with focusing on learning, more display of skill.

3. Performance objectives: They include six dimensions: curiosity, engagement or preoccupation, the importance of reading, appreciation, competition, and social reasons for reading.

Communication studies define the audience's motives for reading, as a form of exposure to the media, in two categories: (Saleh, 2021, p. 381)

1. Utilitarian motives: where the individual selects the content he is exposed to for self-acquaintance, increasing knowledge, gaining experience and learning in general.

2. Ritual motives: in which the exposure is without prior planning, and the goals are relaxation, fun, friendship, familiarity with the medium, escaping from problems, and social communication.

Factors affecting news readership:

Age, class, income, and level of education all contribute to determining audience size for any media; Because it interferes with the amount of time and the amount of money needed to use the media. The age determines the extent of readiness, and the limits of freedom in choosing what can be exposed to, for example. Children are subject to the control

of the family and its choices, and with age they acquire freedom of choice gradually, and then at a later stage their responsibilities increase, so they differ their interests, and their allocation of time for reading or exposure varies" (Denis McCaul, 2010, p. They differ from those with a simple educational level (Lee & Wei, 2008, p.9), and the characteristics of the audience, affecting the exposure process, can be summarized as follows:

1. The "demographic" characteristics of the audience: including primary characteristics that do not accept change such as gender and age, and are related to the individual's interests and preferences from media texts, and acquired characteristics that the individual can change, such as the educational level and economic status. (Al-Khazraji, 2015 AD, p. 58)

2. Civilizational characteristics: they are the way of life, perceptions and impressions of reference groups.

3. Psychological characteristics: they are related to lifestyle, cultural background, type and level of education, and they control the attitudes of individuals and groups. (Al-Dujaili and Al-Kinani, 2018, p. 106)

4. Time: The more civilized the individual increases, the more free time he has, especially since progress with modern inventions shortens time, and the media plays a leading role in occupying this time.

5. Trust in the source: The degree of sincerity that the future attaches to the source prepares to lure the public and push it to accept the media contents.

6. Habits of exposure: it means how to read, listen or watch, in an easy manner and with minimal efforts, so that individuals choose the time and place in a manner consistent with its general characteristics. (Youssef, 2012 AD, p. 176)

The results of the survey

The data in Table (1) indicate that the proportion of males from the total sample

amounted to 57%, the proportion of females 43%, the proportion of those under 30 years old 11%, the proportion of a group of 30-40 years of 21%, a group of 40-50 years of 37%, and a group of 50-60 In the year 17%, the category of over 60 years old 12%, the percentage of those holding a master's degree was 67%, and the doctorate rate was 43%, and the percentage of those living in the city center was 72% and the outskirts of the city were 28%.

Table 1. *Description of the respondents according to demographic factors*

	variable	Category	P	%	Order
1	Type	Male	57	%57	1
		feminine	43	%43	2
2	Age	less than 30 years old	11%	%11	5
		30-40 years old	21%	%21	2
		40-50 years old	37	%37	1
		From 50 to 60 years old	17	%17	3
		More than 60 years	12	%12	4
3	Educational level	Master's	67	%67	1
		PhD	43	%43	2
4	Living	City center	72	%72	1
		outskirts of cities	28	%28	2

Table (2) data indicates that respondents who read the news and look at it on the university's website more than once a day came first with a rate of 32%. The news is quality, and it does not require reading it for a long time.

Table 2. *Average rate of respondents' access to news on the university's website*

	reading rate	P	%	Order
1	More than once a day	32	32%	1
2	once a day	29	29%	2
3	between day to day	17	17%	4
4	irregularly	22	22%	3
Sum		100	100	

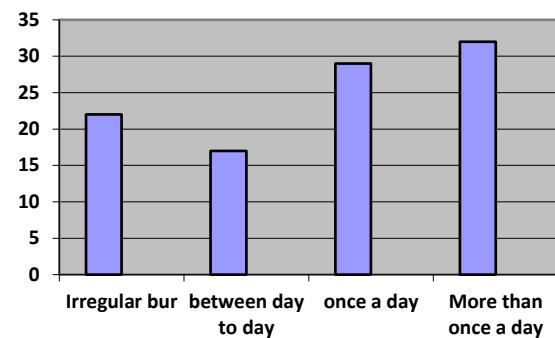


Figure 1. *Average rate of respondents' access to news on the university's website (The figure was prepared by the researcher based on the data of Table (2))*

The data in Table (3) indicates that respondents who read news under the university colleges news category came first with a percentage of 43%. Influenced by the proximity element, while the research centers' news category came last with a percentage of 9%, and they use personal computers for exposure, and this says The respondents prefer to read news related to the activities that take place in their colleges more than others.

Table 3. *Shows the coverage of the news published on the university's website*

	Topic range	P	%	Order
1	University presidency news	35	35%	2
2	college news	43	43%	1
3	Scientific Departments News	13	13%	3
4	Research Centers News	9	9%	4
Sum		100	100	100%

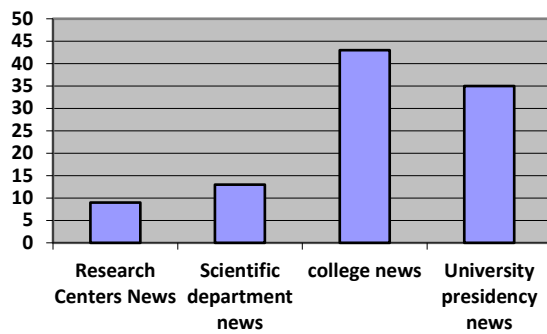


Figure 2. *Scope of coverage of news published on the university's website (prepared by the researcher based on the data in Table (3))*

The data of Table (4) indicates that the method of reading the entire text of the news by the respondents ranked first with a rate of 36%. While the category of reading news headlines ranked second with a rate of 33%, while the category of reading parts of the news ranked last at a rate of 12%, and this explains that the respondents They read the entire news article and are familiar with all the information contained in it.

Table 4. *shows how the respondents were informed of the news published on the university's website*

	How to read	P	%	Order
1	Addresses	33	33%	2
2	the introduction	19	19%	3
3	parts of the news	12	12%	4
4	full text	36	36%	1
Sum		100	100	100%

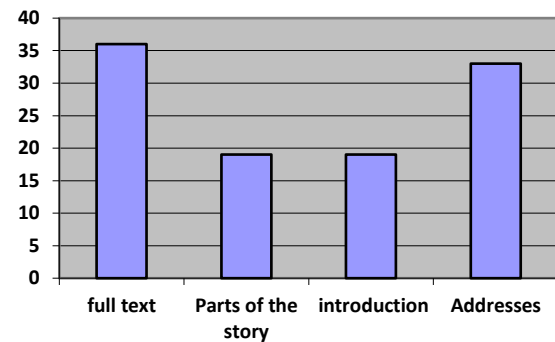


Figure (3) *How the respondents were informed of the news published on the university's website (The figure was prepared by the researcher based on the data in Table (4)).*

The data in Table (5) indicate that the category of motivation to learn about the decisions issued by the university came in the first place with a rate of 22%. The category of motivation to learn about new in the field of specialization came in the second place with a percentage of 15%, while the category of motivation to escape from reality came in the last rank with 8 4%. Confirms that the cognitive motives of the respondents behind reading are the most emotional, entertainment and entertainment motives. Follow the developments of the news on the same day of publication and then in the following days and they are attracted to the news by the attractive headlines that editors use as a method to impress readers and entice them to read.

Table 5. *shows the respondents' motives behind their reading of the news on the university's website (more than one alternative)*

	motives		%	Order
1	Familiarize yourself with the decisions issued by the university	47	22%	1
2	Learn what's going on in the corridors of the university	23	10,7%	6
3	increase information	29	13,5%	3
4	Get to know what's new in your field of expertise	32	15%	2
5	Entertainment and entertainment	25	11,6%	4

6	Escape from reality	18	8,4%	7
7	Breaking the daily routine	19	8,9%	6
8	pass the free time	21	9,9%	5
Sum		214	214	(more than one alternative)

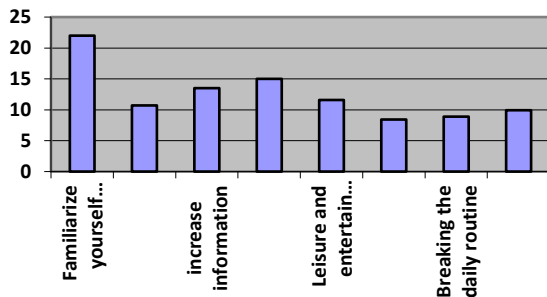


Figure 4. *The respondents' motives behind their reading of the news on the university's website (more than one alternative) (The figure was prepared by the researcher based on the data in Table (5)).*

The data in Table (6) indicates that the factors affecting the readability of news published on the university's website. The nature of news category, ranked first with a rate of 32%, the type of news category ranked second with a rate of 20%, while the category of the output form of the material ranked last with a rate of 6%. It indicates that the respondents are affected by the nature of the event covered by the news more than other influences.

Table (6) shows the factors affecting the readability of news published on the university's website.

	Factors affecting reading news	P	%	Order
1	nature of news	32	32%	1
2	quality news	20	20%	2
3	Drafting	8	8%	5
4	output form	6	6%	6
5	It saves time	14	14%	4
6	Trust the source	17	17%	3

7	Physical and psychological safety	3	3%	7
Sum		100	100%	

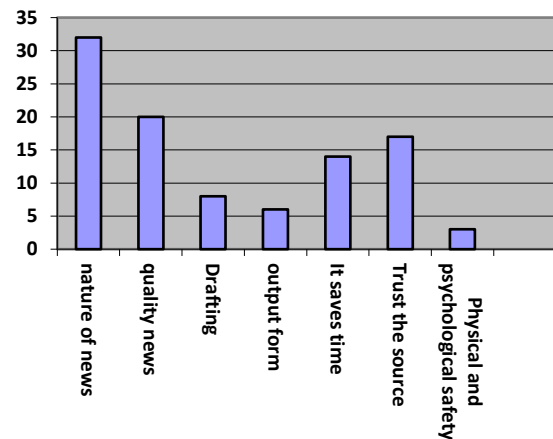


Figure (5) shows the factors affecting the readability of the news published on the university's website (The figure was prepared by the researcher based on the data in Table (6)).

The data in Table (7) indicates that the gratifications achieved under the category of keeping up with publications in the field of specialization ranked first with a rate of 24%. The category of access to news not available in other sites ranked second at a rate of 18.9%, while it ranked last in the category of gratifications of getting rid of Boredom, at a rate of 7.8%, and this indicates that the news published on the university's website achieves gratifications for the respondents that cannot be achieved through other media.

Table 7. *shows the satisfaction achieved from reading the news materials published on the university's website*

	fulfilled gratifications	P	%	Order
1	I saw news that is not available on other sites	41	18,9%	2
2	Accompanied publications in the field of specialization	52	24%	1
3	I got information	33	15,2%	3

	that interests me			
4	Understand the reality of the university	28	13%	4
5	Get rid of boredom	17	7,8%	7
6	Entertainment and entertainment	19	8,7%	6
7	spending spare time	27	12,4%	5
Sum		217	217	100%

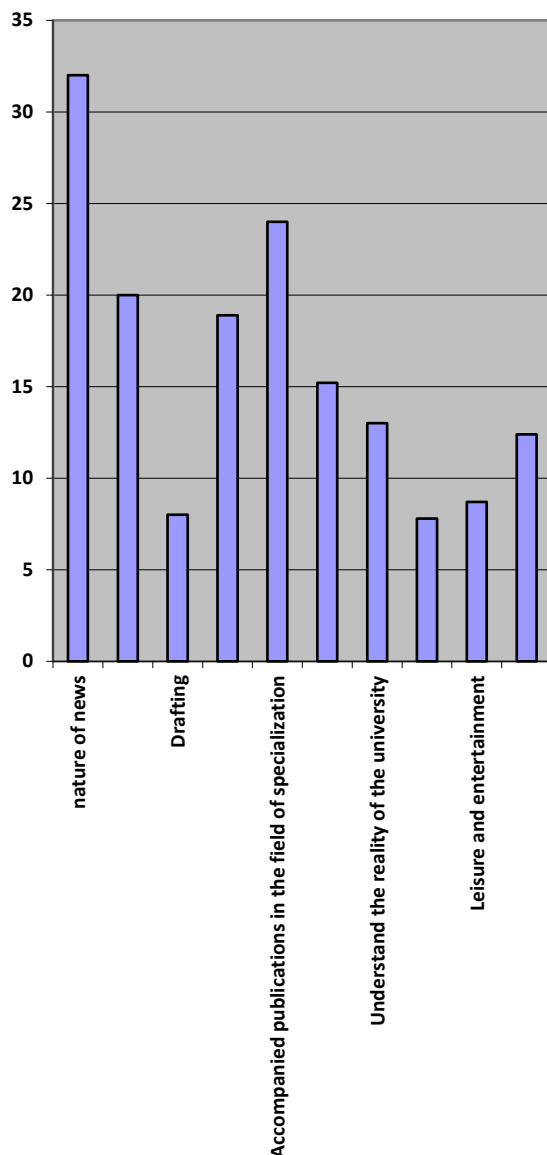


Figure (6) *Satisfactions obtained from reading the news materials published on the university's website (The figure was prepared by the researcher based on the data in Table (7).*

Conclusions

1. The high rate of reading news published on the University of Dhi Qar website, as more than 85% of the respondents read the news published on the Dhi Qar University website at a rate always and sometimes.

2. Most of the respondents read the news published on the Dhi Qar University website on a daily basis, at a rate of once or twice per day.

3. The respondents prefer to read the news published on the University of Dhi Qar website, in the evening and at night, for a period not exceeding (30 minutes). The reason for this is the end of work concerns, and because the news published on the website is qualitative and few in number, so it can be read in a short period.

4. The motives of the respondents to read the news published on the Dhi Qar University website were to learn about the decisions issued by the university and to increase the information.

5. The respondents read the entire text of the news article, some of them are satisfied with reading the headlines, and they always follow news developments on the same day of publication and the next day. The elements that attract respondents to read the news published on the Dhi Qar University website are the news headlines and the topics they deal with.

6. The nature of news and trust in the source are the most influential factors in the readability of the news published on the Dhi Qar University website.

7. The satisfaction obtained from reading the news published on the University of Dhi Qar website is to keep pace with new publications in the field of specialization, understanding the university reality, and spending free time.

Suggestions

1. The necessity of conducting readership research on a regular basis in order to identify

the levels of readership and the factors affecting it.

2. Conducting qualitative research to increase the readability of news on university websites.

3. Conducting comparative research between readability and readability to reveal the effects of readability and its role in increasing or declining readability rates.

4. Conducting qualitative research aimed at identifying the audience's sentiments, preferences and characteristics affecting the exposure process and providing those in charge of the websites of Iraqi universities with the results of such research.

Reference

- [1] Webster's Dictionary. (2022). Retrieval date 3/4/2022, from <https://www.yourdictionary.com/readership#websters>
- [2] A Wigfield & J Guthrie. (1997) children's motivation for reading to the amount and breadth of their reading. *Journal of Educational psychology*.
- [3] Lee & Wei. (2008) How newspaper readership affects political participation. *newspaper research*.
- [4] Ibrahim Mohammed Abu Al-Majd. (2018 AD). Factors affecting the readers of specialized magazines for the blind. *The Egyptian Journal of Public Opinion Research* (fourth issue).
- [5] Ahmed Mahdi Al-Dujaili, and Mohsen Gloub Al-Kinani. (2018 AD). *Television and health awareness promotion*. Damascus: Dar Al-Manahil for publishing and distribution.
- [6] Haider Mahmoud Al-Khazraji. (2015 AD). *Visual media and political agenda-making - Iraq as a model*. Jordan: Dar Amjad for Publishing and Distribution.
- [7] Dennis McCaul. (2010 AD). *McQuill's theory of mass communication*. (Ayman Bajnaid and Abeer Khaled, translators) Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: King Fahd National Library.
- [8] Sarah Sharurah. (2020 AD). *The role of caricature in increasing the readability of the electronic press in Algeria*, Master's thesis, Mohamed Boudiaf University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Algeria: unpublished.
- [9] Tariq Ahmed Al-Khelaifi. (2008 AD). *A Dictionary of Media Terms* (Volume 1). Cairo: University Knowledge House.
- [10] Abdul Razzaq Muhammad al-Dulaimi. (2016 AD). *Communication theories in the twenty-first century*. Amman, Jordan: Dar Al Yazouri for printing, publishing and distribution.
- [11] Issam El Din Mostafa Saleh. (2021 AD). *The economics of information technology and electronic advertising*. Cairo: Dar Al-Fikr University.
- [12] Ghada Abdel Tawab Al Yamani. (2018 AD). Readability of printed newspapers and their future in the light of recent research trends - a critical and forward-looking vision. *Journal of Media Research and Studies*, p. 85.
- [13] Kamal Hajj. (2020 AD). *Media and communication theories*. Syrian Arab Republic: Publications of the Syrian Virtual University.
- [14] Lulwa Aman Saeed, Saeed Abda, and Doaa Fathi. (2019 AD). Factors affecting the Saudi public, readers of electronic and print newspapers. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*.
- [15] Laith Badr Yousef. (2012 AD). *Readability of the Iraqi electronic press*. *Journal of the College of Basic Education*.
- [16] Mohamed Abdel Hamid. (1993 AD). *Study the audience in the media*. Cairo: Alaa Book House.
- [17] Mahmoud Hassan Ismail. (2003 AD). *Principles of communication science and theories of influence*. Cairo: International House for Publishing and Distribution.