CORRUPTION BEYOND BORDERS: RETHINKING CAUSAL TYPOLOGIES IN GLOBAL AND TRANSNATIONAL CONTEXTS



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Abstract:

This study addresses the complex landscape of corruption by exploring the different causal patterns underlying corrupt practices, seeking to uncover the diverse factors that sustain its persistence by classifying corruption into distinct types, such as political, administrative, economic, and social corruption, among others. The study aims to provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the mechanisms and motivations behind corrupt behavior through qualitative analysis that includes case studies across different regions and sectors, highlighting the influence of cultural, institutional, economic, and other factors.

Accordingly, the article systematically explores the causal classifications of corruption by analyzing how different theoretical frameworks categorize its origins and mechanisms of persistence into four main categories: structural-institutional corruption rooted in governance gaps, cultural-reinstitutionalized corruption reinforced by societal acceptance, elite-driven corruption perpetuated by the concentration of power, and survival-based corruption driven by economic necessity. The article also examines patterns of political patronage, organizational capture, and informal networks.

The findings reveal that corruption is not a monolithic phenomenon but rather a multifaceted issue shaped by multiple and diverse causes. Thus, typological examination is vital for both policymakers and researchers, as it helps in designing more effective strategies for combating corruption and promoting integrity. Ultimately, it can be concluded that identifying the causes of corruption contributes to the development of effective policies for addressing and remedying this phenomenon, as tackling root causes is more feasible and effective than merely confronting corruption crimes after they occur. Therefore, the recommendations focus on multi-dimensional anti-corruption strategies by providing a comprehensive framework for understanding the causal mechanisms

of corruption, aiming to enhance effective governance and ensure accountability by equipping policymakers and researchers with practical insights to design targeted anti-corruption strategies that address its structural and behavioral drivers.

***key words**: Causal Typology of Corruption; Institutional Causes; Political and Economic Causes; Socio-Cultural Causes; International Factors; Transparency and Integrity; Corruption Prevention; Anti-Corruption Strategies.*

ملخص:

تعالج هذه الدراسة المشهد المعقد للفساد من خلال استكشاف الأنماط السببية المختلفة الكامنة وراء الممارسات الفاسدة، سعيًا إلى الكشف عن العوامل المتنوعة التي تُبقي على استمراريته، وذلك عبر تصنيف الفساد إلى أنواع متميزة مثل الفساد السياسي، والإداري، والاقتصادي، والاجتماعي، وغيرها. وتهدف الدراسة إلى تقديم إطار شامل لفهم الآليات والدوافع الكامنة وراء السلوك الفاسد من خلال تحليل نوعي يشمل دراسات حالة عبر مناطق وقطاعات مختلفة، مع إبراز تأثير العوامل الثقافية والمؤسسية والاقتصادية وغيرها.

وبناءً على ذلك، تستكشف المقالة بصورة منهجية التصنيفات السببية للفساد من خلال تحليل كيفية قيام الأطر النظرية المختلفة بتصنيف أصوله وآليات استمراره ضمن أربع فئات رئيسية: الفساد البنيوي-المؤسسي المتجذر في فجوات الحوكمة، والفساد الثقافي المعاد إضفاء الطابع المؤسسي عليه والمدعوم بالقبول المجتمعي، والفساد الذي تقوده النخب ويستمر بفعل تركز السلطة، والفساد القائم على البقاء والمدفوع بالضرورة الاقتصادية. كما تتناول المقالة أنماط المحسوبية السياسية، والاستحواذ التنظيمي، والشبكات غير الرسمية.

وتكشف النتائج أن الفساد ليس ظاهرة أحادية أو متجانسة، بل هو قضية متعددة الأبعاد تتشكل بفعل أسباب عديدة ومتنوعة. ومن ثم، فإن الفحص النمطي يُعد أمرًا حيويًا لكل من صانعي السياسات والباحثين، لأنه يساعد في تصميم استراتيجيات أكثر فاعلية لمكافحة الفساد وتعزيز النزاهة. وفي نهاية المطاف، يمكن الاستنتاج أن تحديد أسباب الفساد يسهم في تطوير سياسات فعالة لمعالجة هذه الظاهرة والحد منها، إذ إن التصدي للأسباب الجذرية أكثر جدوى وفاعلية من مجرد مواجهة جرائم الفساد بعد وقوعها. ولذلك، تركز التوصيات على استراتيجيات متعددة الأبعاد لمكافحة الفساد، من خلال تقديم إطار شامل لفهم الآليات السببية للفساد، بهدف تعزيز الحوكمة الفعالة وضمان المساءلة، وذلك عبر تزويد صانعي السياسات والباحثين برؤى عملية تمكّنهم من تصميم استراتيجيات موجهة لمكافحة الفساد تعالج دوافعه البنيوية والسلوكية.

***الكلمات المفتاحية:** التصنيف السببي للفساد؛ الأسباب المؤسسية؛ الأسباب السياسية والاقتصادية؛ الأسباب الاجتماعية والثقافية؛ العوامل الدولية؛ الشفافية والنزاهة؛ الوقاية من الفساد؛ استراتيجيات مكافحة الفساد.*

.Introduction:

Corruption is a complex phenomenon that must be addressed in order to limit its spread and protect society from its effects. However, the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of this effort require an understanding of the internal and external variables that contribute to its occurrence and proliferation. These variables consist of the causes and factors that, in one way or another, foster the spread and entrenchment of corruption. Identifying these causes can, at the very least, help mitigate corruption and its consequences.

The worsening of corruption is due to the interplay of numerous causes. Thus, researchers exploring the topic often encounter a diversity and divergence in the reasons provided to explain it. This is because corruption is a complex social phenomenon that is difficult to interpret and analyze; it is the result of a combination of interrelated and interacting causes that are practically inseparable. Some of these causes relate to legal aspects, others to administrative shortcomings, some are tied to political dimensions, others to economic factors, and still others to socio-cultural dynamics, alongside the impact of international factors.

Nevertheless, it is essential to attempt to identify the key variables that lead to the emergence and spread of corruption, with the aim of preventing it or at least mitigating its effects.

On this basis, the central problem addressed by the article revolves around the nature of the variables that cause the emergence and spread of corruption, and the extent to which identifying these variables is important for the prevention and combatting of corruption.

To address this problem, we found it appropriate to explore in this article the "Causes of Corruption" through various theoretical approaches, organized into six main points. We begin with legal causes, highlighting manifestations such as the absence, weakness, or flaws in existing laws. We then examine administrative causes and their underlying factors, followed by political causes and related issues. Next, we analyze economic causes, move on to socio-cultural causes, and finally address international factors. This exploration will be structured according to the following outline:

I. Legal Causes, II. Administrative Causes, III. Political Causes, IV. Economic Causes, V. Socio-Cultural Causes, VI. International Factors..

I. Legal Causes

Legal causes represent an important aspect of the factors contributing to corruption. The absence or weakness of laws, or even the existence of laws that are flawed or unenforced, constitutes a major factor in the occurrence and spread of corruption. The mere existence of laws does not guarantee the absence of corruption or its containment. For instance, laws with legal loopholes or ambiguous wording create an environment conducive to corruption, characterized by the lack of legal security.

It is important to point out that the absence of anti-corruption laws is not the only factor that inevitably leads some individuals to commit acts of corruption; the absence of other types of legislation also plays a role. When there are no legal rules governing relationships between individuals within society, or regulating their interactions with state institutions, this inevitably leads to social disorder. The principle of "rule of law" is one of the foundations of the social system in all its dimensions. Since the rule of law is the essential standard for implementing order and justice, and because its purpose is to protect fundamental rights and freedoms, the existence of laws is crucial to achieving the concept of equality, by ensuring that all individuals and institutions are subject to the law. The rule of law must prevail over all.

Conversely, the lack of respect for the law, whether due to its absence or the absence of equality before it, leads to the belief that the law is not the path to obtaining rights; rather, that rights can be secured through unlawful means (Sweilem, 2010, p. 22). This opens a significant gateway for corruption due to legal causes.

Even when laws exist, corruption may arise if the legal texts are unclear, poorly drafted, or if there are contradictions between different laws or within the same law in a given country. These situations create opportunities and favorable conditions for the occurrence and spread of corruption.

To illustrate this, we can refer to an example related to anti-money laundering legislation at the international level. Most countries have enacted laws to combat this crime due to its severe negative effects. However, some countries, such as the Government of Seychelles, have recently adopted a law called the "Economic Development Act," which grants foreign investors immunity from prosecution for all criminal offenses, provided their investments exceed 10 million dollars. Such a law presents a serious flaw — a legal loophole that allows smugglers, drug traffickers, and others to launder their illicit funds by investing them in that country .(Dawood, 2003, p. 139)

Regarding the role of legal ambiguity in fostering corruption, another example is the lack of clarity in tax and customs laws. This often leads taxpayers to engage in repeated interactions with officials to inquire about their obligations

and how to fulfill them. Such frequent contact creates a fertile environment for bribery. Furthermore, it grants officials discretionary power over the application of crucial laws, especially regarding incentives and exemptions, thus exacerbating corruption (Schiavo-Campo, 1999, p. 6).

Therefore, the mere existence of laws and regulations is not sufficient. They may remain locked away in drawers or exist only as unenforced instructions and directives, due to their failure to precisely define the criminalized acts (Schiavo-Campo, 1999, p. 138). Moreover, the failure to update laws in response to global changes, the complexity of some laws, and the rapid succession of legal reforms can result in contradictions and difficulties in interpretation. This gives officials greater authority to rely on their personal interpretation, thereby increasing the risk of arbitrary and biased decisions serving their own interests (Melinikov, 2008, p. 5).

II. Administrative Causes

In general, it can be said that the nature and quality of administrative engineering contribute significantly to the spread of corruption, particularly administrative corruption. Robert Tilman, in one of his studies on corruption, explained that its cause lies in the existence of an environment where the government's public policy supports a bureaucratic system (Mahmoud, 1994, pp. 49-50).

This argument was reinforced by Ralph Braibanti, who stated that governmental corruption and misconduct exist within all forms of bureaucracy (Mahmoud, 1994, p. 50).

Thus, administrative causes are among the main factors behind the spread of corruption, as they are directly linked to the administrative environment. These causes are primarily manifested in poor administrative organization, bureaucratic leadership characterized by the multiplicity of administrative officials and the overlap of their responsibilities, weak administrative oversight, negligence in addressing corruption cases, and the failure to implement deterrent measures. Such conditions strip administrative employees of their sense of responsibility. Moreover, the lack of incentives and rewards for employees who perform positively, along with the absence of justice in the distribution of workloads, fosters indifference, creating a fertile ground for favoritism and bribery in administrative dealings.

Accordingly, the main administrative causes of corruption can be summarized as follows:

The absence of human relations in the workplace, which would otherwise be ensured through proper care for employees' conditions. and humane treatment that guarantees their rights (Al-Naqeeb, 2002, p. 118).

Weak oversight of governmental performance or the lack of neutrality among those responsible for it (Haimer, 2007, p. 118)

The absence of structures, institutions, and laws capable of deterring corruption, or at least the ineffectiveness of such mechanisms if they do exist, thus allowing bureaucratic elements, especially senior officials, to pursue their private interests by exploiting the various factors enabling administrative corruption (Al-Hussein, 1997, p. 147) .

The lack of scientific distribution of responsibilities and duties, in addition to the overstaffing of administrative bodies, which incapacitates them from fulfilling their roles and meeting citizens' needs. This, in turn, drives citizens to entice employees into adopting behaviors contrary to work rules and regulations (Al-Hudjaili, 2001, p. 53).

In this context, it is worth mentioning the findings of a seminar held in Damascus under the title "Corruption as a Global, Arab, and Local Phenomenon," which indicated that one of the key causes of administrative corruption is the failure to combat corrupt individuals within the administration or the issuance of lenient penalties against them. Additionally, a lack of transparency in administrative procedures and the absence of independent oversight bodies, combined with the failure to adopt modern methods and tools to handle new developments, contribute significantly to corruption. The continued reliance on traditional approaches causes delays in processing transactions, prompting stakeholders to resort to offering bribes to expedite their dealings (Al-Hudjaili, 2001, p. 53).

The seminar also pointed out that factors such as the inefficiency of oversight bodies, the absence of exemplary leadership, the low educational level among many public officials, and the preoccupation of senior administrators with minor issues due to excessive centralization all leaving little time for focusing on strategic matters contribute to making the administrative system vulnerable to corruption. Furthermore, the exclusion of skilled and experienced personnel from decision-making positions, as their approach conflicts with the personal interests of corrupt officials, further facilitates the spread of corruption within the administrative apparatus.

Additionally, a study conducted by the Arab Center for Security Studies emphasized that the personal traits of leadership figures in society, the leniency in enforcing regulations and instructions, and the influence of prevailing social values on the administrative system are among the contributing factors to corruption (Al-Hudjaili, 2001, pp. 53-54).

Finally, the inefficiency of employees is also considered an administrative cause of corruption. Administrative work requires a certain level of knowledge

and skill, and the absence of these qualities creates a fertile environment for the spread of various forms of corruption (Haimer, 2007, p. 118).

III. Political Causes

Political causes refer to factors of a political nature, encompassing all that relates to the system of governance, the conditions of the ruling elites, political fluctuations, the absence of freedoms and democratic systems within civil society institutions, the weakness of media and oversight mechanisms, the state of political parties, the level of political awareness, and political stability, among others (Matar, 2011, p. 300). A number of these factors, particularly in developing countries, can be identified as leading to the emergence of corruption. The causes of corruption in these countries differ from those observed in developed nations (Ali, 2009, p. 16), although the latter also occasionally experience significant corruption scandals.

Political conditions and related factors are among the primary causes of many crimes, driven by struggles for influence and the violation of laws to attain prestigious positions within the state.

The main political causes of corruption can be summarized as follows: the spread of government bureaucracy, excessive centralization of governmental administration, the poor performance of certain authorities, the absence of effective political authority allowing the executive branch to dominate and overshadow both the legislative and judicial branches (Maabara, 2011, p. 115), as well as the lack of informal influence channels such as civil society organizations and the media (Bania, 2007, p. 23). Moreover, the weakness of specialized oversight bodies in uncovering corruption exacerbates the phenomenon.

The spread and intensification of corruption can also occur in the absence of judicial independence; a situation closely tied to the principle of the separation of powers. In most advanced and democratic countries, the judiciary operates independently of the political system's functions and performance, thereby granting broader scope and greater effectiveness to an impartial judiciary. Such a judiciary exercises its duties fairly, possesses deterrent authority applicable across society without discrimination, and this deterrent power is a fundamental pillar for promoting justice and equality among citizens (Matar, 2011, p. 300).

The absence of an effective political system based on a balanced separation of the three powers (legislative, executive, and judicial) and their appropriate distribution that is, the absence of a state founded on political, legal, and constitutional institutions leads to a lack of intrinsic motivation to combat corruption (Maabara, 2011, p. 115).

Authoritarian rule is also a major cause of corruption, as political calculations aimed at monopolizing power, the prolonged tenure of political

officials, and the appointment of loyal but often incompetent individuals eventually result in institutional paralysis. Over time, networks of vested interests exploit this situation to practice corruption. Moreover, prioritizing political agendas over the rule of law enables political interests to determine the fate of individuals implicated in corruption cases (Al-Helou, 1987, p. 46).

It is essential to highlight that the weakness of democratic practices and the restriction of participation in public affairs contribute to the occurrence and spread of corruption crimes. The widespread presence of authoritarianism and dictatorship in many countries directly fosters the growth of this phenomenon (Al-Shuaibi, Sptember 20-23, 2004, p. 721).

We must also note that states undergoing transitional phases moving from dictatorship to democracy, from occupation to independence, or from internal revolution to stable governance are particularly vulnerable to corruption (Salem & Al-kaabi, 2011, p. 75).During these periods, the novelty and incompleteness of institutional and legal structures create a favorable environment for corrupt actors, who exploit the weakness or absence of oversight mechanisms (Bawadi, 2008, p. 98).

Additionally, the failure of governments to develop strict policies and to adopt serious measures and actions against corruption is one of the main political causes of its occurrence and proliferation (Aziz, 2006, p. 8). Political corruption can also result from political parties resorting to illicit methods to secure votes, such as vote-buying or making false promises (Al-Shuaibi, Sptember 20-23, 2004, p. 720).

In short, political causes are the primary driver of corruption (Salem & Al-kaabi, 2011, p. 76). These causes arise due to the absence of transparency, integrity, accountability, and the rule of law values intrinsically linked to democracy as a societal culture. The United Nations Convention Against Corruption emphasizes this connection, stating in its preamble:

"Concerned about the seriousness of problems and threats posed by corruption to the stability and security of societies, undermining the institutions and values of democracy, ethical values, and justice, and jeopardizing sustainable development and the rule of law" (Al-Harishawi, 2008, p. 121).

The preamble also highlights that cases of corruption involving massive assets can represent a significant proportion of a country’s resources, thereby threatening political stability and sustainable development (Al-Harishawi, 2008).

It is important to remember that corruption is not absent even in advanced and long-established democratic systems. However, in these countries, corruption remains exceptional, and when it does occur, institutions and mechanisms are promptly activated to fight it (Nations U. , 2003, p. Preamble Para (1)).

In a United Nations report published in February 2004, titled "Fighting Corruption," the causes of the spread of corruption were identified as: the absence of democracy, the accompanying spread of monopolies, the lack of accountability and transparency, the prevalence of oppression and injustice, and the violation of human rights (Nations U. , 2003, p. Preamble Para (3)).

Another international report listed the reasons behind the emergence and spread of corruption in societies, despite a near-consensus that it is a negative human behavior driven by self-interest. The report summarized the causes as follows:

The spread of poverty, ignorance, and lack of awareness of individual rights, along with the dominance of traditional values and kinship ties;

The failure to uphold the principle of balanced separation of the three branches of power (executive, legislative, and judicial), with the executive often overpowering the legislative, thereby compromising the principle of mutual oversight;

The weakness and lack of independence of the judiciary, encouraging corruption;

The weakness or lack of independence of oversight bodies;

The increased opportunities for corruption during transitional periods and political, economic, and social transformations, due to the novelty or incompleteness of institutional frameworks and legal systems, which create favorable conditions for corrupt activities;

The weak political will among leadership to fight corruption, often due to their own involvement in corrupt practices or the involvement of their affiliates;

The deterioration of public services and institutions, prompting employees to seek alternative sources of income, often through bribery;

The absence of formal work procedures, written codes of conduct for public and private sector employees, opening the door to corrupt practices;

The lack of media freedom and restrictions on citizens' access to information and commercial records, preventing them from playing their oversight role on government and public institution activities;

The weakness or lack of neutrality of civil society organizations and private institutions in monitoring government performance;

The absence of legislation and regulations to combat corruption and to impose sanctions on perpetrators.

In conclusion, it can be said that the level of corruption tends to decrease in systems where institutional controls among the three branches of government are established and effective mechanisms exist to prevent, detect, and punish such illegal behavior (Sweilem, 2010, p. 18).

Conversely, corruption levels rise when institutional mechanisms to combat it are weak or unused, especially when governments exert excessive control over economic resources and regulations. Such conditions provide abundant opportunities for illegitimate practices, leading to the normalization of corruption. In these systems, narrow political elites dominate economic opportunities, exploit them, and use valuable political opportunities for personal gain. Official controls diminish, and alternative means for defending vulnerable interests and groups become scarce (Atiya, 2008, p. 107).

IV. Economic Causes

Economic causes refer to the deteriorating economic conditions and their outcomes, which drive the occurrence and spread of corruption, such as weak investment (Atiya, 2008, p. 107), capital flight abroad, the monopolization of employment and investment in the economic sector by a specific segment of society, as well as the scarcity of job opportunities and rising levels of unemployment and poverty (Atiya, 2008, pp. 107-108).

Generally poor economic conditions ultimately reflected in the state's inability to meet the basic needs of its citizens are a major cause of the corrupt practices that prevail in society (Nations D. P., 1998, p. 9). Various economic factors contribute to the occurrence and spread of corruption. The worsening of economic crises leads to a decline in individual income levels, thus pushing some people to seek illicit sources of income. Moreover, the persistence of high unemployment rates, the spread of poverty and need, all serve as catalysts for corruption. In addition, the lack of or poor planning of economic development based on scientific principles, the absence of feasibility studies for projects, the poor distribution of wealth, and the lack of transparency and objectivity in the exploitation of state resources are all major drivers of corrupt behavior (Nations D. P., 1998, p. 10).

Poverty is thus a factor in corruption, at least in some of its forms, particularly in the bribery of low-level officials. Furthermore, the state’s failure to ensure a degree of fairness in the distribution of resources and wealth through the exploitation of privileged positions in society and in the political system by those in power, allowing them to monopolize the largest share of economic benefits leads to feelings of injustice among the majority of society (Maabad, 2012, p. 44). This, in turn, pushes some individuals toward illegitimate means to obtain a higher share of income to restore the lost balance among social classes. For instance, a citizen suffering from poverty and a low standard of living may

not hesitate to sell their vote in exchange for money or other material benefits, including employment opportunities or various facilitations (Al-Dessouki, 2012, p. 31).

Another economic cause of corruption is the severe shortage and excessive discrepancy in salaries and benefits, especially for public employees in developing countries, particularly the lower ranks. This leaves them unable to meet their basic living needs, compelling them to accept or even solicit bribes from citizens to compensate for their insufficient income (Al-Harishawi, 2008, p. 121). In this regard, the 1999 Transparency International report on corruption attributed the spread of corruption in the public sector of developing countries to low salaries (Al-Harishawi, 2008, p. 121).

Conversely, wealth can also be a motivating factor behind certain forms of corruption. Some perpetrators of corruption crimes are individuals who already possess enough wealth to meet their essential needs. It is often observed that those who commit acts of bribery and embezzlement, for instance, are senior officials who receive high salaries and numerous benefits. Such cases are especially prevalent in countries undergoing economic or even political transitions and that adopt a capitalist development policy focused on free economic growth without concern for equitable distribution.

As a result, new social strata emerge, possessing wealth without political influence. These groups then resort to attracting those in power through corrupt practices such as bribery, commissions, and other inducements in order to gain their support (Pope & Vogel, 2000, p. 6). Such individuals, like their poorer counterparts, engage in corruption driven by the desire for greater material gain and luxurious living. In this context (Mounir, 1992, p. 176), Ibn Khaldun remarked: "The true cause of corruption is the elite's desire to live a luxurious life and cover their extravagant expenses." From this perspective, both poverty and wealth, each in their own way (El-Gohary, 1992), play a role in the occurrence and spread of corruption (El-Gohary, 1992, p. 233).

Another economic factor contributing to corruption is the lack of economic efficiency in some countries, where most economic activities are shady deals or result from brokerage operations heavily influenced by financial corruption. This inevitably affects the structure and level of the national economy by disrupting the smooth execution of projects and production processes (Afandi, 1999, p. 56).

Furthermore, the accumulation of massive wealth (in the form of assets, properties, and natural resources) in the hands of regimes creates favorable opportunities for officials to access confidential economic data, which they exploit thanks to exceptional powers, thus soliciting bribes and looting public wealth (Klitgaard, 2000, p. 3). The expanding economic role of the state is considered a major cause of corruption: individuals tend to propose or accept

bribes to bypass rules, regulations, and bureaucratic procedures (Ibrahim, 1995, p. 8). State control over the economy, or the monopolization of the economic sector by a limited number of institutions, coupled with protection from competition, encourages monopolists to engage in corrupt practices. (Mauro, 1998, p. 11)

V. Socio-Cultural Causes

In its narrow sense, social causes refer to the network of relationships connecting an individual to others. Perhaps the most influential factor in shaping a person's character and general behavior is the set of values acquired through interactions with those in their social environment. Criminologists categorize the social environments an individual experiences into three types: an imposed environment, such as the environment of upbringing; an incidental environment, such as the school setting; and a chosen environment, like one's personal family.

Cultural causes, on the other hand, are a set of social factors with an intangible nature that is, they consist of the moral and religious values upon which society is based. Researchers in criminology have linked certain cultural factors to criminal phenomena, considering that they can influence crime either positively or negatively. Among the most prominent cultural factors studied in relation to criminal behavior are education and the media.

Social causes are considered particularly important in the emergence and spread of corruption within a society. Certain cultural values emphasize the individual's attachment to their family, tribe, clan, friends, and the village they belong to. Thus, when someone assumes an important public position, they are often expected to offer services to those with whom they share such specialties even if doing so requires violating the law or the principle of equal opportunity (Al-Hudjaili, 2001, p. 6). These dynamic fosters the emergence of corrupt values (Sweilem, 2010, p. 19).

According to this perspective, the social approach explains corruption as stemming purely from social and cultural factors. It rejects the idea that most corruption results from individual motives to defy social norms (Shamiya, 2007-2008, p. 22). Instead, it views corruption as a form of social deviance that arises from the collaboration between the social system and the cultural values prevailing in society. In other words, corruption, in its all forms, is attributed to the social environment and the structure of prevailing relationships. From this point of view, the causes of corruption are seen in the duality of values: formal organizational values that reflect the aspirations of official institutions, and social values that represent the desires of groups, customs, and traditions. The conflict between these two types of values influences individual behavior and performance, ultimately leading to the dominance of unofficial social values and, consequently, corrupt practices (Ali, 2009, p. 17).

This outcome is especially driven by a lack of awareness, limited knowledge of individual rights (Al-Shammari & Al-Fatlawi, 2011, p. 38), the dominance of traditional values and kinship ties, as well as the weakness and retreat of public services and institutions that serve citizens (Talib & Al-Amri, 2014, p. 59). Therefore, raising public awareness is vital, because corruption arising from these causes is among the most dangerous, due to its deep infiltration into the cultural and social fabric. In such cases, society loses its ability to distinguish between honest behavior and corrupt actions, or between moral and immoral conduct. Additionally, it disrupts social norms by expanding societal tolerance and acceptance of corrupt practices and values, leading people to increasingly overlook them (Atiya, 2008, p. 211).

On the international level (Haimer, 2007, p. 111), the prevailing values and culture within some societies also play a significant role in either fostering or mitigating corruption. In some societies, the cultural values allow corruption to be more tolerated or even integrated into customs and traditions, whereas in others, culture acts as a safeguard against corruption. This discrepancy stems from differences in the culture and values between these types of societies, where corruption may either face strict pursuit or be widely accepted (Al-Din & Al-Sayed, 2001, p. 206).

Wars and internal or external conflicts also represent social causes of corruption. The consequences of such conflicts extend deeply into the social life and internal environment of societies. In such conditions, people may resort to criminal behavior to maintain their standard of living or to meet their basic needs, which have been deprived by the turmoil caused by wars and conflicts (Al-Hunayti, 2003, p. 398).

From the above, it can be concluded that social values and customs can cause deviations from work rules and regulations, especially when those rules have foreign origins. This is linked to the colonial domination that infiltrated civilized societies, combined with a general weakness in social awareness regarding the principles of rights and duties, ultimately leading to corruption. Moreover, narrow affiliations, loyalties, and kinship relations can also contribute to deviation from work regulations and systems. However, despite the impact of social and economic pressures on value systems and culture, it must be acknowledged that many positive values have historically remained entrenched within individuals. Values do not disappear entirely, nor do they change completely with shifting material circumstances. In every phase of a society's life, certain values may dominate due to economic conditions, but they do not entirely erase the positive social values of previous eras.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to implement educational and awareness programs to raise the level of public consciousness. This can be achieved by organizing seminars and scheduling lectures to highlight the dangers and devastating effects

of corruption on society and the state as a whole. The United Nations Convention against Corruption also encourages such initiatives, as it places upon State Parties the responsibility of promoting educational and training programs to ensure that public officials can fulfill their duties with integrity, professionalism, and sound ethics. These programs may include codes or standards of conduct applicable to relevant areas, aiming to increase officials' awareness of the dangers of corruption in the performance of their duties (Zwailef & Al-Louzi, 1993, p. 9).

VI. International Factors

The new perspective explaining the causes of corruption adds another dimension to the previously discussed causes: the international dimension. By this, we mean external factors that surround states and societies and impose certain systems (Ibrahim, 1995, p. 6), policies, and procedures upon them such as the colonial legacy and the influence of other international powers through foreign investment, foreign aid, and similar factors (Ashour, 2006, p. 63). External causes often arise from financial and commercial interests and relationships with external partners, and from the use of illegal means by both local and international partners to obtain privileges within the state (Klitgaard, Controlling Corruption (Translated by: Ali Hussein Hajjaj), 1994, p. 94). Thus, such causes are reflected in what is commonly referred to as "transnational corruption."

Moreover, the technological and informational revolution, modern communication networks (Al-Dessouki, 2012, p. 31), and software developments have contributed to making corruption spread across the globe at the click of a button. Some even argue that the corruption accompanying globalization represents the other side of the open-market policies globalization has produced (Salem & Al-kaabi, 2011, p. 65).

International factors are among the variables influencing the commission of corruption crimes, even though they have not historically received extensive attention as primary determinants (Nations U. , 2003, p. Article 7 (d)). Despite the significant role foreign aid, foreign investment, and international trade play in generating rents for corrupt officials, only recently have policymakers begun to seriously focus on these causes. There is now a growing call to direct efforts toward combating international corruption, which may manifest as bribes and illicit payments within the framework of trade, foreign aid, and investment flows between countries, or as preferential treatment in trade opportunities or biases toward certain investment proposals (Al-Kubaisi, 2005, p. 70).

This type of corruption often accompanies the presence of foreign companies striving to secure contracts in certain countries, resorting to questionable activities that generate corruption locally (Maabad, 2012, p. 44).

Another major cause of corruption and its spread internationally is the rise and expansion of international economic integration. One of its side effects is the prevalence of corruption, due to the investments and commercial exchanges it facilitates activities that are often accompanied by corrupt practices. Furthermore, the increase in strategic and cooperative alliances, both within individual countries and across borders in various strategic sectors, is another factor promoting corruption (Al-Shuaibi, Sptember 20-23, 2004, p. 724). The interconnectedness of the international financial system through electronic networks facilitates corruption opportunities, as does the global spread of e-commerce, especially when some countries overlook corrupt practices, believing the negative impacts will not affect them directly but will be felt elsewhere (Al-Kubaisi, 2005, p. 71).

Additionally, the globalization and digitalization of international finance have made it easier to remove the label of “proceeds of criminal activity” from corrupt funds. It has become technically easier than before to disguise illegal money, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between legitimate and illicit funds (Al-Kubaisi, 2005, p. 72).

Foreign intervention in the internal affairs of countries is also a factor contributing to corruption. Some countries particularly Western ones use lobbying groups to achieve their various goals, which constitutes a form of corruption. For instance, to achieve political objectives, such countries might destabilize or overthrow the political systems of targeted states, with the aim of spreading instability and corruption to facilitate their domination and influence (Al-Masri, 2001, p. 8).

It is evident from this that the West has exported many destructive ideas to developing countries, among them the notion that a little corruption is harmless — likened to "the grease that keeps the wheels turning." Corruption thus became a commodity to be exported: foreign powers show little hesitation in bribing politicians, influential figures, and decision-makers to further their interests. This form of corruption is among the most dangerous, due to its close connection with domestic corruption (Al-Jabri, pp. 13-16).

Furthermore, foreign aid and economic assistance provided by developed countries in the form of loans or grants to economically weaker states are among the international economic causes of corruption. Although such aid often presents itself as humanitarian — ostensibly aimed at supporting the economies of these states — the reality reveals that it is frequently a tool to implement specific political agendas. In many cases, such aid leads to the consolidation of foreign monopolies, effectively functioning as a modern form of economic colonization, which creates a fertile environment for the growth and spread of corruption within governmental institutions (Al-Harishawi, 2008, p. 122).

The causes of corruption, as outlined through the various proposed approaches, are multiple and diverse. Although they are often interwoven, whether at the national or international level, understanding their complexity is key to effectively addressing and combating corruption.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, we summarize a set of findings and present some recommendations**:**

Findings:

The clarity and quality of rules reduce the likelihood of corruption compared to cases where officials enjoy a high degree of discretion**.**

Systems characterized by accountability, effective measures to promote ethics and integrity, and the availability of information about outcomes are less prone to corruption**.**

The multiplicity and diversity of corruption's causes, both nationally and internationally, stem from the failure to enforce laws and regulations by various state agencies**.**

Identifying the causes of corruption helps in formulating policies that can provide solutions and address this phenomenon**.**

Addressing the causes of corruption is more effective and beneficial than dealing with corruption crimes after they have been committed by corrupt individuals**.**

Corruption represents a social deviation, resulting from the collaboration of both the social system and the culture of the society in its emergence and development**.**

International factors are among the variables influencing the commission of corruption crimes**.**

Recommendations:

1. Introduce more effective mechanisms for scrutinizing legislative initiatives (projects and proposals) to avoid corrupt legislative inputs, and strengthen this by allowing appeals before the Constitutional Court to ensure the quality of legal texts related to preventing and combating corruption**.**
2. Make amendments to administrative structures and their nature, granting more flexibility to the functioning of administrations on one hand and facilitating the monitoring of their activities on the other**.**
3. Encourage and incentivize employees and empower them with competence and specialization**.**
4. Adopt transparency, integrity, accountability, and the rule of law as values closely tied to democracy, which should be embraced as a societal culture. This would enable a balanced separation of powers and the implementation of mutual checks to reduce corrupt practices**.**
5. Implement deep economic reforms aimed at sustainable and equitable economic growth, in order to eliminate, to the extent possible, the underlying motives for corruption**.**
6. Prepare and implement educational and awareness programs to raise public awareness among citizens — through seminars and conferences as a vital matter in the fight against the causes of corruption**.**
7. Direct efforts toward combating international corruption by encouraging states to join the United Nations Convention against Corruption ("Merinda"), as it is the most important legal foundation that can be relied upon in preventing and combating corruption**.**

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