



Article

# The Dependence of Iraqi Audience on News Applications as a Source of Information

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**Abstract:** This research aims to study the level of the Iraqi audience's dependence on news applications as a source of information about various events and issues, based on Media System Dependency Theory. The researcher adopted the descriptive method using the questionnaire tool that was distributed to a sample of (257) respondents from the city of Baghdad, selected by convenience sampling method. The research aimed to measure the level of dependence, the most used applications, and the type of news followed, in addition to revealing the cognitive, affective, and behavioral reasons and motivations behind this dependence. The results showed a strong dependence on applications such as (Al-Sumaria News) and (Al-Sharqiya News), which were the most frequently used platforms. Political, security, and economic news content received the highest levels of user engagement. The main drivers behind this dependence included ease of use, rapid news delivery, and the presence of engaging visual content. While the findings indicated a significant cognitive impact, they also revealed a limited emotional and behavioral dependence on these applications. This research represents a qualitative addition to the media library by shedding light on digital news applications in Iraq, and serves as a basis for future studies that explore shifts in the patterns of public consumption of information in light of the fast technological developments.

**Keywords:** Media Dependence, News Apps, Digital Media, Journalism, Iraqi Media

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## 1. Introduction

News applications are witnessing increasing growth in the number of users and a remarkable diversification in the services they provide. As one of the most important forms of digital media that the public depend on for obtaining information and news, they have contributed to shaping the media landscape by providing real-time updates and making content available at any time to meet users' needs and expectations

This research aims to find out the level of dependence of the Iraqi audience in the city of Baghdad on these news applications as a source of information, based on Media System Dependency Theory, it is a theory developed by (Sandra) and (Melvin) in 1976, which assumes the study of media and communication in the context of large social systems and there is an interaction between media, the audience, and society, and the impact of media is related to this interaction. It can be said that the more a person depends on media to fulfil their needs, the more important the role played by these media in the person's life, and this can be applied to society as a whole; the more members of society are dependent on media, the greater the overall impact of these media on society, and thus the more important the functions and roles they can play.

Some researchers have described Media System Dependency Theory as an ecological theory that focuses on the relationships between various social systems, and views the media as part of the social fabric, with relationships to people and groups within society, In addition, there are two main pillars of Media System Dependency Theory:

- 1) Goals: People in society want to achieve goals through the information provided by different sources. These goals are understanding what is going on in society and the world, and entertainment to achieve satisfaction or escape from problems.
- 2) Sources: The media system in society is an information system that controls the sources of achieving people's goals. These sources are represented by three stages, starting with collecting information, then processing it, then publishing and distributing it.

Based on the above, researchers have identified a number of areas of influence resulting from the public's dependence on media in society, as follows:

- 1) Cognitive: This is done by providing comprehensive information and correct interpretations based on facts, evidence and proofs. Cognitive effects also include shaping attitudes, arranging audience interests, and influencing value and belief systems, as the media does not only cover events, but also promotes and maintains values, regardless of their type.
- 2) Affective: related to feelings, sensations and emotions, such as increased fear, emotional lassitude, tension and sensitivity to violence. Affective effects also include anxiety about being a victim, as well as supporting morale or supporting the feeling of alienation, as studies have shown that a person's feeling of alienation increases when they do not find media that express their culture and affiliations, and media can play a positive role that enhances a person's belonging by expressing their identity, culture, habits, and traditions.
- 3) Behavioral: It is divided into two parts. The first is activation, which means increasing positive and overt action or behavior, while the second is inactivity, which means ineffectiveness and avoidance of action. Effectiveness is the performance of a person's work tasks without being exposed to the media and the messages or contents published in it, and behavioral influences are the final outcome of cognitive and affective influences.

The power of the media according to the adoption theory lies in the media's control and dominance over information systems and the way it flows or reaches the public to achieve their goals, as the goals of understanding, guidance and entertainment can increase and expand as society becomes more complex, thus increasing the dependence of people in society on the media to obtain their needs to achieve their goals regardless of the type of medium, whether traditional (print, audio, visual) or digital, such as news applications, social media websites, news websites and digital newspapers. Media System Dependency Theory is a comprehensive theory that offers a view of the relationship between media and public that avoids the simple question of whether or not the media are highly influential. Researchers argue that Media System Dependency Theory reflects a trend in the social sciences that views social life as a system of interacting elements rather than as discrete models.

#### **Literature Review**

Below, the researcher reviews a set of previous studies related to the research topic in general, in order to benefit from them in achieving the research objectives, which seek to find out the dependence of a sample of the Iraqi users on news applications as a source of information and current events:

Followed the procedures of the survey method and applied the data collection form, online, to a large sample of young people aged between (18-30 years) in Portugal. The data collection form was divided into several sections that included a set of closed questions that meet the research objectives such as identifying the characteristics of the respondents,

the media they use as a source of news, their favorite news, and their habits of using these applications. The study found that a large percentage of respondents get news from social media networks rather than news applications, which is related to the type of content, as the results showed that respondents receive notifications on their phones about news that does not fall within their circle of interests, and therefore they ignore it because - from their point of view - it is not important, even if the news is accurate and credible.

While investigated the users' preferences for news applications, their using motivations, and the factors influencing this, by conducting a field survey on a sample of (698) respondents in the United States of America, the data was collected through a questionnaire that included (4) axes: (respondents' data and demographic variables, the way respondents use applications, the ease of use of applications, and the motivations for this use). The results showed that the most important thing that drives respondents to depend on news applications is that they are easy to use and correspond to the user's desires in terms of content selection, as well as the ease of searching for and accessing information within the application.

The study of is a descriptive survey study conducted on a sample of (500) respondents in Saudi Arabia, which sought to know the extent of their dependence on (Nabd) news application as a source of obtaining news, as well as measuring their level of following the news articles published on it, their level of satisfaction with the media services it provides, and their motivations for using the application. The study came up with a set of findings, most notably that (43%) of the respondents depend on the application as a primary source of news through their mobile phones, attributing the reason for this to the speed of news delivery. The study also showed that (52%) of the respondents use the application on average (less than an hour) per day, and this use increases in urgent and emergency events with an arithmetic mean of (2.47). In addition, the study recommended the need to raise awareness among the public about obtaining news and information from reliable sources as well as working to increase the richness and interactivity elements in news applications in general.

Aimed in his study to find out the levels of dependence of the Iraqi public on digital newspapers in obtaining news related to the environment, by collecting data using the questionnaire tool from (390) respondents who use digital newspapers from different Iraqi governorates, the study belongs to descriptive survey studies, and the researcher adopted the hypotheses of Media System Dependency Theory to achieve goals, the study reached a number of results, most notably that (46.93%) of the respondents depend on digital newspapers in obtaining news, and (69.76%) of them (sometimes) follow news related to environmental issues, the study found that (46.93%) of the respondents depend on digital newspapers in obtaining news. The results also showed that the largest percentage of the sample does not read the entire news, as the respondents only read the headlines or the first part of the news.

Study explored the public's dependence on social networking websites in following sports events, the (2021 IHF World Men's Handball Championship) in Egypt, and the extent of the impact of this dependence on the cognitive, behavioral and emotional aspects, the researcher followed the steps of the survey method, and applied the data collection form to a sample consisting of (200) respondents, the study reached several results, the most important of which is that (Facebook) came at the forefront of the websites preferred by the respondents to follow the results of the tournament, then (YouTube) and (Instagram), and the study proved a statistically significant relationship between the intensity of exposure through social networking websites to the tournament news and cognitive effects [1], [2].

A study by sheds light on the reality of the dependence of the public in Baghdad on social media websites as a source of information and the effects resulting from this dependence, specifically in times of crisis, the crisis of the high exchange rate of the dollar,

the study belongs to descriptive research (survey method), the researcher reached a set of results, including (41.17%) of the respondents depend on (Facebook) to obtain information and the latest news about the crisis of the high exchange rate, and the most prominent motives for dependence are to know the position of the government on this crisis and how to address it, with an arithmetic mean (3.95), which is greater than the value of the hypothetical mean [3], [4].

As for, he aimed in his study to find out the extent of the Iraqi public's dependence on satellite channels in following the news related to the crisis of the spread of (COVID-19), and the study seeks to measure the level of public confidence in the news and information published and broadcast through those channels, especially those related to vaccines to limit the spread of the disease, the researcher followed the procedures of the descriptive survey method. The researcher reached a set of results, most notably that (55%) of the research sample follow satellite channels and depend on them as a source of information because they trust and believe that they publish correct and accurate information that differs from what is published and circulated in social media websites and applications, as well as the proximity of satellite channels to the source of information (official authorities), and their transmission of all relevant details [5], [6].

Aimed to identify the motives and objectives that drive the Saudi audience of the research sample to depend on social media websites in knowing events and issues of internal concern, and to identify the most relied upon websites, and the reasons that push them to depend on them, the study is a survey study, the researcher applied the data collection tool on a sample consisting of (893) individuals, the study revealed that the sample members depend on (Twitter) ( $X$  currently) in knowing current issues in their community within Riyadh city, and that the respondents follow issues of a social nature more than other events and issues [7]. The results also showed that adoption motivations are primarily cognitive.

A study by sought to find out the extent of exposure of the audience of Baghdad city to satellite channels and the extent of their dependence on their news bulletins as a source of information, the study tests a main hypothesis that measures the correlative relationship between the characteristics of the respondents and their dependence on news bulletins, the researchers applied the questionnaire tool to collect the required information on a sample of (476) respondents. The study came up with a set of important findings and conclusions, including the existence of respondents' interest in news bulletins on satellite channels, and an emphasis on following local news of a political nature. In addition, the results concluded that there is a statistically significant correlation between respondents' characteristics (gender, age, and educational attainment) and the extent of dependence on news bulletins on satellite channels [8], [9], [10].

Based on the above, the researcher finds that:

- 1) The previous studies agreed that there is an increasing growth in the use of digital media and social media websites, and emphasized that the public depends on them as a source of information and news, which is related to the changing habits of the public's use of media, and confirms that technology has imposed a new media reality on the communicator and the audience or the users.
- 2) The current research differs from previous studies in its focus on measuring the level of the Iraqi audience's dependence on news applications. Previous studies primarily examined the dependence on other media, such as newspapers, satellite channels, and social media websites. This distinction makes the findings a valuable addition to the scientific literature, offering insights that can be utilized in future studies and research.
- 3) This research agrees with the previous studies mentioned in that it is descriptive research and adopts the survey method as the main method to achieve the research objectives.

- 4) The current research agrees with most previous studies in its use of Media System Dependency Theory as a guiding theory.
- 5) The researcher selected the research sample by the convenience sampling, while some previous studies adopted the simple random sampling, and others adopted the purposive sampling.
- 6) Through previous studies, the researcher gained a more accurate understanding of the research topic, as they provided a substantial amount of data and information that contributed to defining the dimensions of the research problem [11].
- 7) The literature review helped in accessing a list of sources and references that contributed to enriching aspects of the research.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

### **2.1 Research Questions**

The researcher defined the research question as: "What is the level of the Iraqi audience's dependence on news applications for obtaining information about various events?" This primary question is followed by a set of sub-questions:

- 1) Which news applications does the Iraqi users depend on for information?
- 2) What kind of news is the sample interested in following via news applications?
- 3) What are the reasons and motivations for the Iraqi audience's dependence on news applications to obtain news and information?

### **2.2 Importance of the Research**

- 1) The research examines the level of dependence of the Iraqi audience on news applications and explores the relationship between this dependence and their level of knowledge about events and issues. Accessing news and obtaining information are communication habits practiced by users to fulfill cognitive, behavioral, and emotional purposes, which can serve as valuable data and information for researchers.
- 2) The results represent an addition to the media scientific library and a starting point for new research and studies that shed light on the topic of dependence on digital media in Iraqi society.
- 3) Utilize the findings to develop news applications for Iraqi media, aiming to provide communication and media services that effectively meet user needs.

### **2.3 Research Objectives**

The research aims to achieve a set of objectives:

- 1) Find out the level of the Iraqi audience's dependence on news applications in obtaining information.
- 2) Identify and categorize the most commonly used news applications among the respondents in the research sample.
- 3) Identify the types of news that users are interested in following and accessing through applications.
- 4) Identify the reasons and motives that lead the Iraqi audience to depend on news applications as a source of information about various events and current issues.

### **2.4 Research Hypotheses**

The research aims to examine the following hypotheses:

H1. There is a statistically significant correlation between the type of news applications used by the respondents and the level of dependence of the Iraqi audience on them as a source of information about current issues and events.

H2. There is a statistically significant correlation between the type of news applications used by the respondents and the reasons for their dependence on them to obtain information.

H3. There is a statistically significant correlation between the types of news applications used and the motivations for the Iraqi audience's dependence on them to follow current news and events.

To explore H3 in greater depth, the following sub-hypotheses are proposed:

H3a. There is a statistically significant correlation between the types of news applications used and the cognitive motivations for the Iraqi audience's dependence on them

H3b. There is a statistically significant correlation between the types of news applications used and the affective motivations for the Iraqi audience's dependence on them.

H3c. There is a statistically significant correlation between the types of news applications used and the behavioral motivations for the Iraqi audience's dependence on them.

## 2.5 Scope of the Research

- 1) Temporal Scope: It extends from May 1, 2024, to September 1, 2024, representing the period during which the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the respondents to collect data and information, which were then categorized and processed.
- 2) Spatial Scope: Baghdad Governorate, Iraq, was chosen by the researcher because it is a densely populated area with significant social and cultural diversity.
- 3) Demographic Scope: Residents of Baghdad city aged 18 years and above, selected according to the estimated data for the year 2024 issued by the Central Statistical Organization/Ministry of Planning.

## 2.6 Research Sample

The researcher identified the population of Baghdad as a representative sample of the research community, and the respondents were selected using the convenience sampling, which is a sample based on the principle of what is available (Ghareeb & Hilmi, 2019, p. 136). Accordingly, the researcher prepared and designed the questionnaire online and distributed it via email and social media platforms and applications. A total of (257) respondents completed the data collection form.

## 2.7 Research Method

This research is descriptive, utilizing the survey method to collect data and achieve its objectives. The researcher used the questionnaire tool to collect information and data from the respondents of the research sample, and the researcher divided the questionnaire into three sections:

Section 1: The researcher focused on questions related to the characteristics of the respondents, which are gender, age, education attainment, and occupation.

Section 2: It included questions related to the applications used by the Iraqi audience (research sample), on which the respondents depend as a source of information, as well as the type of news and topics they follow the most .

Section 3: The researcher designed a scale to assess the extent to which respondents depend on news applications and the reasons and motivations behind their dependence on these apps for information and news about events and issues.

The researcher followed two approaches to measure the validity of the questionnaire:

- 1) Face Validity: It is concerned with the form of the questionnaire in terms of its appearance, clarity, accuracy, comprehensiveness and the extent to which it relates to the research objectives from the point of view of experts and specialists (Al-Shuairik, 2023, p. 59). The researcher was keen to present the questionnaire to a group of specialized arbitrators , and the percentage of agreement on the questions and paragraphs of the questionnaire was (91.17%), which is a good percentage.
- 2) Internal Consistency: By calculating the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, the results showed that all correlation coefficients of the research questionnaire paragraphs and phrases were significant at the level of (0.05), which indicates the validity of the tool. To check the reliability of the research questionnaire, the researcher followed two methods to measure it:
  - 1) Split-Half Method: The questions in the questionnaire were divided into two equal halves: one containing the odd-numbered and the other containing the even-

numbered. After selecting a random sample and calculating the correlation between the scores of the two halves, the split-half reliability coefficient was found to be (0.94). Using the Spearman-Brown Formula, the adjusted reliability reached )0.95(, which is considered an acceptable ratio of reliability.

- 2) Analysis of Variance: Applying the Cronbach's Alpha Formula and calculating the consistency of the sections of the questionnaire, the reliability value reached (0.98), which is a good ratio.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

Table (1) below shows the results of the statistical analysis of the data collected from the respondents, which is a set of general characteristics (demographic variables) that characterize the (257) respondents in the research sample, which can be presented as follows:

**Table (1).** Relative Hierarchical Distribution of Respondents' Characteristics (Demographic Variables)

Variables		N	%
Gender	M	159	61.87
	F	98	38.13
Age	26-33 y	101	39.30
	34-41 y	62	24.12
	42-49 y	35	13.62
	18-25 y	28	10.89
	50-57 y	27	10.51
	58+ y	4	1.56
Educational Attainment	Bachelor's degree	162	63.04
	Postgraduate	53	20.62
	Secondary Education	36	14.01
	Primary Education	6	2.33
Occupation	Employees	148	57.59
	Freelancers	55	21.40
	Students	38	14.78
	Not currently working	16	6.23
<b>Total</b>		<b>257</b>	<b>100</b>

- 1) Distribution of respondents according to the variable (Gender): The results showed that (61.87%) of the respondents are males compared to (38.13%) of them females [12].
- 2) Distribution of respondents according to the variable (Age): The results showed that (39.30%) of the respondents were aged between (26-33 years), (24.12%) were aged between (34-41 years), and (13.62%) were aged between (42-49 years), while respondents aged between (18-25 years) recorded (10.89%), and the percentage of respondents aged (58 years and above) was (1.56%).
- 3) Distribution of respondents according to the variable (Educational Attainment): The results indicate that (63.04%) of the respondents have a university education, (20.62%) hold postgraduate degrees, (14.01%) have completed secondary education, and (2.33%) have only a primary education.
- 4) Distribution of respondents according to the variable (Occupation): The results showed that (57.59%) of the respondents are employees, (21.40%) are freelancers, (14.78%) are students, while (6.23%) do not work.

#### 3.2 News Applications Used by Respondents

Table (2) presents the news applications used and depended on by respondents as sources for receiving information and news. The findings indicate that (14.23%) of respondents identified (Al-Sumaria News) application as their primary source for staying

informed about current events and issues in Iraq and around the world. This was followed by (Al-Sharqiya News) application, selected by (12.95%) of respondents, and (Al-Jazeera) application, chosen by (12.44%). Both (Alrabiaa) and (BBC Arabic) applications were chosen by (9.49%) of respondents. Additionally, (8.33%) reported using (Sky News Arabia) application, while (7.95%) depended on (iNews) application.

The other news applications recorded low and fairly close percentages, as respondents chose (UTV) application (5.64%), (Google News) application (5.51%), (Al-Sharq News) application (4.23%), (Russia Today) application (3.85%), and (Al-Rasheed) application (3.33%). (Nabd) application ranked last with a percentage of (2.56%) of the respondents' choices.

**Table (2).** Relative Hierarchical Distribution of News Applications Used and Depended on by Respondents

Applications	N	%
Al-Sumaria News	111	14.23
Al-Sharqiya News	101	12.95
Al-Jazeera	97	12.44
Alrabiaa	74	9.49
BBC Arabic	74	9.49
Sky News Arabia	65	8.33
iNews	62	7.95
UTV	44	5.64
Google News	43	5.51
Al-Sharq	33	4.23
Russia Today	30	3.85
Al-Rasheed	26	3.33
Nabd	20	2.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>100</b>

### 3.3 The Level of Respondents' Dependence on News Applications According to the Type of Events and Issues

Table (3) below shows the level of dependence of the respondents on news applications according to the type of events and issues and the results were as follows:

- 1) Political: The data indicate that a substantial proportion of respondents (53.31%) reported a high level of dependence on news applications for obtaining information about political events and issues. This highlights the significant role political news plays in the lives of the Iraqi people. In contrast, (37.74%) of respondents expressed a neutral stance, while only (8.95%) reported not depending on such applications [13].
- 2) Social: The results showed that (50.19%) of the respondents are keen to follow news and social events through news applications, which is a high level, while (39.30%) of them are neutral, which reflects a level of reluctance or lack of interest, and (10.51%) of them do not depend on them.
- 3) Security: The results indicate that the majority of respondents (52.14%) rely on news applications to follow the latest security-related events and updates, demonstrating a high level of engagement and interest in societal security and stability. In comparison, (31.91%) of respondents adopted a neutral position, while 15.95% reported not depending on such applications.
- 4) Economic: (43.19%) of the respondents chose (neutral), while (42.41%) of them chose (dependent on) - i.e. news apps - to follow economic news. The answers reflect the respondents' lack of clarity, or their reliance on sources other than news apps, despite the direct and noticeable impact of economic fluctuations on the local market and people's lives.
- 5) Sports: The data show that (46.30%) of respondents reported that they depend on news applications to access news and information about sports, while (27.24%)

selected the neutral option, and (26.46%) indicated that they do not depend on it. This indicates that there is differential interest in depending on news applications for information about sport events, which is related to personal interests, preferences and attitudes of the respondents [14], [15].

- 6) Health: The percentage of respondents' dependence on news applications to obtain health information was (46.69%). Meanwhile (40.08%) of respondents chose (neutral), and (13.23%) chose (I do not depend on it), the researcher finds that these results are related to the type of information, its credibility, and the scientific and health facts it contains, which may make the public fearful of believing or following it, especially since false news and misleading information spreads widely on social media websites and digital media platforms.
- 7) Arts and Culture: The results revealed that (51.36%) of respondents do not depend on news applications to obtain information about arts or cultural events, indicating a low level of engagement with such content. This may be attributed to a greater public interest in topics perceived as more significant or impactful in daily life, such as political, social, and economic issues.
- 8) Science and Tech: The results show that (49.81%) of the respondents depend on news applications to obtain information about technology events, which reflects a high level of dependence and interest in technological developments and their impact on different areas of life.

The results show that respondents' dependence on news apps to obtain information in various fields varies, with the highest dependence recorded in the political (53.31%), security (52.14%), and social (50.19%) fields, reflecting a general awareness of the importance of these issues and their direct impact on the stability of society and the daily lives of people.

There was also a notable interest in technology (49.81%), indicating a growing awareness of the impact of scientific and technological developments. In contrast, dependence on news applications was relatively low in topics such as arts and culture, with (51.36%) of respondents indicating that they do not depend on them, which could be attributed to the public's focus on issues that have a direct impact, such as political and economic affairs.

In sports and health, the results were average, reflecting a variation in interest depending on individual preferences, alternative sources of information, and the extent of trust in the content offered.

Overall, the results highlight the growing role of news apps as a major source of information, especially on issues directly related to public life and community security.

**Table (3).** Respondents' Level of Dependence on News Applications as a Source of Information According to the Type of Events and Issues

Type of events and issues	I depend		Neutral		I do not depend	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Political	137	53.31	97	37.74	23	8.95
Social	129	50.19	101	39.30	27	10.51
Security	134	52.14	82	31.91	41	15.95
Economic	109	42.41	111	43.19	37	14.40
Sports	119	46.30	70	27.24	68	26.46
Health	120	46.69	103	40.08	34	13.23
Arts and Culture	60	23.35	65	25.29	132	51.36
Science and Tech	128	49.81	97	37.74	32	12.45

### 3.4 Reasons for Respondents' Dependence on News Applications

Table (4) below presents data on the reasons why respondents depend on news applications as a source of information about current events.

The results show that (24.84%) of respondents rely on these applications because they are simple, easy to use, and accessible at any time [16].

Meanwhile, (24.24%) depend on them for their speed in reporting news and covering ongoing events, and (19.97%) value them for providing images and videos that help summarize complex issues and events. Ease of use and speed of news delivery appear to be the most significant reasons for using news applications, along with a preference for visual content, which enriches the news experience and serves as a strong point of attraction.

Additionally, the options (characterized by accurate and constantly updated information) and (reflecting all the different trends and opinions in society) each received (7.32%) of responses. These were followed by the option (allowing me to express my opinion freely and flexibly), which received (7.01%).

On the other hand, the option (reliable and through which I can check false and fake news) received (5.49%), followed by the option (reflects my individual perspectives and stances on events and issues) which received (3.81%).

**Table (4).** Relative Hierarchical Distribution of the Reasons for Respondents' Dependence on News Applications

Options	N	%
Simple and easy to use, available at any time	163	24.84
Fast news reporting and coverage of current events	159	24.24
Contains images and videos that summarize complex events	131	19.97
Characterized by accurate and constantly updated information	48	7.32
Reflecting all the different trends and opinions in society	48	7.32
Allowing me to express my opinion freely and flexibly	46	7.01
Reliable and through which I can check false and fake news	36	5.49
Reflects my individual perspectives and stances on events and issues	25	3.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>100</b>

### 3.5 Respondents' Cognitive Motivations for Dependence on News Applications

Table (5) below show the respondents' answers and attitudes towards the questions related to the motivations for their dependence on news applications, and the results were as follows:

- 1) There is (70.43%) agreement among respondents on the statement (I depend on news applications to follow current events and issues), which is an indicator of the importance of news applications to the audience as an important source of information and continuous coverage [17].
- 2) The statement (I depend on news apps because they make me more understanding and aware of what is going on in society), had an agreement rate of (62.26%), which is a high percentage. This confirms that news applications are not only a means of transmitting news and information, but also contribute to enhancing respondents' understanding and awareness of societal issues.
- 3) (60.70%) of the respondents agree with the statement (I depend on news applications to search for new information about different events), which is an indicator of the respondents' use of news applications to search for new information or news related to their interests or concerns.
- 4) The statement (I depend on news apps for information, news, and different opinions on issues) received the highest percentage of agreement (69.65%), a result that indicates the existence of diversity in the content published in news applications.

**Table (5).** Respondents' Cognitive Motivations for Their Dependence on News Applications

Statements	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%

I depend on news applications to follow current events and issues	181	70.43	56	21.79	20	7.78
I depend on news apps because they make me more understanding and aware of what is going on in society	160	62.26	86	33.46	11	4.28
I depend on news applications to search for new information about different events	156	60.70	71	27.63	30	11.67
I depend on news apps for information, news, and different opinions on issues	179	69.65	61	23.74	17	6.61

### 3.6 Respondents' Affective Motivations for Dependence on News Applications

Table (6) below show the respondents' attitudes toward the statements related to affective motives, as follows:

- 1) A total of (46.30%) of respondents disagreed with the statement, (I depend on news apps because what is published in them enhances my sense of belonging to my community). This indicates that enhancing a sense of belonging is not a significant affective motive for respondents when using news applications, or that the content published in these apps does not effectively promote community belonging.
- 2) More than half of the respondents (51.36%) agreed with the statement (I depend on news applications because their content corresponds to my personal attitudes and opinions). This indicates that alignment with personal views and attitudes is a strong motive for relying on specific news applications and their content [18].
- 3) The results showed that (50.19%) of the respondents agree with the statement (I depend on news applications to interact with issues and events within the community), which is an indicator of the audience's interest.
- 4) A percentage of (46.69%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement (I depend on news applications to know the opinions and attitudes of others), so knowing the opinions of others is not a motivation for the respondents, which is attributed to the interactive nature of the applications and the characteristics of the audience, as shown in the results of Table (4) Reasons for using news applications by the respondents.

**Table (6).** Respondents' Affective Motivations for Their Dependence on News Applications

Statements	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I depend on news apps because what is published in them enhances my sense of belonging to my community	79	30.74	59	22.96	119	46.30
I depend on news applications because their content corresponds to my	132	51.36	68	26.46	57	22.18

personal attitudes and opinions						
I depend on news applications to interact with issues and events within the community	129	50.19	97	37.74	31	12.06
I depend on news applications to know the opinions and attitudes of others	60	23.35	77	29.96	120	46.69

### 3.7 Respondents' Behavioral Motivations for Dependence on News Applications

Table (7) below presents the results related to the behavioral motivations behind the respondents' dependence on news applications, as follows:

- 1) The results showed that (44.36%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement (I depend on news applications because the news and information they provide offer practical solutions). Additionally, (33.46%) of respondents took a neutral position, meaning that more than two-thirds either disagreed or remained neutral toward the statement. This suggests a perceived weakness in the practical usefulness of the journalistic content published in news applications or a shortcoming in fulfilling the educational function, which is a key role of the communication and media process.
- 2) The statement (I depend on news apps because it has become a habit of my daily life) received a high percentage of agreement (62.65%), which constitutes the vast majority of the respondents, and this result indicates that using applications and accessing news has become a daily behavior used by the respondents to obtain information or access the latest news [19].
- 3) As for the statement (I depend on news applications to pass time and for entertainment), respondents' opinions were relatively close. The results show that (69.65%) of respondents either agreed or remained neutral, indicating that the entertainment function holds some importance for them.
- 4) The majority of respondents (74.71%) believe that news applications do not help them understand reality, find logical and practical solutions to societal issues, or make informed decisions in their daily lives. This result corresponds to the statement (I depend on news applications because they help me understand reality and deal with situations and issues), and is consistent with the first finding from the same table

**Table (7).** Respondents' Behavioral Motivations for Their Dependence on News Applications

Statements	Agree		Neutral		Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I depend on news applications because the news and information they provide offer practical solutions	57	22.18	86	33.46	114	44.36
I depend on news apps because it has become a habit of my daily life	161	62.65	71	27.63	25	9.73
I depend on news applications to pass time and for entertainment	104	40.47	75	29.18	78	30.35

I depend on news applications because they help me understand reality and deal with situations and issues	27	10.51	38	14.79	192	74.71
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### 3.8 Hypothesis Testing

The data presented in Table (8) show that the significance value (Sig) is less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant correlation between the type of news applications and the level of audience dependence on them as a source of information about current issues and events. Therefore, the hypothesis H1 is accepted.

**Table (8).** Pearson Correlation Analysis Between the Type of News Applications and the Level of Audience Dependence

Correlations			
	Pearson Correlation	APPLICATIONS	LEVEL
APPLICATIONS	Sig. (2-tailed)	1	.257**
	N		.000
	Pearson Correlation	257	257
LEVEL	Sig. (2-tailed)	.257**	1
	N	.000	
	Pearson Correlation	257	257

**\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

It is clear from Table (9) below that the statistical significance value (Sig) was less than (0.05), which indicates that there is a statistically significant correlation between the type of news applications and the reasons why the audience depends on them to obtain information. Accordingly, the hypothesis H2 is accepted.

**Table (9).** Pearson Correlation Analysis Between the Type of News Applications and the Reasons for the Respondents' Dependence on them

Correlations			
	Pearson Correlation	APPLICATIONS	REASONS
APPLICATIONS	Pearson Correlation	1	.459**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	257	257
REASONS	Pearson Correlation	.459**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	257	257

**\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

The data in Table (10) below shows that there is a correlation between the type of news applications used by the respondents and the cognitive motivations for depending on them to be informed about news, events, and issues. Since (Sig) value is <0.05, the sub-hypothesis H3a is accepted.

**Table (10).** Pearson Correlation Analysis Between the Type of News Applications and the Cognitive Motivations for Depending on them

Correlations			
	Pearson Correlation	APPLICATIONS	COGNITIVE MOT.
APPLICATIONS	Pearson Correlation	1	.178**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	257	257
COGNITIVE MOT.	Pearson Correlation	.178**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	257	257

**\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

It can be seen from the data in Table (11) below that the statistical significance value (Sig) is greater than 0.05, indicating that there is no statistically significant relationship between news applications and affective motives. Accordingly, the alternative sub-hypothesis H3b is rejected and the null hypothesis that there is no correlation between the two variables is accepted.

**Table (11).** Pearson Correlation Analysis Between the Type of News Applications and the Affective Motivations for Depending on them

<b>Correlations</b>			
	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	<b>APPLICATIONS</b>	<b>AFFECTIVE MOT.</b>
<b>APPLICATIONS</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.118
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.059
	N	257	257
<b>AFFECTIVE MOT.</b>	Pearson Correlation	.118	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.059	
	N	257	257

Table (12) shows that the statistical significance value (Sig) was less than (0.05), indicating that there is a statistically significant correlation between the type of news applications and the behavioral motives of audience dependence on them. As a result, the sub-hypothesis H3c is accepted.

**Table (12).** Pearson Correlation Analysis Between the Type of News Applications and the Behavioral Motivations for Depending on them

<b>Correlations</b>			
	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	<b>APPLICATIONS</b>	<b>BEHAVIORAL MOT.</b>
<b>APPLICATIONS</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.135*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.030
	N	257	257
<b>BEHAVIORAL MOT.</b>	Pearson Correlation	.135*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.030	
	N	257	257

**\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

#### 4. Conclusion

- 1) The audience shows a high dependence on news applications to follow political, social and security events, which confirms their pivotal role in shaping Iraqi public opinion.
- 2) News applications serve as a major source of information for the audience, with (70%) of the sample depending on them to follow current issues and events. Additionally, more than (60%) of the public depend on these applications to understand societal realities, highlighting their effectiveness in shaping public perception.
- 3) Dependence on news applications to obtain new information and news has become a daily habit for the majority of users, which is an indicator of the public's integration of this modern medium into their daily routine, and reflects the importance of modern digital media and its role in our life.
- 4) The audience's clear dependence on (Al-Sumaria News) and (Al-Sharqiya News) as a source of local news indicates the presence of these applications and their speed in covering events and their impact on the Iraqi media scene.

- 5) The news application's ease of use, simplicity and responsiveness, and the use of images and videos alongside text-based news and stories are key reasons and factors for depending on news applications as a source of information.
- 6) There is a noticeable lack of audience trust in news applications when it comes to verifying fake news and misinformation, highlighting a significant gap in their credibility and transparency.
- 7) The research found that cognitive dependency motives are more present than affective and behavioral ones, indicating the audience's focus on the cognitive aspect when consuming news.
- 8) The weakness in the affective or emotional impact of content published via news applications in strengthening community belonging creates a need to reinforce national messages and cultural identity within Iraqi society or promote content that appeals to emotions and affiliations.
- 9) Consistency with opinions and attitudes is a key affective driver that reflects respondents' preference for content that confirms their beliefs
- 10) Weak behavioral motivations related to decision-making and solving everyday problems indicate that news applications are not delivering content that effectively supports users in their daily lives.
- 11) Entertainment is an average behavioral motivation, which requires the development of balanced infotainment content.
- 12) The positive correlation between applications type and cognitive and behavioral motivations supports the idea of improving content personalization based on audience preferences.

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