

The Role of Environmental Media in Promoting Sustainable Environment in Iraqi Universities: A Survey Study

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Abstract. *This study came under the title (The role of environmental media in promoting sustainable environment in Iraqi universities) to address sustainable environmental issues through environmental media, as this study is one of the descriptive survey studies.*

The study aimed to answer a number of questions that were formulated in light of the research problem to know the extent to which environmental media assumes its responsibility towards the public in finding solutions to environmental problems, and to reveal the extent of the target audience's desire to interact with the topics raised by environmental media, as this study included three chapters as follows:

Chapter One: The methodological framework and included (the research problem, the importance of the research, the research objectives, the type of research and its methodology, the research community and its sample, the research limits and areas, the research concepts and terms, previous studies), while the second chapter is the theoretical framework: which includes the nature and concept of environmental media and its determinants, in addition to the characteristics and standards of environmental media, the means, objectives and obstacles of environmental media, in addition to addressing the theory of collective responsibility, and finally the third chapter is the field study that included: the methodological research procedures, presentation and analysis of data, results and recommendations.

The researcher reached a set of conclusions, the most important of which are:

- 1. Environmental media is clearly defined in the Iraqi media, as the respondents agreed to some extent at a rate of 40%, which calls for increasing environmental awareness in the Iraqi media.*
- 2. Students in Iraqi universities have a clear perception regarding viewing the content of environmental media, and that the media is interested in environmental issues to some extent, as it obtained a rate of 38%.*
- 3. The ineffectiveness of environmental media in Iraqi universities leads to the absence of social behavior in Iraqi universities, as it ranked first, I disagree, 43%..*

Key words: *Environmental Media, Sustainable Environment.*

Introduction:

Environmental media is a specialized branch of journalism and an important means of highlighting issues that hinder the development trajectory in both developed and developing societies, particularly those issues related to the environment. The environmental phenomena and natural disasters that emerged at the end of the last century have contributed to the rise of "environmental media" through its various platforms—print, audio, and visual. It serves as one of the essential tools for raising public

awareness about environmental issues and fostering a sense of responsibility and duty toward these issues.

The term "environmental media" first appeared in the 1970s, evolving consistently in definition, concept, and applications. Originally limited to the mere reporting of environmental news, it has since developed policies, plans, and functions aimed at achieving its diverse objectives.

Based on the above, it is necessary to organize training courses aimed at qualifying journalists, spreading awareness among media professionals, and familiarizing them with the role of media in promoting environmental consciousness within society. Such training would fill the gap currently present in local journalism by introducing educational studies in environmental media⁽¹⁾.

Chapter One:

Methodological Framework

First: Research Problem:

Choosing a research problem is a critical step in the scientific research process, often considered one of the most challenging stages. Researchers frequently encounter multiple issues that require in-depth study.

The research problem is defined as "a phenomenon needing explanation or a contentious issue with varying perspectives requiring examination in its essence⁽²⁾." This study's research problem can be summarized in the following main question: To what extent does environmental media enhance sustainable environmental practices in Iraqi universities?

From this central question, several sub-questions emerge:

- How interested are media outlets in environmental issues?
- Is there a clear presence of environmental media in Iraqi media outlets?
- To what extent does environmental media create environmental awareness among university students in Iraq?
- How effective is environmental media in promoting environmentally responsible behavior among Iraqi university students?
- What is the need for specialized environmental media outlets?
- What is the impact of environmental media on Iraqi university students?
- How engaged are Iraqi university students with environmental media and its issues?

Second: Importance of the Research:

The significance of this research lies in examining the role of media in addressing sustainable environmental issues and raising environmental awareness, especially within Iraqi universities. It highlights the specific importance of specialized environmental media and seeks to provide essential information for environmental communication practitioners. This information is crucial for effectively addressing weaknesses in disseminating information to the public.

The importance of environmental media extends beyond merely conveying environmental news, raising awareness, and sharing information and guidance on environmental preservation. Researchers generally agree that environmental media represents a critical and constructive tool for decision-makers, encouraging them to integrate environmental dimensions into all developmental plans⁽³⁾.

¹) Ali Abd al-Fattah Kanaan, *Environmental Media*, Amman, Jordan, Dar Al-Yazouri Scientific Publishing and Distribution, 2014, p. 6.

²) Hamid Hamed Al-Dulaimi, *Fundamentals of Scientific Research*, Baghdad, Al-Khidr Printing and Publishing Company, 2004, p. 16.

³) Suzanne Al-Qalini, Salah Madkour, *Environmental Media: Between Theory and Practice*, Cairo, Dar Al-Nahda Al-Arabiya, 2004, p. 54.

Third: Research Objectives:

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the nature of the information that environmental media provides to the public.
2. To identify the characteristics and tools of environmental media.
3. To understand the concept of environmental media.
4. To assess the potential impact of environmental media on Iraqi university students.
5. To enhance the understanding of environmental media among Iraqi university students.
6. To identify the limitations of environmental media.
7. To evaluate the success of environmental media in overcoming the challenges it faces.

Fourth: Type of Research and Methodology:

This is a descriptive survey study designed to provide information based on data collected through a research questionnaire. By using description and analysis, the study seeks to reach accurate results aimed at improving and developing current practices. The research adopts a survey methodology, which aims to systematically describe facts by following scientific procedures, presenting the topic with objectivity and precision⁽⁴⁾. This descriptive approach focuses on describing a particular phenomenon to understand its causes, influencing factors, and drawing general conclusions through data collection, organization, and analysis⁽⁵⁾.

Fifth: Research Population and Sample:

The researcher chose Baghdad Governorate as the population for this study, focusing on students from the Civil Engineering Department—Environmental and Sanitary Branch—at the University of Technology. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed among the students, with 195 completed questionnaires returned. Five were excluded due to damage or incompleteness.

Sixth: Research Boundaries and Fields:

The research scope includes three main fields:

- Human Field: The researcher chose students from the Civil Engineering Department—Environmental and Sanitary Branch—at the University of Technology, with a sample of 200 students of both genders.
- Spatial Field: The research location is Baghdad Governorate, specifically at the University of Technology, Civil Engineering Department, Environmental and Sanitary Branch.
- Temporal Field: The research was conducted from January 3, 2024, to February 30, 2024, including the distribution, collection, analysis of questionnaires, and deriving results.

Seventh: Research Concepts and Terms:

- Role: Refers to a set of behavioral standards or rules governing a specific situation within the social structure. In this context, "role" denotes the function or performance of a media tool for the public in a specific field (such as education, news, guidance, etc.)(6).
- Environmental Media: The process of creating and disseminating scientific facts related to the environment through media channels to foster environmental awareness and achieve sustainable development(7).

⁴) Farid Mohammed Saleh, *The Role of Journalism in Enhancing Economic Security*, Master's Thesis, College of Media, University of Baghdad, 2004, p. 8.

⁵) Safaa Fawzi, *The Role of Communication Tools in Shaping the Knowledge and Attitudes of the Egyptian Public Towards the U.S. Presidential Elections*, *The Egyptian Journal of Public Opinion Research*, Cairo, Cairo University, Issue 2, 2008, p. 80.

⁶) Karam Al-Shibli, *A Dictionary of Media Terms: English-Arabic*, Dar Al-Jeel, Beirut, 1994, p. 837.

⁷) Ayman Mazahreh, *Environmental Education*, Amman, Jordan, Dar Al-Manahij, 2004, p. 15.

- Sustainable Environment: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, often described as stable development that possesses factors for continuity, inclusivity, and longevity⁽⁸⁾.

Eighth: Previous Studies:

1. Aliyout Muhammad Fakhr El-Din's Study: "Environmental Media and Its Role in Environmental Protection," 2021.

The researcher applied an analytical method to interpret and analyze texts to understand the relationship between media and the environment and to answer the study's main question: "To what extent does environmental media contribute to protecting and preserving the environment?" The study results indicated a need for increased environmental awareness in contemporary societies and highlighted the potential impact of media on environmental issues.

2. Mishal Fayez Al-Otaibi's Study: "Environmental Media in the State of Kuwait: The Environment Public Authority as a Model," 2012.

This study employed a descriptive-analytical method to describe the study population and analyze data collected using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The sample consisted of the Kuwaiti population, with a random sample drawn due to its size, to answer the primary research question: "Has the Environment Public Authority effectively used its media channels?" The study found that environmental media in Kuwait did not fulfill its role effectively in fostering environmental awareness or culture among the public, indicating a need for more specialized environmental media outlets.

Difference Between This Study and Previous Studies:

While previous research addressed various topics related to the environment and environmental media, there remains a need to enrich Arabic literature due to the scarcity of studies on specialized environmental media. This study is distinguished by its use of a systematic random sample from Iraqi university students to answer the research questions, recognizing the significant importance of this group in Iraqi society for understanding the impact of environmental media and achieving the study's objectives.

Chapter Two:

Theoretical Framework

Section One: The Essence of Environmental Media

The term "environmental media" first emerged in the 1970s and has since evolved in concept and application. Initially focused on reporting environmental news and generating media excitement, it now encompasses a legal framework, policies, and strategies aimed at achieving various environmental objectives. This shift reflects the growing demand of the target audience for accurate and comprehensive environmental information, which supports the foundation of sustainable environmental development and educates the public on environmental issues to form informed opinions on the environmental challenges facing society.

Environmental media is one of the most effective tools for raising environmental awareness. When used effectively, it can yield positive outcomes in advancing environmental consciousness. As a relatively new field, environmental media gained momentum after the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. It operates across various platforms—audio, visual, and print media—generally aiming to achieve goals related to environmental protection and sustainable development. Through this, it helps humanity address critical challenges that may hinder progress and prosperity⁽⁹⁾.

⁸) Ahmed Adel Abdel Azim, Environment and Sustainable Development, Tiba Publishing and Distribution House, Cairo, 1st edition, 2018, p. 10.

⁹) Aliyout Muhammad Fakhr Al-Din, Previously Cited Source, p. 9.

Definition of Environmental Media

Environmental media is a compound term combining "media" and "environment." Media involves the truthful and objective dissemination of news and information to help individuals form sound opinions on specific issues. The environment, on the other hand, encompasses all the factors and conditions surrounding an individual, including both living organisms and inanimate objects, which influence people as external elements⁽¹⁰⁾.

Determinants of Environmental Media

These determinants refer to a range of factors that influence how environmental issues are addressed in media, shaping the approach to these topics. This approach may not always align with the ideal role media should play in this area. These factors can impact media coverage in general and are not unique to environmental media alone. Consequently, media scholars emphasize the importance of studying both the intended and unintended effects of media performance, whether visible or underlying⁽¹¹⁾.

Determinants of environmental media include aspects related to the purpose of the media process, the target audience, the media channel used based on the audience type, and the credibility of the communicator. These determinants can be political, economic, or media-specific. They affect various aspects of media performance, influencing how environmental information is delivered and received.

First: Political Determinants

Political factors greatly influence media coverage of environmental issues for several reasons:

1. Media attention to environmental issues is closely tied to each country's media policies and their alignment with media activities. The ownership structure of media outlets also plays a role in this process, as does the effectiveness of non-governmental civil organizations, some of which have evolved into political parties, as seen in France and Germany.
2. The degree to which environmental issues have become politicized is evident at both the national and international levels. Domestically, this is reflected in the campaign agendas of candidates in legislative and presidential elections, especially in major industrial nations. Internationally, heightened awareness emerged after Mikhail Gorbachev highlighted the dangers of environmental issues for humanity's future in his well-known book *Perestroika*. It is notable that media coverage of certain environmental issues was influenced by ideological conflicts, particularly in the final stages of the Cold War. For instance, Western media coverage of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor explosion carried implicit messages criticizing Soviet scientific and technological capabilities⁽¹²⁾.
3. Differences in environmental perspectives between industrialized nations and developing countries significantly impact media coverage. For example, while developing countries prioritize the issue of toxic chemical and nuclear waste disposal on their territories, industrialized nations are more focused on reducing air pollution caused by carbon dioxide emissions⁽¹³⁾.

Second: Economic Determinants

Economic factors play a major role in how environmental issues are addressed and studied, particularly concerning the relationship between developing countries and major industrialized nations. Economic sensitivities and interests influence media coverage of environmental issues, given the political and economic interdependence between the industrialized "Global North" and the developing "Global South," where industrial programs are still in their early stages.

The role of multinational corporations in the environmental sphere is significant. These corporations control approximately 70% of global trade and 80% of foreign investments, impacting greenhouse

¹⁰) Previously Cited Source, p. 10, with modification.

¹¹) Sanaa Muhammad Al-Jubour, *Environmental Media*, Amman, Dar Osama for Publishing and Distribution, 1st edition, 2011, p. 123.

¹²) Muhammad Saad Abu Amoud, *The Role of Environmental Media in Addressing Environmental Issues (1972-1992)*, article published on the following website: www.dijital.ahram.org.eg

¹³) Muhammad Saad Abu Amoud, *Previously Cited Source*.

gas emissions. Recognizing the threat that media campaigns could pose to their interests by exposing their role in environmental pollution, these corporations have established public relations offices worldwide. These offices aim to influence journalists to act as promotional tools for these corporations, adopt a neutral stance on environmental issues, or mislead the public⁽¹⁴⁾.

Multinational corporations have also exploited the economic needs of developing countries, transferring highly polluting industries to these nations and even renting land to dispose of hazardous waste harmful to human health⁽¹⁵⁾. At the recent Rio de Janeiro Conference, an economic disagreement emerged between major industrialized nations, particularly the United States, and developing countries regarding the level of financial support needed for environmental protection in the developing world⁽¹⁶⁾.

The competition among multinational corporations for markets in developing countries has also influenced media coverage of environmental issues, particularly through financial support to media outlets. Additionally, the disparity in financial resources available to each country affects the funding of general media and environmental media specifically, reflecting varying levels of wealth among nations.

Through the Above, it is Evident:

The significant impact of economic factors on media coverage of environmental issues is clear. This influence manifests in the quantity of media messages, the content and structure of those messages, and the specific environmental topics prioritized by the media.

Third: Media Determinants

Media determinants refer to factors related to the structural foundation of media institutions, their operational dynamics, and the level of professionalism and awareness among media personnel regarding environmental issues. These determinants are particularly relevant for journalists and media professionals across all forms of media—print, visual, and audio.

Environmental topics often require a certain level of scientific knowledge and cultural awareness for media professionals to both understand and effectively communicate⁽¹⁷⁾ them to the public. Crafting environmental messages also necessitates specific media skills to ensure the message is clear, understandable, and engaging for the audience, fostering active participation in environmental issues. The ultimate goal for environmental journalists goes beyond simply reporting; it involves prioritizing environmental preservation as a critical mission, reflecting their belief that safeguarding the environment is synonymous with protecting life and the future. Thus, these factors distinctly influence environmental media coverage across nations⁽¹⁸⁾.

Characteristics and Standards of Environmental Media

Environmental media serve as a conscious tool for change, aiming to achieve a balanced society capable of positively interacting with its environment. This is done by enhancing public skills and fostering a sense of responsibility toward the environment, leading to a real shift in behavior based on scientific awareness and a willingness to maintain individual self-discipline for environmental protection.

¹⁴) Al-Ridwan Salamen, Media and Environment, Master's Thesis in Media and Communication Sciences, Faculty of Political Science and Media, University of Algiers, 2006, pp. 94-96.

¹⁵) This significantly contradicts the strict regulations outlined in the Basel Convention of 1998 on the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes, which was agreed upon by over 100 countries. The reason for this is that most developing countries lack legislation concerning hazardous waste management, as well as the technical and institutional capacities to enforce such laws, in addition to their high debt levels versus their need for foreign currency.

¹⁶) Muhammad Saad Abu Amoud, Previously Cited Source.

¹⁷) Muhammad Saad Abu Amoud, Previously Cited Source.

¹⁸) Ridwan Salamen, Previously Cited Source, p. 96.

For an environmental article to successfully influence public opinion and resonate with societal concerns, it must address individuals' personal circumstances, quality of life, and future. To achieve this, environmental media maintain unique characteristics and standards, including⁽¹⁹⁾:

1. Simplicity in Presentation with Quality Content – Ensuring the message is accessible to all while maintaining informative quality.
2. Generalization with Limited Detail for Non-Specialists – Presenting issues broadly to engage the wider public without overwhelming them with technical details.
3. Aligning with the Interests and Readiness of Diverse Community Groups – Engaging various societal segments actively in environmental efforts by addressing their interests and capacities.

Focusing on Priority Environmental Issues

Environmental media adhere to several core standards aimed at effective communication, detailed as follows⁽²⁰⁾:

1. Comprehensive and Integrated Coverage of Environmental Issues
 - Ensuring all dimensions of an issue are covered to provide a holistic view.
2. Avoiding Over-Saturation
 - Refraining from overwhelming the audience with dense content, as this may lead to disengagement.
3. Accuracy and Balance in Presentation
 - Presenting issues fairly, providing a balanced perspective, and ensuring precise information.
4. Highlighting Positive Examples
 - Focusing on solutions and constructive cases, rather than only the problems.
5. Beyond Basic News Coverage
 - Incorporating analysis and interpretation, rather than mere reporting, to deepen understanding.
6. Reducing Pessimism in Environmental Narratives
 - Minimizing the tone of hopelessness to keep the audience engaged and motivated.
7. Encouraging Balanced Discussion
 - Facilitating objective dialogues among diverse stakeholders on environmental issues.
8. Viewing Environmental Issues Holistically
 - Considering the interconnectedness of issues and addressing them in an integrated manner.

Environmental media professionals must thoroughly understand complex environmental issues to convey them clearly and impactfully. Following key journalism principles ensures both the credibility of reporting and the constructive engagement of audiences. Critical protocols for environmental media include⁽²¹⁾:

A. Citing Causes and Context of Environmental Events

- Providing a background, including historical and contextual information, and referencing prior relevant reports or studies.

¹⁹) Nader Ghazi: *A Proposed National Strategy for Environmental Awareness and Media*, article published on the following website: www.kenanaonline.com.

²⁰) Naguib Saab, *Environmental Issues: Ideas on Environment and Development*, First Edition, Technical Publications, Beirut, 1997, p. 45.

²¹) Darwish Mustafa Al-Shafei, *Media and Environment: A Complex and Distant Relationship*, article published on the following website: www.qafilah.com.

B. Consulting Experts for Insight

- Seeking informed opinions on causes, impacts, and future implications of environmental events.

C. Approaching with Realism without Alarmism

- Reporting responsibly without exaggerating threats, maintaining credibility, and refraining from prematurely attributing blame.

Chapter Two:

Theoretical Framework

Section Two: Means, Objectives, and Challenges of Environmental Media

Media have become crucial in raising awareness about environmental issues, fostering a sense of responsibility among citizens, and disseminating sustainable development concepts. This role has grown due to increasing social, economic, and political pressures on the environment, as well as the public's growing need for information on environmental disasters, pollution, and climate change impacts on society and economy.

As environmental issues escalated and posed significant threats, media have effectively raised awareness about the urgency of addressing them. Given that media's role now emphasizes holistic development, particularly sustainable development, contemporary environmental issues have become a core focus.

The primary objective of environmental media is to leverage all media forms to inform individuals, shaping behaviors towards environmental preservation. Through diverse platforms, media serve as the main source of environmental information, acting as society's conscience and encouraging collective efforts by individuals, communities, and governments to safeguard the environment. This approach strives for balanced development that aligns with sustainable practices for future generations.

Means of Environmental Media:

The rapid urbanization of Arab societies in the late 20th century, combined with the intertwined interests of communities and individuals, shifted communication patterns significantly. Mass media outlets became widespread, reaching audiences across cultural and intellectual levels. Media tools have advanced to efficiently spread environmental awareness, including:

1. Printed Media: Newspapers, magazines, books, posters, etc.
2. Audio Media: Radio, audio tapes, seminars, conferences, etc.
3. Visual Media: Television, exhibitions, internet, films, specialized satellite channels, etc.
4. Personal Interactions: Interviews, meetings, visits, discussions, etc.

Research conducted in both industrialized and developing nations has shown that media play a central role in shaping public environmental awareness. Media inform the public with accurate, comprehensive data, shape attitudes towards environmental issues, and set priorities at local, regional, and international levels. Each media type—whether print, audio, or visual—holds a unique potential to influence the public's environmental consciousness⁽²²⁾.

Means of Public Environmental Awareness⁽²³⁾:

In advanced nations like the United States, dedicated environmental channels exist alongside commercial and public media outlets. For example, during California wildfires and frequent hurricanes in the southern U.S., newspapers and magazines allocate space for thorough coverage, and television stations provide round-the-clock updates, offering accurate and reliable information.

²²) Mohammed Khiyaf Al-Ashraf: *The Training Course for Environmental Program Producers in the Field of Visual and Audio Media*, Damascus, p. 456.

²³) Dr. Shaker Al-Hajj Makhilif, *Environmental Media*, Amman, Dar Dijla for Publishing and Distribution, 2015, p. 91.

This media approach has proven effective in developed countries, showcasing the significant role that dedicated environmental media can play in promoting public environmental awareness and responsibility.

Objectives of Environmental Media:

The goal of environmental media is to address problems of this nature, functioning as the conscience of society across successive generations. Its role is to sound the alarm for individuals, communities, and governments to safeguard the environment and establish a balance between the environment and development. The ultimate aim is to achieve a sustainable, integrated development approach that takes future needs into account and does not focus solely on temporary solutions⁽²⁴⁾.

Environmental media also aims to enhance environmental capabilities and protect them, thereby achieving proper social and vital functional adaptation for citizens. This results in rationalizing environmental behavior in how humans interact with their surroundings and preparing them to participate in projects aimed at environmental protection and the preservation of natural resources. Additionally, environmental media plays an increasingly important role in early warning and monitoring any environmental imbalances that may occur, mobilizing public opinion, and raising awareness among the population⁽²⁵⁾.

The Tbilisi Conference—held in the capital of Georgia—outlined the objectives of environmental media in light of the broader goals of environmental education as follows⁽²⁶⁾:

1. Enhancing awareness and concern for the interconnection of economic, political, and ecological aspects in both urban and rural areas.
2. Creating new behavioral patterns towards the environment among individuals, groups, and society as a whole.
3. Providing opportunities for every individual to acquire the knowledge, values, commitment, and personal skills needed to protect and improve the environment.

The main objectives of environmental media can be summarized as follows⁽²⁷⁾:

1. Spreading environmental knowledge: This refers to the set of knowledge, concepts, judgments, beliefs, and intellectual perceptions that individuals have about the environment, its problems, and relevant institutions, whether at the local, national, regional, or global level.
2. Increasing environmental awareness: This entails an individual's understanding of specific environmental aspects, including an awareness of their thoughts and feelings about the surrounding environment and distinguishing between what is right and wrong.
3. Introducing methods of conserving natural resources: This involves educating people on how to preserve and make optimal use of natural resources and how to manage their consumption, especially since all human activities rely entirely on natural resources.
4. Appreciating efforts made to preserve environmental wealth: This goal encourages individuals and relevant entities to recognize the importance of preserving environmental wealth, protecting resources from pollution, and emphasizes the need for international, regional, and local cooperation to

²⁴) *Arab Media and the Environment*, Report by the Arab Organization for Education, Culture and Science, United Nations Environment Program, pp. 50-51.

²⁵) Abdel Majid Boushnifi, *The Role of Environmental Media in Building Environmental Awareness and Adaptation Capacities among Moroccan Citizens*, article published on the website www.maktoobblog.com.

²⁶) Asma Abadi, *Media Coverage of Industrial Pollution in Algerian Press: Analytical Study of El-Watan Newspaper*, Master's Thesis, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Mentouri University, Constantine, 2010, p. 90.

²⁷) See in this regard both:

Gamal El-Din El-Sayed Ali Saleh, *Media, Human Rights, Population, and the Environment*, Dar Al-Nahda Al-Arabia, Cairo, 2008, p. 95.

Majed Makhoulouf, *Media, Human Rights, Population, and the Environment*, Dar Al-Nahda Al-Arabia, Cairo, 2010, p. 95.

Mohamed Abdel Kader Al-Faqih, *Symposium on Environmental Rehabilitation and the Role of Media in Rehabilitating the Environment*, Printing House of the Higher Authority for Education and Training, Kuwait, 1999, p. 111 and following.

Khalid Mohammed Mosan Mohammed, Previous Reference, pp. 89-94.

Mari Saad Suleiman Saad, Previous Reference, p. 69.

implement programs that safeguard the environment and mitigate environmental destruction affecting many ecosystems on our planet.

5. Highlighting ways to conserve environmental resources: This includes shedding light on how to prevent the depletion and pollution of environmental resources and explaining the significance of utilizing advanced technologies to optimize the use of environmental wealth.

6. Early warning and monitoring environmental imbalances: This objective focuses on detecting any environmental disruption, mobilizing public opinion, and pressuring governments to enact laws aimed at protecting the environment.

Barriers and Challenges of Environmental Media:

First: Obstacles and Barriers Related to Professional Secrecy

The focus of environmental media on environmental issues and its efforts to provide environmental information, as well as to inform the target audience in a manner that aligns with the surrounding circumstances, are critical objectives for protecting the environment. Environmental media highlights environmental problems from their inception, not just after they occur, and it communicates knowledge, concern, and awareness to the public about the environment⁽²⁸⁾. This is achieved through cooperation and coordination among various media outlets, working within a unified framework by developing a comprehensive media plan.

However, environmental media faces several obstacles and barriers that limit its effectiveness and stand in the way of protecting and preserving the environment. These challenges also hinder its ability to fulfill its developmental role because the success of media in its mission requires deep and comprehensive cooperation between media institutions and the authorities responsible for the environment. Without this coordination, these authorities cannot achieve their goals, nor can the media fulfill its tasks. When administrations withhold environmental data and information under the pretext of professional secrecy, it harms the public interest.

The principle of administrative secrecy prevents citizens or associations from accessing the necessary information to exercise their right to contribute to public decision-making processes that affect their environment and quality of life⁽²⁹⁾. The lack of a clear definition of the principle of secrecy and its broad scope allows the administration to determine which information is confidential based on what it deems necessary for the normal and effective functioning of its operations, according to its view of what benefits public interests⁽³⁰⁾.

Second: Obstacles and Barriers Related to Environmental Media

One of the most significant challenges facing environmental media is the difficulty in obtaining environmental statistics, figures, and information. Even when this data is available, interpreting and analyzing it⁽³¹⁾ can be challenging. This is sometimes due to the administration's lack of knowledge of publication rules and techniques, such as when documents are unreadable or their content is unclear. This also leads to difficulties in simplifying environmental information and presenting it in a way that is easily understandable to readers.

Moreover, many sources of environmental information suffer from widespread administrative diseases prevalent in official institutions, particularly extreme bureaucracy. Additionally, there is a lack of coordination between environmental information sources and media outlets, which results in a noticeable absence of actual contributions from environmental information sources to the media's work⁽³²⁾.

²⁸) Ibrahim Hamada, *Studies in Media, Technology, Communication, and Public Opinion*, 1st Edition, Alam Al-Kutub, Cairo, 2008, p. 510.

²⁹) Kamilya Zarouqi, *The Right to Administrative Media*, Master's Thesis in International Human Rights Law, Faculty of Law and Commercial Sciences.

Développement du Dias Varela Marcelo, *The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in International Law*, Culent, N: 01:01, p. 55.

³⁰) Kamilya Zarouqi, *The Right to Administrative Media*, Master's Thesis in International Human Rights Law, Faculty of Law and Commercial Sciences, University of Mohamed Bougara, Boumerdes, 2006, p. 93.

³¹) Sana'a Muhammad Al-Jubour, *Environmental Media*, Dar Osama for Publishing and Distribution, 1st Edition, Amman, 2011.

³²) Muhammad Abdul Qadir Al-Feki, *Seminar on Environmental Rehabilitation: Media and its Role in Environmental Rehabilitation*, Higher Institute for Applied Education and Training, Kuwait, 1999, p. 118.

The main obstacles faced by environmental media can be identified as follows:

1. Journalists operating outside the specialization of environmental media.
2. Obstacles related to media tools and devices.

Social Responsibility Theory

The Social Responsibility Theory emerged after World War II in the United States as a response to the negative aspects of the Liberty Theory, particularly the misuse of the concept of freedom. This misuse involved excessive emphasis on individual freedom at the expense of society's welfare and an overextension of granting individuals the right to be free from social responsibility or ethical values. As a result, the media industry became solely profit-driven. In contrast, the Social Responsibility Theory argued that both individuals and society have rights. Society, being a collective of individuals with their own rights, is organized into institutions that aim to serve the public good and require protection from the whims and desires of individuals.

Baran and Davis (2008) state that this theory emphasizes the need for an independent press that scrutinizes and monitors the performance of state institutions and provides objective and accurate news and reports. One of the main characteristics of this theory is its call for media outlets to take on their social responsibility to build a creative and productive society. The media should become the voice of the people, not just the voice of the elite or groups that dominate national or local culture. This theory also urges journalists to fulfill their social responsibilities by listening to the demands and opinions of the public (Baran & Davis, 2008, p. 114).

Furthermore, the theory advocates for ethical responsibility and cautions against individuals overstepping the freedoms they enjoy. It also calls for the state to intervene in protecting people's rights from any violations, and it promotes the rational and ethical use of freedom. This means that the media must present diverse viewpoints and opinions (Hindman, 1997, p. 19). The theory encourages the inclusion of all segments of society, as media messages that lack the support of the community will ultimately fail and will not achieve their objectives (McCombs et al., 1997, p. 158).

According to this theory, everyone has the right to express their views using the media. Its main goal is to elevate conflict to the level of discussion, alongside informing, entertaining, and profiting. Media oversight is exercised through public opinion, beneficiaries, and professional ethics. The publication of anything that violates the rights and personal or social interests of individuals is prohibited. In terms of ownership, private ownership of media outlets is allowed, provided it is subject to agreed-upon regulatory procedures. This theory is distinguished by its premise that media outlets bear a social responsibility, and if they fail to do so, measures should be taken to enforce this responsibility.

This theory is highly relevant to the subject of this study, as it emphasizes that the media must play a significant role in raising public awareness of various environmental issues. Similarly, individuals are also expected to take responsibility for these issues in ways that ultimately benefit society as a whole⁽³³⁾.

Chapter Three

Practical Framework

Research Procedures:

This chapter covers the practical aspect of the research, wherein a questionnaire was designed, consisting of a series of questions, and reviewed by professors in the Department of Media at Al-Salam University College. The questionnaire was distributed to a number of respondents to obtain accurate results, which were achieved through statistical analysis of the data collected from the completed questionnaires.

First: Statistical Analysis of Demographic Questionnaire Questions and Other Information Questions

³³) Mishal Faiyaz Al-Otaibi, *Environmental Media in the State of Kuwait: The Public Authority for Environment as a Model*, Kuwait, Middle East University, College of Media, 2012.

Table (1) The Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Male	112	57%	First	
Female	83	43%	Second	
Total	195	100%		

Table (1) illustrates the frequency distribution of respondents by gender:

Males ranked first with a frequency of 112, representing 57%, while females ranked second with a frequency of 83, representing 43%. This distribution seems logical according to the researcher's perspective, and the percentages are relatively close.

Table (2) The Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
18–20 years	81	42%	First	
21–23 years	64	33%	Second	
24–26 years	30	15%	Third	
27 and above	20	10%	Fourth	
Total	195	100%		

Table (2) shows the frequency distribution of respondents by age group:

The age group of 18–20 years ranked first with a frequency of 81, representing 42%, followed by the age group of 21–23 years in second place with a frequency of 64, representing 33%. The age group of 24–26 years ranked third with a frequency of 30, representing 15%, and the group of 27 years and above ranked fourth with a frequency of 20, representing 10%. The percentages of the above-mentioned groups were rounded as needed.

Table (3) The Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Single	124	64%	First	
Married	49	25%	Second	
Divorced	16	8%	Third	
Widowed	6	3%	Fourth	
Total	195	100%		

Table (3) shows the frequency distribution of respondents by marital status:

The "Single" category ranked first with a frequency of 124, representing 64%, followed by the "Married" category in second place with 49 responses, representing 25%. The "Divorced" category came third with 16 responses, representing 8%, and the "Widowed" category ranked fourth with 6 responses, representing 3%.

Table (4) The Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Academic Year

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Second Year	95	49%	First	
Third Year	37	19%	Second	
First Year	33	17%	Third	
Fourth Year	30	15%	Fourth	
Total	195	100%		

Table (4) presents the frequency distribution of respondents by academic year:

The "Second Year" students ranked first with a frequency of 95, representing 49%, followed by "Third Year" students in second place with 37 responses, representing 19%. "First Year" students ranked third with 33 responses, representing 17%, and "Fourth Year" students ranked fourth with 30 responses, representing 15%.

Second: Question Axis

Table (5) The Frequency Distribution of the Clarity of Environmental Media in Iraqi Media

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Somewhat Agree	78	40%	First	
Agree	60	31%	Second	
Disagree	57	29%	Third	
Total	195	100%		

Table (5) indicates that the clarity of environmental media in Iraqi media is somewhat present, ranking first with a frequency of 78, representing 40%. This is a positive indicator for enhancing environmental awareness in Iraqi media. The "Agree" variable ranked second with 60 responses, representing 31%, while the "Disagree" variable ranked third with 57 responses, representing 29%. The close percentage between "Agree" and "Disagree" suggests the need to pay attention to this issue.

Table (6) The Frequency Distribution of Media Interest in Environmental Issues

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Somewhat Agree	74	38%	First	
Agree	68	35%	Second	
Disagree	53	27%	Third	
Total	195	100%		

Table (6) shows that media outlets somewhat care about environmental issues, with the "Somewhat Agree" variable ranking first with a frequency of 74, representing 38%. This suggests that students have a fair perception of the media's coverage of environmental issues. The "Agree" variable ranked second with 68 responses, representing 35%, while the "Disagree" variable ranked third with 53 responses, representing 27%.

Table (7) The Frequency Distribution of Students' Need for Specialized Environmental Media

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Agree	107	55%	First	
Somewhat Agree	68	35%	Second	
Disagree	20	10%	Third	
Total	195	100%		

Table (7) demonstrates the need for Iraqi university students to have specialized media focusing on environmental issues. The "Agree" variable ranked first with 107 responses, representing 55%, indicating a strong demand for environmental programs to be developed by media departments in universities to raise awareness among students. "Somewhat Agree" ranked second with 68 responses, representing 35%, while "Disagree" ranked third with 20 responses, representing 10%.

Table (8) The Frequency Distribution of the Role of Environmental Media in Creating Environmental Awareness among Iraqi University Students

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Disagree	76	39%	First	
Somewhat Agree	66	34%	Second	
Agree	53	27%	Third	
Total	195	100%		

Table (8) reveals the role of environmental media in creating environmental awareness among Iraqi university students. The "Disagree" variable ranked first with 76 responses, representing 39%, indicating that specialized environmental media is not fulfilling its role effectively in raising awareness among students. "Somewhat Agree" ranked second with 66 responses, representing 34%, while "Agree" ranked third with 53 responses, representing 27%.

Table (9) The Frequency Distribution of the Success of Environmental Media in Creating Societal Behavior in Iraqi Universities

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Disagree	84	43%	First	
Somewhat Agree	63	32%	Second	
Agree	48	25%	Third	
Total	195	100%		

Table (9) illustrates the extent to which environmental media has succeeded in creating societal behavior in Iraqi universities. The "Disagree" variable ranked first with 84 responses, representing 43%, indicating that environmental media is not effectively influencing social behavior in universities. The "Somewhat Agree" variable ranked second with 63 responses (32%), and the "Agree" variable ranked third with 48 responses (25%).

Table (10) The Frequency Distribution of Iraqi University Students' Engagement with Environmental Media and Its Issues

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Agree	80	41%	First	
Somewhat Agree	60	31%	Second	
Disagree	55	28%	Third	
Total	195	100%		

Table (10) shows the level of engagement of Iraqi university students with environmental media and its issues. The "Agree" variable ranked first with 80 responses, representing 41%, indicating a strong level of student engagement with environmental issues presented by the media. The "Somewhat Agree" variable ranked second with 60 responses (31%), while "Disagree" ranked third with 55 responses (28%).

Table (11) The Frequency Distribution of the Impact of Environmental Media on Iraqi University Students

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Rank	Notes
Agree	78	40%	First	
Somewhat Agree	65	33%	Second	
Disagree	52	27%	Third	
Total	195	100%		

Table (11) highlights the impact of environmental media on Iraqi university students, especially in relation to campaigns like tree planting and the creation of green spaces. The "Agree" variable ranked first with 78 responses (40%), showing that students react positively to such initiatives. The "Somewhat Agree" variable ranked second with 65 responses (33%), and the "Disagree" variable ranked third with 52 responses (27%).

Results and Recommendations

First: Results

1. Environmental Media is Clear in Iraqi Media: The study found that environmental media is somewhat clear in Iraqi media, with 40% of respondents agreeing to some extent. This highlights the need for increased environmental awareness in Iraqi media.
2. Students' Awareness of Environmental Media Content: Students in Iraqi universities have a clear understanding of the content related to environmental media. It was found that Iraqi media somewhat addresses environmental issues, with 38% of respondents agreeing.
3. Need for Specialized Environmental Media: There is a strong need for specialized environmental media in Iraqi universities, with 55% of respondents agreeing that such media should exist to address environmental issues.

4. Environmental Media's Role in Raising Awareness: The study indicates that environmental media is not playing a significant role in raising environmental awareness among Iraqi university students, with 39% of respondents disagreeing.

5. Ineffectiveness of Environmental Media in Creating Societal Behavior: The lack of effective environmental media in Iraqi universities has led to a lack of societal behavior concerning environmental issues. The first-ranked response was "Disagree" with 43%, suggesting that environmental media is not influencing societal behavior in universities.

Second: Recommendations

1. Involve Students in Volunteer Environmental Activities: To increase student engagement and foster societal behavior within Iraqi universities, it is essential to involve students in environmental volunteer work.

2. Establish Specialized Environmental Media in Universities: There is a need for the establishment of specialized environmental media within Iraqi universities, following scientific methodologies and standards to effectively address environmental issues.

3. Implement Environmental Programs by Media Departments: Media departments in universities should create programs focused on environmental issues to educate students and raise awareness about the environment.

4. Create Communication Channels Between Media and Universities: Establishing clear communication channels between media outlets and media departments in universities will help facilitate better collaboration on environmental issues.

5. Define Priorities in Environmental Media: It is necessary to establish clear priorities within the media's approach to environmental issues by setting a comprehensive media strategy that addresses key environmental concerns.

6. Host Environmental Media Seminars and Conferences: To enhance student awareness, universities should organize seminars and conferences focused on environmental media, fostering discussions on important environmental topics.

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