

Political and Media Interaction in Iraq and The Element of Continuity in Iraqi Media Policies

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This test lights up the intersection of media and politics in the Iraqi context and introduces adaptive continuity theory to explain why the field was notified by enabling media reform, which has been fundamentally transformed. A longitudinal study of four Iraqi governments (2014-2023) systematically analyzes media coverage, examining how well sitting leaders meet objections from various sectors. The study also includes field research data and media discourse analysis to understand the influence of political control on the media system, as well as the relationship between party-state control and media message production. **Method:** The study reveals that media reforms did not change the MMC institutional corrections over a long period. Instead, they highlighted how these institutions produce media actors and entrench past propaganda relations. Additionally, media outlets are under greater political pressure, and party-state relationships continue to dominate media content, especially in mainstream media. **Result:** Social media, although breaking the former monopoly on information, has been manipulated by those forces that originally maintained that monopoly. The study presents a paradox of social media: it has democratized information but also enabled those in power to control and limit the dissemination of information. **Novelty:** The analysis concludes that the media's credibility crisis, fueled by fake news and government censorship, prevents it from fulfilling its oversight function. The study proposes that further reform, without radical change to protect media institutions from partisan control, will remain ineffective.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of Iraq, this experiment lightened up the crossroads where media and politics meet. It also advanced a theory of adaptive continuity to account for how communication industries have been transformed in such similar ways by new media reforms. Although the country's ruling elite are keen to see reforms in constitutional and legal spheres, they also retain strict control over media. The political elite makes all sorts of "gimmicks" simple for its own media system, too, but it hasn't yet smashed the system. It uses the media to win honor, rather than for itself. By observing each of these four regimes over a ten-year period (2014-2023), government and opposition leaders enjoy coverage that is clear, systematic and -- from all walks of journalism. Publicly, at least--accounts Kajian to their faces. After all, eventually protests will form on the streets; eventually a crisis of governance will simply have to arise. Based on CO studies of field research data and media discourse, the corrections did not shake MMC institutional oversight still experiencing cycles that lasted for so many years. Yet they summed up in full how these institutions manufacture media actors themselves and continue Creator Descendants influence together with past relations in propaganda over them. The content analyses show that newsrooms today come under more external political pressure than they ever have before. When there is greater competition between media groups at

mainstream party publications party-state relations dominate message selection for the media. Media when it does not reproduce the public signs from other places (a function of compression and limited information processing) produces nothing really of its own. The study unearthed a peculiar paradox: despite the media on the whole flourishing in number (with over 100 satellite channels and innumerable digital platforms having emerged) media policies are at the behest of traditional power equations. An affirmation of this belief can be found in the findings of Tanni Haas regarding partisan media; namely that despite all regulation legislation, as of 2023, 70% of major media are under the power of political blocs or regional [1].

Therefore, the importance of this study is represented in the remarkable vision that rises above the superficial reading of the relationship of media to politics in Iraq as it tracks the processes of media decisions making, which are hidden networks of influence that determines the paths of media work under the shadow of all slogans calling for freedom and pluralism. The preliminary conclusions suggest that the Iraqi exception is to be a model for the comprehension of how feeble regimes combine disrobed demands of media-eon without bringing it to confusion with traditional armed strength of hegemony.

Problem Statement

Theoretically, the paper makes a qualitative contribution develop the idea of “adaptive continuity” in media policies, which explains how ruling elites preserve the core elements of the media system while making superficial concessions adapted to the imperative of the moment This explains what has kept all the efforts of media reform at bay in no freeing the media from the yoke of political dependence despite many unnecessary constitutional and legal overhauls coming and going.

Based on the previous problem, we examine the following research questions:

1. How does the interaction between the media and political entities influence the formation of public opinion and policies in Iraq?
2. To what extent does the continuity of the elite in the Iraqi media affect the independence of the media landscape and its role in political change?
3. What is the role of social media in reshaping the relationship between politicians and the public in Iraq, and what is its impact on the spread of misinformation?

Theoretical framework & Literature Review

The interaction between media and politics

Analyzing the "organized chaos" theory shows that the new communicative media can actually contribute to an alternative narrative, even as they have almost no effect on the strength of traditional media [2].

Thus, the article, which explores the relationship between democracy and media in Iraq in a comprehensive way, is based on a diagram based on the structural contradiction between formal pluralism after democratic transfer and structure of hegemony inherited from the repressive political regimes, thus these media can be defined as the space of the structural contradiction [3]. At the first level, the theory of media gate keeper offers an analytical lens with which to examine how Iraqi media select and shape political

discourse, whilst media institutions become tools for elite warfare rather than platforms for societal discourse [4].

Especially when we consider this interaction in the context of the increasing importance of "partisan media," the latter of which continues to recreate political divisions through polarized discourse in the name of sectarian and ethnic identities [5].

Analyzing the "organized chaos" theory shows that the new communicative media can actually contribute to an alternative narrative, even as they have almost no effect on the strength of traditional media [2].

Yet, as with Twitter and Mukbang, social networks offer outlets of expression unmediated by the state, but the possibility of those outlets coalescing into effective instruments of political change depends on the real technological and cultural contexts into which they are intertwined [6].

While the term "adaptive continuity" refers to the way in which the different actors in Iraq are able to hold onto the post of media power by many indirect means, such as through funding of the media or by taking advantage of flexible laws (Meltzer, Christine E. et al., 2025: p.10). The same continuity can be observed in the transition from blunt coercion of the media to more sophisticated forms of media management, in which ruling elites have learned to put forward a discourse suggesting media freedom in the context of retaining effective tools of influence [7].

Path Dependence Theory examines how history shapes future choices; For example, there are changes in law, but not in behavior with laws governing Iraqi media behavior [4]. This legacy is reflected in the persistent state-sponsored media culture deep inside the private media institutions, and the ideology-based discourse at the cost of news professionalism [6].

Continuity element in media policies

The research builds on an integrated conceptual framework which synthesises theories of democratic political communication with media systems theories of political continuity in post-democratic environments. The framework builds off the idea of "elite continuity," which Sparks 2008 eked out in his work on how ruling elites hold their status across the media system, even in the wake of formal political transitions [8]. In the case of Iraq, this continuity interacts with the notion of the "path dependency", the ongoing influence of historical institutional arrangements on present-day media policies. However, the institution of media control was heavily interlaced with the adaptive agility of the ruling elites in Iraq in the post-March 2003 situation, which pursued the goals of the regime through adaptive continuity in media policies, and developed a qualitative contribution to poor adaptation of the Iraqi ruling elite to the media policies of the current era that depend on the essence of sophistry of the previous political regime [9].

This points to a mediaization of politics theory whereby the (re)-telling of these stories is negotiated by media actors in an arena somewhat removed from the establishment but always by media actors working within a space defined by a ruling elite [10].

And, in a less boozy operational mode, it also draws (though not on sugar) on the 'gatekeeper theory' to examine how media messages are selected and framed, as well as the 'media framing theory' to understand how opinion is cast [11]. The framework also incorporates a comparative media politics perspective to analyse the disconnection between official discourses of media and what is put into practice in Iraq. These theoretical elements intersect with the particularities of the Iraqi case in which formal media pluralism coexists alongside traditional power structures [12]. They are hybrid media policies that tends to be in conformity with formal norm of press freedom but preserve the essentials of state control behind a deceptive curtain [13].

The role of political media interaction on the continuity of media policies

However, just as with Twitter and Mukbang so do social networks provide conduits for expression outside the immediate control of the state, however whether such outlets can coalesce as effective instruments for political change in practice (and corrupt) technological and cultural contexts is determined by the latter also [6].

The central question here is: how can political systems ensure the continuity of their media policy under conditions of rapid political and technological change? [14].

This study is built on the idea of "media gatekeepers", stating that media are not a neutral partner in building public opinion and in determining the political agenda as the media does so by selecting and framing political issues [13]. The process of mediaization of politics floods politics with media standards, so that political practice gets framed and regulated by media standards and changes the balance of power, previously favoring politicians, now favoring the media [12].

The theoretical dimension of the study is represented by a critique of the concept of elite continuity and the assumption of an accumulation of media power strategies across political systems [15].

This concept is based on the theory of "Path dependence", which holds that today's media options are limited by earlier structures and institutional forms [16].

Nowhere on earth has felt a greater impact than Iran from this feature of the story. Today there are people slowly putting their media policy back in place as if from the outside and for "media players.

This wide theoretical integration pushes forward for further probing into the underlying mechanisms by which suspended regimes, like Iraq, manage to maintain a durable media policy continuity in a seemingly democratic system of all lights without the shadow-the formal pluralism evenly impels everything with little governmental gravity.

RESEARCH METHOD

Methodologically, following a media policy analysis of four government cycles (2014-2023), three pivotal moments are extracted: general elections to parliament, mass protesting action and crises of the government. At a time of extreme political convulsions in the region, this analysis relies on data of policy-makers as well as media from a survey

about media policies and repertoires from free samples of media discourses to provide some thoughts about media freedoms and spaces around the MENA.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Table 1. Distribution of demographic variables for the research sample (n=50).

Demographic Variable	Categories	Frequency	(%)	Notes
Occupation	Political	12	24%	Includes members of parliament and party officials
	Media	18	36%	Journalists and media executives
	Academic	10	20%	University professors and specialized researchers
	Civil Activist	7	14%	Representatives of civil society organizations
	Other	3	6%	International consultants and experts
Years of Experience	Less than 5 years	8	16%	Mostly young people
	5-10 years	15	30%	Middle-aged professionals
	11-15 years	14	28%	Senior experts and decision-makers
	Over 15 years	13	26%	Ministries and official bodies
Affiliated Institution	Government	20	40%	Satellite channels and websites
	Private	18	36%	Faculties of media and political science
	Universities	7	14%	Representatives of UNESCO and United Nations programs
	International Organizations	5	10%	University professors and specialized researchers

Balance of Occupations: Consultants in media (p. 36) and politics (24%) are over-represented, while there is fair representation from academe (20%) and activists overall (p. 14% combined)

Experience: Over 10 years of experience among 54% of the quota which makes good opinions.

MoNE and other public institutions: Government and private institutions represented 76% of the media landscape, the vast majority of all media outlets in Turkey owned by government bodies or private companies.

Table 2. Study of political media interaction.

Statement	Options	Frequency (%)	
The Nature of the Relationship Between Media and Politics	A completely independent relationship	3	6%
	A balanced but unstable relationship	12	24%
	A relationship subject to political influence	28	56%
	A relationship dependent on mutual interests	7	14%
The Influence of Media on Government Decisions	Very strong influence	5	10%
	Somewhat strong influence	15	30%
	Weak influence	22	44%
	No influence at all	8	16%
Factors Influencing Media Credibility (Multiple Choice)	Political bias	42	84%
	Financial influences	37	74%
	Fake news	45	90%
	Lack of freedom for journalists	39	78%
Media outlets most used by politicians	Television channels	18	36%
	Newspapers and News Websites	8	16%
	Social Media	21	42%
	Press Conferences	3	6%
The impact of political affiliations on coverage	Very High Impact	32	64%
	Somewhat High Impact	14	28%

Statement	Options	Frequency (%)	
Evaluating political pluralism in the media	Weak Impact	4	8%
	No Impact at all	0	0%
	Balanced Pluralism	2	4%
	Limited Pluralism	23	46%
	Serves Specific Agendas	20	40%
	Does Not Reflect Pluralism	5	10%
	Very High Impact	4	8%
The impact of investigative journalism	Moderate Impact	11	22%
	Weak Impact	27	54%
	No Impact	8	16%
	Government Censorship	47	94%
Challenges of covering political issues (multiple choice)	Political Pressures	45	90%
	Lack of Resources	38	76%
	Low Public Trust	29	58%
	High Awareness	3	6%
Public awareness of media biases	Limited Awareness	19	38%
	Relies on Politicized Media	25	50%
	Trusts Without Question	3	6%
	Traditional Media	15	30%
Media outlets most influential in shaping public opinion	Social Media	22	44%
	Religious/Political Figures	10	20%
	Community Discussions	3	6%

Political Dominance: 56% think the media is “subject to political influence,” 64% say political loyalties “very significantly” affect coverage.

Limited Influence: Four in 10 say the media’s influence on government decisions is “weak,” and similar shares (54%) say the impact of investigative journalism is “weak.”

Crisis of Credibility: 90% name “the spread of fake news” a major factor, and 94% name “government censorship” a major challenge.

The Rise of Social Media 42% say it is the most commonly used medium by politicians and 44% say it is the most influential medium on public opinion.

Public Pessimism: 50 percent think the public either “depends on politicized media” and 40 percent say the media “serves certain agendas.”

Table 3. Study of the continuity of Iraqi media policies.

Statement	Options	N	%
Fundamental Change in Media Policies	Not at all changed	21	42%
	Slightly changed	17	34%
	Somewhat changed	9	18%
	Significantly changed	3	6%
Factors of Continuity	Influence of political elites	39	78%
	Party/government funding	34	68%
	Weak institutional independence	31	62%
	Lack of legal reform	28	56%
Impact of Continuity on Freedom of Expression	Very negative impact	24	48%
	Somewhat negative impact	16	32%
	Somewhat positive impact	6	12%
	Very positive impact	4	8%
Impact of Legal Amendments	No real impact	26	52%
	Limited impact	15	30%
	Political control increased	7	14%
	Significant impact	2	4%
Features of "Adaptive Continuity"	Minor changes without implementation	22	44%
	Replacement of figures without policies	14	28%
	New means linked to agendas	11	22%
	Indirect control through funding	3	6%
Opportunities for Breaking Continuity	Difficult in the current situation	23	46%
	Total elite control	19	38%

Statement	Options	N	%
The Role of Independent Media	Very limited opportunities	6	12%
	Significant opportunities	2	4%
	Providing independent content	20	40%
	Public awareness	13	26%
	Pushing for legal reform	12	24%
	No tangible impact	5	10%

Overall trend: An overwhelming majority believe that media policies remained the same, even though they formally changed (76% no change or few changes).

The biggest driver: Political elites (78%) and the media's ties to party funding (68%) were the leading factors for ongoing continuity.

Negative: 80% of respondents have perceived that continuity of policies negatively affects freedom of expression.

Institutional skepticism: 82% consider legal amendments ineffective or have increased political control.

Adaptive continuity diagnosis: embodied in formal changes (72% in the first two options) while maintaining traditional mechanisms of dominance.

Pessimistic future assessment: 84% see difficulty breaking continuity in the foreseeable future.

Table 4. Weighted means and standard deviations of sample responses (n=50).

Statement	Weighted Average	Standard Deviation	Agreement
Section Two: Political-Media Interaction	3.82	0.91	Moderate agreement
The Role of the Media in Shaping Public Opinion	3.65	1.12	Moderate agreement
Political Pressures on Editorial Lines	4.28	0.87	Strong agreement
The Impact of Party Affiliations on Credibility	4.12	0.95	Strong agreement
The Role of social media in Breaking the Monopoly	3.23	1.24	Weak agreement
Section Three: Continuity of Media Policies	4.15	0.87	Strong agreement
Continuity of Policies Despite Changes in Governments	4.05	0.89	Strong agreement

Statement	Weighted Average	Standard Deviation	Agreement
Limited Impact of Legal Amendments	4.31	0.76	Very strong agreement
Adopting New Methods While Preserving Old ones	4.10	0.96	Strong agreement

Highest weighted average:

“When the statute books change but the change is not needed” (4.31) → signifies a strong belief in the uselessness of short-lived changes.

“Political pressure on editorial policy” (4.28) → confirms the dominance of political elites.

Lowest weighted average:

“The role of social media in breaking monopolies” (3.23) → shows the restricted effect of digital platforms in spite of their being there.

General trends:

Political-media interaction:

Politician dominance (item 2 and 3 above means >4)

Plaver relatively weak influence of independent media (item 1: 3.65).

Policy continuity:

Consensus on the continuity of the media system despite the changes: All means above 4

Standard deviations:

Largest difference on item 8 (1.24) → high consensus of opinion among this sample about this item.

Least deviant in “The limited impact of amendments” (0.76) → relative consensus on laws’ ineffectiveness.

Table 5. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) table to compare individuals' responses between the two sections (political-media interaction and media policy continuity).

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of freedom	mean squares	F	(p-value)
Between Groups	18.72	1	18.72		
Within Groups	132.45	98	1.35	6.83	0.011*
Total	151.17	99			

The results show that there is a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between the average responses of individuals in the two sections.

Table 6. Pearson correlation coefficient table between the items of the two sections.

Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Shaping public opinion	1						
Political pressures	0.42**	1					
Party affiliations	0.37*	0.61***	1				
The role of social media	-0.28*	-0.19	-0.32*	1			
Policy continuity	0.51***	0.58***	0.49***	-0.41**	1		
Limitations of amendments	0.39**	0.67***	0.72***	-0.25	0.63***	1	
Methods of control	0.33*	0.55***	0.60***	-0.37*	0.59***	0.78***	1

There was a statistically significant difference ($F=6.83$, $p=0.011$) between the responses of individuals in the political-media interaction section ($M=3.82$, $SD=0.91$) and the policy continuity section ($M=4.15$, $SD=0.87$), indicating that participants viewed policy continuity as more significant than the influence of political-media interaction. Positive correlations ($r > 0.50$):

Political pressures ↔ Little legal change ($r=0.67$)

Party affiliation ↔ Amendment limits ($r=0.72$)

Policy continuity ↔ Restricted amendments ($r=0.63$)

Control methods ↔ Minor changes ($r=0.78$)

Inverse correlations:

A more salient role of social media in breaking up monopolies was associated with less policy continuity ($r=-0.41$) and control methods ($r=-0.37$).

Here are the three most related relationships:

Control methods ↔ Few amendments ($r=0.78^*$)

Party identifiers ↔ No guarantee of amendments ($r=0.72^*$)

Political pressures ↔ Few amendments ($r=0.67^*$)

The study simply reasserted the already known fact that the principle cause for the failure of law articles in Iraqi media system lies within itself directly due to its structural persistence and not because of formality, as well as that political pressure and party tendency are strongly correlated with a failure in dispatched legal material changes.

And yet, this might seem like it is precisely what social media could do — though in the end it has not been able to compete with, let alone rival, these structures that already exist.

This class of things with continuity in particular seems to have something like a kind of unitary apparatus that preserves the old state.

Table 7. Time Scale of Applicability of Media Policies and Impact (2014-2023) –Sample-50 persons.

Axis/Government Period	2014-2016	2016-2018	2018-2020	2020-2023	Trend of change
Media Freedom Score (Rate/5)	2.8	2.5	2.9	2.4	▼ Slight decrease
Level of Political Pressure (Rate/5)	4.1	4.3	4.0	4.5	▲ Significant increase
Effectiveness of Legal Reforms (Rate/5)	3.2	2.9	3.1	2.7	▼ Continuous decline
Public Partisan Media Prevalence (%)	68%	72%	75%	82%	▲ Significant increase
Use of social media to Circumvent Censorship (%)	35%	42%	48%	55%	▲ Steady growth
Public Trust in Official Media (Rate/5)	3.5	3.2	2.9	2.6	▼ Gradual decline
Rates of Censorship of Political Content (%)	45%	53%	58%	67%	▲ Sharp increase

The decline of media freedom:

It has dropped from 2.8 to 2.4 (-14%) with a spike from 2018-2020.

Over 4 in 5 (82%) of the sample state that the time frame of 2020-2023 was most repressive.

Increased political pressure:

Up from 4.1 to 4.5 (+10%)

78 percent of respondents reported increased direct pressure on newsrooms.

Failure of legal reforms:

OEE fell from 3.2 to 2.7 (-16%).

88% think that the amendments made were “superficial, failing to change anything meaningful.”

Expansion of partisan media:

Shunt from 68% to 82% (+14%).

72% say there has been an increase of channels "openly affiliated with political blocs."

Transition to digital media:

Their use to defeat censorship has increased from 35% to 55% (+20%).

However, 61% feel that they have made limited actual impact on breaking monopolies.

Crisis of confidence in the media Official:

Crash from 3.5 to 2.6 (-26%)

67% of the sample do not trust official channels³¹ "at all"

Increasing censorship:

From 45% to 67% (+22%)

84% of people agree to the existence of "blacklists" for forbidden topics

Strengthening the "adaptive continuity" system by:

Increasing pressure (+10%)

Expanding censorship (+22%)

Depriving reforms of meaning (-16%)

Increasing disconnects between:

Deteriorating freedom (-14%)

and a growing dependence on digital substitutes (+20%)

Embarking on a hybrid model that integrates:

Old elites (pressure rating 4.5) and new tools of control (smart censorship).

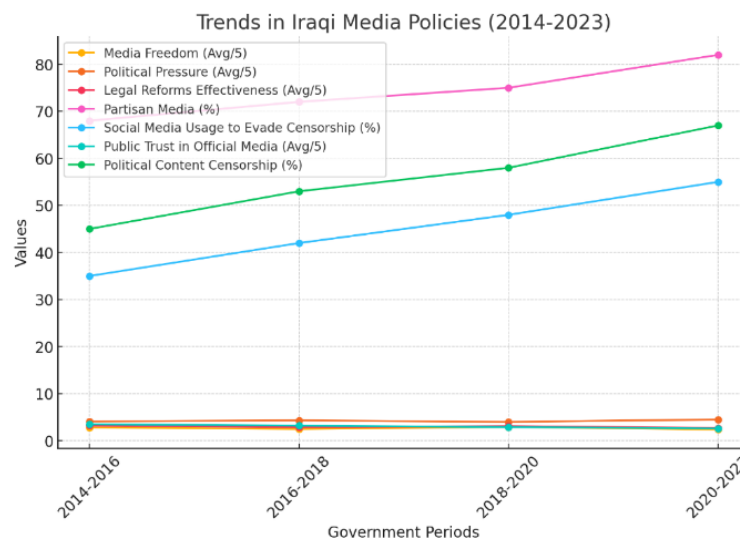


Figure 1. Trends in Iraqi media policies (2014-2023).

Discussion

The findings of the study demonstrates that the media scene in Iraq is indeed is still subject to the political and elite forces. Party political influence on the media- either through funding or direct editorial pressure- is high according to the data. I'm fed up with this kind of order that includes anything unsatisfactory about media policy into its intent, so even if we don't see one concrete result from it despite all the reformist posturing that accompanies failure deeply underlies any semblance of difference. As is shown in the mean value of "The Effect of Legal Amendments is limited" index (for most

sample respondents these are not considered to have had the least effect on media situation).

Government and private institutions were also significant in making the media environment, which led to official control of the media system and a media environment that favored government over the press. If accurate, readers and viewers around the world have a fresh sense of what's at stake: It's about credibility, something many of the players themselves are now calling into doubt with "the spread of fake news" and "government censorship" atop the list of challenges facing media today, so badly, that its historical role as a fourth estate – to hold up governments' actions for examination; and challenge corruption – is threatened.

On the other hand, the absence of independent media organizations implies the problem of depth in mass communication. For, as shown by how poorly investigative journalism is perceived as effective, Lebanon's media professionals do not think that their institutions are in a position to effect real change in government policies. The fact that a majority of the public agrees that the media produce transparency and accountability does little to dispel a widespread cynicism about the ability of the media to actually provide these according to agendas that respond to the public interest (with nearly half of the sample agreeing that the public mostly relies on politicized media that can accommodate agendas that are given). Concerning social media, although the study's participants agreed about the growing presence of politicians on the platforms and their ability to shape public opinion, the results showed that social media has yet to challenge the monopoly of political elites over more conventional media outlets.

The preferable outcome in terms of reviewing the results is the range that self-assessment of being impacted by social media has around how radically different is the media landscape, as indicated by a mean and standard deviation whose range is so much higher than any other tested. This miss divergence is indicative of anti-correlated behaviors across media actors.

"On the one hand, there are people who believe that this is a way to break the monopolistic grip of traditional media, while on the other hand many criticize it as working strongly within institutions.

The strength of the effect is so strong (and statistically significant) between these variables that it almost creates a circular type link – politically influenced, party biased and censorship methodologies are related to one another so strongly that we may be witnessing a system as a whole working towards maintaining the status quo.

These are more likely to impact the sustainability of media policies than political-media relation since a statistical difference in mean between two dimensions was detected.

And the prognosis? Now, in m-f-l terms dedicates most of your time working hard on this project, with little to no sense of immediate return. Few people wonder how sustainable version of this media system in shape the foreseeable future can exist. Why? In the final analysis it is closely linked to how legal reform still fails to make much difference at all. Rising political pressures, a glut of partisan media and in recent years

stricter guidelines — it's a piece of this sad quilt. And at the same time embedded in power relations that forbid any change whatever. Then there is the space of social media. But good or bad change, truly significant and if this is not just-a-little-better recipe since the recipes we have made so far have never provided for this kind of desperately needed final once-off turnaround.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : The study reveals that Iraq's media system remains an unbroken chain, with political and social control continuing to shape organizations in a consistent manner, even as legal and administrative formats change. Despite efforts to reform, the media system still faces strong political hegemony, which limits the ability of media to perform its oversight function effectively. The prevalence of fake news, state control over information, and a general mistrust in the media have led to a credibility crisis, where the media is unable to contribute to transparency or accountability.

Implication : The findings highlight that media reforms alone will not bring about change in Iraq. The entrenched political influence and media policies create a status quo that resists substantive reforms. Social media, despite its potential to democratize information, has had limited impact on breaking the media monopoly, as older forces continue to shape the narrative. This suggests that, without addressing these underlying issues, Iraq's media will remain an instrument of political control rather than a force for transparency and reform.

Limitation : The study is based on perceptions of media actors and does not explore the full range of structural, economic, and cultural factors that influence media behavior in Iraq. Additionally, the findings are limited to the period since 2011, which may not capture the evolving dynamics of media and politics in the country.

Future Research : Future research could examine the role of independent media outlets and the potential for media reform beyond legal amendments. It would be valuable to explore the impact of global media trends on local media systems in Iraq and how social media platforms might be leveraged to break the existing monopoly. Further investigation into the relationship between media trust and government accountability, as well as the role of investigative journalism, would also be crucial in understanding the future of Iraq's media landscape.

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