



# Administrative Transparency and Its Impact on Combating Corruption in Public Jobs

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## Abstract

Administrative corruption is a factor that negatively affects the accomplishment of business and the achievement of the objectives that any organization seeks to reach with the least effort, time and cost. Many studies emphasize the need to study the administrative corruption and its facilitating factors especially in public sectors, so that global tools and strategies including transparency, integrity and accountability can be implemented and combat corruption.

Accordingly, this research intends to theoretically investigate the impact of administrative transparency on combating corruption in public jobs through the utilization of a descriptive methodology, in which the researcher tends to review previous studies and literature in order to identify corruption and its different forms, explore the factors facilitating public administrative corruption, identify anti-corruption strategies (Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in public administration) and clarify the impact of administrative transparency on combating corruption.

It was concluded that it is important to establish and instill the principle of disclosure and transparency in various public organizations because of its importance, being one of the most important means of combating corruption indicated by the UN charter and different investigational studies. Moreover, transparency contributes significantly to enhancing the levels of growth and development of the organizations, in addition to supporting the processes of change and administrative success.

**Keywords:** Corruption, Administrative transparency, Integrity, Accountability.



## Introduction

The problem of corruption in all its forms has recently preoccupied the interest of researchers and politicians all around the world. This great interest in this phenomenon was not born today; corruption represents an old social phenomenon in terms of its existence, but this phenomenon is new in terms of its widespread that crossed borders and barriers between countries in our recent time (Noor & Iqbal, 2013). This phenomenon has crystallized when it became the main topic of people, specialists and researchers' speech, as a result of the spread and rampant corruption in many aspects of life and daily dealings, to the extent that this behavior is now finding those who support it, pave the way in front of it, and considers it of the ethics and behaviors of modern dealing (Svensson, 2007).

It is undeniable that all societies in East and West contain a certain amount of corruption. This was confirmed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (2004) which stated that no country, no matter how democratic, is free from corruption. This social disease affects government officials, politicians, business leaders and journalists alike. It destroys national economies, undermines social stability and undermines public confidence (Qian, 2012).

Consistently data is published about the extent of public resources and revenues lost to corruption. The harm to a country's financial advancement from assets misspent on useless consumption, for example, bribes, and misallocated to those with impact has long been perceived to deter investments, impair trade and increase the expense of doing business (Menocal et al., 2015).

Not only revenue lost when public authority exertion is diverted from the public interest to self-dealing and unfair allocation of public entitlements, but also democratic legitimacy (Sadeghi, Farsani & Aghasi, 2014). At the political level, non-stable government and distanced natives are altogether perceived expenses of corruption. The social outcomes of corruption are found as low quality customer items, entrenched poverty and decreased public safety as government spending is diverted and stolen away from public necessities including health and education (Mauro, 1996).

The impacts of corruption on the organizations of public administration can be especially pernicious. At the point when corruption is accepted to be the way the public sector, or one of its offices, routinely works the harm goes past the loss of misled assets.



Public administration risks losing the two its ability to be compelling and the trust of residents in the fair and transparence utilization of public assets and authority (Taghavi, Nikoomaram & Tootian, 2011). In the public side it becomes hard to ensure consistence with public benchmarks or regard for the standard of law (Rothstein, 2011). An especially harming institutional ramification for the public organization is that skilled and legitimate workers can be lost or deterred from working for government at all, further decreasing its ability for effectiveness and integrity (Quah, 2007).

Given that corruption causes enormous social, economic and political costs, it delays development and prosperity for peoples, undermines the building of democracy, and reduces the sphere of rule of law and institutions, this dictates that its prevention must be comprehensive, affecting all governmental and private sectors, and includes all possible means (Caiden & Dwivedi, 2001).

One of the best ways to combat infringement and abuse of power for private benefit (corruption) is to apply the concept of transparency and disclosure; strictly enforce the principles of accountability and suspicion; strengthen the vital role of surveillance systems with their various responsibilities; ensure its full independence in order to implement its active role to protect and preserve public and private property, as well as rationalize its expenses and increase its revenue (Liiv, 2004).

This shows the importance of oversight and applying administrative transparency in the detection of corruption, and the importance of trying to remedy it in a timely manner before it expands into parts of the public work environment and becomes dominant on human, material and financial resources, and therefore causes the non-achievement of the goals and the desired objectives (Armstrong, 2005).

Accordingly, this research paper represents an investigation attempt to review and shed light on some of the predominant researches that studied and examined corruption in public sector and represented ways and methods to combat it including administrative transparency, integrity and accountability which are considered by the United Nations countries, individually and collectively as part of founding principles of public administration.



## **Problem Statement**

The public government sectors are the main bodies concerned with the implementation of the State's public policies, providing various services to members of society, achieving development, avoiding society from various crises, and enhancing national security (Ayed, 2009).

Considering the importance of national security and the economy for human beings as indispensable pillars, alongside with what administrative corruption causes to society including threatening of national security, impeding economic, cultural and social progress, stimulating unemployment and crime and causing low per capita income, low quality of services in various health, educational and economic fields, and high prices for goods and services; this shows the importance and need for administrative transparency and its implementation in the work of all government sectors in order to detect the defects and corruption in the making of regulations and legislations or in decisions being made and implemented, through the disclosure of government sectors on their planning and executive activities, in the public interest, and which achieve the general satisfaction of citizens and stakeholders (Abou-Moghli et al., 2013).

The significance of applying the transparency and disclosure principle is developing quickly, as it is one of the most significant standards of institutional governmental administration when revealing the financial reports of the organizations, particularly after the financial crisis of 2008. Accordingly, studies uncovered that transparency and disclosure is a crucial instrument for the organizations' development. However, there is a lack in the examinations that link disclosure and transparency to corruption directly (Armstrong, 2005).

From its nature, it can be recognized that disclosure and transparency intend to acknowledge clarity in displaying the annual financial and non-financial reports and statements; and are a strategy for decision making at the different organization levels. This implies checking the administrative and financial performance for combating corruption and preference, just as misuse of the position for personal benefits (Abdel Wahab, 2006). Moreover, the economics of several nations had bumbled because of the absence of transparency and disclosure in their public organizations, which thus made overwhelming harms to the investors, lenders, providers and others (Badah, 2013).



Developing countries face a serious challenge in accelerating development and growth. With the advent of globalization, they face many obstacles to a greater share of global trade and investment. Overcoming these obstacles requires significant public sector reforms to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness (Ashour, 2004). It also requires better governance that is more inclusive of different groups in society, and relies heavily on disclosure and transparency to fight corruption (Abou-Moghli et al., 2013).

Therefore, as a result of the lack of research and studies in the Arab region, especially that shows the effects of transparency on the fight against corruption, although the Arab countries lead the other countries in corruption, This study will provide a review of a theoretical framework that will contribute to the understanding of the effects of administrative transparency on the fight against corruption, especially in public companies and the government sector.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objective of this study is: To investigate theoretically the impact of **administrative transparency on combating corruption in public jobs.**

This main objective will be achieved through the following subdivided objectives:

- 1) To identify corruption and its different forms
- 2) To explore the factors facilitating public administrative corruption
- 3) To identify anti-corruption strategies (Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in public administration)
- 4) To clarify the impact of administrative transparency on combating corruption



## **Research Methodology**

Research methodology can be defined as a subject that deals with how research or study is carried out in a scientific way. The importance of research methodologies lies in its ability to highlight and give essential training in the arrangement and collection of material in a way that can be recognized in an easy way (Saunders, 2011).

This research is based on a descriptive methodology, in which the researcher tends to review previous studies and literature that will help in identifying the impact of administrative transparency on combating corruption in public jobs. Primary data will be collected from the literature, related studies, cases and investigations which will help in fulfilling the objectives of this study.

## **Corruption & Its forms**

The term “corruption” refers to the misuse of resources or power for private gain. Transparency International defines corruption as the abuse of the power entrusted for private gain (Kolstad et al., 2008). The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) does not provide a single definition for it (Menocal et al., 2015). Almost every theorist who has attempted to define corruption has at first instance recognized the difficulty and ambiguity of the concept which has created several obstacles for empirical researches to put a one definition for it (Liiv, 2004).

A general definition for corruption has been recently identified by Aldaihani (2017) in which he stated that corruption represents all attempts made by the workers to present their interests to the public interest of the work, exceeding all the values and systems that they pledged to respect and serve and work for their implementation. However, a specific definition for corruption was given by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2018), in which it was defined as: abuse of public authority for a private gain, which is usually achieved when a civil servant accepts, solicits, or extorts a bribe. This may be associated with misuse of power, such as private sector entrepreneurs bribing in order to circumvent public policies and government laws and to achieve competitive advantage, profit or personal benefits.

Corruption takes various forms; the most common categories of corruption are summarized as shown in the Table (1) below:

**Table 1: Corruption different forms (Johnsøn, 2014; World Bank, 2011)**

Corruption forms	Description
Bribes	It represents a dishonestly act through which someone is persuaded to act in support of one by a payment or other prompting. Promptings can appear as fees, loans, gifts, rewards or different advantages including (donations, services, taxes and so forth.). The utilization of bribes can prompt collusion (for example investigators under-reporting offenses in return for bribes) or potentially extortion (for example bribes to be taken due to threats of over-reporting).
Facilitation Payment	It represents a small payment which also called a "grease" or "speed" payment, made to accelerate the performance of a routine or necessary procedure that a payer has a legal or other benefit from it.
Collusion	A course of action between at least two gatherings intended to accomplish an inappropriate purpose, including impacting inappropriately the activities of another gathering .
Fraud	The demonstration of deliberately and insincerely beguiling somebody so as to increase an out of line or unlawful favorable position (budgetary, political or something else).
Extortion	The demonstration of hindering or hurting, or taking steps to impede or hurt, directly or indirectly, any gathering or the property of the gathering to impact inappropriately the activities of a gathering .
Embezzlement	To take, mislead or misappropriate assets or resources set in one's trust or under his /her control. From a legitimate perspective, embezzlement doesn't necessarily be or include corruption
Patronage and nepotism	Patronage at its center represents the help given by a patron. In government, it alludes to the act of recruiting and pointing individuals straightforwardly.

Regardless of the form of corruption, it is well known that it is closely linked to the generation of economic rents and the pursuit of rents, causes tremendous social, economic and political costs, delays the development and prosperity of peoples, undermines the building of democracy, and reduces the rule of law and institution (Liiv, 2004).





## **Factors Facilitating Public Corruption**

Corruption is a phenomenon with numerous countenances. It is portrayed by a scope of monetary, political, regulatory, social and cultural elements, both domestic and global in nature. It is not a natural type of conduct, yet rather a side effect of more extensive dynamics. It results from collaborations of opportunities, weaknesses and strengths in socio-political systems. It opens up and shuts down spaces for people, gatherings, associations and organizations that populate common society, the state, the public and private sector. It is, most importantly, the aftereffect of dynamic connections between various actors (Menocal et al., 2015).

Factors that facilitate corruption have been studied by many authors, and there was a consensus by researchers that all these factors fall under the interpretation of two theories of the principal agent of corruption as a series of interactions and relationships within and outside public bodies. It also emphasizes the rational choices that occur in individual incidents of corrupt behavior (Menocal et al., 2015). Until very recently, the prevailing theoretical approach to corruption was based on the principal agent model. Recently, literature has begun to emerge that analyzes corruption from the perspective of collective action, focusing on the collective or even systemic nature rather than the individualism of corrupt behavior (Persson et al., 2013).

For instance Johnson (2000) noticed that among the most significant reasons of the tumble down of several organizations was the revelation of many bribing and fraudulence cases that were done by the CEO's of these organizations which represent a principle agent model. However, the CEO action was driven by several collective action including, the independency of every one of the individuals from the Board of Directors, just as their interior and outer auditors; the deficiency and inadequacy of the inner control frameworks applied in these organizations; in addition to the weak quality of the effectiveness of the internal auditing profession of the organizations.

A group of work investigating corruption in the public sector focuses on the motivations singular civil servants need to participate in corruption, and the results of such conduct (Olken & Pande, 2013). One critical motivating and facilitating force this literature investigates identifies with pay and compensation levels in the public sector.





The proof on this remaining mixed. Van Rijckeghem and Weder (2001), for instance, discover a relationship between low wage levels and corruption. Other examinations, in any case, have cast doubt about the quality of this relationship and the heading of causality (for example corruption could be a factor prompting diminished pay rates instead of the other route around on the grounds that, in corrupt countries, civil servants might be expected to earn adequate pay from corruption and accordingly wage and salary rates are kept low (Rose-Ackerman & Søreide, 2012).

Poor governance represents also one of the main factors leading to the spread of corruption. The political and economic opportunities available in different political systems, as well as the power and effectiveness of state and socio-economic institutions, are the conditions under which corruption can flourish. In particular, the centrality of power in inefficient implementation and accountability mechanisms gives actors (especially elites) a lot of discretion that leads to more public administrative corruption (Johnston, 2005), which can be combated by different principles and strategies discussed in the next section.

### **Anti-Corruption Strategies (Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in Public Administration)**

The ideas of accountability, integrity and transparency have been distinguished by the UN nations, by and large and independently, as a component of the establishing standards of public organization. Thusly, these standards should be upheld and seen to be drilled by the administration inside the UN System and in all part nations. In public administration, integrity alludes to "trustworthiness" or "honesty" in the doing of authority obligations, filling in as an absolute opposite to "the abuse of office" or "corruption" (Harlow, 2006). Transparency alludes to free access by general society (public) to timely and reliable data on performance and decisions in the public sector.

Moreover, accountability alludes to the commitment with respect to public officials to report on the utilization of public resources and answerability for failing to meet stated execution targets (Armstrong, 2005).

In theory, for the UN's own organization, integrity has been characterized as "including, however not restricted to truthfulness, probity, fairness, impartiality and honesty."



The requirement for transparency, however not characterized explicitly, has been inferred in the establishing reports. All the more as of late, the Organization has recognized the need to encourage more transparency in access to procurement, information and senior level recruitment. The Organizations staff's guidelines ought to ask their staff individuals to be responsible for the correct release of their capacities, featuring the significance of accountability for execution (Berliner, 2014).

In addition, there is a good sample for countries trying to combat corruption through those strategies (Integrity, transparency and accountability in Public Administration), which in turn reflect many dynamic desires. For example, in Saudi Arabia, to maintain integrity, public workers must neither request nor acknowledge anything from their fellow citizens to perform their obligations, in this manner making an atmosphere of trust in them and in the public service all in all (Albassam, 2012). In South Africa, transparency must be cultivated by giving the public timely, available and exact information. (Patel, Balic, & Bwakira 2002) In the United Kingdom, accountability is a standard of public, where holders of public office are responsible for their choices and activities to general society and must submit themselves to whatever examination is proper to their workplaces (Karlsson, 2010).

Thus at the abstract level, these three principles (Integrity, transparency and accountability in Public Administration) depend on each other. Integrity, by requiring that the public interest be of paramount importance, provides the basis for transparency and accountability. Transparency without accountability becomes meaningless and mocks sound public administration. Accountability depends on transparency or the availability of information. Transparency and accountability without integrity may not serve the public interest (Fox, 2007; Lourenco, 2013).

However, this research is intended to focus on the impact of transparency specifically as seen in the next section, giving the chance for following researcher to investigate integrity and accountability individually or as a system consisted of three of them.



## **Impact of Administrative Transparency on Combating Corruption**

Taking into account that administrative corruption is one of the most significant obstacles to economic growth processes, as well as modernization processes in regulatory environments, especially in developing countries (Taghavi et al., 2011; Sadeghi et al. 2014). In addition to the results of the Esmaili et al. (2013) study, which confirmed the existence of a negative correlation between administrative corruption and the levels of productivity of human resources, in addition to its negative effects on the levels of satisfaction, job security, accuracy of the performance of various tasks, and the level of performance of the workers, and the level of Functional knowledge and quality of work life.

Several authors and politicians including (Svensson, 2007; Karlsson, 2010; Abou-Moghli et al., 2013; Lourenco, 2013) stress on the importance of adopting a policy of transparency in fighting corruption as an effective way to get rid of corruption through making administrative information clear and transparent away from ambiguity, and does not need to be interpreted. Administrative transparency represents also the clarity of legislation and laws and easy to understand and stability and harmony with each other and objectivity, clarity of language, flexibility and development in accordance with economic, social, political and administrative changes in line with the spirit of the recent time (Abou-Moghli et al., 2013).

It was expressed by Aldaihani (2017) in their distributed research that the absence of transparency and clearness just as the non-revelation of the data, general records, governmental venture, public incomes and the manners in which they are utilized, all are supporters of the administrative and financial corruption. Moreover, Broush & Al-Duhaimi (2012) stated that the administrative corruption represents a genuine phenomenon confronting the developing nations, specifically, which drove into entering slackness in the structure and economic improvement; and that corruption may devastate the money related and authoritative possibilities of the organization. They further emphasize that transparency and disclosure, being one of the most significant administration criteria, is among the most significant tools to treat corruption and defeat it.

The administrative transparency represents a significant administrative tool such as freedom, equality and accountability that increase the strength and ability of the administration to achieve its goals.



It can also face corruption, whether bribery, favoritism or nepotism. It also provides an atmosphere of satisfaction and increases the loyalty of employees and citizens in the same time (Qian, 2012). Badah (2013) points out that transparency is working to achieve several objectives; it helps to facilitate the administrative work and face the routine which is the most important factors to help the administrative corruption, develop the management and provide effective means of control.

In addition, administrative transparency contributes significantly to enhancing the levels of growth and development of the organizations, in addition to supporting the processes of change and administrative success (Alsharah, 2014). It further helps to support future policies and programs, enhances internal controls, helps to enhance the levels of autonomy of employees in different regulatory environments, and is one of the entry points through which it can provide real opportunities for competition between institutions and improve the reputation of the regulatory environment (Cameron, 2010).

In the opinion of the researcher, the importance of administrative transparency emerges mainly from the perspective of being a tool that helps to achieve the administrative discrimination of different organizations, because it helps to improve the rates of transparency and integrity in the conduct of various operations, in addition to being a mechanism that works to combat corruption, punish the wrongdoers, and overcome the traditional routine patterns in which administrative corruption processes used to go.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the literature review mentioned above, it can be concluded that the administrative corruption represents all attempts made by the government servants to present their interests to the public interest of the work, exceeding all the values and systems that they pledged to respect and serve and work for their implementation. Furthermore, administrative corruption in all of its forms including, bribes, facilitation payments, collusion, fraud, embezzlement and patronage represents the suffering of most private and public sector companies specifically which should be deterred by finding appropriate control methods.

It is clear that financial and administrative corruption is the result of mismanagement and lack of transparency, disclosure, control, experience and skill in managing available funds and human resources.



This led to several different financial crises and negative effects all around the world causing huge financial losses to shareholders. All this motivates specialized professional organizations to pay more attention to disclosure and transparency as an anti-corruption tool. As such, this research highlights its importance as it reveals the risk of financial and administrative corruption, which has become rampant in many businesses, leaving negative effects on the national economy and society at large.

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