

# NEWS SERVICE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO DESIGN IN THE WEBSITES OF THE IRAQI PRESS (ANALYTICAL STUDY)

**Laith Abdul Sattar Ayada, University of Diyala**  
**Laith Badr Yousef, University of Baghdad**

## ABSTRACT

*The two researchers sought to know the extent to which the Iraqi electronic newspaper websites apply the concept and methods of design, as well as to study employing these sites to the technical capabilities provided by the internet in a way that is reflected in the design of their pages.*

*This is so to ensure excellence in the style of presentation, so the researchers applied an analytical study on a sample of four Iraqi electronic newspaper sites, to get acquainted with the general features of its design, and ways to distribute the structural elements of the pages.*

**Keywords:** Design, Websites, Users

## INTRODUCTION

News service is one of the most prominent services that media means seek to develop because it represents a source of information. Electronic newspapers have appeared to refer to what is affiliated with newspapers, radio stations, and news agencies, as well as independent websites that are not related to any traditional means. Regardless of the extent to which the electronic newspaper is affiliated with any party.

Information should be presented in a new way that takes advantage of the technical capabilities provided by the Internet, such as hypertext and multimedia. Information must be presented in a way that allows users to navigate and roam the site to ensure speed and ease of access to information, which forces designers to follow design methods that balance between the capabilities of the Internet and the information needs of the public. Provided that the latter should be clear and visually attractive. This required the culture and skill of the designer to reach the design that takes into account the aesthetic and informational aspects.

Websites of the Iraqi newspapers are a model of the Arab electronic newspapers, which are still in their beginnings, as their spread was linked to the use of the Internet as a means of communication and information in the Iraqi society. Rather, private websites have appeared, whether affiliated with newspapers or independent ones that do not follow any traditional means. It is noticeable that no news websites affiliated with radio or television stations, whether governmental or private, have appeared because there is no radio stations specialized in the news service in Iraq.

Accordingly, the importance of studying the extent to which websites are employed in the Iraqi press for the technical capabilities provided by the Internet in a way that is reflected in the quality of the website design in light of the recent phenomenon and the lack of studies applied to Iraqi websites, especially since the delay in issuing these websites has not yet studied its results, whether they were positive as a result of benefit These sites are from the experiences of those who preceded them, or was their beginning weak, which created a clear contrast between their design and the rest of the sites, in order to reach design foundations that help give distinction to the media product in a way that meets the informational

requirements of users in terms of providing information in a way that distinguishes it from the rest of other elements of pages, as found in the production of Iraqi paper newspapers, which takes into account the distribution of these elements in a way that achieves a balance between typographical and graphic elements, and determine the ability of these sites to add new dimensions of information as a result of making use of the advantages of the internet.

### **Problem and Questions of the Study**

The problem of the study is limited by studying the design, and the design of electronic pages.

1. What are the methods adopted by the Iraqi newspaper websites?
2. To what extent have Iraqi electronic newspapers websites developed the most important principles of research through the following points: (choosing the general design of the page, designing and building information, navigating within the website)
3. Website design?

### **Significance of the Study**

- The topic is of special importance in Iraqi society as it is one of the important areas in this aspect, and therefore the study will focus on measuring the ability of these websites in the Iraqi press to make use of the technical options provided by the Internet in a way that is reflected in the design of the websites of Iraqi newspapers.

### **Reviewing Literature**

Reviewing previous studies and scientific research on the subject of the study is one of the important and basic stages that must be carried out, due to its role in deepening the subject of the study and adding new dimensions.

This helps to know the research that dealt with the variables of the study and determines the knowledge addition that the study will add in the subject that it will address, and by monitoring some among the most prominent previous literature related to the subject of the study, the researcher can divide the previous studies into two aspects as follows:

- Studies related to the design of electronic newspapers' websites and their ease of use.
- Studies on the employment of electronic newspaper sites for the technical capabilities of the Internet.

### **Studies Concerned With the Design of Electronic Newspapers Websites and the Ease of Their Use**

A number of researchers discussed the methods of designing websites and came up with the most important rules that govern the distribution of the structural elements of website pages, in order to reach the optimal design that corresponds to the desires of users. The most important studies and results were as follows:

#### **Study of Qazar (2019)**

The study sought to clarify the degree of availability of web page design standards and their impact on the efficiency of the website, and to clarify modern web design techniques that designers or web developers can be familiar with, such as: HTML5, CSS3, JQuery, then the study explained the frameworks and their importance and important aspects, Explain the stages of development of the Internet, web design and its history.

The researcher used the descriptive analytical approach, as the results showed that the degree of application of web page design standards, which consisted of 20 carefully selected

questions from the conditions that must be met to achieve standards that fit with the aspect, as it came in the first place. The website provides multiple search features and came in the second place the title on each page clearly indicates the content of the topic, then it came in third place, the web page provides a match between the content and the actual needs of the browser, and in fourth place, the logo appears on all pages of the website, and in fifth place, the website provides a list of references to document information (Qazar, 2019).

### **Study of Reinecke, et al., (2019)**

The study sought to know the effect of the aesthetic aspect on the first impression of the site by studying the effect of each of the color variables and the visual composition, as the first concept appears through images or the combination of colors on one page.

As for the visual composition, it is calculated by determining the area taken from the design for each of the text and images from the total design page, as it can be measured by calculating the number of images. The study of colors was applied to (184) participants, including (96) females aged (15-54). As for the visual structure study, it included (122) participants, of whom (60) were female, aging from (16) to (70), and each participant was provided with (70) sites to express his opinion regarding it. One of the most important findings of the study is that colors play a secondary role in generating the first impression of the site, and that the greater the number of elements that make up the page, the less the desire for design. Another point found was that the sites of medium and weak construction had the same degree of acceptance. Results also indicated that there is a relationship between the educational level and the extent of color acceptance, and that there is a relationship between age and the perception of visual structure, while there is no relationship between gender and both visual structure and colors (Reinecke et al., 2019)

### **Studies Related to the Employment of Electronic Newspaper Websites for the Technical Capabilities of the Internet**

A group of previous studies monitored the ways in which traditional means benefit from the Internet in its technical dimensions with regard to the use of hypertext, multimedia and interactive media as the most important characteristics that distinguish the new media, and the most important of these studies are:

#### **Study of Qotob (2020)**

The study aimed at measuring the impact of the technical and technological developments that occurred, especially in recent years, on the techniques of press production in developing the production performance of the national Egyptian newspapers and the newspapers that belong to the political parties. This is done through the use of the media survey method and the comparative method, and by relying on several research tools: the typified interview, the open interview, the scientific observation, and the questionnaire.

Through a detailed exposure to three main fields dealt with by the study throughout its chapters that represent the essence of the study's objectives and its basic questions, and these main fields were represented in:

First: Monitoring and analyzing the technical developments that occurred in the stages of press production in general, which are distributed in the light of this study into three stages: the stage of press editing, the stage of press production, and the stage of printing.

Second: A study of the current technical situation in the Egyptian daily newspapers (national and partisan) - the subject of the study - in order to identify the share of these newspapers in the technical development that has occurred in recent years in the press industry, the extent to which they keep pace with these developments, and the impact of these

technologies on journalistic performance in the stages of the article. Journalistic (Qotob, 2020)

### **Himmelboim & McCreey Study (2019)**

The study sought to determine the ways news websites benefit from the capabilities of the Internet, determine the dimensions of interactivity on the pages of these sites, and monitor the new ones related to the possibility of publishing and sharing news through social networks.

The researchers concluded that the communicators do not prefer the use of interactive dimensions on their website pages, as this hinders their work as gatekeepers, and the ability to search in websites is one of the most important dimensions of interactivity, while newspaper websites have many options to print the article or share it through social networking sites, and their pages are dominated by the spread of content. As for the sites that follow radio stations, they prefer to use audio and video clips and provide the ability to download them (Himmelboim & McCreey, 2019)

### **Type and Method of Study**

The study falls within the descriptive studies as it seeks to characterize and analyze website design in the Iraqi press, and the extent to which it takes into account the new dimensions added by the Internet, and its reflection on the general appearance of the newspaper's website, and the attraction of users to websites of the Iraqi press to know the design styles used and methods of distributing the structural elements of the pages to ensure ease of use.

### **Data Collection Tools**

In the analytical study, the two researchers used the form as a tool for data collection. After completing its design, it was presented to arbitrators specialized in the field of media to express an opinion on the extent of its ability to measure the dimensions of the study and reach an answer to its questions, during the period between (10/3/2021) and (31/3/2021), and based on the arbitrators' observations, some amendments were made, either by adding new questions or amending the wording of the forms.

### **Analytical Study**

The form of analyzing the shape of a newspaper was divided into axes that correspond to the objectives sought by the study, provided that it covers the pages to be analyzed, which in turn are divided into:

- Home page.
- A sample of the newspaper pages (local pages): The pages are considered the basic tabs within which the topics fall according to the nature of the topic of what the news is about. Examples like either it is political, economic or sports. The two researchers chose a Local News page on the grounds that the study is applicable to Iraqi users who are interested in this type of news, as it is a common page among the study sample sites.
- A sample of the news display page: The two researchers will analyze the page of the first news that is mentioned on the local news page, so the pages on which the study was applied can be represented.

## PROCEDURE FRAMEWORK

### Community and Sample of the Study

The researchers apply the study to the websites of the Iraqi electronic newspapers, and the sample of the electronic newspapers will be distributed according to the type of ownership. The sample representation is taken into account for what is found in the study community. The researchers select the most used Iraqi electronic newspapers sites, using the Alexa site, so the sample was distributed as follows:

- Newspapers with hard copy equivalent (Al-Sabah) (government newspaper) (www.alsabaah.iq)
- Newspapers with hard copy equivalents (Al-Sabah Al-Jadeed) ( New Sabah) (Private newspaper) (www.newsabah.com)
- Newspapers with hard copy equivalents (Azzaman, Iraq Edition) (Private newspaper) (www.azzaman-iraq.com)
- Newspapers with hard copy equivalent paper (Al-Mada) (Private newspaper) (www.almadaper.net)

### Research Time Limits

The time dimension of the analytical study is for a period of three months within the period between (1/4/2021) and (1/7/2021), as there is no need for the analysis period to exceed that due to the stability of the design. The design of websites for Iraqi newspapers will be studied in the peak time previously referred to by the previous studies is the evening and evening periods, and details of this will be provided in the analytical study.

### The Spatial, Limits of the Research

The place domain of the analytical study is represented by the websites of the Iraqi electronic newspapers (the research sample), which was previously mentioned.

### Tests of Validity and Reliability

1. **Validity of the tool:** The researchers used the virtual honesty method, where they presented a form analysis form for the analytical study to a group of arbitrators specialized in the field of media in general and electronic journalism in particular.
2. **Stability of the tool:** To ensure the stability of the analysis sheet of the pages to be analyzed, the two researchers cooperated, after accurate identification of the analysis pages and their units, with two analysts. The pages to be analyzed were explained to them, as each of them analyzed the content of a small sample representing (10%) of the total number of pages on the websites of the four Iraqi newspapers (Al-Sabah, New Sabah, Azzaman " Iraq Edition", Al-Mada); which are the subject of the study during the period extended between the start of the analysis and the end of the analysis period.

When withdrawing this small sample, the two researchers took into account the achievement of the principle of relative balance between the websites of the four Iraqi newspapers, and thus the number of newspapers analyzed reached (28) number out of (288), the total number of Iraqi electronic newspapers, That was done during the time period of the current study, three months. Depending on the comparison of the results of the analysis of both researchers, some axes in the shape analysis units were modified to become clearer, and then the analysis was re-analyzed in cooperation with two analysts for another small sample.

The two researchers used the Holste reliability equation to determine the reliability coefficient among the analysts. The reliability coefficient among the analysts according to the Holste equation reached (88%), and this is considered a high percentage, which means that there is a great agreement between the analysts to reach the same results.

### **Data Collection**

The data collection process lasted for three months, starting from 1/4/2021 until 1/7/2021, by saving the numbers of the four Iraqi electronic newspapers' websites electronically on the computer so that the researchers could analyze them according to the format analysis form, which was set up in advance.

### **Statistical Data Processing**

Completing the collection of study data, it was input - after coding - to the computer. Then it was processed, analyzed, and statistical results were extracted using the "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences" program, known as (SPSS) short for (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

### **Defining Terms**

Many definitions of concerning terms of the study were made by some researchers, as follows:

- Design: It is said that, "Manar Fathi Muhammad", a design is a tool to achieve an end, so the site is built for many reasons, but the most important one is enable the user to use the site and achieve certain goals. Users can read, listen to, add, and print the data he wants. Another reason behind the design is to make the site surfed and used by many users using different access devices (Mohammad, 2011).
- Design: In accordance with "Sherif Darwish Al-Labban" it is the process of following the path of the eye on computer screens when browsing electronic newspapers. It is one of the most important characteristics and distinguishing features of the process of reading electronic newspapers on the Internet, in addition to being a process of analyzing digital typography, especially titles, and how to design electronic newspapers websites. It affects news retrieval, user's awareness, multimedia effects on site design, and its role in achieving the site's functions (Al-Labban, 2011).
- Newspapers' websites: Maha Abdel-Majeed Salah defines it as the instant electronic product of newspapers that has a paper origin and is published to the public *via* the Internet (Salah, 2004).
- Websites of electronic newspapers: "Abdul-Jawad Sa'eed" defines it as the issuance and dissemination of electronic newspapers on the international information network, whether as electronic versions of printed paper newspapers or a summary of their most important contents, or as electronic newspapers and magazines that do not have regular issues printed on paper and include a mixture of newsletters, articles, stories, comments, images and services reference (Sa'eed, 2003).

### **Procedural Concepts**

- Design: It refers to the method of distributing the elements that contribute to giving the electronic newspaper the general appearance that is supposed to be accepted by users for its production according to the concept of ease of browsing, and everything related to the methods applied in displaying the information.

- Electronic newspapers websites: This concept is used as an indication to newspapers' websites, whether they have a hard copy equivalent or electronic ones that are produced in all their stages on the Internet. The concept also refers to independent newspapers that have no connection with any traditional means. These electronic newspapers are characterized by the predominance of news content on their pages and continuous following-up news and updating.

**Analytical Study**

Web design in the Iraqi press

<b>Table 1 RESULTS OF AL-SABAH NEWSPAPER WEBSITE TO SHOW THE SHORTEST AND LONGEST TIME FOR LOADING PAGES</b>			
<b>Pages Duration and Size of Page</b>	<b>AL-Sabah Newspaper Website</b>		
	<b>Main page</b>	<b>Top news- Local</b>	<b>First News Page</b>
Minimum page load time (sec.)	9.420	8.850	3.20
Page Size (KB)	1.660	1.005	290
Longest page load time (sec)	21.110	20.070	19.190
Page Size (KB)	1.970	1.230	500

Results of the previous table indicate that the time required to load the main page is the longest, the least time to download it reached (9.420) seconds, and the longest period is (21,110) seconds, as it includes the largest number of images, given that it refers to the most important news from all pages of the site. It is noticed that there are no obvious differences in the loading time for both the home page and the top news page - local.

<b>Table 2 RESULTS OF THE NEW SABAH NEWSPAPER WEBSITE TO SHOW THE SHORTEST AND LONGEST PERIOD OF TIME FOR LOADING PAGES</b>			
<b>Pages Duration and Size of Page</b>	<b>New Sabah Newspaper Website</b>		
	<b>Main page</b>	<b>Iraqi affairs- Local</b>	<b>First News Page</b>
Minimum page load time (sec.)	11.790	9.800	6.580
Page Size (KB)	2.570	1.690	1.025
Longest page load time (sec)	25.540	22.100	10.800
Page Size (KB)	2.990	1.730	1.350

Results of Table (2) indicate that the page load time is related to its size, but the researchers see that the size of the main page, which is not less than (2000 KB), is relatively large. This has an impact on the page load time, which was not less than (11) seconds.

Being compared to other sites whose time of loading of the main was less. Perhaps one of the methods that can be used to reduce the time period is to reduce the number of images included on the page, as well as reduce the length of the page. Because there are repetitions for some elements that could have been eliminated in favor of the length of the page, such as the ability to access "local" news.

<b>Table 3 RESULTS OF AZZAMAN NEWSPAPER, IRAQ EDITION, TO SHOW THE SHORTEST AND LONGEST PERIOD OF TIME FOR PAGE LOADING</b>			
<b>Pages Duration and Size of Page</b>	<b>Azzaman ' Iraq Edition' Newspaper Website</b>		
	<b>Main page</b>	<b>Iraqi affairs- Local</b>	<b>First News Page</b>

Minimum page load time (sec.)	7.430	6.830	6.900
Page Size (KB)	830	740	750
Longest page load time (sec)	9.650	8.980	12.200
Page Size (KB)	900	810	990

Results of Table (3) show that the time period for loading all the pages of Azzaman newspaper, the Iraq edition, is close and there are no noticeable differences between them.

Pages Duration and Size of Page	Al-Mada Newspaper Website		
	Main page	Home affairs- Local	First News Page
Minimum page load time (sec.)	3.956	3.543	3.898
Page Size (KB)	785	782	810
Longest page load time (sec)	7.550	22.749	9.002
Page Size (KB)	887	996	924

Results of Table (4) show that there are no noticeable differences in terms of the minimum time required to load the pages of the site, as the limits remain within three seconds with a difference in fractions of a second.

Researchers believe that it is difficult to make a comparison in this field at the level of all sites, as each site has its own privacy, and if a comparison is made, it is sufficient to read the loading time without linking it to the page size. This comparison can be made on the main page because it is the most important, and therefore the results are as follows, in ascending order:

Sites Duration	Al-Mada	Azzaman	Al-Sabah	New Sabah
Minimum duration to load main page (sec.)	3.956	7.430	9.420	11.790

Results of Table (5) indicate the total time specified for each website to download its home page. It is clear that Al-Mada newspaper has achieved the shortest period of time to load its main page.

Researchers believe that designers should do something to help in reducing time required to load pages, such as reducing the number of images and page length, as the researchers have already reached, because the previous numbers indicate the minimum required time, which may increase as Table No. (6) Shows the longest time period to load the main page.

Sites Duration	New Sabah	Al-Sabah	Azzaman	Al-Mada
The longest duration to load main page (sec.)	25.540	21.110	9.650	7.550



Researchers relied on the descending order of the values in Table (6). It is clear from the results that the designers of the New Sabah newspaper and Al-Sabah newspaper must do something to prevent exceeding (20) seconds in loading the main page, because every increase in time threatens the site with losing its users.

## CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Researchers have already indicated that there are no copies for web designs for smart phones, tablets. This requires from websites' managers to review such a point. Even if the costs are high because the higher cost is that one which threatens any site, *i.e.*, losing the website followers.
2. Results of the study showed that there were no obvious demerits in the design of the websites. However, there were some obstacles faced the respondents. These obstacles are related to the nature of internet connection, and not specifically website, except some websites that have some links that do not work. This requires from websites manager to do continuous following up and maintenance in order not to let the website lose its followers. The co-occurrence of such a problem may have negative effect on the website.
3. There is a necessity to make improvement and modifications on the design to make it suitable with the users/ needs to keep them. Because of the competition found among the websites, especially after the entrance of social media sites. Newspapers websites really admits the competition of social media.

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