

The Role of Sport Television Media in Reducing Violence in Sports Institutions in Iraq

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Abstract

The communication revolution primarily contributes to distinguishing the role of media in reducing the phenomenon of violent and odd behaviour in different areas of sport. Some new biased sport media issue a great rallying call for violent and aggressive behaviours in sport. The present study aims to investigate the role of sport media in the phenomenon of violence and hooliganism in Iraqi sports institutions. The research sample includes a random selection of 200 academic sports colleges in Iraqi universities. The pilot study was carried out with 40 staff members between 20 October 2019 and 17 November 2019, followed by the main experiment, which involved 160 staff members during the period from 8 December 2019 to 29 January 2020. An experimental method using a questionnaire with descriptive method was adopted to collect the data. The data were statistically treated using the SPSS program. The obtained results show that there is a significant role for sport media in introducing sports programmes in objective and neutral ways by spreading sport awareness and rejecting the phenomenon of violence and hooliganism in Iraqi sports institutions and society. Finally, the researchers highly recommend adopting interviews with sports experts and academics in order to show a unified message and send positive messages to the audience about good behaviour in sport institutions.

Keywords: sports violence, sports institutions, hooliganism, audio-visual media, sports academies

1. Introduction

In light of great technological development, the media have become very active and influential in the lives of people in different societies across the world, which has given rise to many disturbances and tensions. It is observed that the media play different roles to convey the development of events to the world through their ability to report and document. However, the negative role of the media means that some new media, which are run by political parties or celebrities, may encourage violence in society in general and sports violence and riots in sports institutions in particular. This reflects a bad impact on the ethical values of society and sport. Technologically, media are generally divided into three types—audio, visual, and audio-visual—and each has a great impact on its followers. Television is a popular audio-visual media which is known for its comprehensiveness, availability for different social classes of people, and easy access by the audience. Fadhil (2015, p. 49) argues that “the audio-visual media has an important role in covering true news and information in objective and clear ways in order to build right views and attitudes about a specific event or subject related to sport field”. Thus, it works directly to take them to the location of the event via a screen, and increases the value of the news or event through live video and camera footage. Thus, the direct and fast elements add credibility to events by using a serious and persuasive style. However, the phenomenon of sports

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violence has recently increased in Iraqi institutions to the extent that it is becoming impossible to watch a match without witnessing non-verbal or verbal violence. It is noticed that there is something called the 'pulse of the stadium': this term is a real result of many values of the new culture, and among those values is violence in all its forms.

There may be reasons behind this violence, whether directly or indirectly, such as articles and headlines published by newspapers, different comments or statements by club heads and players, or hot coverage by television and radio media which act as sparks that lights fanaticism and violence, negatively affecting the audience. Furthermore, the compactness of some sports institutions inevitably leads to supporters of different sports teams mixing, which increases the intensity of the squabbles. Despite the efforts made to confront this phenomenon, it is significantly increasing to the extent that it threatens sports as a whole. This motivates scholars to ask questions about how to make use of the media to reduce violence among athletes and sports fans, because they see that the media can also play a positive role to limit this phenomenon. For example, Al-Hasif (2002, p. 58) states that "this makes media an exciting and effective device that can be exploited and used in educating the audience and increase their awareness about bad behaviour in sport and work to face abnormal behaviour and strange phenomena in society in general and sports violence phenomenon in particular".

The present paper aims to investigate this problem in Iraqi sports institutions, especially within football, because it is a popular game and as a result strong and continuous violent actions are happening in the streets today. The present researchers focus on television media, which represents the main screen for Iraqi families. Sports programmes on television do not need only to present the results of sports competitions, but to address bad issues in sport from different aspects, both objective and subjective. In this regard, it is necessary to address the issue of violence in sport with pictures and sounds objectively, and then go deeper to analyse these issues from different aspects, suggesting appropriate solutions or treatments, as they are sensitive issues for our society.

1.1 The Research Problem

Violence and riots in stadiums is not a new phenomenon in sports, but is as old as competitive sport itself. However, a new aspect is the kind of violence among sports fans; this violence is changing in that it is now spilling out beyond the borders of sports stadiums when the spectators try to celebrate victory in a game in uncivilized ways, such as assaulting others and harming them or damaging their possessions. These unacceptable actions make sports stadiums dangerous places from which violence can rapidly spread. Thus, there is need to determine the role of the media in reducing this problem in sports events across the world.

1.2 The Importance of the Research

Iraqi institutions have witnessed a significant increase in sport-related violence. This study aims to clarify and distinguish the role of sports programmes in Iraqi TV media in sports violence as a negative phenomenon that has arisen among sports staff and athletes on one side and among sports fans on the other. It is necessary to take advantage of modern technological devices or media such as TV or social media to educate the public and athletes, and spread sports awareness and values.

1.3 Objectives of the Research

This research aims to identify the role of TV sports media in the phenomenon of sports violence in Iraqi sports institutions from the perspective of academics in physical education and sports science colleges in Iraq.

2. Research Methodology

The researchers used a descriptive method with a survey method, as it is appropriate to the nature of the research. The research sample includes 200 teaching staff in physical education and sports science colleges at the Universities

of Baghdad, Diyala, Al-Anbar, Kirkuk, Basra, Babil, Kufa and Al-Qadisiyah. The sample is randomly chosen and is distributed as follows:

- The pilot study sample consists of 40 staff members, representing 20 per cent of the total sample, to test the validity of the questionnaire.
- The basic study sample consists of 160 staff members, being 80 per cent of the total sample, to apply the final version of questionnaire. This is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The research community and sample research

University	Research Community	Sample Research	Pilot Sample		Basic Sample	
			T	%	T	%
University of Bagdad	58	40	7	17.50	33	82.50
University of Diyala	42	35	6	17.14	29	82.86
University of Basra	37	35	6	17.14	29	82.86
University of Kirkuk	22	20	5	25.00	15	75.00
University of Al-Anbar	31	20	5	25.00	15	75.00
University of Babil	35	20	5	25.00	15	75.00
University of Kufa	28	15	3	20.00	12	80.00
University of Al-Qadisiyah	27	15	3	20.00	12	80.00
Total	280	200	40	20.00	160	80.00

N= 200*

2.1 Data Collection

After a comprehensive review of previous studies related to the topic of the research, the researchers designed a questionnaire to collect data from the research sample. This is a basic tool for data collection, used here to identify the role of television sports media in reducing violence in Iraqi sports institutions. The questionnaire items are distributed in three parts as follows:

- The first part aims to test the impartiality and objectivity of sports programmes.
- The second part aims to test spread awareness among the sports audience.
- The third part aims to test the diversity and multiplicity of programmes and the use of experts and specialists.

Many items are designed under each part, with three options-namely 'yes', 'partial yes', 'no'-to achieve the objectives. The obtained data are analysed using the SPSS program, this being the optimal procedure to follow to analyse the answers to the questionnaire and obtain results (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). The results are represented in the following tables for discussion and for conclusions to be drawn.

Table 2. The first part of the questionnaire

No.	Item	yes		Partial		No		K2	Means	Yes pcertage
		frequency	%(frequency	(%)	frequency	(%)			
1	Sports programs are always watched on Iraqi TV	151	%94.38	9	%5.63	0	%0.00	*126.025	2.94	%97.19
2	TV programs cover sporting events without exaggeration or amplification	117	%73.13	10	%6.25	33	%20.63	*118.962	2.53	%76.25
3	TV reporters cover sports events as required by reporting sports news	153	%95.63	7	%4.38	0	%0.00	*133.225	2.96	%97.81
4	The Iraqi TV programs are biased towards a team or an authority in their sporting subjects	102	%63.75	46	%28.75	12	%7.50	*77.450	2.56	%78.13
5	Sports TV programs contribute to the creation of conflicts, whether between teams or audiences, through the broadcast of sports media	60	%37.50	29	%18.13	71	%44.38	*17.787	1.93	%46.56
6	sports news presented through TV shows are credible	118	%73.75	10	%6.25	32	%20.00	*122.150	2.54	%76.88
7	The sports topics presented on Iraqi television are objective and neutral	58	%36.25	29	%18.13	73	%45.63	*18.763	1.91	%45.31

Table 3. The second part of the questionnaire

No.	Item	yes		Partial		No		K2	Mean s	Yes pcentage
		frequ ency	%(fre que ncy	(%)	frequ ency	(%)			
8	You see that what the TV sports programs offer (news, reports, coverage of matches, seminars and debates) is sufficient to curb the spread of the phenomenon of violence in stadiums You see that sports TV programs attach great importance to the phenomenon of violence and riot in the stadiums	16	%10.0	39	%42.38	105	%65.63	*80.038	1.44	%22.19
9	Television programs contribute to educating its sports audience	98	%61.25	47	%29.38	15	%9.38	*65.712	2.52	%75.94
10	You see that the way news and sports are handled through paragraphs and TV programs is of an educational nature	102	%63.75	13	%8.13	45	%28.13	*76.212	2.36	%67.81
11	You see that sports TV shows are	103	%64.38	32	%20.00	25	%15.63	*69.837	2.49	%74.38

	broadcasted through the news presented by the ethical values and sportsmanship of its sports audience									
12	Television programs raise awareness of the risks and harms of violent events in the sports field	19	%11.88	52	%32.50	89	%55.63	*45.988	1.56	%28.13
13	Sports programs have an indirect role in violence and riots in the sports field	15	%9.38	41	%25.63	104	%65.00	*78.538	1.44	%22.19
14	Sports programs have an indirect role in violence and riots in the sports field	16	%10.00	67	%41.88	77	%48.13	*40.137	1.62	%30.94

No.	Item	yes		Partial		No		K2	Means	Yes percentage
		frequency	%(%)	frequency	%(%)	frequency	%(%)			
15	You see that the content of sports programs affects	125	%78.13	14	%8.75	21	%13.13	*144.913	2.65	%82.50

the sports audience										
16	The sports audience is influenced by the content through									
16/1	Sports comment	105	%65.63	32	%20.00	23	%14.38	*75.837	2.51	%75.63
16/2	Various statements sport	148	%92.50	8	%5.00	4	%2.50	*252.200	2.90	%95.00
16/3	Pictures and footage	134	%83.75	26	%16.25	0	%0.00	*72.900	2.84	%91.88
17	which are the most influential TV program?									
17/1	Sport news	116	%72.50	20	%12.50	24	%15.00	*110.600	2.58	%78.75
17/2	Matches coverage	16	%10.00	67	%41.88	77	%48.13	*40.137	1.62	%30.94
17/3	Reports	103	%64.38	32	%20.00	25	%15.63	*69.837	2.49	%74.38
17/4	Seminars and dialogues	144	%90.00	8	%5.00	8	%5.00	*231.200	2.85	%92.50

Table 4. The third part of the questionnaire

No.	Item	yes		Partial		No		K2	Mean s	Yes pcerta ge
		fre que ncy	%()	fre que ncy	(%)	fre qu enc y	(%)			
18	Which programs do you think are appropriate and which, according to the sports section, are chosen for sports topics that avoid violence									
18/1	Newsletter	111	%69.38	49	%30.63	0	%0.00	*24.025	2.69	%84.69

18/2	Matches coverage	69	%43.13	17	%10.63	74	%46.25	*37.363	1.97	%48.44
18/3	Reports	67	%41.88	39	%24.38	54	%33.75	*7.363	2.08	%54.06
18/4	seminars and dialogues	154	%96.25	6	%3.75	0	%0.00	*136.900	2.96	%98.13
19	The multiplicity and diversity of sports programs contribute to reducing violence	131	%81.88	0	%0.00	29	%18.13	*65.025	2.64	%81.88
20	the sports programs that you follow depend on specialists and experts to diagnose the phenomenon of violence	22	%13.75	28	%17.50	110	%68.75	*90.650	1.45	%22.50
21	You see that specialists and experts have already touched on the issue of sports violence	88	%55.00	9	%5.63	63	%39.38	*61.138	2.16	%57.81
22	You see that professionals and experts have a role in reducing violence through their interventions in TV sports programs	15	%9.38	17	%10.63	128	%80.00	*156.838	1.29	%14.69

3. Discussion

As described in Tables 2, 3 and 4, the findings obtained from the questionnaire show the following.

1. In relation to the first part of the questionnaire which addresses the neutrality and objectivity of sport programmes, there is a significant difference between responses and the values of K squared at the 0.05 level with an agreement average between 45.31 per cent and 97.81 percent according to the order of the first part items This finding may be due to the fact the neutrality plays a vital role in reducing sports violence and riots in sports, and this can be achieved by good administration of the media for sport channels. Furthermore, there should not be bias towards any sports team or specific sport institution, because the popularity of any media is mainly dependent on objectivity in the presentation of an event. Thus, sports programmes can invite the players and audience to create positive situations and avoid showing any unacceptable actions in relation to any faults in the match. This is emphasized by Hamid's (2018, p. 47) study, which contends that television is a widespread media and easy to use, and its programmes contain pictures, colours and movements, and the sound effect of the speaking pictures shown. One of its advantages is that it works to spread awareness among people in a direct and not boring way, so that the audience can understand their essential role in addressing violence and contributing to solving it.
2. In regard to the second part of the questionnaire, which aims to investigate the awareness of the sports audience, the results in Table 3 shows there is a significant difference between the responses for K squared at the 0.05 level,

with agreement values ranging between 22.19 per cent and 74.38 per cent, according the order of the second part items. This indicates that media have a great impact on spreading awareness among their audience, but this can only be achieved by giving more space and time to positive contributions and social values in meetings and interviews when covering sporting competitions or any sports activity. In addition, these programmes can show the importance of public institutions and the role of the audience in maintaining them. In this respect, El-Shafei (2003, p. 317) asserts that “the sports visual media in modern society constitute excellent tools to spread culture, and it also plays a major role in selecting cultural content and cultural development events.”

3. Based on the third part of the questionnaire, which aims to test the diversity and multiplicity of programmes and the use of experts and specialists, the findings show that there is significant difference between the responses and the value for K squared at the 0.05 level, with an agreement ratio ranging between 14.69 per cent and 98.13 per cent, arranging the items as shown in the table. This significant difference shows that it is necessary to attract specialists in the field of physical education and sports science who are highly qualified to direct sports programmes, firstly because they can have a strong influence on youths' ideas and the rejection of violence in Iraqi society, because they have high skills and experience to persuade the audience into a specific idea or attitude. Secondly, the sports field has become important for everyone, so everyone has personal view about sport. However, these personal views to resolve the obstacles or challenges of sports on the. Thus, there is a need to adopt specialists or experts' views to resolve these complex sports' issues and increase the awareness or the knowledge about sport, and this there should be regulations or laws that are followed in the work on television programmes. This finding is in line with Al-Silmi's (2013) results, which confirm that the new TV media has a prominent role in showing this intolerant phenomenon, and the increase in sports fanaticism is primarily related to the spread of new media and the increase the number of social media. Thus, there is a need to attract specialists and experts to sports programmes to reduce and end violence in sport, diagnosing the reasons for it and analysing these in order to get important and positive results to limit this phenomenon. This is the basic goal behind the targeted media in the any society (Al-Ateeq, 2013, p. 25).

4. Conclusions

In light of the results obtained, the researchers draw the following conclusions.

1. There is an important role for TV media in general and sports programmes in particular in reducing violence and rioting in Iraqi sports institutions. The findings show that they should observe objectivity and neutrality when introducing sports programmes and covering sports events, without exaggeration.
2. The content of sports reports should be analysed and reviewed by experts before they are presented on the TV in order to avoid all kinds of bias towards a team or a party to justify its failure.
3. There is a big role for administrative censorship in observing the content of sports programmes to achieve credulity and objectivity of their goals and reduce reports of bias in sports programmes or encouragement of violence.
4. Effort should be made to spread awareness among the sports audience and have meetings with famous sport fans and the head of Iraqi sports fans associations to explain the risks of violence in sport and its bad impact on the sport and the reputation of Iraqi sports team and cultural values.
5. New communication devices should be exploited to discover the identity of people who encourage sports violence and rioting for personal advantage or money in order to take some legal steps towards stopping them.
6. An effort should be made to attract experts and specialists for seminars, dialogues and interviews to shed light on violence and rioting in sport. This step is important and, according the obtained results, will contribute to reduce violence in sport.

5. Recommendations

In light of the research results, the researchers recommend the following.

1. Increase the number of sports media and programmes covering sports events in order to create competition among them and so develop the quality of sport reports and solve the obstacles and difficulties that they face at all levels.
2. Take advantage of sports media to send messages from athletes and sports fans to officials in order to solve problems.
3. Support competent journalists with sufficient knowledge in the sports field to enable them to track the phenomenon of violence and try to reduce it in the media. Launch campaigns against violence everywhere and educate the young to reject it.

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