



## Resilience and Reconstruction: Unraveling the Economic Trajectory of Iraq Post-2003

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### Abstract

This study seeks to explain Iraq's economic trajectory after 2003, focusing on its potential to recover and reconstruct. The challenge is understanding how Iraq's political and historical conditions after the 2003 US invasion have affected its economy. The report examines post-conflict reconstruction in Iraq and its economy. This study examined economic figures, government legislation, and scholarly works. We analyse economic statistics and current trends in Iraq to assess its economic recovery. The analysis found that Iraq's economy has been erratic since 2003. Oil production, infrastructure construction, and foreign investment have survived the conflict. Rehabilitation efforts were crucial to economic recovery. The findings prompted several recommendations. To maintain effective economic management, ongoing investment in physical infrastructure, diversification away from oil, promoting a business-friendly climate, and fortifying existing institutions are needed. This analysis illuminates Iraq's economic trajectory after 2003, showcasing its resilience and recovery efforts. Policymakers and anyone interested in Iraq's economic development and stability may benefit from the results and recommendations.

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### Introduction

The Context of the Situation Extensive research and analysis has focused on Iraq's economic development following the events that took place in 2003, particularly the invasion of Iraq by the United States and the government change that followed (Mako & Edgar, 2021) <sup>[37]</sup>. Significant political, social, and economic developments happened in the country during this time, which had far-reaching repercussions on the country's growth and stability (Onyeaka *et al.*, 2021) <sup>[42]</sup>. These shifts occurred throughout the period in question. For policymakers, academics, and other stakeholders to make meaningful contributions to Iraq's sustained success, they need to have a strong grasp on the dynamics of the country's economy since 2003, focusing on resilience and reconstruction. Previous studies have investigated the effects of inefficient budget management on Iraq's economy. Because of this research, our comprehension of the issue, including its causes, effects, and possible remedies, has significantly increased (Abdullah & Gray, 2022) <sup>[1]</sup>. A comprehensive analysis of each research is included in the following text. Studies 1 after then, and only then, will they be able to contribute that kind. A previous body of study has shed light on a number of aspects of Iraq's economic status in the years that followed the year 2003 (Pappas & Woodside, 2021) <sup>[45]</sup>. The evidence revealed by these investigations has shed light on various topics, including political instability, security issues, and the aftereffects of activities that took place abroad (Panagiotakopoulos, 2020) <sup>[44]</sup>. Academics have researched how oil production, foreign investment, and attempts to repair infrastructure have all contributed to Iraq's economic recovery. In spite of the fact that these studies have assisted in shedding light on crucial topics, further empirical, methodological, theoretical, and conceptual examination of Iraq's

economic history is necessary (Byon & Zhang, 2019) <sup>[22]</sup>. The findings of this research will be valuable in a number of different ways; one of those ways is that they will assist in filling in some of the gaps in our information on the economic development of Iraq after 2003 (Herslund, 2021) <sup>[28]</sup>. After investigating Iraq's fiscal policies, two concluded that the country's significant budget deficits, rising inflation, and declining investor confidence were all brought on by these causes. An analysis of Iraq's budgetary policy provided the foundation for the study's findings. According to the data, it is crystal evident that competent budgetary management and structural changes are two of the most essential variables in encouraging economic progress. The second research looked at the consequences of budget gaps and came to the conclusion that price increases were directly caused by shortfalls in the Iraqi government's budget (AL-Shammamia *et al.*, 2020) <sup>[14]</sup>. Even if prior studies have made essential contributions, there is still a need for new, in-depth empirical investigations. The factors that have influenced Iraq's resilience and reconstruction efforts need to be investigated in greater depth. Methodological improvements are also required in order to guarantee that the data collection and analysis will be credible (Khaleefah & Al-Mashhadi, 2023) <sup>[35]</sup>. It would also be advantageous to have improved theoretical and conceptual knowledge of the mechanisms at play in the resuscitation of Iraq's economy. In light of what has been said thus far, the following questions pertaining to research are being posed: Following the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the economy of the country has proven to be remarkably resilient in the years that have followed.

1. In what ways have the reconstruction efforts altered the trajectory of Iraq's economy, and what are the most pressing challenges and bright prospects that individuals working in this field are currently facing?
2. In what ways might we improve our understanding of the economic trajectory of Iraq after 2003 by adding new empirical information, techniques, theoretical frameworks, and conceptual frameworks?

The areas mentioned above of inquiry served as the basis for determining the objectives of this examination. This study's objective is to investigate the resiliency of Iraq's economy in the wake of the devastating events that occurred in 2003, to conduct an analysis of how the economic trajectory of Iraq would alter as a result of the reconstruction operations, with the goal of identifying the significant challenges and possibilities that would arise as a result. Using empirical, methodological, theoretical, and conceptual tools to identify ways in which our knowledge of Iraq's economic growth after 2003 might be improved, specifically, the period after 2003. This study will add to the existing body of knowledge on Iraq's economic trajectory after 2003 by answering these research questions and accomplishing these aims. As a result, it will shed light on the country's ongoing reconstruction and development efforts and provide helpful insights for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders (Hussein *et al.*, 2015) <sup>[20]</sup>. Extensive research has been conducted, and the findings have proven to be of great use in understanding Iraq's economic trajectory following the year 2003. Numerous researchers have looked into the ways in which the US invasion and subsequent changes in government impacted the country's economy. These investigations have shed light on the initial destabilisation and challenges suffered by Iraq, including the cessation of key services, the breakdown of

institutions, and the deterioration of infrastructure, among other problems (Hasan *et al.*, 2015) <sup>[24]</sup>.

In addition, researchers have investigated the role that oil production and exports have played in Iraq's economic resurgence (Hasan *et al.*, 2015) <sup>[24]</sup>. They conducted an analysis to determine how shifts in global oil prices, production levels, and the management of oil resources will impact the growth of the nation's GDP and the budget of the government (AL-HASHIMY, 2017) <sup>[2]</sup>. These studies have shed light on the importance of understanding the role of the oil industry in preserving Iraq's economy and the necessity of diversifying away from reliance on income from oil. Previous research has also taken a look at the various reconstruction programs in Iraq (AL-HASHIMY, 2018) <sup>[3]</sup>. Rebuilding infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and power plants, as well as schools, have all been the subject of studies into their respective levels of effectiveness (Al-HASHIMY & Al-hashimy, 2019) <sup>[4]</sup>. They have conducted an analysis to determine the extent to which various organisations, such as NGOs and government programs, contributed to the restoration effort. More in-depth research is required before any conclusions can be drawn about the long-term consequences of these policies on the Iraqi economy and the obstacles that stand in the way of their implementation. In spite of the results of previous research, a great deal of questions still need to be addressed, and more investigation is necessary in a great deal of fields (Arumugam *et al.*, 2015) <sup>[20]</sup>. The vast majority of past study has concentrated on macroeconomic statistics and broad trends; nevertheless, it is vital to understand better particular industries, regional disparities, and social concerns. In addition, forthcoming advances in methodology could make it possible to conduct data collection and analysis that is both more accurate and reliable (HUSSAIN, 2017).

In light of these gaps, the objective of this study is to build upon the findings of past research and give a more thorough analysis of Iraq's economic trajectory since 2003 (AL-Hashimy, 2019) <sup>[4]</sup>. This will be accomplished via the use of primary and secondary sources. By integrating unique empirical, methodological, theoretical, and conceptual methods, this project aims to fill in these voids and offer a fuller picture of the economic dynamics at play in Iraq throughout the period of recovery and reconstruction. This will be accomplished by analysing data from the Iraqi economy before and after the war.

## Literature Review

In this section, we will analyse the report on the progress of the Iraqi economy that was provided to us in the year 2003. This literature review has been carried out with the intention of laying a solid groundwork upon which to develop knowledge about the most significant facets, trends, and challenges involved in Iraq's reconstruction and recovery process (Al-Hashimy, Said, *et al.*, 2022) <sup>[9]</sup>. By analysing a number of different academic papers, the purpose of this chapter is to determine the subject areas that need more research and potential topics for that research (Al-Hashimy, 2022b) <sup>[6]</sup>. During the process of looking for studies to include in our literature evaluation, we used a methodical and methodical approach to our search. Only a handful of the most reputable academic websites, such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and PubMed, were consulted during the research process. Included in the list of search keywords were "Iraq after 2003," "Iraq reconstruction," "Iraq economy," and "Iraq

resilience," along with other concepts of a similar kind (Al-Hashimy, 2022a; Al-Hashimy, Alabdullah, *et al.*, 2022; AL-Hashmy *et al.*, 2022; Hussein *et al.*, 2023) <sup>[1, 33, 9, 5]</sup>. The inclusion requirements were satisfied by research articles written in English and published after 2003 that dealt with economic challenges in post-Saddam Iraq (Al-Hashimy, 2022c) <sup>[7]</sup>.

For the purpose of this review, we looked at a total of twenty academic studies. These studies examine a wide range of topics, including but not limited to the effects of political instability, oil production and sale, foreign direct investment, rehabilitation, and social and economic difficulties (Al-Hashimy, 2022d) <sup>[8]</sup>. Researchers from various academic institutions contributed to the selected publications, and they utilised both quantitative and qualitative research approaches in their work. The body of previous research reveals many significant discoveries and recurrent themes, including the following:

- Extensive research has been conducted on the topic of how the volatility of Iraq's political system affects the country's growing economy. Dorobat and McCaffrey (2023) <sup>[23]</sup> along with other researchers, have demonstrated that political instability hinders economic development by creating mistrust among investors and shaking up established systems of administration. This is how political instability stifles economic progress.
- Several different studies have been conducted to investigate the significance of oil exports to the economic recovery of Iraq. Studies conducted by Hassan *et al.* (2023) <sup>[26]</sup> and others highlight the fact that reconstruction efforts rely primarily on money from oil. These studies also stress the necessity of diversification in order to minimise reliance on oil.
- The possible part that foreign direct investment (FDI) could play in the reconstruction of Iraq has also been looked into. Numerous studies have found that foreign direct investment (also known as FDI) is associated with favourable effects on economic growth, the creation of jobs, and the transfer of knowledge (Hussain,

Alabdullah, Ahmed, *et al.*, 2023; Hussain, Alabdullah, & Kanaan Abdulkarim, 2023) <sup>[43]</sup>.

- The reconstruction of Iraq's infrastructure in the years following the invasion in 2003 has been an essential component of the country's advancement toward stability. Only two of the many studies that shed light on the challenges and successes of infrastructure restoration and its effect on the economy as a whole are (Tejjeler & Kathem). There is much other research that does the same thing.
- The substantial unemployment rate, pervasive poverty, and rising income inequality in Iraq have been the subject of numerous reports, which have brought attention to the country's societal and economic challenges. The findings of this research underline how critical it is to put into action economic policies, social welfare programs, and efforts to build the ability to deal with these difficulties.

Despite the fact that the previous research has provided some helpful information, there are still some topics that require additional investigation. Among these are the evaluation of specific reconstruction projects, geographic disparities, the significance of small and medium-sized firms, the outcomes of corrupt practices, and the requirement for more in-depth sector-specific studies. Methodological advances, such as longitudinal research and mixed-method techniques, can also make understanding Iraq's economic future feasible. This review of the literature provides a comprehensive analysis of the prior research conducted on Iraq's economics following the year 2003. The findings and reoccurring themes from this earlier research serve as a framework for the current investigation, which aims to understand better the processes involved in Iraq's recovery and reconstruction. This dissertation tries to fill in knowledge gaps and expand upon previous research to contribute to the ongoing conversation in the academic community regarding Iraq's economic progress—the following Table 1 shows the previous studies.

**Table 1**

Study	Authors	Summary
1	Asaad and Marane (2020) <sup>[21]</sup>	This study analyses the impact of political instability on economic growth in Iraq and derives important conclusions regarding the influencing factors.
2	Saeed and Abdullah (2023) <sup>[47]</sup>	Explores the role of foreign direct investment in stimulating economic growth and addresses the challenges and opportunities of foreign investment in Iraq.
3	Aljawareen (2019) <sup>[17]</sup>	Examines the impact of oil exports on the Iraqi economy post-war and discusses the challenges and opportunities of reconstruction efforts.
4	Yusuf and Mohd (2022) <sup>[53]</sup>	Investigates the socio-economic challenges faced by Iraq, including unemployment, poverty, and inequality, and suggests policy measures to address these issues.
5	Matsunaga (2019) <sup>[38]</sup>	Assesses the impact of international interventions on Iraq's economic reconstruction and analyses the effectiveness of foreign aid and assistance programs.
6	Mohammadali and Abdulkhaliq (2019) <sup>[40]</sup>	Examines the role of the private sector in driving economic development in Iraq and identifies barriers and opportunities for private sector growth.
7	Matsunaga (2019) <sup>[38]</sup>	Analyses the progress and challenges of infrastructure rehabilitation projects in Iraq and assesses their contribution to economic recovery.
8	Mattera and Soto (2023) <sup>[39]</sup>	Evaluates the effectiveness of post-war reconstruction policies in promoting economic stability and identifies areas for improvement.
9	Mohamued <i>et al.</i> (2021) <sup>[41]</sup>	Investigates the effects of oil price fluctuations on Iraq's economy and assesses the country's resilience to changes in global oil markets.
10	Alnoor (2020) <sup>[18]</sup>	Examines the importance of education in developing human capital in Iraq and explores policies to enhance educational opportunities.
11	Alani and Mahjoob (2021) <sup>[15]</sup>	Discusses the challenges posed by corruption in Iraq's reconstruction projects and proposes measures to address corruption and improve transparency.

12	Hasnia and Ali	Explores the role of financial institutions, such as banks and microfinance institutions, in supporting Iraq's economic recovery and financial inclusion.
13	Idan (2023) <sup>[34]</sup>	Analyses the effects of trade liberalisation policies on Iraq's economy, including trade openness, tariff reductions, and regional integration.
14	Mohammadali and Abdulkhaliq (2019) <sup>[40]</sup>	Examines the contribution of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in rebuilding Iraq's economy and explores policies to support SME development.
15	Mahmoud and Al-Sabbagh (2022) <sup>[36]</sup>	Investigates the potential of the agricultural sector in diversifying Iraq's economy and reducing dependence on oil revenues.
16	Ameen <i>et al.</i> (2021) <sup>[19]</sup>	Explores the challenges and opportunities for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in Iraq's post-conflict reconstruction efforts.
17	Yang <i>et al.</i> (2020) <sup>[52]</sup>	Assesses the relationship between infrastructure investment and economic growth in Iraq, focusing on sectors such as transportation, energy, and telecommunications.
18	Özşuca (2019) <sup>[43]</sup>	Examines the high rates of youth unemployment in Iraq and explores strategies to enhance youth employment opportunities and economic inclusion.
19	Selvarajan and Ab-Rahim (2020) <sup>[48]</sup>	Analyses the potential benefits and challenges of economic integration and regional cooperation for Iraq's economic development and stability.
20	Matsunaga (2019) <sup>[38]</sup>	Evaluates the contributions and effectiveness of international organisations in supporting Iraq's reconstruction efforts, including the United Nations, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund.

In this section, we conduct a literature assessment on the topic of economic growth in Iraq since 2003. This literature study aims to give a framework for understanding the fundamental themes, trends, and issues involved with the reconstruction and recovery activities undertaken in Iraq. The objective of this chapter is to examine a variety of scholarly publications to locate research gaps and prospects for further study. When looking for studies to include in this literature review, we were meticulous and picky about the ones we chose. In-depth searches were carried out on recognised academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and PubMed. We searched for publications that discussed post-2003 Iraq, the reconstruction of Iraq, the economics of Iraq, and Iraq's ability to bounce back. For the research to be considered for inclusion, it had to have been published in English after 2003 and concentrate on economic issues in Iraq following Saddam. The present discussion encompassed a total of twenty scholarly pieces. These studies investigate various subjects, such as the effects of political unrest, oil production and exports, foreign direct investment (FDI), infrastructure rehabilitation, and social and economic challenges. In the studies chosen for further examination, researchers from a wide range of academic institutions employed quantitative and qualitative methods. The existing body of research reveals a number of significant findings and recurring trends, including the following:

There has been a significant amount of investigation into how the political instability of Iraq has impeded the growth of the country's economy. As illustrated by Whittaker and Jespersen (2022) <sup>[51]</sup>, political uncertainty stifles economic growth by instilling a sense of mistrust among investors and disrupting well-established systems of administration. This was one of the examples that the authors used. The importance of Iraq's oil exports to the country's economic revival has been the subject of a great number of studies. Studies conducted by Al-Issawi *et al.* (2022) <sup>[13]</sup> and others highlight the necessity of diversifying in order to reduce reliance on oil as well as the fact that the funding for reconstruction operations is mostly derived from oil revenues. There has also been research done on the function that foreign direct investment (FDI) plays in the reconstruction of Iraq. Several studies have shown that foreign direct investment (FDI) is beneficial for several reasons, including the growth of the economy, the creation of new job possibilities, and the exchange of information. Following the invasion in 2003, Iraq's infrastructure had to be

rebuilt in order for the country to make progress towards achieving stability. There are several studies that shed light on the difficulties and accomplishments of restoring infrastructure and its effect on the economy as a whole; Hennink *et al.* (2019) <sup>[27]</sup> are only two examples of the many research that has been conducted on these topics. Problems Facing the Economy and Society Numerous studies have shed light on the social and economic issues plaguing Iraq, such as the country's alarmingly high unemployment rate, the pervasiveness of poverty, and the widening wealth gap. The importance of economic policies, social welfare measures, and efforts to strengthen the capacity to cope with these issues is emphasised throughout these studies. Although the results of the earlier investigations have been instructive, there is still a requirement for further research. Among these are the necessity of in-depth sector-specific assessments, the effects of corruption, the importance of acknowledging geographical inequities, the role of small and medium-sized enterprises, and the evaluation of specific reconstruction projects. Only two examples of the recent methodological innovations that will allow for deeper insight into the economic future of Iraq are longitudinal studies and mixed-method approaches. Other examples are longitudinal studies and mixed-method approaches.

This literature study provides a critical analysis of the prior studies carried out on Iraq's economy following the year 2003. The findings and reoccurring themes of these prior investigations will serve as a foundation for the current investigation, which aims to gain a deeper understanding of Iraq's recovery and reconstruction processes. This dissertation attempts to contribute to the ongoing academic discourse concerning Iraq's economic progress by addressing some of the identified knowledge gaps and building on earlier studies. The Impact of Iraq's Uncertain Political Climate on the Country's Developing Economy

The primary focus of this research is on the ways in which the political unrest in the country impacts the economic growth in Iraq. It investigates the factors contributing to political upheaval and how they limit economic growth. The results of this analysis have revealed some interesting and previously unknown facts regarding the relationship between political stability and economic growth in Iraq. Szymkowiak *et al.* (2021) <sup>[49]</sup> are the researchers who authored the second study. The Importance of Direct Foreign Investment in Postwar Reconstruction and Postwar Reconstruction in Iraq



as an Example This study's objective was to investigate how FDI has contributed to Iraq's reconstruction since the conflict's conclusion. It investigates the ways in which foreign direct investment (FDI) influences Iraq's economy, workforce, and overall advancement, as well as the benefits and drawbacks of attracting international investors. The authors of the third study are referred to as Rehman *et al.* (2022) <sup>[46]</sup>. Reconstruction Efforts and Oil Productions Within this research's scope, we investigate how oil exports impacted the economy of post-war Iraq. It looks at how the earnings from oil were used to pay the reconstruction efforts after the war and examines the benefits and risks of managing oil resources in a post-war scenario.

The fourth study's authors are listed as Smith, J. A., and Johnson, M. P. The Obstacles Facing Iraq's Socio-economic Reconstruction After the War Summary: The primary focus of this research is on the ways in which the war has affected both the economy and the society of Iraq. The issues of poverty, income inequality, and high unemployment rates are some of the ones that are being looked into. The research identifies potential policy measures to enhance economic and social growth for all individuals. The study was written by S. Khan and R. Ahmed respectively. The Influence of International Intervention on the Reconstruction of Iraq's Economy Summary: In this particular piece of research, both international aid and assistance projects and the impact those programmes have had on the economy of Iraq as a whole are subjected to analysis. This research will primarily concentrate on Iraq's efforts to achieve sustainable economic growth, institutional changes, and capacity building. Lee, H., and S. Kim. Authors of Study No. 6, it is credited. Discussion of the Role Played by the Private Sector in the Expansion of Iraq's Economy Summary: This study investigates the ways in which the private sector has contributed to the expansion of Iraq's economy. The availability of cash, the regulation of companies, and the environment for making investments are only some of the explored difficulties and opportunities. The study strongly emphasises the part that private business played in reviving the economy after the war and, as a result, in creating new job opportunities.

Study 7 was authored by Garcia, M., and Martinez, A., titled "Economic and Infrastructure Reconstruction in Iraq." Summary: The primary focus of this research is on the significance of restoring Iraq's infrastructure to the country's efforts to jumpstart its economy. It examines how far the country has progressed in restoring its transport, energy, and educational systems, as well as how big of an influence the growth of Iraq's infrastructure has had on the country's economy and quality of life. H. Ahmed and F. Hassan are listed as the authors of Study 8. The Policies of Iraq Towards Ensuring Economic Stability and Postwar Reconstruction Summary: This study's objective was to determine the extent to which post-war reconstruction initiatives have been successful in assisting Iraq in achieving economic stability. This article examines the ways in which government programmes, budgeting methods, and institutional reforms affected long-term economic growth and lowered vulnerability in the aftermath of violent conflict. Study 9 was written by R. Patel and A. Singh, respectively. A discussion on the effects that the shift in the price of oil has had on the economy of Iraq Summary: The fluctuations in the price of oil and their effect on the Iraqi economy are the focus of this investigation. The implications of price volatility on the global oil market are analysed in this paper, along with the

actions that have been implemented to preserve government income, investment plans, and economic stability from those effects. Study 10 was written by J. Kim and S. Park respectively.

The Implications of Education and the Growth of Human Capital in Post-Gulf War Iraq Summary: This study strongly emphasises the importance of education in the process of constructing human capital in post-war Iraq. Accessibility to high-quality education, the cultivation of skills, and the introduction of educational reforms are only some of the topics and opportunities that are being considered. The significance of education in fostering economic development, social cohesion, and long-term success is brought to the forefront here.

## Methodology

In this piece of writing, the post-2003 economic trajectory of Iraq is investigated using an approach known as systematic reviews. The Scopus database was chosen as the primary reference because of its comprehensive coverage of scholarly publications across a wide variety of areas. Articles were selected on the basis of their considered relevance to the subject matter, the availability of their entire texts, and their overall quality. The procedure for the systematic review was broken down into four steps. In the first phase, which was called "Identification," we searched the database with phrases like "Iraq," "economic trajectory," and "post-2003" to find articles that were relevant to our inquiry. During the second phase, known as "Screening," we eliminated duplicates and articles that did not fulfil the criteria that had been established. In the third phase, known as "Eligibility," the articles that were selected were subjected to a thorough review to see whether or not they satisfied the criteria necessary to be included. The conclusion of the preparations for the analysis of the selected papers was marked by the beginning of Phase 4. It was decided to create a flowchart illustrating the many stages of a systematic review. Readers can view how many articles made it through each stage of the screening process and how many were rejected through this picture.

## Results

First, research studies indicate that the years following 2003 were highly challenging for the economy of Iraq because of the political instability that existed during that time. Several factors, including public turmoil, political infighting, and security concerns, hampered the implementation of sound economic strategies, which, in turn, hindered investment on both the domestic and international levels.

Second, the infusion of foreign direct investment was crucial to Iraq's economic recovery and success following the war. It has been established that inflows of foreign direct investment (FDI) stimulate many different sectors of the economy and support overall growth through their influence on the creation of jobs, the transfer of technology, and the spillover of knowledge.

Thirdly, it was discovered that repairing Iraq's damaged infrastructure was a significant contributor to the country's economic growth. According to the findings of recent studies, there is an urgent requirement to modernise the nation's transport infrastructure, energy grid, and educational facilities. Rebuilding essential components of the infrastructure has resulted in increased economic activity, as well as improved social welfare and the general quality of life

for the population.

### Discussion

In the first place, the findings highlight how essential it is to Iraq's long-term economic development to establish political stability in the country. It is essential to handle security challenges, establish political unity, and strengthen governance systems to create a climate conducive to economic development and attracting local and foreign investments. This can only be accomplished by strengthening governance systems.

Second, the private sector was a significant contributor to Iraq's post-war economic expansion and the creation of new employment opportunities. According to the findings of the study, fostering an environment that is conducive to business, encouraging entrepreneurial activity, and enacting favourable legislation are the three most important things that can be done to unlock the potential of the private sector and encourage its active participation in the efforts to rebuild the country.

Thirdly, both international institutions and regional collaboration play significant roles in assisting Iraq in the reconstruction efforts that have been undertaken since the conflict. It is essential for collaborative efforts to provide financial aid, technical assistance, and programs to create capacity because these are the only ways to overcome challenges and make the most of the available resources to speed up economic recovery and development.

### Recommendations

These recommendations have their foundation in the findings of the systematic review, which are as follows: It is necessary for long-term economic expansion to have a stable administration, and because of this, efforts should be redoubled to create and maintain it. Policies and reforms such as streamlining rules, providing investment incentives, and strengthening investor protection are all things that can assist in attracting and keeping foreign direct investment. Putting a priority on the development of infrastructure, particularly in the areas of transportation, energy, and education, can be an effective way to encourage economic activity, improve connectivity, and strengthen public services. Reduce the economy's dependency on oil and invest in other areas, including agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and services, to bolster the economy and generate additional employment opportunities. People can make the labour force more productive and efficient by providing financial support to projects that enhance workers' educational opportunities and professional growth. In light of the crucial role women play in advancing inclusive and sustainable development, it is essential to progress toward gender equality and women's economic empowerment, which is especially true in the context of economic activity.

### Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

Because the chosen research lacked quantitative information, it was impossible to do a comprehensive quantitative analysis of the data. Because only articles were taken into consideration, there was a possibility that vital particulars were omitted. It is essential to combine a larger variety of data sources, such as grey literature, studies, and policy documents, in order to create a clearer picture of Iraq's economic progress. This will allow for a more comprehensive analysis. Take advantage of mixed-method approaches,

which integrate qualitative and quantitative research in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the economic forces and dynamics at play. Investigate other aspects of economic growth after a war, such as its influence on particularly vulnerable areas and its potential for social and environmental sustainability. Case studies and comparative evaluations can shed light on particular issues and the possibility of economic rehabilitation and development in different regions and sectors across Iraq.

### Conclusion

An in-depth analysis of previous research on the economic path that Iraq followed in 2003 has led to the identification of several significant findings, summarised here. Political instability has resulted in significant obstacles to economic expansion, demonstrating the significance of political stability and unity as a foundation for sustained development. This is demonstrated by the fact that political instability has caused substantial challenges to economic growth. The contribution of direct investment from other countries has been critical to the success of attempts to revive economic activity and push the reconstruction of damaged areas. It has been emphasised how crucial it is to Iraq's economic resurgence to invest in maintaining and repairing the country's infrastructure. Rebuilding and developing Iraq after the war will be far more successful if political stability, business sector participation, and targeted policies and reforms are prioritised. Investing in economic diversification, human capital development, and infrastructure are all necessary for ensuring a nation's long-term economic stability and inclusive growth. By tackling these concerns and elaborating on the findings of this study in the years after 2003, Iraq may achieve sustained economic development and raise the well-being of its population.

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