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# Traditional and Online Journalism and Corruption Investigation Issues: The Case of Algeria

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## Abstract

In the modern democracies, journalism exercises an important role in the political process, in controlling and monitoring government activities, and watchdogging political authority from abuse derives controversy in Algeria, which is a case of journalistic situation in an authoritarian regime with a stumbling attempt to democratic transition. In order to trait covering in this case, it can be verified in the journalism narratives, telling story about corruption. The article tries to shed light on some important corruption issues that Algeria has witnessed and demonstrate by using narrative analysis of online journalism and traditional paper journalism as how the media and journalism anti-corruption activities have declined in terms of substance and achievements and how it subjected to re-narrate the official version of corruption stories.

**Keywords:** the Algerian press, political corruption, Khalifa Bank case, Algerian East-West Highway case, the Algerian press law, the arrest of journalists, journalism narrative

## 1. Introduction

The free press has a considerable role in monitoring government activities and on the practices of politicians in democracies. As the fourth estate within society and politics, the press controls over the practices of corruption, but these roles varies across political systems, where the function of the press journalist is varied widely in the authority criticism abilities, the transfer of information and coverage of news. The provisions of public service, in addition to monitoring role through journalist's investigations and the role of exposing political corruption and public affairs through the investigative press, news transmission, info's circulation, reporting proceeding trials, and public opinion interaction with political issues are all tasks of the free journalism. But in the other side, the press can produce biased press campaigns and propaganda and the propagation of rumor and false news by the so-called yellow press have reverse effect on corruption uncovering in journalism. However, the task has become more complicated by the advent of electronic journalism and social networking, which has made the function of journalism as a very complex issue in the transmission of news and the fight against corruption.

## **1.1 Research questions**

The principle question arises on the status of the press and its tasks in detecting corruption cases, under transitional or quasi-democratic political systems, such as the case of Algeria. We can ask the following questions about the nature of the narrative, about issues of corruption, produced by the press and journalism? Is its role just limited to transferring what the political authority or incumbent power is promoting from narrative? Does the advent of electronic journalism represent a quantum leap in the audacity to deal with corruption issues? Those questions can shed light on some other questions and assumptions about constraints that reconfigure the journalism discourse on corruption in the public sphere. And about the manner of transferring and reproducing corruption's narratives that supports what the authorities want to and what not to diffuse, the kind of journalistic mission toward corruption cases, despite the introduction of new electronic media and social networks, this situation may represent a new difference in journalistic work, about anti-corruption issues, and if the electronic press has been able to penetrate the barrier of censorship and prohibition in detecting corrupt practices or it has not.

This chapter attempts to address this issue through four sections. Theoretical and field studies on journalism and the literature about the ability to detect corruption and the journalistic narrative about corruption. Section 3 deals with the reality of journalism and journalistic work in Algeria, in terms of restrictions, opportunities, and the status of press freedom. Section 4 deals with three cases of corruption that occurred in Algeria, the quarter dealing with: how journalism and journalistic work have been dealt with and what the nature of the journalistic narrative produced. Was it convincing to the public? And if there is a significant difference between a traditional journalistic narrative and a new electronic press narrative.

## **1.2 Method**

This research included a sample of newspaper articles, from the most famous Algerian newspapers, electronic and traditional one, and the most widespread and readable in the country; this research treated 35 different articles for 8 daily newspapers; 4 were issued in Arabic (Elkhabar, Echourouk, Elhiwar, and Annasr), and two issued in French (Al Watan and La Liberte). All of these newspapers have their electronic versions, in addition to two pure electronic newspapers: TSA and the Algeria Press. In their coverage of three known corruption cases, the East-West highway, Khalifa Bank case, and the Sonatrach 1 and 2 cases, all these cases are for large-scale corruption scandal.

This study adopted the method of qualitative narrative research, due to its usefulness to deepen analysis, and it can give further insight on the context in which the press operates and how this is reflected in the narration content which provides and limits what it reveals as narration products. This is by using narrative analysis, based on the latent content analyses [1]. The analysis framework in this chapter aims to uncover the impact of the institutional and political context on the structure of the corruption narratives reflected in journalistic articles and allows exploration of important elements that can reveal the reality and context in which the press operates. As a kind of analysis of the discourse, it leads to the identification of the method of reproduction and exercise of power through the media field, especially in important areas of political corruption.

In this topic, the research tries to construct an objective analysis, using the thematic analysis [2, 3], which focuses on the basic characteristics of the subject and its textual manifestations. The analysis include five principal analysis categories, and they all belong to "what was said" or what was "narrated" about corruption:

the category of fighting corruption, who is the accused, what are the charges, what are the concepts involved, and what is the analysis or interpretation given to events. The study was adopted by the subject module (verbatim text) [2], to identify and monitor content.

## **2. Journalistic task and confronting corruption**

Many reports and researches have discussed the role of journalism in the fight against corruption, through several cases across the world, but it is still limited to focus only on promoting a set of liberal ideals and relate it to what the press should be. Because the press has not been affected by corruption, and supposed not to be affected, given the motivation of competition and the search for truth, it should not be covered by corruption when it enjoys a level of independence, pluralism, and freedom. It will be an impartial actor in confronting and exposing corrupt practices; since the press is the fourth estate, it can act as a detective and watchdog on the public interest, not just as passive recorder of events [4–6]. Some studies, however, lack comprehensive perspectives and theoretical depth and did not address the test of clear hypotheses in this topic. Even studies of corruption as a phenomenon has its specific influence on the political process and political change; the press has been seen as a party that does not play a central role in the fight against corruption but is a means of communication process. There are big literatures that used general theories of communication [7–10] and tried to deal with questions, such as who owns the press corporations, and according to which editorial line does the press work on? What interests do the press advocate or defend?

There have been lots of studies, in spotlight of journalism and press freedom in the liberal sense, focusing on the context and conditions that enhance the role of journalism, especially the practice of journalistic investigation, in democratic and liberal states. In fact, the ability to investigate and control the press is linked essentially and basically on the conditions of freedom, the independence of the judiciary, and legal restrictions to arbitrary government actions [11, 12]. The fact that freedom of the press is one of the prerequisite for the right to information, the right to seek information and the right to disseminate information. Within the limits that do not harm the legitimate interests of the democratic political system, and that the media is one of the important tools or actors in fight against corruption, which requires the collective participation of the official and unofficial bodies [13]. However, some studies, which have a critical trend in media freedom, are beginning to pay attention to the conditions of the political economy and the context of special interests and market imperatives, which mortgage and constrain the work of a free and private press. The press reflects the strong and influential interests of society. It cannot go beyond some red lines in investigations and investigations about corruption, where press freedom is just a mere theory and an ideal [14–16]. Many critical journalism scholars from democratic countries, especially the United States of America, point out that the press is under the authority of influential elites who make public opinion, manipulating minds in the words of Herbert Schiller [17–19].

However, effectively, the role of the press cannot be neglected in uncovering corruption throughout the globe. Many corruption-related issues have been leaked to the media and have been exposed to the media and have led to political changes such as the fall of Governments. The Watergate scandal led to the downfall of the Nixon presidency in the United States; similar incidents are found in European cases, and in the rest of the world's democracies, and even in non-democratic states within permissible limits. There was an optimistic view that freedom given to the press by political authority and society can provide many corruption-related

investigations to be achieved. Some researches attempted to establish a causal relationship between press freedom and the ability of the press to investigate in corruption and to fight it [11, 12, 20–22]. How the press in some third world societies, especially in South-East Asia and Africa, has made significant contributions to the fight against corruption [23, 24]. Governments are also deliberately, when it decided to establish campaigns against corruption, using the written press and all other media to uncover corruption or only to liquidate opposition wings within power.

Given the technological development and the entry of the world to the Internet era, since the end of the twentieth century, the new communication technologies associated with globalization acceleration have been introduced. In their last version, new technics and expanding horizons in the field of press freedom have the capacity to detect and confront corruption. The electronic press now is very much associated with the field of cyber media, use of investigations and the dissemination of information on large and uncontrolled social networking. Thus press has played an important role in highlighting and enhancing the role of journalism and press investigations in detecting corruption, reducing the risk and cost of investigative work, and journalistic dissemination of corruption cases and issues [9, 25], although threats to the physical integrity of journalists and the prosecution and security pursuit of them and to the press institutions still persist. However, fighting and confronting corruption is where the press plays a role, by defaming corruption cases and its prominent personalities, by providing full information to public. But such prominent task does not fully achieved.

There is serious lack of literature and studies about corruption narratives and discourse, as a new theoretical tool to understand its consequences and how to conceptualize. One of such studies seeks to find how it constructs state and political images among citizens, Gupta studies, presented such findings. The narratives about corruption help to understand citizens' expectations about what the state does and what it can do, how bureaucracy responds to the Citizen's needs, and how the allocated money for the development and improvement of citizens' lives goes to the pockets of corrupt people [26, 27]. In the Chinese case, the press tries to have a social role through investigative journalism, but it does not amount to separate authority facing the governmental one, as in the Anglo-American way. But the situation of the press is similar to the status of a non-crowned king, where the press is focused on the reproduction of cultural values [28]. What is more important in the context of the narrative analysis is how to build corruption stories in journalism. What does the press offer about corruption and the perpetrators of corrupt practices and those who confront them? This is not just about telling stories of corruption, or how they should be addressed, instead, is about building the corruption narratives, and its reflects on the functions and tasks of journalism in detecting it, and how its lead to a construction and imaginary about state and authority. In this regard, the narratives provided by the press and journalists about their anti-corruption tasks and corruption, differ in context and contents from one country to another. The corruption narrative is an important subject in the struggle between the Chinese government and the opposition over legitimacy and reproduction of it. The opposition uses corruption theme to prove immorality and incompetence of established regime. While China is economic, success has allowed anti-corruption narrative manipulation, focusing on the role of the state in successful economic development including the fight against corruption, and social stability and citizen's prosperity [29]. In the Arab world, many studies have emphasized the influence of the authoritarian climate of political systems on journalism. And how this impedes the process of investigative journalism. Although the barrier of fear of regimes was partially eliminated after the events of the Arab Spring in 2011, many Arab political regimes are aware of the seriousness of social networks over the Internet, so

they has retightened control over the online journalism and traditional journalism after 2011 [30, 31]. This authoritarian reality prevents the formation of an effective role for the press in the fight against corruption, as reflected in the journalism narrative about corruption. The journalistic practice of detecting corruption can be debunked through the media's reporting of corruption and its information, through the structure of the press narrative of corruption, and the degree of plotting and mastery in detailing issues related to corruption. Although previous studies have highlighted the role of the press in combating corruption in many cases, few studies have focused on the content of the press on corruption, in terms of the discourse adopted against corruption, and the narrative structure it presented on this topic.

### **3. Algeria and the conditions of journalism and corruption**

Algeria has its specific situation to some extent within the Arab and African world, in the freedom of journalistic work and freedom of expression in general term. Algeria's position in some international reports and global indicators concerning democracy and corruption makes Algeria as one of the countries with high degree in corruption, and modest degrees in freedom of the press, journalistic work and civil liberties in the country is shrinking. Thus, does not raise them to the ranks of democratic regimes or electoral democracies. Corruption has penetrated every sphere in Algeria journalistic works, and confronting corruption in journalistic terms is risky and adventurous, within predetermined limits. More than two decades after President Abdelaziz Bouteflika took office, and despite Algeria was out of the black decade, the Indicators of corruption, democracy and freedom of the press have not improved much. International reports usually, repeat Algeria's ranking among countries where corruption is high and press freedom is low, and classified among the less transparent and non-free states [32–34]. Although there is a margin of media freedom in Algeria, the Algerian private press has repeatedly attacked and criticized government policies, [32], But journalism and investigative journalism face two problems: corruption and authoritarianism.

Statements and sentences condemning the restriction on the work of journalists and their continued detention echoed in many international reports, which classify Algeria as one of the countries where journalists do not enjoy freedom. There is no freedom of the press. The classification of Algeria in the Freedom House rating does not exceed 35 points from 100 in the Freedom new Standard since 2016. The reports of this center considered Algeria as non-free country, (Freedom House, 2018) the reports cites some incidents in which journalists have been arrested or prosecuted and charged with defamation, libeling, or undermining political institutions and state symbols. However, there is a remarkable margin of freedom in the press, that makes the latter criticize offensively the government's actions, and draws criticism to the political situation in the context of the free opinion press and articles column, and in the context of venting political tension. Through this close freedom margin, Algerian government tries to prove the existence of pluralism in the form of media and in its content. There are, however, government harassment of the press, human rights and journalists' rights organizations, accusing the government of cracking down on journalists, imprisoning, and arresting them, such as the arrest of the journalist and the director of the newspaper Al-Masa in French in 2004, against the background of writing a book criticizing the President [35]. The accusations were strongly denied by the government and governmental media. By making clear that Algeria has seen progress in journalism freedom, government has given advantages and paid the care attention to journalism, and confirm that Algeria has registered a remarkable rise in press headlines and titles over two decades, surpassing 40

newspaper titles and more than 20 television channels after its licensing in 2014. Before 2000, the written press title numbers counted on the fingers, the number of these titles has increased and multiplied several times over the past 10 years. The government also opened the way for media pluralism, in the audiovisual field, by issuing a law regulating the audiovisual media in 2014, but the press law issued in 2011 has given a broad powers for the government to intervene in newspaper's closure, and censoring the investigative publication that affect national security or economic state interests and sensitive special affairs. At the same time, the government's has limited updated control on new e-communication technology. In addition, there is an increasing tendency of youth generations and citizens to resort social networking, especially Facebook; this social network by the emergence of several pure online newspapers, and the media institutions produce traditional paper newspapers established online version of their paper publications. This media pluralism has made possible to increase the level of boldness in dealing with many sensitive subjects that were forbidden in the decade of the last century.

Critics of the press and journalistic situation in Algeria argue that journalism's situation has not improved substantially, and that censorship and government control over news circulation, are still in place, although this censorship is ineffective [36–38]. Active press institutions, mostly under the governmental control, are affiliated to government and political authority. The government is exerting various means of pressure on journalistic work by monopolizing the power to distribute publicity to daily newspapers. Many daily newspapers are closed down after they were declared bankrupt and the government has been asked for debts owed by it, because of depriving publicity quotas, which generates profits on the newspapers, far exceeds the profits they do not derive from their newspaper copies distribution. Thus, Driss argues that the state's control over the media landscape, despite entering the electronic media, has evolved, and has become a control over the transmission of information, and the dissemination of news in both traditional and electronic newspapers [39]. What helped, however, was the humble readability of newspapers in Algeria, especially for purely electronic newspapers [39]. In addition, despite, the mass media characterized by multiple media titles, the access and use Internet is uncensored. But journalism activity is closely controlled, the free press investigations are difficult to be achieved, in conditions described by Driss as follows: “there is a free Expression but without freedom of the press” [40]. So the media scene has become a mere echo of what the state news agency says, and is barely out of scope, except in a narrow range, or through some of the online newspapers and blogs that are active outside the country.

These conditions make the presswork in Algeria without the capacity or the means to become an effective one, or that has the capacity to detect or investigate corruption cases in an independent, protected and secure manner. The economic and social conditions in which journalists work are discouraging and the lack of training are required by young journalists for journalism. This is reflected in the form of journalistic works, in which investigations and reports are limited. The journalist does an essay rather than writing it; Mustafawi comments on that, and ads: the public press is the public press of the rumor [41]. Most corruption cases, published by the newspapers, are the echo of information that the government, or other authorities and incumbents, allow to disseminate. It is therefore a common practice in journalism writing, that he or she do not mention the real sources of the news, or attribute sources to unknown. Not to mention the talk about the conduct of public affairs and the corruption occurs on it, falls within the silent or non-talkable, because access to information and access to it for journalists remains a matter of ink on paper in the legal texts [42]. It has also been reflected in the existence of non-professional journalistic practices, which focus on the dissemination of some

false and unreliable news attributed to unknown sources. There is common phrase repeatedly cited in like news: “a source who declined to be identified Said”. The cases, we are going to show about corruption, and trials have taken place around, confirm this. Although corruption issues as titles in newspapers is one of the things that attracts readers to buy newspapers and to follow their news, there are limits in front of journalists and journalistic work in talking about corruption and its issues, which is reflected in the corruption stories telling in such journalism. These narratives, in turn, are subject to interpretation and political employment, and are subjected to narrative confusion, when they are politicized, through comments and statements attributed to political actors, or to unknown sources, that wish to leak information to the press according to their own interests, or who consider themselves to be victims exploited in these corrupted perpetrator.

Despite the emergence of some online newspapers in Algeria, they neither constitute an important exception in the investigation about corruption cases, nor in the field of self-censorship or harassment by authorities. In 2017, the info website: TSA was blocked for at least 2 days, because of its diffusion of some news about the president and his surroundings. The exception remains in directing more criticism and exposing the corruption stories by some journalists working abroad, who have been able to increase the audacity and ability to access sensitive information about corruption can give a different account of what the government was trying to publish. But it is limited to employing social media such as Facebook or creating pages for online newspapers and blogs that are not accredited in Algeria. This allowed the penetration of many walls, and raised many issues and campaigns against corruption and unmasking many of its secrets. Nevertheless, this did not alter the situation fundamentally, in that the journalistic work is a vector of corruption's crimes and the facts of the trials around it. And does not play an important role in the investigation or disclosure of its actual limbs, the journalistic work in Algeria cannot exercise the function of institutional media monitoring and watchdog, although the press enjoys a margin of Freedom and offensive criticism of government policies. However, the ability to expose corruption cases in an independent and professional manner remains elusive, and the role is only to convey the news of these issues, and to cover up the judicial and security institutions fighting against corruption, by transferring the facts of the trials in the context of permissible leaks on security and judicial investigations of those events. Even the online journals in their overwhelming parts who is outside of government's control in its parts who is outside of government Guardianship, which adopts positions of opposition, lacks professionalism, and objectivity, its being transformed into a mere transfer of the opinion of a section of the hardline opposition against the political regime.

#### **4. Journalism in Algeria and narratives of corruption**

The hypothesis formulated about the impact of the authoritarian political conditions on the journalism's production of corruption narratives is very clear and strong in the Algerian case. The press story, and the media narrative produced by the Algerian press on corruption issues, characterized for at least two decades by great homogeneity. There are similar accounts and stories reported by newspapers on the same subject. This is possibly due to the limited availability of information sources, and to the new authoritarian conditions that lead to a failure to go beyond the official central narrative. This does not reveal the official face necessarily, and it is an incomplete narrative, missing several elements of the novel and narrative, which are necessary to convince the Algerian reader, the later turned to conspiracy theory to fill the gaps and mysteries of the inconclusive narrative about corruption

issues, and about who is behind the senior actors. On the other hand, who is the real and responsible actor in these issues?

Three cases of corruption can be analyzed, demonstrating the premise and the importance of journalistic narrative handling. These issues are the arrest and prosecution of the President of the Bank of al-Khalifa, in what is known as “Trial of the Century”. The second issue is the highway scandal, known as the “scandal of the century”. The third issue, which is still very ambiguous and unresolved in terms of media: the case of Sonatrach 1 and 2. In all these cases, arresting of those attributed as a principal suspect. All of these cases are cases of misappropriation of public funds through embezzlement, corruption and currency smuggling, but some elements of these three issues remain a mystery that the press has been unable to resolve or dare to do, despite the reluctance of news outside of what is unofficial about these issues.

The case of Khalifa Bank: dating back to 2003, when a loophole and bankruptcies were discovered at the level of the bank, estimated at \$1.5–\$2 billion. The Algerian judiciary and police were investigated in this corruption case inside and outside the bank. The investigation included more than 4000 person, most notably the bank’s chief executive, Abdulmoumen Khalifa, who fled to Britain and was extradited to Algeria in 2013. The damage included some 111 public agencies and institutions, some of them were established as a civil party and a victim of the bank. Some 124 defendants, including the social security fund and Sonatrach National Company, deposited their funds in this bank, motivated by attractive banking benefits and guarantees, which amounts to 17% as interest rate [35, 43]. But it did not recover its money, and has led to a government-estimated loss of about \$8 billion, but the press reported much higher figures besides the number announced by the government. This case was called the scandal of the century. During trials, group of perpetrators and defendants were convicted, especially the main accused in this case, bank director Abdelmuomen Khalifa, where he was sentenced in absentia to life imprisonment in 2007, and after his arrest and receipt from London in the same year, he was sentenced to 18 years in prison on 23 June 2014. However, it is noted that the list of accused has changed, and some ministers and some political figures known as witnesses have been summoned in the case. The press investigation, in most cases, has not followed up on trials, and with some information on suspicions regarding the manner in which the bank, began its activity in 1998, got a loan from the Local Development Bank (BDL).

**The issue of the highway scandal:** this issue is one of the issues known nationally and internationally about the spread of corruption in public institutions. The case of the East-West Highway exploded after the announcement of irregularities in transactions and abuses in this project. This led to a security investigation, and the transfer of this file to justice in the investigation, some of what is quoted by the press, is that the project was completed by the Chinese company; “CITIC CRC”, in amount of \$6 billion dollars. The cost of the project reached 16 billion. Freedom House’s 2015 report on this incident cited that this project is one of the most expensive projects of its kind in the world [44]. The issue is about corruption and bribery, and the making of suspicious transactions with some foreign companies, including amplification of invoices, involving some administrative officials, including Director of the National Highway Agency, Planning Directorate of the Ministry of Public Works, in addition to the Secretary General of the later Ministry, some cadres in the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Transport, some businesspersons and contractors. Some direct responsible of the project were charged, but the press gave some critical views of the proceedings, about how some well-known political figures, and senior officials did not appear on the scene, and were not charged. The press reported that the judicial investigation included 16 people from 7 foreign

companies. The key officials, including the new project manager was sentenced to 10 years in prison, and the main defendant in the case is the Chinese company's consultant to the ministry to complete the route. The court issued fines against seven foreign companies that contracted in the project. The Secretary-General of the Ministry was acquitted, after being sentenced in the first trial.

**The Sonatrach 1 and 2 cases** reveal the corruption issues at Sonatrach. This company was a closed fortress for journalists; as they were not allowed getting investigations within its cases. According to journalist Jilali Hajjaj: "It is a difficult company for journalists to investigate and any attempt to do so is quickly halted" [35]. Two of the corruption case in this public company: called in the press; the Sonatrach 1 and Sonatrach 2, which deal with the existence of suspicious transactions between the national company of Sonatrach and other foreign companies from Italy, the smuggling of funds abroad. The trial included the former general manager and a group of Sonatrach executives. They were charged for bribery, smuggling of funds and waste of public money. Some charges are directed to the Minister of Energy and the mines: Chakib Khelil, but without entering the trial. Although the press at that time has reported that the court ordered his arrest with his sons and wife. In addition to another person named figure: Farid Bedjaoui. The attorney general of the Algiers Judicial Council charged them for corruption and wasting public money, in dealing with an Italian company and receiving bribes from them, and concluding illegal deals with them. The court has not substantiated any evidence against him. Suddenly all the charges and suspicions against him were dropped later suspicions against him later, and even dropped the charges against the defendants in the first stage, the talk about this story in the newspapers was closed later and was forgotten.

These three events, linked to corruption, differ in the way the story presented and the structure of the narrative, in terms of the sequence of events and in the end drawn to it. Till the end, it is clear to some extent in the case of the Khalifa Bank and in the case of the highway by entering the characters to the scene of the court. The story end is settled in the cases of Sonatrach 1 and 2. The narrative, given to those corruption cases, is beset by many gaps and disturbances in the narrative structure, by changing the characters charged in the novel, and conflicting news about the main and actual defendants. What is common in these cases is the disappearance of the charges and the accused from high-ranking officials and government political figures who either turned into witnesses or being tolerated.

## **5. Narrative analysis for the data and discussion**

Most of the press articles, which are covered in the study, are from eight newspapers (four in Arabic and two in French) in addition to two purely electronic newspapers (pure player) that wrote about corruption cases, they belong to articles that cover up the proceedings of trials, the second type are those that relate to interviews with public or political figures, or lawyers for those accused of corruption, human rights activists and political party figures. The third category is of daily articles columns that are written in some newspapers.

### **5.1 Analysis and discussion**

In these three cases, about corruption, there are no leaks of official documents, or strong documentary evidences, which could constitute a pre-press, and make the press a prominent actor in the detection of corruption. All these issues were not disclosed by press media, at first glance, for example, through an independent

investigative journalism, but were triggered initially by the presence of information from international sources outside the country, or by police inspections, and the investigation of these cases was moved by the security institutions or the justice system. The journalism provides only a critical account of the proceedings of the corruption trial. It does not provide an integrated account explaining how to do such corruption, who are the full parties involved in. The articles do not tend to reveal the sources of the news, especially statements revealing secret or new information, but the press tends to justify the protection of the source information to refer to what is claimed as “trusted sources”, or to personalities whose name has not requested, or who has refused to disclose its identity.

The second element concerning the actor perpetrating the corruption's crime in the narrative analysis concerning the accused, most articles when talking about corruption refers to “other parties” or “other sides”, and do not tell completely, how the real actors have not convicted, and the narratives develop into an escalating narrative: that the regime protects its men and instead of that, it provides only the involved persons of the second or of the third range in the corruption affair. The plot of the novel always seems incomplete. Traditionally, it appears in the form of a story about good and evil, where the final sanction has not been imposed on the perpetrator, and the real perpetrator has neither revealed nor sentenced. But it contains a statement and hinting most of the time that the perpetrator is always behind the curtain and disappears behind the scene of the trial. The question that always arises in these three issues is that these officials are essentially appointed; why did some senior officials appear in the trials but as witness, but later were removed from them. Note that there is a difference in the style of coverage between the Arabic newspapers and the Francophone newspapers. There are differences in boldness, clarity and statement, where *Alkhabar* newspaper has more ability to bold, the latter seems bolder in directing charges to sides accused of corruption, more inclined to politicize corruption, and that corruption is protected, there is no much difference in this style of charging between traditional newspapers and purely electronic newspapers. What is noticeable in the cases that have been disclosed is that the press coverage has not yielded significant political or informational results, and none of these three corruption scandals have led to direct accountability to any high official and have not led to the resignation of any high political personality either. Contrary to what is happening in other countries is known of its severity toward corruptions cases.

In the course of the narrative construction, about corruption and the related charges (what is the charge?); Algerian national newspapers are trying to construct narrative of corruption and its event, by linking it with what official declaration reveals, and that the state organs are resolutely tackling corruption effectively. The political opposition's rhetoric made the responsibility of corruption over the state's high officials, and on weak and bad performance of the government. Even deepening this narrative, in order to give the impression that the principal perpetrator of corruption is the supreme officials of the State, and that the State has the capacity and intention to protect its corrupt agents, especially its officials from the ranks of Ministers, instead of that, it sacrificed only junior staff. The narratives of the traditional and online newspapers shown about corruption, is dominated by the character of the uncompleted story, by using the third pronouns. There is almost an absence of the direct reportages or the investigations where the journalists or newspapers play a key role in the story. The journalists stay outside the story and take heterodiegetic narrator position [2], and sometimes the narrative refer to use the macro-narrative in telling corruption histories. By telling how it is linked historically to the political regime and its authoritarian nature, it is part of the political and legitimacy crisis of the political system. Some of the articles dealing with

corruption issues provide us with this method of macro-narratives. While articles dealing with trial proceedings are dominated by the use of partial narrative (micro-narrative), and dive into trial proceedings, where the reader can be distracted and reoriented from the story of corruption, to sub-story of the proceedings of corruptions accused or perpetrators, and tell what charges were brought against them, and how their reactions were on the sentences handed down against them.

What is noticeable about the articles in the three cases of corruption: the case of the Khalifa Bank, the cases of Sonatrach 1 and 2 and the East-West highway case, is that the element of the place in the story or the theater (scene) revolves in most of these cases in court, the court is the one in which the story is relisted, and where events are rearranged, and the frequency between events is established. The court is the place where corruption is formally and officially defined and judged. Corruption is recognized and publicized only within the court as a place, and there are no other places, where a major issue of corruption is uncovered, the newspapers were devoted to the official story as a dominant narration.

The press in Algeria is merely telling the story of corruption (story teller) as events reported that are not directly investigated, and exposed only some figures who are not political, or just carry out tasks and functions of technocratic jobs. In the articles that are in the form of interviews, they partially present fragments of the whole story, not the real actor in corruption. Some newspapers seem bolder in uncovering corruption, through dialogs, and through opinion columns than direct investigations, which are almost absent in large-scale corruption cases, and are only to cover up the scene or scene of the corruption trial in court. The audacity lies only in criticizing the government, or echoing the opposition's views on accusing the regime as a whole of corruption and illegality. Ironically, in light of the paucity of press investigations that can reveal major corruption cases, instead of looking at the truth, the press wonders about the truth.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study reveals that the role of journalism in fighting corruption in Algeria depends on the institutional and political context, where journalistic work remains very far from playing a key role in fighting corruption, and has no strong oversight role, unless it receives support from power factions or from one of the wings within ruling elite, which have an interest in leaking some information. On such a situation of the firm security strict security and political restraints, by legal and financial restrictions means on journalism work, and by indirect ways of controlling the mass media and daily newspapers, Throughout forbid allowing news releases of many corruption cases, under the pretext of security reasons and under pretext of law violation, concerning the inviolability of the reputation of persons, or that of moral persons and State institutions, under the charge of libel and spreading false news. This practice reflected the way how stories of corruption are reported in the online and traditional media alike, where it relies on re-narrating what others are saying about corruption, and the adoption of the official narration in the telling-story, which are characterized with mystery and lack of full elements and characters of the usual narration, and the incomplete full threads. Therefore, this kind of telling story about corruption, with poor unconvincing plot of the story, consolidates the reader's mistrust, and ordinary citizen's suspicion toward established political authority and ruling elite. This situation also strengthens the conviction that the actor in corruption cases remain always hidden behind the scene of the crime of corruption, and there is great protection for politicians and officials of the incumbency, so those peoples involved in corruption cases are only a scapegoats. Those

cases confirm theories concerning the mechanisms of narration of the journalistic work that transform news in fictional and fable narrative [45, 46] but without esthetic plot elements. In addition, the Algerian case confirms the hypothesis that journalism narrative on corruption reveals the relationship of power in this field. When the press writes about corruption cases, it does not mean fighting corruption necessarily, or to expose it or seek to investigate on it seriously, but only to tells partial and fragmented stories about corruption, and it does not provide a complete and convincing narrative, which is often the official and dominant version of corruption narrative. The media arena with its journalism narratives about corruption reflects in almost cases the power domination, where the press narrative reproduces power and political dominance relationship. Especially when narratives and its structure shed light frequently on the trial process events, not on the crime scene itself, this lead to reconfirm that political authority of the incumbent power elite, has abilities to controls corruption issues, and also controls who is entitled to tell and narrate about corruption, and how to tell the story of corruption. Finally, in order to draw attention to marginalized narratives, the opposition press conveys different views about other political figures and parties, often in opposing side to reconstruct macro-narration and present only a vague story about corrupted ruling elite.

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