



THE ROLE OF OPERATING COMPANIES OPERATING IN THE IRAQI OIL SECTOR IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT FOR THE PERIOD (2004-2020)

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 11 th December 2022 Accepted: 11 th January 2023 Published: 20 th February 2023	The Iraqi economy has great material and human capabilities that give it the ability to grow, progress and eliminate unemployment, but these capabilities and capabilities were not employed through a sound economic policy. As one of the most prominent justifications of the Iraqi government in bringing major international companies to work in the Iraqi oil sector is working to provide many job opportunities for the people of this country in addition to developing and training Iraqi cadres working in the oil sector, which reduces the unemployment rate in the country as well as contributing to the absorption of The high population growth that characterizes Iraq and the weakness of the productive sectors, and work to find solutions to this phenomenon and its economic, social and security repercussions. The research aims to know the reality of unemployment in Iraq for the period from 2004-2020. As well as knowing the reasons behind the increase in its rates in Iraq, as well as developing some proposed solutions to avoid the effects of unemployment. The research is based on one of its hypotheses that the phenomenon of unemployment in the oil sector is represented by a certain segment of human resources with low efficiency

Keywords: Iraqi economy - unemployment – oil .

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment in its various forms is one of the most important economic and social problems that the Iraqi economy suffers from after 2003. It is no secret that any country in the world can achieve full employment for all its citizens. This serious problem is behind multiple internal and external reasons, but the most important of these reasons is the high rate of illiteracy, the low level of education and health, the underdevelopment of training and rehabilitation programs, the weakness of economic activity, and the inability of the national economy to absorb the largest possible amount of the national labor force.

The political instability and the contradiction of the adopted economic development programs, which led to random confusion in the management of the national economy In addition to the destruction of most of the foundations of the Iraqi economy due to the occupation, which led to the cessation of economic activity in most economic sectors, which exacerbated the problem, as one of the most prominent justifications of the Iraqi government in bringing major international companies to work in the Iraqi oil sector is to work to provide many

job opportunities for the people of this country In addition to developing and training Iraqi cadres working in the oil sector, which reduces the unemployment rate in the country, as well as contributing to absorbing the high population growth that characterizes Iraq and the weakness of the productive sectors, and working to find solutions to this phenomenon and its economic, social and security repercussions.

Research problem:-

The research problem is centered on the spread of the phenomenon of unemployment and its exacerbation year after year and the lack of serious programs to reduce it by the international oil companies operating in Iraq.

Research aims:-

1. Identifying the reality of unemployment in Iraq for the period 2004-2020.
2. The reasons for the exacerbation of unemployment in Iraq.
3. Develop proposed solutions to avoid the effects resulting from unemployment.

Research hypothesis:-

The research is based on several hypotheses:



1. The population growth has an impact on the supply side of the Iraqi and foreign labor force present in the market through the direct relationship between the size of the population and the unemployment rate.
2. The phenomenon of unemployment in the oil sector is represented by a certain segment of human resources with low efficiency

The lack of seriousness of the Iraqi government, represented by the Ministry of Oil, in applying the points within the contracts of the oil licensing rounds with regard to providing job opportunities for Iraqis within the staff of the investing companies.

Research importance :

Unemployment is considered the scourge of the present age in developed and developing countries, and what most countries are going through in terms of political changes, as happened in Iraq. The Iraqi oil sector to achieve maximum benefit from it in terms of developing and qualifying the workforce, as well as increasing the number of workers from the Iraqi side, which works to reduce unemployment rates in Iraq.

1. Unemployment: the state of a person who does not find a job, although he is looking for it diligently. The term unemployment does not include those people who do not seek work because of advanced age, mental or physical illness, or disability, nor does it include people who attend school or do homework. Such people are generally classified as not in the labor force.
2. Unemployment: It is an increase in the number of people who are considered within the labor force that is looking for a job greater than the job opportunities produced by society in its various institutions, and the unemployed does not work and is able to work looking for it and not finding it.
3. Unemployment: It represents the amount of difference between the volume of labor supplied and the volume of labor employed at prevailing wage levels in the labor market during a certain period of time

In the economic sense, unemployment is defined as the cessation of work or the unavailability of work for a person who is able and willing to do so, and it may be real unemployment or disguised unemployment, as it may be permanent unemployment or partial and seasonal unemployment, and its harmful effects multiply if it continues for a long period,

Especially in times of economic recession, and the person is the breadwinner or the head of a family, as it leads to the cracking of the family entity, the

disintegration of family relations, and to spreading feelings of dullness and depression.

These definitions failed to reach a comprehensive and comprehensive definition of the concept of unemployment, and the definition of the subject of international agreement emerged, which is the International Labor Organization's definition of unemployment as: the situation that includes persons who are of working age, who are able to do it, and who are qualified for it in the required type and level, and those who want it and those who seek it. And they agree to choose it in light of the prevailing wages, and they do not find it during a certain period of time. From this definition, we extract the criteria that must be met in order for the individual to be considered unemployed, which is :-

1. The person must be between (15-65) years old and without work, whether that is for pay or for his own account.
2. That the individual is ready to work, able to do it, willing to do it, and willing to do it for a fee or for his own account.
3. That the individual is looking for work in a positive way, and take serious steps to search.
4. That the person is searching during the time period in which the statistics are taken, he should always search and not despair.

Some criticism has been leveled at this definition :-

1. It does not take into account both disguised unemployment and partial unemployment. An individual is counted in the number of workers as long as he works, even if it is for one hour.
2. It does not link between work and productivity, as the individual is included in the number of workers, even if his productivity decreases to a very low extent.
3. Only individuals who do not work and are looking for work are taken into account in the census of the unemployed, thus neglecting a large segment of the unemployed who are not looking for work after they despaired of finding a job.
4. It ignores individuals who work in marginal jobs or carry out illegal activities .

Unemployment, according to its practical concept, is the situation in which the society does not fully or optimally use its labor force, and then the actual output in this society is less than the potential output, which leads to a lower level of well-being for the members of society than what could have been reached.

From this definition, two dimensions of unemployment can be distinguished:



1. It is represented in the lack of full use of the available labor force, and examples of this are the cases of open unemployment and partial unemployment.
2. It is represented in the non-optimal use of the labor force, and a clear example of this is the phenomenon of disguised unemployment.

And she believes that unemployment, in short, means the presence of an influential percentage of the country's youth outside the labor force. This influential percentage, in turn, affects the psychological and social condition of the members of society, as well as the economic, political and security situation of society.

In fact, she would like to point out that not just the presence of unemployment in a society constitutes a threat to this society, but rather we must take into account that the ideal society has not yet been created, that is, there is no society free of unemployment, but there is an extent in which unemployment becomes a problem, so In all countries of the world there is a category of unemployed individuals, but they may not represent a problem because their percentage is within the optimum employment limit, which is the level of full employment and does not exceed (+ or -5% surplus or deficit) the elastic of the total volume of opportunities offered in the labor market in relation to the total volume of jobs.

Types of Unemployment: There are many types of unemployment, of course, due to their causes. There have been many divisions and variations on the part of researchers in an attempt to confront each of these types with appropriate treatment and appropriate strategies. We can deal with these types and those forms of unemployment.

1. Normal unemployment: This flexible type of unemployment occurs when labor markets do not work efficiently, even if jobs are available to a large extent. Such unemployment includes workers who left their jobs or who left their jobs and did not get new jobs. This unemployment is called [short-term unemployment.
2. Seasonal or casual unemployment: It is unemployment that appears seasonally, and is closely linked to the nature of the productive activity itself, and its oscillation between the intense need for labor at some times, and the decline and decrease of this need at other times, as it occurs during a specific season or after a specific casual work.
3. Cyclical unemployment (unemployment decrease in demand): in the definition of the United Nations, it is a result of the failure of economic demand due to

changes in activity levels during a certain period and it results from a general decrease in the demand for workers. This occurs when the total expenditure of society becomes too little. When the goods are not promoted, many factories resort to reducing their production and the number of their employees, and these industries can maintain the same level of production and operation, but with a reduction in both prices and wages.

4. Frictional unemployment: It means the continuous movement of workers from one profession to another and from one region to another. It occurs due to occupational change, and it arises as a result of a lack of information among job seekers, or among business owners who have the opportunity to work, and it can be included in cyclical unemployment, and it occurs whether in developed or economically backward countries.
5. Structural (technical) unemployment: It is that unemployment that afflicts part of the labor force due to structural changes that create a state of mismatch between the available (employment) opportunities and the qualifications and experiences of unemployed workers who want and seek work. This type of unemployment can cause It occurs as a result of reduced demand from certain types of labour.
6. Technological or technical unemployment: This is unemployment resulting from the use of technological methods in production, or that require special skills in a way that leads to the disruption or layoff of some work personnel who do not have these skills, or the introduction of industrial machines that do not need workers. Many
7. Voluntary (voluntary) and compulsory unemployment: Voluntary unemployment is the case in which people stop looking for work that does not disable the worker of his own free will, by submitting his resignation from the job he was working for for various reasons, some of which may be due to the availability of independent sources of income, Or because he is looking for a better job that provides him with a higher wage and better working conditions. In all of these cases, the decision to opt out is optional. As for compulsory unemployment, it is by forcing the worker to be unemployed even though he is willing and able to work and is acceptable to the prevailing wage level.
8. Blatant unemployment (pure - overt - complete): It is the state of apparent unemployment in which part of the labor force suffers, who are able to work physically, mentally and mentally and desire it but



do not find the appropriate opportunity or work required for employment within the economic institutions.

9. Disguised unemployment ((disguised)): It means that there are workers who work under the name and do not receive their wages and salaries without any actual productivity. In the sense of rising employment rates, with no corresponding rise in production rates. It becomes clear that this type of unemployment has two concepts, namely;
- **The first:** It goes to individuals who work, but not to their full potential, or work in jobs in which their productivity is much less than it could be in other jobs.
 - **The second:** which is more common, goes to individuals who work in jobs where the marginal productivity of labor is very little or non-existent, and it may be negative, as it is noted that this expansion is found in the industrial sector, and the majority of government departments and public sector units suffer from the phenomenon of disguised unemployment

The reality of unemployment in Iraq :

The return of the deterioration to the deterioration of the former Iraqi economy Unemployment among young people, who represent the largest proportion of the total population

In addition to the total number of economically active people, unemployment figures vary in Iraq. The results of a survey conducted by the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in Iraq indicated that the unemployment rate in Iraq reached 281% in 2005, while the International Labor Organization estimated the unemployment rate between A quarter and a third, while other estimates indicate that it is more than half. Unemployment is usually accompanied by negative and harmful consequences for societies that threaten economic stability. Although Iraq possesses enormous natural and human resources and the future of the chief of Arab labor (which exceeded three million workers during the seventies), however, External variables (wars and siege) have turned the Iraqi economy into a fragile, deteriorating economy that does not generate job opportunities.

One of its results was the emergence of the unemployment problem since the beginning of the nineties decade, then the problem worsened after 2003 for many reasons, the most prominent of which we present as follows:

1. Economic performance in terms of efficiency in Iraq is low, which leads to low rates of economic growth

based on the exploitation of oil, as a low rate of economic growth means a low level of national income and a low level of investment, and then a low level of full employment and the spread of unemployment

2. The inability of the local labor markets to cope with the large increase in the number of the labor force as a result of the high rates of population growth, and that the issue of imbalance between the demographic factor and the economic factor makes the problem multiply, and this phenomenon is more evident in developing countries because there is an increase in the proportion of the population to a greater degree than growth In economic activity or the labor market, the existence of this gap between the labor market and its capabilities to absorb the labor force whose percentage exceeds the market capabilities leads to unemployment.
3. The neglect of the agricultural sector was through relying on unbalanced development programs and plans that did not give sufficient attention and support required to upgrade the agricultural sector and local industry. This resulted in the negative impact of trade liberalization on the Iraqi private sector, especially in agriculture and industry, where agricultural and industrial production declined greatly as a result. To open the borders wide, and without quantitative or customs controls, to the flow of foreign goods, most of which are subsidized by the government, which forced many farms and factories to close their doors or reduce their production, and in both cases the demand for local labor was affected
4. The Iraqi economy is a one-sided economy and it depends very much on the oil sector, which in turn is considered backward compared to the advanced use of scientific and technological techniques in the regional and global oil facilities alike.
5. This situation made the possibility of the effective influence of the oil sector in the Iraqi economy below the level of ambition, and the use of oil revenues was used to import more consumer goods characteristics of the Iraqi labor force, which has a high proportion of young people and lacks the necessary training to meet the needs of the labor market..
6. The rampant administrative corruption in the official agencies, which squandered huge amounts of money in fake projects or of little use in accommodating the unemployed.

The inability of the local labor markets to cope with the large increase in the number of the labor force as a



result of the high rates of population growth, and that the issue of imbalance between the demographic factor and the economic factor makes the problem double, and this phenomenon is more evident in developing countries because there is an increase in the percentage of the population to a greater degree than the growth in activity. The economic or labor market, as the existence of this gap between the labor market and its capabilities to absorb the labor force whose percentage exceeds the market capabilities leads to unemployment.

7. The lack of effectiveness of the public sector in generating more job opportunities due to the closure of many government factories that were exposed to acts of looting and destruction after April 2003 due to the lack of security and political stability on the one hand and the lack of necessary production requirements for government facilities and factories on the other hand.

The dissolution of the Ministries of Interior and Defense and the suspension of the work of some ministries, such as the military industry, for example, due to the lack of a clear-cut economic strategy, and in the absence of a fair distribution of income, and the increase in the number of people living below or close to the poverty line, and due to the lack of operational strategies, all of which led to the worsening of the living situation and the increase in Unemployment rate in Iraq .

The problem of unemployment in Iraq has produced very serious economic consequences, the most prominent of which can be explained as follows:

1. Marginalization of an important part of the Iraqi labor force by placing it outside the societal economic process, and this is considered a waste of one of the sources of wealth in Iraq that could have been exploited in the process of developing and developing the Iraqi economy.
2. Unemployment leads to a deterioration in the standard of living of the Iraqi individual and thus exacerbates the phenomenon of poverty in Iraq, in which it exceeded (absolute poverty was about 70% of the total population during the nineties decade, then it decreased by half after that.
3. Unemployment, especially among directors and those with high qualifications, leads to the emigration of many of them abroad in search of a

job opportunity, which is a waste of one of the most important sources of wealth in Iraq and thus a waste of the Iraqi national competencies that are indispensable in the development of the Iraqi economy and society.

In the light of the foregoing, the Iraqi economy has faced challenges that are inevitable from its negative effects on the economy represented by high unemployment rates, as statistics indicate that unemployment rates in Iraq are high and there is no doubt that the public sector alone cannot provide additional job opportunities, as the departments and companies of the public sector are full. With the labor force and suffering from the problem of disguised unemployment due to the weakness of the local private sector, the state finds it difficult to find job opportunities to solve the problem of unemployment.

And that the most prominent characteristics of the Iraqi labor market is the increase in the growth rate of the supply of labor as a result of the high growth rates of the population and the workforce in light of the slowdown in the growth of demand for work, which is caused by several factors, most notably the decrease in the ability to increase the total supply in line with the volume of effective aggregate demand, which results in The growth of the volume of revenues in excess of exports, and this means a decrease in investment opportunities and capital formation as a result of the exit of foreign currencies, and this results in increasing difficulties for the Iraqi economy to direct economic activities in areas that achieve economic development.

Unemployment in Iraq is subject to its conditions and environment, and it cannot be given a specific explanation for unemployment, as it differs according to the decades and conditions that this economy went through, between behavioral unemployment, structural unemployment, disguised and compulsory unemployment, although the Iraqi economy was one of the economies described as achieving a state of full employment until the end of the eighties. This economy to achieve employment has declined a lot since the second Gulf War in the year (1991) and unemployment has worsened (2). By analyzing the data presented in Table (1)

Unemployment rates %	the year	Unemployment rates %	the year
11.92	2012	22.8	2004

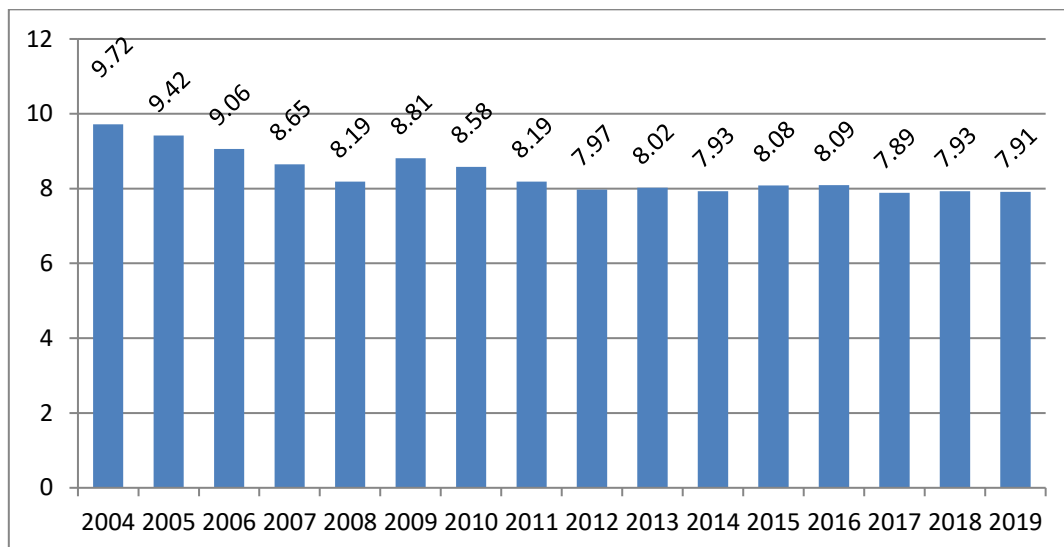


16	2013	17.97	2005
10.95	2014	11.5	2006
15	2015	11.70	2007
10.82	2016	15.34	2008
10.95	2017	15.1	2009
22.6	2018	15	2010
12.8	2019	12.2	2011

Source/Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, Central Agency for Statistics and Information Technology, annual statistical group scattered.

The high rate of unemployment: Unemployment is one of the most important challenges facing the Iraqi economy, as a result of the weak level of production and investment activity, the disruption of most industrial facilities and the migration of farmers from the countryside to the city as a result of the high costs of agricultural production and the opening of borders to imported agricultural products, as well as the dominance of the oil sector. On the overall economic activity, as statistics indicate that unemployment amounted to (26.8%) in 2004, and the International Monetary Fund announced in 2018 that the unemployment rate for youth in Iraq is (40%) out of a population of (37) million people, according to statistics announced by the Ministry Iraqi planning. In addition to the weak ability to generate job opportunities, the modest production levels and the efficiency of management have exacerbated the problem of unemployment to the present time.

The following figure shows that the unemployment rates witnessed a significant decrease in 2008 compared to the average in 2004. The total unemployment rate reached (9.72%) in 2004 and decreased to (8.19%) in 2008. This is due to the development plans set by the government represented by the Ministry Planning, including the five-year plan to address unemployment and economic conditions which contributed to a relatively low level of unemployment in Iraq. In 2009, the total unemployment rate increased, reaching (8.81%), and after that the rates began to decrease as a result of the many government programs that it set to draw strategies to reduce poverty and unemployment in cooperation between the Ministry of Planning and Statistics and the United Nations to reduce social problems that have become a major and major obstacle in the path of sustainable development and its goals set until it reached in 2019 to a total rate of (7.19%) .



The figure is from the researcher's work, based on World Bank data: <https://data.albankaldawli.org>

The role of foreign direct investment in reducing unemployment rates in Iraq:

Before we explain what foreign investment means and its role in the Iraqi oil sector after 2003, we must address the importance and place of the Iraqi oil sector in the economy and the extent of its contribution to the formation of the gross domestic product.

Disruption of the structure of participation in production and employment as a result of the oil sector.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The phenomenon of unemployment has become one of the urgent and decisive issues that do not accept delay and postponement in any way, as it has already become a direct threat to stability and social peace. No matter how conflicting numbers and data may be, it warns of a crisis if the government, in cooperation with the private sector, international and civil organizations, does not take practical solutions to confront it.
2. The inefficiency of directing the natural and human resources available in Iraq to public utility uses, in addition to the weak role of the private sector and the dominance of the public sector over economic activity and its lack of modernity are all factors that contributed to the slowdown in the process of economic growth and the exacerbation of unemployment
3. The educational system in terms of performance was weak, as that system grew unbalanced in certain patterns, in addition to its weak effectiveness and the subsequent interruption between it and the needs of the labor market. This

was reflected in the existence of the problem of unemployment of educated people and the misuse of human capital.

4. The Iraqi economy is a rentier economy, so growth in it is not considered real growth, and central economic policies led to weak economic growth, and this economy remained. takes modest steps, which limits its ability to absorb the workforce entering the labor market annually .
5. Despite the huge oil industry and the little revenue that came to Iraq, the extent to which the country benefited from it was limited. That is because some of the industries that could be fueled by oil were not built in his time. And not even some chemical industries that depend on oil extracts, sulfur or phosphates, so the growth of industries that will be based on oil, sulfur and phosphate revenues will also be based in the near future to a large extent on spreading industrial and agricultural education in the country and directing it to the correct scientific direction that will inevitably lead To fill this shortage in the country.
6. Not establishing post-processing projects for crude oil production in Iraq, near the production areas, and establishing them in the mother country, and depriving Iraq of the advantages of these projects, the added value generated by us and the networking relations that it can achieve with the rest of the sectors of the national economy.
7. The Iraqi oil industry faced many challenges, including internal and external challenges. The internal ones are represented by the unstable economic, political, social and security conditions



that Iraq is going through previously and now, and the external challenges are represented by the phenomenon of globalization and the control of major international companies over the oil market, and it refers to some of the Challenge the privatization of the Iraqi oil industry. Among other reasons, it suffers from a decrease in production capacity, the obsolescence of the technology used in the industry, and the lack of experience and large capital needed to repair the infrastructure of this important industry.

8. The challenge of merging international oil companies, their negotiating power, their possession of advanced technology, their ability to move quickly in carrying out business, and the extension of their activities in many countries. This challenge will put the Iraqi oil industry under conditions that may be in its disadvantage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First: The Role of Government and Society:

The government bears a great burden as well as the society, and one party will not do it without the other, which raises a strong paradox between the role of governments in the race for capitalist restructuring and society in its acceptance of that, and therefore all bodies in society should pay costs and cooperate with the government and coordinate between them from trade unions , civil society associations, charitable institutions, etc

In general, achieving the strategic directives in combating unemployment requires far-reaching institutional changes in the economic and political environment. It also requires stable cooperation and coordination between states and civil society. In the specific American states, we find that 11% of the unemployment problem contributes to the civil work sector in solving it, which allowed the law of community associations and important institutions It has to achieve and activate its role in solving the unemployment crisis through productive projects and through training

Also, the state's entry into the production market again, building productive projects, is considered the first pillar of the new development strategy to combat unemployment. The second pillar is the government's entry into its apparatus to apply laws related to boredom and social security to the private labor market in all its forms, whether it is organized, unorganized, or semi. orderly and thus remove one of the hotbeds of social tension .

There is a very important proposal, which is the organization of the Unemployment Fighting Fund, which

undertakes the implementation of plans to fight unemployment and coordinates between all concerned parties, including states, trade unions, associations, civil institutions, manpower and all that is needed

It is concerned with this problem, and it also sponsors small projects, and coordinates between companies, factories, project incubators, and industrial zones. As for the funding sources for this project, they are many, and it is similar to the training and employment system, but it is on a broader scale in the specializations and roles required and concerned with it.

So, the problem of unemployment is not a sectoral affair that is specific to one sector and not the other, but rather it is a comprehensive societal matter, and this is the case with all the important issues currently in Iraq. A comprehensive and comprehensive solution has become a necessity if a successful solution is wanted for any problem at all, just as short-term solutions are not It is commensurate in comprehensiveness with societies similar to ours, but long-term solutions are characterized by depth, comprehensiveness, and strong impact

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There is no doubt that the government plays an important role in confronting unemployment, and this role is based on several axes or directions that should be available from them, and among these axes are the following:

1. Expansion of urban projects:

Where the new cities absorb an important part of the labor force in restriction and construction projects and various industrial and commercial sectors, and the absorptive capacity increases in the utilities and construction works, as more than ten thousand workers and employees of different age groups work in these activities, and it is considered a source of increasing employment opportunities.

2. Benefiting from the experiences of other countries:

We have played the role of the university because it is the last stage of education and represents the last end with regard to the student of knowledge, therefore, she has the burden of preparing this student for the labor market, so if the student enters the labor market, he has entered the real field of competition, for he is now discovering the truth that is either shameful or good and beautiful, and in this regard he discovers the



value of what she has been doing throughout these years, so he either bows to her with thanks and respect, or declares war on her and curses the day he entered, and from this point of view, the university must be like a workshop that prepares the student for the labor market, fully and comprehensively, because he is on the verge of a ruthless competition field.

1. The university has a major role in this regard. As a house of basic and vital science, it has a pivotal role in preparing the graduate and contributing to qualifying him in the manner in which he should be, by taking care of him and his scientific and personal level to a high degree. The university bears several burdens, as follows:
2. There must be a methodological and educational vision, and at the same time an application, and interest in traditional methods, the practical application approach, so that the student is familiar with how to apply what is circulated in the university in his field of work, 3- The university must spread awareness among students of societal culture and participate in programs to combat unemployment Alleviating poverty levels, raising the student's sense of self and value in society, and the need for it to be a good nucleus for a society that is in dire need of it and its children's arms to build a strong economy that guarantees a good life for them and their families.

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