



# Did COVID 19 help authors to publish in high impact journal

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## Abstract

The progressing of countries is measured by scientific research, Iraq made a good progressing in recent three years, whereas the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research announced that Iraq ranked fifty-fourth among the publishing countries in Scopus. The study aim is to look after if COVID 19 help Iraq to get this rank? The information was collected by questionnaires to general people and a phone interview with chief- editors of Iraqi journals had been made. The results showed that the COVID 19 play an important role in helping authors to collect any information about paper publishing in high impact journals and this is due to the ease of access to information that was previously restricted with a specific time and place and became available online because of the COVID 19 lockdown. Despite the seriousness of COVID 19 but as we know that always there is a positive aspect of everything happening around us, COVID 19 helped us to know an important advantage of e-learning that we do not know before.

*Keywords:* COVID 19, High impact journals, Iraqi authors.

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## 1. Introduction

The Undersecretary of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research said that public universities achieved an increase from January 1, 2020, until October 25 of the same year, he continued:- private universities and colleges registered well attended in presence of research published in high impact journal. He added that the reasons for the increase in the number of Iraqi

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research approved in Scopus are the adoption of many Iraqi journals and conferences in Scopus, in addition to amending the promotion instructions and granting degrees to graduate students for scientific publishing, as well as intensifying the work of researchers and motivating them from the ministry and universities towards sober publishing [1]

## The reasons of Iraq delay

### 1. lack of experience

Many international publishing houses are seeming sober but in real it's ostensibly scientific publishing, the first priority of these publishing houses is the commercial purposes, which distances them from the required scientific sobriety, they attract researchers because of their several scientific fields and good feature like speed publishing, and others, they publish research without evaluation so they publish researches with Low-level evaluation, which reduces the scientific usefulness and sobriety of this research, These magazines publish the electronic website in the international information network (Internet) claiming to be published, The researchers pay the exorbitant publishing fees and they steal the researcher's ideas to develops them in their scientific institutions [2].

### 2. Iraq's cultural isolating

The Spaniard author Manuel Castillo discussed in his (Education, Science, and Ideology in Spain between 1890-1950) book the Impact of Dictatorship on Scientific Research and Education, in book summary he writes under "What happened in Spain from the evidence." subtitle What happened in Portugal, Greece, and Germany, about the scientific research and knowledge production, it happened also in similar Countries which different from it nature of European Spain, like Iraq and other Arab countries that suffered from Dictatorship in the modern era. Research and knowledge need a stable environment, the researcher who searches for politics, religion, and science in order to produce knowledge is being shunned by a dictatorship.

Iraq has been absent from the global scientific research map for several years; due to the independence of the work of universities, and the absence of independent bodies that regulate the mechanism of scientific research, the first serious attempts to organize scientific research in Iraq was in 1963.

The establishment of the Supreme Council for Scientific Research in Iraq as an independent body to regulate scientific research. but because of the turbulent political situation, it remained sluggish until the early '80s of the last century, when it was placed under the umbrella of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Then the Council presented a set of reforms that established the policy of scientific research, The most important one was the strategy of scientific research for the years 1980-2000, But the role of this council was diminished until the ending of the 1989 year; Later on, the Research and Development Department was formed in 1995, which is still the responsible body till now.

After 2003, the field of higher education is expanded in Universities and research centers, Iraq started with participating in conferences outside Iraq, sending many students to international universities, to improve the living situation of university employees, and launch the virtual library for Iraqi researches, Iraq started to emerge from isolation. With this expansion, the research production process has increased in quantity [3]

Table 1: shows iraq ranks and the number of publishing Iraqi researches in Scopus - the world's largest database between 2000 and 2020. [4]

<i>Var.</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>year</i>
<i>year</i>	2000	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>Rank of Iraq Be- tween all countries</i>	107 out of 217	106 out of 224	83 out of 231	70 out of 232	64 out of 232	61 out of 232	52 out of 235	48 out of 231	45 out of 234
<i>No. of publishing paper</i>	103	203	845	2224	3241	13984	9007	13984	19110 Out of 788287
<i>Rank of Iraq Be- tween middle east countries</i>	13 out of16	14 out of 16	11 out of16	10 out of16	7 out of16	6 out of16	6	6 out of16	6
<i>No. of publishing paper</i>	103	203	845	2224	3241	13984	9007	13984	19110

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Procedure

Interviews and questionnaires have been designed; the interviews have been conducted with two of editors in chief work at Iraqi journals. The questionnaire was distributed as a link via the Internet the survey had been collected and results were analyzed and recorded.

Table 2: shows the questionnaire the varies and questions

<i>Data</i>	<i>Varies</i>
<i>Age</i>	< 25 25 – 45 45 - 65 > 65
<i>Gender</i>	Male Female
<i>The social situation</i>	married single absolute Widower
<i>place of residence</i>	urban city
<i>job</i>	government employee work regular hours every day Work that is not tied to a specific time
<i>Workplace</i>	
<i>Education level</i>	Student Bachelor's Master's PhD
<i>Has the pandemic affected the your work nature?</i>	Yes, I no longer go to work every day, which saved me some time No it never affected Workload increased
<i>Have the pandemic affect your regular education?</i>	Yes, it affected negatively. I can't continue learning because of the pandemic No, it did not affect my learning at all
<i>Has the pandemic given you time to engage in some activities in your life (online courses, workshop. ....)?</i>	Positively I am finding time to learn some online courses or skills that were difficult to access due to life commitments Yes no

## 2.2. Participants

About 179 participants had been surveyed, the Questionnaire was sent as a link during May, June, and July 2021 via the internet, about 23 Universities and other government departments were shared in this questioner. Some of universities names (University of Kufa, Al-Mustansiriya University, Al-Qadisiyah University, Baghdad University, Tikrit University, Central Technical University, University of Mosul, Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Albasrah University, Babylon University, Muthanna University, Dhi Qar University, Diyala University, University of Karbala, College of Medicine, Technology University, The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, University of Duhok, Al-Karkh University of Science, Al Kut University College, Tigris University College, University of Kufa, Northern Technical University, College knowledge university, University of Babylon, Anbar University ) at the end of study data had been analyzed and classified.

Table 3: The questionnaire data, frequency and parentage

<i>Data</i>	<i>Varies</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Age</i>	< 25	5	2.8%
	25 – 45	118	65.9%
	45 – 65	35	19.6%
	> 65	21	11%
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Male</i>	90	50.3%
	<i>Female</i>	89	49.7%
<i>The social situation</i>	<i>married</i>	114	63.7%
	<i>single</i>	62	34.6%
	<i>absolute</i>	3	1.7%
	<i>Widower</i>	0	0%
<i>place of residence</i>	<i>urban</i>	8	15.6%
	<i>city</i>	151	84.4%
<i>job</i>	<i>government employee</i>	112	62.6%
	<i>work regular hours every day</i>	36	20.1%
	<i>Work that is not tied to a specific time</i>	3	17.3%
<i>Workplace</i>			
<i>Education level</i>	<i>Student</i>	26	14.5%
	<i>Bachelor's</i>	47	26.3%
	<i>Master's</i>	6	34.6%
	<i>PhD</i>	44	24.6%
<i>Has the pandemic affected the your work nature?</i>	<i>Yes, I no longer go to work every day, which saved me some time</i>	98	54.7%
	<i>No it never affected</i>	55	14.5%
	<i>Workload increased</i>	26	30.7%
<i>Have the pandemic affect your regular education?</i>	<i>Yes, it affected negatively. I can't continue learning because of the pandemic</i>	64	35.8%
	<i>No, it did not affect my learning at all</i>	40	22.3%
	<i>Positively I am finding time to learn some online courses or skills that were difficult to access due to life commitments</i>	75	41.9%
<i>Has the pandemic given you time to engage in some activities in your life (online courses, workshop. ....)?</i>	<i>Yes</i>	143	79.9%
	<i>no</i>	36	20.1%

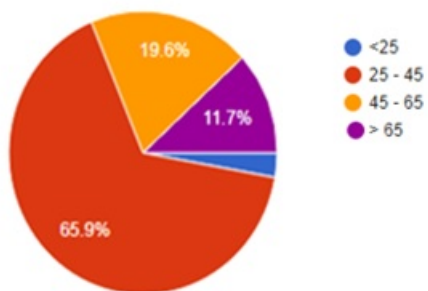


Fig.1. Represent the participants age.

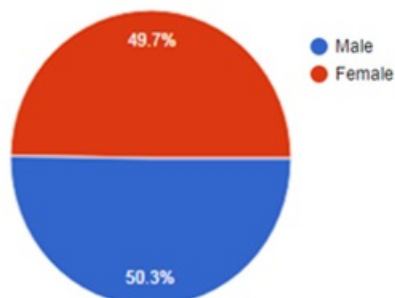


Fig.2. Represent the participants Gender

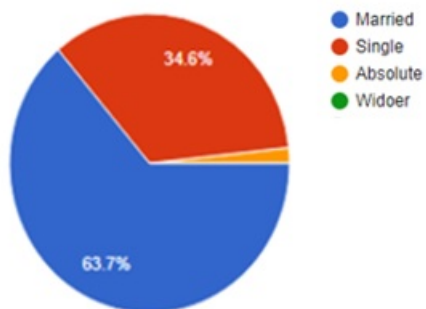


Fig.3. Represent the participants social situation.

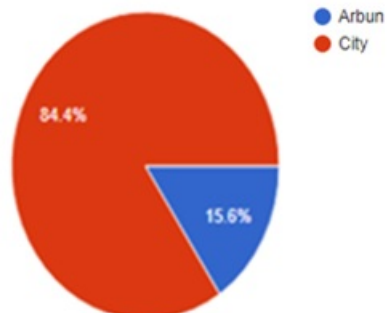


Fig.4. Represent the participants resident place.

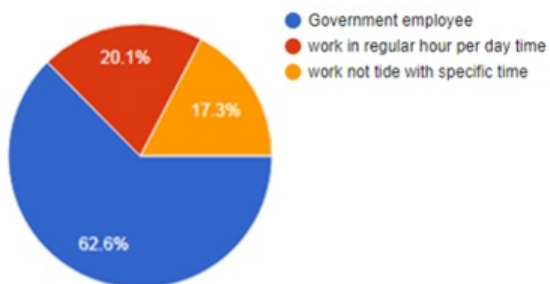


Fig.5. Represent the participants job nature

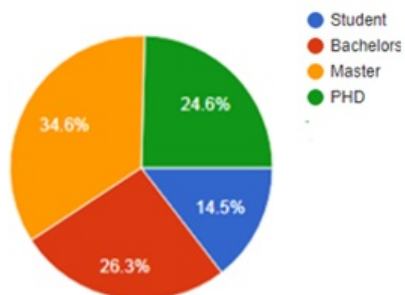


Fig.6. Represent the participants Education level.

2.3. Statistical Analysis

SPSS had been used to analyzed the collected data, Data were analyzed statistically depending on frequencies. Differences were considered as significant when the number of participant agreeing on same opinion is more than 75% .

3. Results

3.1. The progressive of Iraq in publication within Scopus journals due to the instructions of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

Table 4: The increasing of paper publishing after 2017 (the time of publishing the new instructions by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research)[4]

Var.	year	year	year	year	year	year	year	year	year
year	2000	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Rank of Iraq Be-tween all countries	107 out of 217	106 out of 224	83 out of 231	70 out of 232	64 out of 232	61 out of 232	52 out of 235	48 out of 231	45 out of 234
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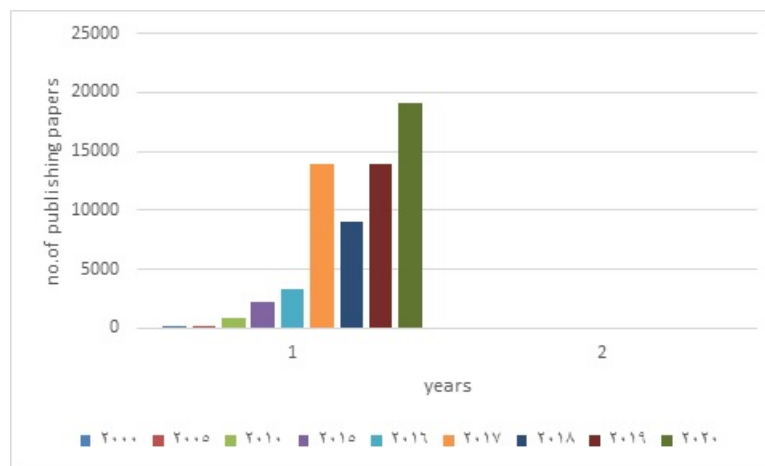


Figure 7: shows the increasing of publishing papers after 2017 (the time of publishing the new instructions by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research) [4].

3.2. The progress of Iraq in publication within Scopus journals due available time of people because of lockdown due to COVID 19.

Table 5: . COVID 19 help Iraq progressive of Iraq in publication within Scopus journals.

<i>Data</i>	<i>Varies</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>As a worker person, Has the pandemic affected your work nature?</i>	<i>Yes, I no longer go to work every day, which saved me some time</i>	98	54.7%
	<i>No it never affected</i>	55	14.5%
	<i>Workload increased</i>	26	30.7%
<i>As a student, Has the pandemic affect your regular education?</i>	<i>Yes, it affected negatively. I can't continue learning because of the pandemic</i>	64	35.8%
	<i>No, it did not affect my learning at all</i>	40	22.3%
	<i>Positively I am finding time to learn some online courses or skills that were difficult to access due to life commitments</i>	75	41.9%
<i>Has the pandemic given you time to engage in some activities in your life (online courses, workshop.....)?</i>	<i>yes</i>	143	79.9%
	<i>No</i>	36	20.1%

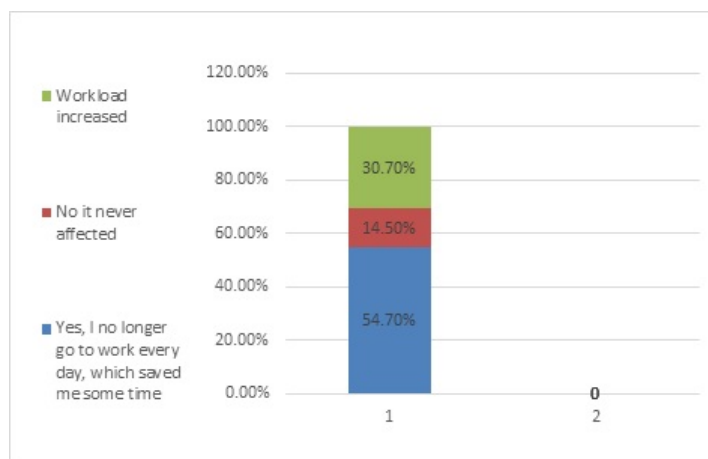


Figure 8: shows that's more than 54% of worker participant saved some time due to COVID 19 pandemic.

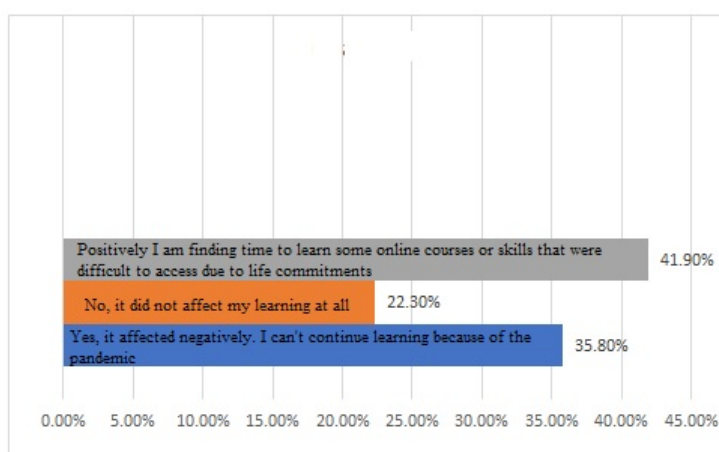


Figure 9: shows that's 41.9% of student participants find some time to improve them skills by rolling online programs due to COVID 19 pandemic.

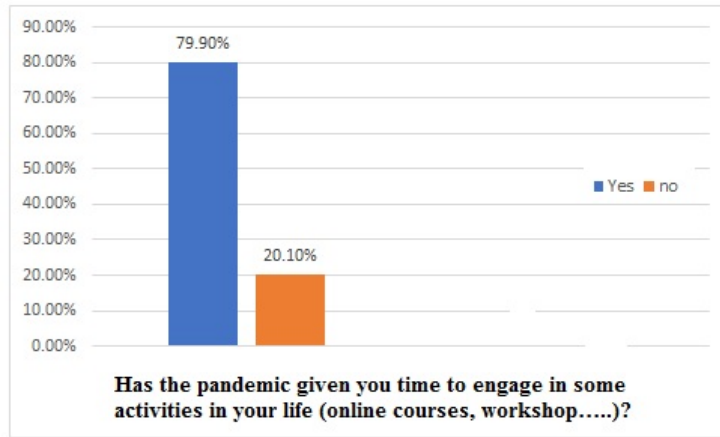


Figure 10: shows that’s 79% of participants find some time to engage online programs due the lockdown due to COVID 19 pandemic.

#### 4. Dissociation

According to a second interview conducted with Iraqi editor in chief working at Iraqi Journal of Karbala International Journal of Modern Science, Dept. of Physics, Coll. of Science, University of Kerbala, Iraq “He identified the reasons behind Iraq rank progressed among the countries publishing in Scopus journals. he said that the main reason was the instructions of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, where it became obligatory for a master’s student to publish at least one research in one of the Scopus or clarivate journals and two researches for the Ph.D. student before theses discussion ,in addition to the instructions regarding scientific promotions for teaching staff, which stipulated that teachers must have researches published in Scopus or Clarivate, and made some facilitation so they were promoted directly if their researches were published within Scopus or Clarivate journals without the need for an evaluation committee, These instructions were published on 11/27/2017 in the (ALWAKAEA Iraqi NEWSPAPER) (the official newspaper of Iraq Republic), provided that they are not applied and implemented until two months after the announcement. They were actually implemented on 01/27/2018 [5]

For example, if we almost assumed that we have 15,000 teachers and they need to publish three research papers in high impact journals such as Scopus and Clarivate, so we find that the resulting number is 45,000 research, in addition to researches of graduated students which are about 11039 in (2018 – 2019) according to (Central Statistical Organization IRAQ (CSO) ) so they approximately had about 22078 research at least (this is for 2018 -2019), these causes led to this progress, on other hand the electronic courses and workshops that became electronic due to the Corona pandemic, played as helping role to access to valuable information about everything related to high impact journals in terms of publication conditions, how, and the reasons for rejection. These journals and this increased the awareness of a large percentage of researchers and helped them to decrease the gap between them and high impact journals”.

Table 6: The number of student from 2014 to 2020 [6].

Indicate	2015/2014	2016/2015	2017/2016	2018/2017	2018/2019	2019/2020
Higher Education Graduate The number of graduate students	4	5	6	7	9	0
	8081	7547	7959	9345	11039	---



## 5. Conclusion

The main reason behind Iraq rank progressed among the Scopus journals publishing countries was the instructions of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, which applied on 01/27/2018, the instruction stipulated that the teaching staff have to publish in Scopus or Clarivate journals to achieve the rank progressive on work and it obligated the master's student to publish one research in the Scopus classified journals and tow researches for a Ph.D. student before theses discussion.

The second reason was COVID 19 which allowed for many people with different specializations to save time due to the lockdown, so they exploited the time in learning, reading, and doing different interests that they postponed it again and again due to lacking time, in addition to the providing of workshops, seminars and lectures online to interested people help them to access these activities after they were restricted to a specific place and time.

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