

Literature Review: The Contribution Of Decentralization To The Fight Against Corruption In The Era Of The New Public Administration Reform (Case Of Morocco)

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Abstract

Decentralization and efficiency of public administration are seen as popular tools implemented by governments to ensure transparency globally. This research evaluates the contribution of decentralization to the reduction of corruption in the era of public administration and civil service reform in Morocco. And introduces new guidelines to achieve a higher level of transparency and good governance, and therefore lower levels of corruption.

Index Terms: Public sector, Decentralization, Corruption, Public administration reform.

Introduction

Systemic corruption poses a major obstacle to economic and political development in any country where it prevails. It undermines economic development, political stability, investor incentives, and fosters distrust (Rothstein and Varraich, 2017). It is generally recognized that low governance quality hinders financial development and economic growth (Kaufman, Kraay, and Mastruzzi, 2009), and it has been proven that poor governance is associated with high corruption rates.

Indeed, decentralization has emerged as a significant theme in good governance in several developing countries (Shah, 1998;

World Bank, 1999; Manor, 1999; De Mello, 2000; Fjeldstad, 2004). A comprehensive definition of decentralization is the "the transfer of responsibility for planning, management and resource raising and allocation from the central government and its agencies to: (a) field units of central government ministries or agencies, (b) subordinate units or levels of government, (c) semiautonomous public authorities or corporations, (d) areawide, regional or functional authorities, or (e) nongovernmental private or voluntary organizations". (Rondinelli 1981a). (1)

Given that decentralization is one of the solutions that, by definition, establishes a certain structure, conformity, and performance, most studies indicate that a higher degree of decentralization is associated with lower levels of corruption (Shleifer and Vishny 1993; Fisman and Gatti 2002a, 2002b; Arikan 2004; Lessmann and Markwardt 2010).

Moreover, in Morocco, since its independence, decentralization has been a choice for the country. However, it is worth noting that the new development model recognizes the inefficiency of public administration (the representative image of decentralization) as a major obstacle and, above all, a hindrance to development.

Problem Statement

In the face of the considerable number of reforms worldwide over the past decades, particularly in the public sector, including Morocco, where responsibilities and management functions have been decentralized, leading to devolved budgetary and financial accountability systems (Farnham and Horton, 1996), Von Maravic (2007) asserts that the decentralization of management and financial responsibilities introduces an increased risk of conflicts of interest and corruption.

Following this line of thought, and empirically, several researchers have analyzed the relationship between

decentralization and corruption, leading to contradictory conclusions. Indeed, most studies show that a higher degree of decentralization is associated with lower levels of corruption (Shleifer and Vishny 1993; Fisman and Gatti 2002a, 2002b; Arian 2004; Lessmann and Markwardt 2010), but other studies reach the opposite conclusion (Treisman 2000, 2006; Fan et al. 2009).

The New Development Model states: "Other significant issues accentuate the low performance of public policies: the slow pace of decentralization and deconcentration processes, which deprives the territorial level of the human, technical, and financial capacities necessary for a more effective and citizen-centered implementation..." (2).

It is worth noting, even from this excerpt alone, that decentralization has not necessarily led to effective results, and the Moroccan administration still suffers from a significant lack of performance. Hence, it becomes imperative to examine the impact of decentralization on corruption in the era of public administration reform, which presents a comprehensive and collaborative method that lays the foundations for a new culture of public service delivery and addresses the shortcomings of decentralization.

Literature Review

1. Corruption

Theoretical and empirical studies on the subject of corruption are numerous. Indeed, corruption affects both the private and public sectors worldwide. We can consider this as one of the reasons that prompted researchers, global organizations, economists, and even socialists to take an interest in this subject.

In a general and undifferentiated manner, the definition proposed by the non-governmental organization Transparency International (2002) seems comprehensive. According to this organization, "corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for

private gain." (3)

This definition encompasses both financial and non-financial benefits. It emphasizes the importance of governance systems in regulating and controlling how authority is exercised, highlighting the inefficient costs associated with corruption and the use of diverted resources from their intended purpose.

The World Bank (1997) concerns itself with the definition of corruption, especially at the level of the public sector, stating that corruption is "the abuse of public office for private gains." (4), the World Bank addresses the issue of public corruption involving a public structure and an individual.

As for the OECD in 2008, it specifically addresses foreign public officials by providing the following definition: "The intentional act, by any person, of offering, promising, or granting undue pecuniary advantage, directly or through intermediaries, to a foreign public official, for the official or a third party, to act or refrain from acting in the exercise of official functions, in order to obtain an undue advantage in international business." (5)

Finally, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1999) defined corruption as the abuse of public powers, a public office, or authority for personal purposes through extortion, influence trafficking, nepotism, fraud, and embezzlement, primarily addressing the private sector. This definition was later expanded by the same organization to become the commission or instigation of acts that constitute an abusive exercise of a function (or an abuse of authority), including by omission, in anticipation of a benefit or for the obtaining of a benefit, directly or indirectly promised, offered, or solicited, or as a result of the acceptance of a benefit directly granted, for personal or third-party gain (UNDP, 2003).

2. Decentralization

Decentralization is associated with several variables, including but not limited to democracy, governance, equity,

responsibility, and fairness.

Figure 1: Theoretically Established Variables Linked to Decentralization, made by us

Democracy	Kauzya (2005) Diamond (1999)	The most immediate and least contentious outcome of decentralization is the emergence of cooperation among local populations or their representatives (delegate/mandate) in the decision-making and implementation process. Decentralization strengthens democratic values, fosters accountability, and bolsters commitment to local interests, granting a voice to all categories of citizens.
Governance	Fisman and Gatti (2002)	Decentralization and good governance are positively correlated.
Equity	Manor (1999)	Decentralization favors a stronger partnership between the state and society by allowing citizens to collaborate in decisions that shape their lives and by providing them with a greater sense of ownership.
Responsibility and Efficiency	(Tiebout 1956; Oates 1999)	Decentralization yields fruitful outcomes in terms of abbreviated government responsibility and efficiency, but it also brings about conflicts between

		different levels of government for mobile resources.
Corruption	Shleifer and Vishny (1993) Arikan (2004); Lessmann and Markwardt (2010)	A higher level of decentralization is associated with lower levels of corruption.

3. Decentralization and Corruption

The mismanagement of resources and corruption represent two well-documented challenges that the delivery of public services faces at the core of developing countries. Numerous articles have identified these challenges as being linked to a fundamental issue of incentives within centrally controlled bureaucracies typically responsible for service delivery.

More specifically, this involves the truncated adaptation of governments to oversee local costs, needs, or service levels, recognizing that the issue could be the resulting lack of accountability for officials. Prud'homme (1995) and Tanzi (1996) have highlighted that a decentralized government system is keenly able to bring officials closer to citizens at the local level, promote better services, and reconcile local governments with a higher degree of discretion.

Despite debates regarding the impact of fiscal decentralization on corruption, numerous noteworthy studies support the idea that decentralization can establish a solution to streamline the governmental structure and limit the growth of corruption. In response to significant dissatisfaction with the outcomes of centralized economic planning, reformers turned to decentralization to dismantle the dominance of the central government and provide broader participation in democratic

governance (Olowu, 2000; Smoke, 1994; Wunsch and Olowu, 1990).

Moreover, Weingast (1995) and Arian (2004) have asserted that decentralization provides the opportunity for enhanced accountability, reduced corruption, and increased competition among local governments. Wildasin (1995) and Carbonara (1999) have argued that decentralized government is better equipped to diminish the perceived benefits of corruption while accrediting a higher likelihood of detection and punishment at the local level.

Furthermore, Ahlin (2001) observed that greater transparency at the local government level creates a constraint on corruption and increases levels of monitoring by the central government. Thus, Crook and Manor (2000) evaluated the political decentralization process in countries such as India, Bangladesh, Ivory Coast, and Ghana, concluding that decentralization leads to increased transparency and reduces the incidence of corruption. Taking Indonesia as an example, Kuncoro (2002) argued that administrative decentralization leads to lower corruption, as businesses move to areas with lower bribe rates.

A study by Gurgur and Shah (2005) identified significant incentives for corruption, isolating the effect of decentralization, including a lack of service orientation in the public sector, weak democratic institutions, and centralized decision-making. They concluded that decentralization promotes greater accountability in the public sector and reduces corruption.

It is noteworthy that the political thrust of decentralization remains in the desire to converge citizens' decision-making. Although there is a close relationship between democracy and decentralization, establishing the direction of causality remains complex. Often, much like democracy and human rights, decentralization is supported as an end in itself.

From an economic perspective, the justification for decentralization relies on the benefits of allocative and

production efficiency. The argument for allocative efficiency suggests that the efficient level of production of a local public good (where the sum of residents' marginal benefits equals marginal cost) may vary from one jurisdiction to another due to differences in preferences and differential costs (Oates, 1999).

The rationale for production and supply efficiency seems intuitive and deductive. Local governments, being closer to citizens, possess better information about the preferences of the local population and are thus able to respond to variations in demand for goods and services (Musgrave, 1959).

Literature studies on decentralization and corruption reveal that within these two domains, although significant work has been done, there are very few articles explicitly dedicated to inventorying the correlations between these two themes (Kolstad and Fjeldstad, 2006). A four-volume work on corruption policy (Williams and Theobald, 2000) dedicates one volume to corruption in the developing world; however, only one article addressing decentralization-related corruption (Wade, 1982) is included.

The decentralization of responsibilities and management functions, leading to devolved budgetary and financial responsibility systems (Farnham and Horton, 1996).

Existing literature on related topics follows three main directions. Some works focus on the relationship between the decentralization of government activities and corruption (e.g., Treisman 2000; Fan et al. 2009; Enikolopov et Zhuravskaya 2007), while other analyses examine the relationship between corruption and the underground economy (e.g., Friedman et al. 2000; Dreher et Schneider 2010; Buehn et Schneider 2012a). Additionally, more recent works explore the impact of decentralization on the size of the informal sector, highlighting a negative correlation (e.g., Torgler et al. 2010; Teobaldelli 2011).

On the one hand, the classic channels through which decentralization exerts its beneficial effects, in terms of increased government responsibility and efficiency, are competition between different levels of government for mobile resources (Tiebout 1956; Oates 1999) and informational advantages (Hayek 1948; Oates 1972).

The majority of studies prove that a higher degree of decentralization is associated with lower levels of corruption (Shleifer and Vishny 1993; Fisman and Gatti 2002a, 2002b; Arikan 2004; Lessmann and Markwardt 2010).

In a theoretical article, Shleifer and Vishny (1993) state that states with an institutionalized structure and those that are highly decentralized are better able to endure the harmful effects of corruption compared to states characterized by an intermediate level of institutional centralization.

Indeed, decentralization remains a fundamental basis of governance in the majority of developing countries in recent years (Fukasaku & de Mello, 1999; Manor, 1999; World Bank, 1999; Shah, 1998; Crook and Manor, 1998). It is argued that, through decentralization, communities will be more inclined to pay local taxes when the amounts they contribute can be directly linked to the services received (Livingstone & Charlton, 1998; Westergaard & Alam, 1995). Commitment to decentralization has also become an essential element of corruption-fighting strategies supported by donors, due to expected improvements in state accountability and the reduction of bureaucratic discretion (World Bank, 2000).

Decentralization refers to administrative changes that grant lower levels of government greater administrative authority in service delivery (Khan, 2002).

Theories

The literature on corruption and decentralization in the public sector being insufficient, it is appropriate to base our research on three theoretical currents that have sought to conceptualize

corruption. These are the rent-seeking theory, agency theory, and governance theory.

The rent-seeking theory is a branch of the public choice school, considering corruption as a form of rent-seeking. This term refers to the appropriation, by certain agents, of economic rents leading to transfers of collective wealth to these agents through manipulation of the rules of economic activity (Krueger, 1974). If this appropriation of wealth results from the abusive use of delegated power, it is considered corruption.

Agency theory deals with the consequences of the principal-agent problem within an economic unit, administration, or business. Indeed, the first corruption models are agency models that specifically address public corruption. These models consider the official (the agent) as an actor using the power delegated to them by the community (the principal) to derive private benefits from the sale of public goods or services. In summary, the exercise of discretionary power and the information asymmetry associated with delegation make corruption possible.

Finally, The last current is governance; indeed, this current considers corruption as a symptom of poor governance. Kaufmann (2005) asserts that corruption should indeed be perceived as a symptom of the fundamental weaknesses of the state and not as a fundamental or isolated determinant of societal ills. According to this current, corruption is due to institutional failure.

Research Questions and Methodology

Several theoretical and empirical studies have analyzed the issue of decentralization and its impact on corruption, especially in developing countries. However, to our knowledge, few studies have examined the potential impact between decentralization and corruption in the era of the latest public administration reform, particularly in Morocco. In this context, we pose the following research questions:

- a. How does decentralization, a choice made by Morocco for several years, influence the scourge of corruption?
- b. How does the public administration reform in Morocco assist decentralization? and through which organ?
- c. What would be the benefits of good decentralization and effective administrative management in addressing corruption?

As a result, this study has been undertaken to address the aforementioned questions through a literature review (Tashakkori, Teddie, 1998). We focus on Morocco as a primary case study mainly due to its potential for demonstrating insights for other developing country contexts. First, Morocco is a keen practitioner of a wave of public sector reforms with an intense experience of democratization. Secondly, Moroccan politicians have become highly ambitious in implementing reforms at the public administration level, following projects in collaboration with major international institutions.

Findings and Discussions

1. Decentralization in Morocco

It is worth mentioning that the first text related to the organization of municipalities, which constituted the focal point of local administration and laid down the basic principles defining decentralization, dates back to 1960 [1] and then in 1976 [2].

The observations made regarding municipalities are effectively extended to provinces and regions, namely Law n° 79-00 [3] concerning departmental and provincial community organizations, entrusting the latter with the mission of economic and social development, without explicitly addressing the issues related to the adoption of good governance techniques:

- Results-oriented management
- Accountability
- Partnership

- Funding search
- Information systems
- Monitoring and performance indicators, etc.

The second approach should consider Law n° 47-96 [4] regarding regional organization . In this regard, no specific provision on governance is provided. It is important to recall that before the implementation of the constitutional amendment in 2011, the legal framework limiting territorial decentralization was Law n° 47-96 regarding regional organizations and Law n° 79-00 regarding community organizations at the prefecture and province levels.

Before the implementation of the constitutional amendment in 2011, the legal system restricting local decentralization did not provide specific provisions on governance. During a time when support and control functions were centralized, the management of routine administrative affairs was entrusted to local authorities.

Decentralization and the transfer of powers were unified within a broad framework, that of national reform. This transfer was carried out in accordance with the subsidiarity principle proclaimed in Article 140 of the Moroccan Constitution [5]. This principle states that, in general, the exercise of public responsibility should be carried out at the most local level, where authorities have close relations with citizens.

Under the auspices of the 2011 constitutional reorganization, territorial decentralization no longer falls under common law but rather under a higher normative level complementing the Constitution, namely: Organic Law [Organic Law No. 111.14 on Regions [6], Organic Law No. 112.14 [7] on Prefectures and Provinces, Organic Law No. 113.14 [8] on Communes.

In 2015, the relevant organic law appeared in the national legal order, signaling a new phase of decentralization in Morocco.

Now, local authorities must take necessary measures to

modernize their respective administrative structures, including the incorporation of good governance tools [See, for example, articles 219 and 250 of Organic Law No. 112.14, concerning prefectures and provinces].

It is worth mentioning that the 2011 constitutional amendment brought about structural changes in the field of decentralization by transferring decentralized financial powers (implementation of the budget voted by the Council) from the governor to the president of the Council of the Commune. To be clear, administrative control involves decisive actions from the Commune Council, such as development plans, budgets, partnership agreements, decentralized cooperation [see Article 109 of Organic Law No. 112.14 on provinces/counties, and Article 118 of Organic Law No. 113.14 on communes].

However, legislative reforms affecting decentralization have not completely addressed the gaps and deficiencies in governance and, more broadly, in optimizing and modernizing local public administration. Evidence of this is found in the section of the new development model analyzing the obstacles to development in Morocco.

The New Development Model (NDM) [9] proposes a new development framework to address vulnerabilities caused by changes in Morocco's socioeconomic situation over the past two decades and the new challenges that arise from them. Published in May 2021, the new development model defines four major transformation axes to achieve sustainable progress in economic, human, social, and territorial dimensions by 2035. It is stipulated in the new development model in a section addressing the achievements and shortcomings of the country:

"The constitutional reform of 2011 has not been implemented within the expected deadlines and has not been followed by a comprehensive and integrated response in terms of economic and social development... This situation has contributed to slowing down the reform process and has allowed a deep-seated climate of distrust to settle in, against a backdrop of

economic growth slowdown and deterioration of public services." excerpt of The New Development Model. (6)

This has prompted Moroccan authorities to embark on a radical reform of public administration to address deficiencies that continue to hinder the country's development, which also encourages us to review the contribution of this reform in this study.

2. Public Administration Reform in Morocco

The choice of addressing public administration reform in this article, which primarily focuses on the impact of decentralization on corruption, has three reasons. Firstly, public administration reform is implemented in accordance with constitutional principles put into practice through legislative and executive powers, aimed at achieving the required structural changes, thereby ensuring a logical continuity in the practice of decentralization.

Secondly, the reform is based on the concept of advanced regionalization, which similarly relies on decentralization, and promises to provide citizens with the local services and benefits they need, intending to reconcile them with decision-making centers. Hence, it is crucial to acknowledge these contributions. Thirdly, the reform takes on the nature of a comprehensive transformation aimed at ensuring the quality of public services and preserving the public interest to strengthen the qualities of transparency, fairness, and good governance. Given that these qualities are direct and explicit deterrents to corruption, it is influential to commemorate the roles of the reform.

It is essential to note that the reform requires an update of the administration and the Civil Service by reorganizing, restructuring, and enhancing its managerial and technical capabilities to achieve good governance and safeguard the public interest.

Therefore, it is time to revisit the fundamental principles of the aforementioned reform.

A. National Public Administration Reform Plan 2018-2021 [10]

The Administration Reform is characterized by a comprehensive shift focusing on four distinct structural transformations. The plan is based on a set of rules and mechanisms established during the current legislature, from 2018 to 2021, comprising 24 projects organized around four axes: organizational transformation, managerial transformation, digital transformation, and finally, ethical transformation. The latter allocates a significant portion to the fight against corruption and its methods.

Organizational transformation: Involves the redesign of organizational administrative structures so that various ministerial departments and administrative services at the central and local levels can ensure the effective and efficient implementation of public policies and provide public services in compliance with quality standards for users. The following projects ensure this transformation:

The reform involves adopting the Decentralization Charter to improve the efficiency of decentralized administration and elevate it to high performance. Additionally, there is a revision of the regulatory framework to define organizational rules for ministerial departments, addressing urgent needs in managing sectoral programs. The National Program for Improving Reception is being implemented to enhance the front offices of administrative services based on the principles of the Public Services Charter. Lastly, there is an emphasis on improving public institutional communication in public administrations by developing specialized structures and professional skills.

Managerial Transformation: This shift pertains to the amendment of formulas and management practices accepted at the administrative level through recent management tools. This transformation is anchored by subsequent projects, including:

- Adoption of the Public Services Charter, incorporating

all doctrines of good governance related to the functioning of administrative services, regions, other territorial collectivities, and public entities.

- Competency-based management with a contemporary doctrine of human resource management aiming at enhancing the capabilities and skills of public servants.
- Establishment of an observatory for human resources in the Administration advocating for relevant indicators in terms of estimated human resource management within the Administration.
- Development of a barometer enabling the ongoing evaluation of the quality of public services to continuously gauge the level of user satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

Digital Transformation: This represents one of the most significant transformations, involving the implementation of modern technological techniques and means and their dissemination to all administrative services to strengthen common computer applications and thus facilitate user access. This transformation is particularly achieved through the following projects:

- Development of the Government Gateway platform to enable shared access to data from administrative services, providing users with an array of tools facilitating access to services.
- Installation of the Human Resources Management Information System in the context of pooling resources between ministerial departments.

Ethical Transformation: Representing the final transformation, it aims at implementing the foundations of good governance and emphasizing ethics in the Administration to support integrity and transparency. This transformation advocates the following ideas:

- Continuation of the implementation of projects from

the national strategy to combat corruption through revitalizing the National Anti-Corruption Commission.

- Time management in administrative departments and services during the promotion of ethical best practices within the Administration, along with supporting and fostering professional attitudes of public servants.
- Development of an action plan and processes for the execution of the law on the right to access information, aiming to strengthen the foundation of transparency in public management and adhering to constitutional measures.
- Approval of a national action plan for Open Government to enhance participatory democracy, involving the decentralization of power to the citizens, particularly focusing on the training and assessment of public policies, within the framework of Morocco's commitment to the Open Government Partnership Initiative.

B. Implementation of Projects in the National Anti-Corruption Strategy

The reform plan dedicates an integral part to the fight against corruption, the commission responsible for it, and particularly the monitoring that will need to be ensured to oversee the implementation of all anti-corruption projects in the medium and short term:

- Strengthening the foundations of good governance, especially through the link between responsibility and accountability (by designing a communication plan for the National Anti-Corruption Strategy).
- Confirming the values of transparency and integrity of the executive power to enhance performance and public capacity.
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability of anti-corruption efforts through the implementation of plans outlined in the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (by preparing meetings of the National Anti-

Corruption Commission twice a year).

It is essential to announce that, according to the reform, the tool for implementing this fight is the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC), established under the authority of the Head of Government. (See Appendix 1).

3. Overview of the Contribution of Decentralization and Public Administration Reform to the Fight Against Corruption

The national strategy to combat corruption identifies the following limitations as direct causes of corruption:

- General lack of transparency and access to information
- Lack of clarity on specific tools available for the fight against corruption
- Absence of monitoring mechanisms and tools
- Absence of tools for steering and evaluating action plans

Decentralization somewhat addresses the first part of these limitations, as it advocates the principles of free administration, cooperation, and solidarity. Public administration reform, on the other hand, addresses the second part by promoting the concept of the link between responsibility and accountability, good governance, and safeguarding the general interest in public services. We can already point out the existence of a favorable impact on the fight against corruption through the reassignment of experienced management personnel to administrative control missions facilitated by decentralization and through the managerial, organizational, digital, and ethical transformations enabled by public administration reform.

Decentralization Reform	Public Administration Reform
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-Autonomous administration -Cooperation -Solidarity -Sustainable and integrated human development	-Correlation: Accountability- Accountability ? -Good Governance ? -Preservation of the general interest in public services. ? -Promotion of integrity, good governance, and the adoption of digital administration	Principles
-Organic Law No. 111.14 on Regions -Organic Law No. 112.14 on Prefectures and Provinces -Organic Law No. 113.14 on Communes	-Detailed report on the reform (Ministry of Administrative Reform and Public Service) ? -Articles 154, 155, 155, 157 of the constitution	Sources
-Transition from tasks of execution and supervision to missions of administrative control and legal advice -Strengthening the decision-making and executive powers of elected councils -Conversion of certain experienced management professionals into administrative control missions	Structural Transformations on 4 levels: - Organizational - Managerial - Digital - Ethical	Contributions
Implicit and unintentional	Explicit and dissected	Role of corruption in the reform

Figure 2: The correlation between decentralization and the reform of the Moroccan public administration, made by us

However, theoretical studies have not always favored decentralization, as exemplified by Treisman (2000), who provided evidence that creating numerous levels of government through decentralization is likely to reduce accountability and encourage corruption. Similarly, Banfield (1975) emphasized that due to fewer centralized forces to enforce honesty, decentralized political systems are more prone to corruption. Moreover, empirical studies have also

supported these arguments, such as the insightful study by Crook and Manor (1998) on the decentralization process in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Karnataka (India), and Bangladesh. They suggest that there might be an initial increase in corruption after decentralization, which should decrease fairly quickly.

In line with this, James Manor (1999), in his book *The Political Economy of Democratic Decentralization*, argues that decentralization is always accompanied by an increase in the number of people involved in acts of corruption. Additionally, Tanzi (2000a) supports these views. This perspective is also backed by recent theoretical work based on principal-agent incentive theory, exploring the impacts of decentralization on corruption levels.

Indeed, Carbonera (2000) argues, for instance, that more decentralization has a positive impact on corruption, increasing individual propensity to accept bribes. According to his model, this also has a dual effect on incentives to monitor corrupt activities by higher levels. Firstly, it leads to a loss of control, reducing the willingness of higher levels to monitor. Secondly, it also increases the bribe paid to lower levels, reinforcing their propensity for corruption and increasing monitoring by higher levels.

From the above, Bardan & Mookherjee's major conclusion is that there is no a priori and unconditional verdict in favor of the decentralized system. Its success crucially depends on the existence of an appropriate set of political and economic institutions. Moreover, they argue that decentralization initiatives are more likely to succeed when accompanied by reforms that broaden the scope of local democracy and reduce asset inequality, which is among the reasons that led us to consider public administration reform (in Morocco) as an effective companion to decentralization.

The implementation of the public administration reform is certainly not specifically dedicated to combating corruption but addresses this point in a significant part named *Ethical*

Transformation-. It is worth noting that the reform's horizon was 2021; laws, texts, and regulations certainly exist thanks to the reform, but studying the empirical impact on corruption after their implementation remains to be done for further assurance. This becomes a research avenue for the future

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to attempt to understand the contribution of decentralization to the fight against corruption by examining existing literature in this field and reinterpreting it. This research has expanded the current literature on the fight against corruption, particularly in a developing country (Morocco).

The study revealed that the adoption of decentralization, along with administrative efficiency, is likely to enhance mechanisms to combat corruption, as the level of corruption changes with the practice of good governance facilitated by decentralization accompanied by public administration reform.

However, the research demonstrated that decentralization alone is insufficient to reduce the level of corruption. Consequently, the article concludes that the introduction of provisions emanating from public administration reform at the public sector level is likely to influence mechanisms to combat corruption. This is achieved by bridging the prevailing logic in the public sector through decentralization and accompanying it with the contributions of public administration reform. As a result, an update is necessary to align with this change.

Based on the research conclusions, some recommendations are deemed useful for policymakers: the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation team composed of dedicated experts to ensure the realization of expected outcomes from all reforms. The government should devise plans to facilitate a swift implementation of the new provisions envisaged in the public administration overhaul.

Appendix 1

Overview of NACC (National Anti-Corruption Commission) and NIPPFC (National Instance of Probity, Prevention, and the Fight against Corruption), made by us

In accordance with the provisions of articles 36 and 167 of the recent Moroccan constitution of 2011, the National Instance of Probity, Prevention, and the Fight against Corruption (NIPPFC) was established with the goal of coordinating, monitoring, and ensuring the follow-up of the implementation of policies for the prevention and fight against corruption. Its mission includes gathering and disseminating information in this field, contributing to the improvement of public life, as well as reinforcing the principles of exemplary governance, the mindset of public service, and the values of responsible citizenship.

NIPPFC is a member of the National Commission for the Fight against Corruption, which is led by the Head of Government. The commission is comprised of delegates from various involved public administrations and governance bodies. NACC is tasked with:

- Implementing the national strategy to combat corruption by submitting suggestions and projects aimed at enhancing clarity and the dissemination of principles of morality and integrity within government services.
- Reviewing programs, projects, and initiatives designed to counter corruption, validating them, monitoring their implementation, and evaluating their results. It also analyzes suggestions and proposals put forth by (NIPPFC) and takes necessary measures to implement them.
- Supporting departments involved in anti-corruption initiatives and taking required measures to ensure the convergence of these programs.

Morocco has embarked on a restructuring and revision of anti-corruption policies, focusing on consolidating the legal

foundations of numerous constitutional bodies and institutions, especially NIPPPFC. In this regard, an amendment to Law No. 113-12 related to (NIPPPFC) has been introduced to enable the organization to benefit from legal mechanisms that promote efficiency in exercising its competencies, including consultations, proposals, monitoring, coordination, and policy evaluation.

The abbreviations in French of the said national instances

INPPLC: Instance Nationale de la Probité, de la Prévention et de la Lutte contre la Corruption

CNAC : Commission Nationale Anti-Corruption

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