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The Role of Non-Formal Actors in Preventing and Combating Corruption

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Abstract:

The article addresses the phenomenon of corruption as a complex global issue affecting various countries and sectors, with significant negative impacts on economic, social, and political development. It highlights the role of non-formal actors, particularly political parties, civil society, and media institutions, in supporting state efforts to prevent and combat corruption through oversight, awareness-raising, and exposure of illicit practices. The article also emphasizes that the effectiveness of these roles depends on the level of transparency, institutional independence, and cooperation between the state and these actors. It concludes that combating corruption requires a comprehensive approach based on societal participation and the strengthening of good governance mechanisms.

Keywords: *corruption; governance; transparency; civil society; political parties,anti-corruption.*

Introduction:

Corruption constitutes one of the serious problems confronting nations and peoples in general. It is not confined to a particular category of individuals, nor to a specific State as opposed to another, nor to one people or culture rather than another, Notwithstanding the existence of variations in its magnitude and degree from one society to another, it nevertheless remains a phenomenon as old as human societies themselves, from which most countries of the world suffer.

Corruption-related crimes have also proliferated in recent years and have become a prominent feature affecting many national economies because of their adverse effects on development and their serious repercussions on the financial and economic system, both at the domestic and international levels, this is due to the fact that corruption constitutes an organized crime that threatens stability and development. There is no means of eradicating it except through the

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concerted efforts of both international and domestic actors aimed at combating it and reducing its effects, which threaten national security, development, and the substantial wealth, capacities, and resources of every country it affects.

In light of the technological development witnessed by the world, corruption has likewise evolved and has assumed multiple modern forms that have enabled it to penetrate various fields it was previously unable to access. Consequently, the efforts exerted by States and their governments in combating corruption have become insufficient, and the mechanisms for combating it have turned into traditional mechanisms that are easily circumvented considering such developments.

Accordingly, it has become necessary to establish new strategies for combating corruption that consider all aspects capable of contributing to addressing corruption in its various forms, through reliance on the formal mechanisms established by the State to confront corruption, as well as on informal actors, given their significant roles in the prevention and combating of corruption, This is because political parties, civil society organizations, and media institutions play a major role in this task, by virtue of the capacities they possess that render them essential partners in this endeavor, which requires the concerted efforts of both formal and informal actors to reduce its negative effects.

On this basis, the subject of this research paper will be addressed based on the following problem statement: ***To what extent can non-formal actors effectively contribute to the prevention and combating of corruption, and what are the main challenges limiting their effectiveness?***

- Methodology: *This study adopts a descriptive-analytical design grounded in an institutional-legal approach to examine the role of non-formal actors in anti-corruption governance, the descriptive dimension maps the conceptual and normative foundations of corruption and non-formal actors, while the analytical dimension critically evaluates their functional contribution within multi-actor governance frameworks.*

- Study Limits: *The study is conceptually delimited to the preventive and oversight functions of non-formal actors within anti-corruption systems, it adopts a comparative, cross-national perspective without country-specific restriction; temporally, it is situated within the post-2003 normative framework established by the United Nations Convention against Corruption.*

In order to answer this problem, the following plan has been adopted:

- Chapter I: Corruption and the Causes of Its Spread

- Chapter II: The Contribution of Informal Actors to Combating the Various Forms of Corruption

Chapter I: Corruption and the Causes of Its Spread:

There is no disagreement that corruption is a phenomenon rejected by all. Nevertheless, it is a condition that exists and is widespread in all countries of the world, affecting all institutions regardless of their nature, it is also observed that those who engage in corruption are individuals occupying different levels and positions; for the purpose of defining a clear, precise, and comprehensive meaning of the concept of corruption, it is necessary to refer to the following:

First: Definition of Corruption:

There is no comprehensive, restrictive, and precise definition of corruption in the sense in which the term is used today, However, there are different approaches that have defined corruption according to its multiple aspects and orientations, depending on differences in prevailing cultures and values, as well as the perspective from which it is examined-whether political, economic, social, or administrative-which explains the divergence in defining the concept of corruption.(1)

1- From a Jurisprudential Perspective:

There is no agreed-upon definition among legal scholars regarding corruption. However, some have defined corruption, from a legal perspective, as the misuse of public office for personal purposes or the commission of prohibited acts that a public official is able to carry out alone, including fraud, embezzlement, bribery, extortion, abuse of influence, nepotism, and the misuse of public funds. Another definition considers corruption as a set of acts that violate laws and are aimed at influencing the conduct, decisions, or activities of public administration to obtain direct material benefit or indirect gain.(2)

Robert Tilman defined corruption as "that which prevails in an environment where public policy supports a bureaucratic system, where most transactions are conducted in relative secrecy, and where formal sanctions are not applied, such as bribery, the employment of relatives lacking qualifications and experience, and similar practices."(3)

As for Dr. Ahmed Rashid, corruption is defined as "an immoral act and a deviant and improper functional behavior contrary to what is

appropriate, whose objective is deviation, illicit gain, and departure from the system for personal interest."[4]

It is noted that these definitions converge on a single meaning, namely that corruption refers to the violation of applicable laws and regulations in each society, the transformation of public service from serving the public interest to serving private interests, as well as the negative impact on society in economic, social, and political terms.

2- Corruption from the Perspective of International Organizations and Bodies:

There are diverse approaches to defining corruption, The perception of corruption and attempts to define it by researchers are influenced by the scholar's academic field and the perspective from which the definition is formulated. Accordingly, there is no consensus on a definition of corruption that is accepted by all researchers. The definition provided by the World Bank is among the most concise definitions, as it defines corruption as: "the abuse of public office for private gain."[5]

Transparency International defines corruption as "any act involving the misuse of public office for the realization of a private, personal interest for oneself or one's group."[6]

The International Monetary Fund, in its 1997 report, provided a definition of activities falling under the concept of corruption as follows: "the abuse of office for private gain." Corruption typically occurs when an official accepts, solicits, extorts, or receives a bribe to facilitate a contract or a public procurement procedure. It also occurs when agents or intermediaries of private companies or businesses offer bribes to benefit from public policies or procedures to outperform competitors or achieve profits outside the legal framework, Corruption may also occur through the abuse of public office without resorting to bribery, such as the appointment of relatives or the direct embezzlement of public funds.[7]

With reference to international and regional conventions, the United Nations Convention against Corruption defines corruption as "acts that constitute improper performance of a duty or abuse of position or authority, including acts of omission, in anticipation of an undue advantage or in pursuit of an advantage promised, offered, or solicited, directly or indirectly."[8]

The Arab Convention against Corruption follows the same approach adopted by the United Nations Convention against Corruption, focusing on the responsibility of public officials by criminalizing acts limited to bribery, embezzlement, misappropriation of public funds, torture and unlawful coercion, violation of freedoms and the sanctity of homes, damage to public funds, breach of duties of office, obstruction of justice, and money laundering.(9)

3- Corruption from the Perspective of Some Legislations:

In this section, we review the position of some comparative legislations in relation to Algerian legislation, as follows:

A- Definition of the French Legislator: *The French Penal Code distinguishes between active and passive corruption. Active corruption is defined as "the active conduct of a public official aimed at securing or granting a contract," Passive corruption, on the other hand, is defined as "the acceptance by an official of a gift or any other benefit after the award of a contract or the provision of a service."(10)*

B- Definition of the Egyptian Legislator: *The Egyptian legislator does not explicitly address corruption as a legal term; rather, it focuses on bribery under Articles 103 and 103 bis of the Penal Code, although some manifestations of corruption are referred to, the Egyptian legal framework is criticized for the absence of a comprehensive criminalization of corruption, despite its multiple forms and manifestations, Bribery is no longer the sole expression of corruption, as there are numerous behaviors and acts that today fall within what is commonly referred to as corruption.(11)*

C- Definition of Corruption in Algerian Legislation: *Algerian legislation addressed the concept of corruption under Law No. 06-01 of 20 February 2006 on the Prevention and Combating of Corruption.*

Referring to the aforementioned law, it is evident that the Algerian legislator adopted the same approach as the United Nations Convention against Corruption, following Algeria's ratification of the Convention in 2004 pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 04-128 of 19 April 2004. The legislator deliberately refrained from providing a philosophical or descriptive definition of corruption, opting instead to define it through reference to its forms and manifestations. This is confirmed by Article 2, paragraph (a) of Law 06-01, which stipulates that: "corruption consists of all offenses provided for in Chapter Four of this law." Accordingly, corruption offenses are classified into four

categories: "embezzlement and damage to property; bribery and related offenses; offenses relating to public procurement; and concealment of corruption offenses."[12]

However, it may be observed that the Algerian legislator is criticized for limiting corruption to certain manifestations and forms, excluding other acts that fall within the scope of criminalization and remain unpunished despite their seriousness, such as mediation, nepotism, and post-employment benefits.

Second: Factors and Causes of the Spread of Corruption:

Corruption is neither a recent phenomenon nor one limited to developing countries as opposed to developed ones, it is not possible to determine the exact extent of its spread in one region and compare it with another, as this is generally done only in an approximate manner. Most acts of corruption are carried out in secrecy, and such operations are rarely disclosed with ease, as for the causes the factors leading to the growth and spread of corruption differ between developing countries, including Arab States, and developed countries, the factors that contribute to its growth in developing countries vary significantly from those that facilitate its growth in developed countries.[13]

The main causes contributing to the spread of corruption can be summarized as follows:

1- Weakness of Legislative and Executive Institutions:

When corruption affects the position that occupies the apex of the hierarchy, particularly within executive and legislative institutions, members of these bodies tend to exploit the privileges they enjoy, such as parliamentary immunity and influence, they engage in unlawful activities that facilitate their access to material gains and the acquisition of substantial sums of money for themselves, their relatives, or their associates, whether through the receipt of bribes or commissions from beneficiaries to facilitate the issuance of certain decisions that serve their interests, or through the leakage of confidential information regarding their illicit activities. In such circumstances, corruption becomes a general and widespread phenomenon within the State.[14]

Furthermore, the weakness of the three authorities contributes to the entrenchment and expansion of corruption, the weakness of the legislative authority, for example, is manifested when it is unable to enact laws that provide for the punishment of individuals who exploit

their positions and functions to obtain money through illegal means, this authority may be considered weak and ineffective when there are no written instructions or guidelines for employees clarifying their respective rights and obligations.

2- <u>Absence of Transparency and Accountability</u>:

Secrecy, concealment, and lack of objectivity in the use of State financial resources, the determination of government budget items, and the management of economic assistance and adjustment programmes provided by international, friendly, or technical organizations and funds, constitute factors that facilitate the growth and increase of corruption.

The absence of accountability is also one of the factors behind the rise in corruption levels, as corrupt government officials often remain in their positions due to the lack of accountability and transparency, this enables them to conceal and cover up corruption, either by refusing to provide any information or simply by providing false information.(15)

3- <u>Political Instability and Absence of Political Awareness</u>:

Political instability negatively affects the spread of corruption as well as the process of political, economic, and social development, if development planning is considered an essential element for the success of this process, then political stability constitutes the fertile ground upon which the success of such planning depends. There is no doubt that, regardless of how precise development planning and preparation may be, it will not succeed except in a context of political stability, in parallel with political instability, the absence of political awareness constitutes one of the causes of corruption. There are factors that contribute to the formation of this mentality, including despotism and injustice, secrecy and confidentiality in State policy, the suppression of freedoms, and the absence of free media. These, among other causes and factors, contribute to the weakening of political awareness and encourage corruption.(16)

In the absence of political awareness that enhances loyalty to the nation and the community as a substitute for family and tribal affiliations, it inevitably leads, to varying degrees, to the spread of unethical practices that fall within the scope of corruption.(17)

4- <u>Weakness and Lack of Independence of the Judiciary</u>:

The rule of law is one of the fundamental pillars upon which the democratic system in any State is based, the concept of the rule of law

may be defined as the basic standards for the application of the system and the judiciary, the purpose of which is to ensure the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms that every human being must enjoy without discrimination, however, external interventions may render the judiciary deprived of its autonomy and independence.(18)

Judicial independence is a necessary and important principle, deriving its significance from the existence of an independent and impartial judicial authority that exercises its functions in a fair manner and possesses a deterrent power that it applies to society without discrimination.

5- Excess of Administrative Restrictions and Procedures:

The excessive length of administrative procedures from their procedural aspect, and the abundance of restrictions imposed on administrative transactions in relation to required services, constitute a major cause for the emergence of deviations and the emergence of administrative corruption.

This administrative deviation is attributed to poor drafting of laws and regulations governing administrative work, resulting from ambiguity in legal provisions or their contradiction at times, which leads the citizen to incline towards deviation and places the employee in a difficult situation, facing the possibility of resorting to unlawful methods to serve private interests, this deviation leads to the disruption of citizens' interests.(19)

6- Weakness of Penalties for Violations:

Corruption spreads in environments characterized by weak deterrence, where offenders are aware that they are not subject to severe punishment. When punishment is not appropriate to deter corruption, and when its enforcement system is slow in imposing penalties on violators, corruption grows and takes various forms and types, as it finds a suitable environment for its existence.

Moreover, corruption itself creates officials who contribute to making penalties weaker. Accordingly, the weakness of punishment is considered one of the factors facilitating the spread of corruption.(20)

Chapter II: The Contribution of Informal Actors to Combating the Various Forms of Corruption

This section addresses the efforts undertaken by political parties, civil society, and media institutions in the field of combating corruption.

First: Political Parties:

A political party is defined as a group of individuals sharing a specific ideological or intellectual framework within an organized structure inside the State, the primary objective of the party is to attain power to implement its ideological framework and translate it into practice, either in cooperation with another party or independently.(21)

It is also considered a permanent social organization based on shared principles and objectives aimed at reaching power, participating in it, or influencing it. It comprises a socially cohesive group in terms of ideas and engages in various political activities in accordance with a general programme designed to achieve its objectives and expand its popular base at local, national, and international levels.(22)

Joseph Schlesinger defines a political party as: "the political organization that actively and effectively participates in competition for elective offices."

1- Functions of Political Parties:

The functions of political parties have not changed over time, among their assigned tasks are:(23)

- Contributing to the formation of public opinion and promoting an authentic political culture.

- Encouraging the effective participation of citizens in public life.

- Training and preparing elites capable of assuming public responsibilities.

- Nominating candidates for local and national popular councils.

- Working to establish and encourage lasting neighborhood relations between citizens and their institutions.

- Promoting political life, refining its practice, and consolidating the fundamental values and components of society.

- Consolidating democratic practice and peaceful rotation of power.

The most important function of political parties that falls within the framework of confronting corruption is the organization of opposition and the exposure of potential corruption within State institutions, provided that the opposition is strong and operates within a peaceful framework, thus, when a party comes to power and loses elections, it

must immediately work to organize an opposition that acts as a shadow to the government. constituting a form of accountability and oversight over the actions of the ruling party if it deviates from legality, based on its established programme and relying on the means of pressure it possesses vis-à-vis the government.(24)

2- <u>Efforts of Political Parties in Combating Corruption</u>:

Political parties play a pivotal role in achieving democracy through the alternation of power and the realization of the prevailing political equation in democratic states: power/opposition, the latter represents the absent element in the political equation in authoritarian regimes, political opposition constitutes the alternative that creates balance within society and ensures fair competition, as it acts as a pressure force presenting itself as a better alternative to the ruling authority, at the same time, it exercises its supervisory role by exposing the failures and deviations of the authority, including the problem of corruption.

This makes political pluralism one of the most important mechanisms for consolidating the peaceful transfer of power, organizing political life in society, and ensuring popular participation, while also fostering fair competition between comprehensive development programmes as options adopted by civil society through free and fair elections, at the same time, it provides the individual with a sense of belonging and self-esteem as a social actor capable of expressing priorities and effecting change in society.(25)

Thus, political parties embody the principle of political participation, which is considered one of the most important components of modernity and one of the options of human development, Huntington considers it a form of activity carried out by ordinary citizens with the aim of influencing governmental decision-making, in contrast, the absence of participation is considered one of the characteristics of political underdevelopment in most Third World countries, which leads to multiple crises such as identity crises, legitimacy crises, and others. This is due to the nature of authoritarian regimes that reject all opposing thought and reduce participation to a mere façade for legitimizing their continued hold on power.(26)

The contribution of political parties in combating corruption is manifested in the following:(27)

***A- <u>Elected councils</u>**: where elections are considered the most equitable means of expressing the will of the nation. They are a*

mechanism for legitimizing the political system and elected councils, free and fair elections undoubtedly lead to strong elected councils that express the popular will through their representative nature, they also establish a sound political system based on integrity, transparency, and the fight against corruption, relying on their representative, oversight, and accountability roles derived from the Constitution and laws, particularly the monitoring and participatory role exercised at both local and national levels, starting from municipal councils.

B- Legislative councils: *The legislative council is considered one of the most important elected councils as a legislative authority, and one of the principal representative bodies embodying the principles of transparency, accountability, and the fight against corruption, given its legislative and oversight role in monitoring the executive authority, and approving the State budget through hearing sessions and periodic reports submitted to it by various State institutions, as well as through investigative committees.*

Second: Civil Society:

Civil society plays an important role in combating corruption, given the mechanisms it possesses through which it can perform representative, participatory, and supervisory roles, making it a genuine power that contributes directly to confronting any deviant phenomenon that constitutes a form of corruption in all its manifestations.

1- Definition of Civil Society:

Civil society is defined as the set of social, economic, and cultural institutions operating in their respective fields to meet the pressing needs of local communities, in relative independence from State authority and from the influence of corporate capitalism in the private sector, it contributes to policymaking outside political authority and includes trade-union purposes such as defending economic interests, raising professional standards, and expressing members' interests, as well as cultural purposes, as in associations of writers and intellectuals, cultural associations, and social clubs aimed at spreading awareness in accordance with the association's programme.[28]

Civil society has also been defined as: a set of organizations formed by individuals or joined voluntarily, including professional and labour unions, interest groups, civil associations, federations, associations, clubs, committees, and social, cultural, intellectual, scientific, youth,

and sports forums, in addition to women's and student movements, craft bodies, non-governmental research centres, chambers of commerce and industry, and religious institutions not subject to State authority, all these organizations represent social forces, formations, categories, and strata working to achieve their material and moral interests and to defend these interests either in relation to the State or in relation to other civil society forces and organizations.(29)

Dr. Saad Eddin Ibrahim also defines civil society as: a set of voluntary, free, non-governmental, and non-hereditary organizations that fill the public space between the family and the State, aiming to achieve the interests of their members around a cause or interest, and to express collective interests while adhering to the values and standards of respect, consent, tolerance, and peaceful management of diversity and difference.(30)

Shared characteristics of civil society components include their independence from the State, their limited and informal organization when it comes to serving the public sphere, and their capacity to mobilize resources and act collectively, they may seek to defend group interests as a priority, whether such interests are economic, professional, or ethnic, or they may seek to promote broader objectives such as human rights, environmental quality, women's empowerment, social justice, and consumer protection.(31)

From the foregoing, it becomes clear that civil society, under its various denominations, consists of a set of institutions, organizations, or associations operating within economic, social, cultural, and political spheres, it includes groups of individuals who voluntarily engage in these structures, seeking to achieve the public interest through peaceful means and rejecting unlawful methods such as violence.

2- <u>The Importance of the Role of Civil Society in Combating Corruption</u>:

Civil society plays a complementary role to that of the government in combating the phenomenon of corruption, such crimes cannot be contained or addressed without the concerted efforts of both the government and civil society, moreover, the prevention and fight against corruption is a process in which all actors must participate, including individuals and civil society institutions such as trade unions, associations, and political parties.

In an effort to keep pace with global transformations, particularly those related to the promotion of human rights and the involvement of local civil society organizations in the management of local public affairs, Algeria has joined this process, this is evidenced by the preamble of the Anti-Corruption Law, which in its first article refers to the United Nations Convention against Corruption of 2003, furthermore, a careful examination of the provisions of the Anti-Corruption Law shows that its content is largely consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Regarding the role of civil society, Article 15 of the Anti-Corruption Law is substantively aligned with Article 13 of the Convention, which emphasizes the promotion of civil society participation in the fight against corruption.(32)

With regard to the mechanisms and methods used by civil society organizations in combating corruption, they include:(33)

A- <u>Participation in decision-making</u>: *In order to enhance transparency, civil society plays an important role in combating and preventing corruption through its participation alongside governmental institutions in decision-making, as well as through the involvement of citizens in the management of public affairs Involving citizens in the management of public affairs and in assuming responsibility, thereby enabling them to have direct access to information related to the budget and to understand how public funds are spent.*

B- <u>Awareness-raising</u>: *The idea of civil society today is based on the concept of citizenship, which requires the involvement of citizens in the management of public affairs. Accordingly, civil society must conduct awareness campaigns to explain the risks of corruption crimes and their destructive effects on development and undertake media activities that promote intolerance towards corruption and those involved in it, such campaigns should be directed primarily at young people through media and communication channels, as well as through educational and pedagogical programmes that warn against these risks and explain their causes and harmful consequences.*

C- <u>Access to information</u>: *In order to ensure transparency in the management of public affairs, civil society organizations should obtain, disseminate, and circulate information related to corruption, and make it available to citizens, with the aim of exposing corrupt practices and those involved in corruption, this is a sensitive and serious*

responsibility that is no less important than the responsibilities of legislative, executive, and judicial bodies in combating corruption in all its forms, as the role played by civil society has broader dimensions and a wider impact on the public in a direct and clear manner, which is reflected at the local level in all its dimensions.

D- Monitoring: *This is an effective means through which civil society can expose corrupt practices and mobilize public opinion. Civil society can monitor the management of public funds, the awarding of contracts, the activities of political parties, and the financing of electoral campaigns, in many countries, it is observed that private interests and wealthy individuals resort to pressuring politicians and buying them with money.*

Third: Media Institutions:

The processes of public policy formulation, decision-making, and combating corruption are considered large-scale, complex, and multifaceted processes with various dimensions and implications. Governments strive, through these policies, to achieve the development and advancement of their societies and to address events, problems, and public issues that contribute to the progress of the country, these processes face major challenges, including limited human and material capacities and the weakness of other available State resources. There is no doubt that this cannot be achieved in isolation from the need for an integrated and balanced set of political, economic, social, and cultural structures that should be governed by public policies based on comprehensive and integrated scientific planning processes aimed at the growth and development of the components of the State and society in various fields, as well as the optimal utilization and reinforcement of strengths and opportunities, and the confrontation of challenges and weaknesses and their overcoming.[(34)]

1- Definition of Media Institutions:

Media institutions are defined as structured administrative organizations in which a set of distinct activities is carried out by individuals performing media work in accordance with the rules governing the media profession, they produce and exchange information among members of society in a manner that ensures participation without exclusion, particularly in public affairs related to public opinion, thereby constituting a source of information and news for the public.[(35)]

Media institutions also constitute a space for participation and contribution by all actors in society, carried out voluntarily and with full responsibility, they are linked to State authority in terms of legal regulation and administrative control over their activities. Media institutions, in their various forms, share a common function, namely meeting the needs of the public-both individuals and groups-for access to news and information.(36)

As for the types of media institutions, they include press institutions, radio and television institutions, news agencies, publishing houses, and media companies. However, media institutions differ from other commercial institutions in that they guarantee two fundamental rights: the right to access and circulate information, and the right of individuals to freedom of thought and expression, thereby safeguarding a key aspect of civil and political rights enjoyed by individuals.(37)

Media, as a concept, was defined by "Sami Dbyan" as the communicative process that begins with a journalist becoming aware of important information worthy of publication and dissemination, followed by the stages of collecting information from its sources, transmitting it, processing it, editing it, and finally publishing, broadcasting, or sending it through a newspaper, agency, radio station, or television channel to the relevant and interested audience.(38)

Media in its entirety refers to all printed, audio, and visual means, including newspapers, radio, and television, in addition to modern electronic communication tools. In light of technological development, where information, ideas, and events are exchanged in an easy and rapid manner through the internet (electronic journalism, social networks, etc.), media institutions have effectively become a fourth estate due to their influence and their role in shaping public opinion through media coverage of various events concerning all members of society across all issues presented.

2- The Importance of the Role of Media Institutions in Combating Corruption:

Media is one of the social systems most closely linked and interactive with the lives of individuals and groups. It both influences and is influenced by the social, cultural, and cognitive framework of society, the effectiveness of media is measured through the facts and information it provides, the importance of media in contemporary societies has increased significantly due to the media and technological

revolution, which has transformed communication methods, patterns of daily life, and individuals' social relations, as well as their modes of interaction in various social spaces.[39]

In a world where concepts of space and time have changed, and where communication and information technologies dominate, these technologies provide unlimited possibilities for social communication and for the circulation and transmission of information. In this global media space, characterized by multiple platforms, satellite channels, the Internet, and social networks, individuals have become more aware of what is happening around them and are able to access whatever events, issues, information, and problems they wish.

Given the importance of media institutions in the democratic process and in combating corruption, the existence of free and independent media contributes to undermining the foundations of corruption and exposing those who manipulate public funds. In this regard, citizens should be encouraged and enabled to communicate with anti-corruption bodies and media outlets to report corruption cases that come to their knowledge. This is an exercise of citizenship rights.

Conversely, media outlets must engage with activities and initiatives related to the fight against corruption, this process depends on the facts and information provided by the media, as well as its ability to access sources of information related to public affairs and citizens' concerns, this enables the realization of the right to information, which reflects the principle of transparency, primarily requiring the citizen's right to access facts and information related to public affairs and adopted policies, and to evaluate them to address gaps in governance and administration that may lead to corruption.[40]

The importance of media in exposing corruption lies in the following:[41]

- Media outlets are considered instruments of social control and contribute to instilling ethical values and new social practices, social behaviours are subject to civilizational change, as are ways of thinking and working.

- Media outlets contribute to the reordering of the value and behavioural system of the target society by creating new standards, imposing desired social conditions, and promoting acceptable behaviours, while monitoring rejected and deviant phenomena,

exposing them, correcting weak attitudes and orientations, and supporting desirable ideas and orientations consistent with public order and the spirit of the times.

- The effectiveness of media in creating what is referred to as "emotional engagement" is achieved through broadening horizons, shaping a responsible personality, and adopting a modern perspective that shifts society from a traditional model to a modern one, one of the most important roles of media in combating corruption is the development of social solidarity and the reduction of egoism and individualism.

- Media transmits civilizational patterns and sound practices from developed contexts to areas lacking in development and modernization.

- Although individuals may be fully aware of their rights, this alone is not sufficient to ensure their protection. Accordingly, responsibility lies with the media to expose and denounce such violations and to identify their forms, media professionals should consider themselves part of the forces combating corruption with a view to strengthening human rights, likewise, communication networks may establish a value system based on respect for and defence of human rights.

- Investigative media that seeks and uncovers facts constitutes one of the main tools for exposing corruption. Therefore, media should not limit itself to reporting negative aspects or wrongful behaviors, but must actively uncover any form of corruption wherever it exists, however minor it may appear, in order to prevent its expansion and escalation.

- Media bears responsibility for revealing documents, presenting facts related to specific cases, following up investigations, and ensuring their referral to the judiciary for adjudication, accountability of perpetrators, and restitution of rights.

- Media plays a role in mobilizing public opinion to adopt a rejecting stance towards corruption cases and to demand accountability of responsible actors.

Despite the important role played by media institutions in exposing corruption, their effectiveness often remains limited in political systems characterized by restrictions on freedom of expression and limited access to information. In such contexts, investigative journalism may face political pressure, censorship, or legal constraints, reducing its ability to ensure effective public accountability.

3- Efforts of Media Institutions in Preventing Corruption Issues:

Media institutions contribute to the development of solutions, as they constitute the "fourth estate" that closely monitors and follows the course of events and participates in addressing corruption issues through the following:[42]

- Publishing topics aimed at combating corruption and clarifying them to citizens, regardless of their social and economic status, to enable them to understand such issues and participate in them as active actors.

- Raising awareness and educating citizens about the harms caused by corruption in all its forms through media programmes covering audio, visual, and print media, as well as through specialized media teams.

- Contributing to the coverage and dissemination of seminars, conferences, and meetings focusing on integrity and the fight against corruption, particularly those directed at employees across all State sectors and at different administrative levels.

- Monitoring the authorities responsible for implementing laws and guiding them towards the correct path that serves the public interest.

- Publishing the results of achievements made in the fight against corruption among various segments of public opinion, regardless of the status of individuals or cases, thereby consolidating democratic principles.

- Contributing to introducing anti-corruption bodies, clarifying the role of these oversight institutions within the State, and explaining how to access them for reporting corrupt practices.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of non-formal actors in combating corruption remains dependent on several factors, including political pluralism, institutional transparency, judicial independence, freedom of information, and the willingness of public authorities to cooperate with oversight actors. In many cases, political restrictions, weak democratic practices, and limited civic participation reduce the impact of these actors on anti-corruption efforts.

Conclusion:

At the conclusion of this study, it may be stated that informal actors-whether political parties, civil society organizations, or media institutions-can contribute to shaping participation in achieving the

State's objectives in combating corruption in its substantive sense, although these actors do not position themselves as substitutes for the legal mechanisms established by the State, they present themselves as contributing parties alongside official bodies in the formulation of national affairs and in the development of public policies for combating corruption.

Their primary objective lies in participating in the formulation of such policies through research, education, clarification of options, provision of advice, and contribution to enriching and correcting national efforts aimed at developing more effective strategies and appropriate solutions to national development issues, this includes their investigative roles, through which they contribute to containing the phenomenon of corruption and exposing its perpetrators.

However, these alternative mechanisms remain dependent on the extent of the State's acceptance of them, as well as on the level of trust existing between the State and these informal actors, they are also conditioned by internal pressures and the necessity of adopting them as a mechanism for implementing the principles of governance and combating corruption.

Ultimately, combating corruption requires a governance model based on institutional openness and participatory accountability.

Based on the foregoing analysis in our study, the following ***conclusions*** *can be drawn:*

1- Corruption is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by political, legal, administrative, and social factors, which requires integrated anti-corruption strategies.

2- The study demonstrates that non-formal actors contribute significantly to anti-corruption efforts through oversight, awareness-raising, and public participation mechanisms.

3- The effectiveness of these actors remains conditional upon the existence of democratic guarantees such as freedom of expression, access to information, judicial independence, and institutional transparency.

4- The absence of cooperation between formal institutions and non-formal actors weakens anti-corruption governance and limits the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms.

Based on the foregoing analysis of the study, we ***propose*** *the following:*

1- Strengthening legal guarantees protecting freedom of expression and civil society activities to enhance public oversight mechanisms.

2- Enhancing transparency through effective access-to-information mechanisms that enable citizens and media institutions to monitor public affairs.

3- Supporting investigative journalism and protecting whistleblowers as essential tools for exposing corruption practices.

4- Promoting civic education programmes aimed at consolidating integrity values and encouraging public participation in anti-corruption efforts.

5- Reinforcing cooperation between State institutions and non-formal actors within the framework of participatory governance.

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