



Institutional Corruption and The Role of External Audit - Inspection Bodies in Combating It in Iraq

Mseer Saber Abood

*Department of Accounting, College of Administrative and Financial Sciences, Imam Ja'afar Al-Sadiq
University, Baghdad, Iraq.*

Email: mseer.sabir@ijssu.edu.iq

Received: 28th June 2025

Accepted: 24th August 2025

Published: 5th October 2025

ABSTRACT

This research seeks to clarify the concept of institutional corruption, which many countries suffer from, especially various developing countries, including Iraq. It takes on multiple, broad dimensions, intertwined with various factors, including the effectiveness of external audit and inspection bodies. Therefore, the importance of the research lies in clarifying the role that external audit and inspection bodies can play in eliminating institutional corruption within the government institutions subject to their oversight, and the extent to which these bodies adhere to regulations and laws to preserve public funds. The research yielded a set of conclusions, the most important of which is that there is a clear role for external audit and inspection bodies in identifying cases of institutional corruption in Iraq, but they do not report them to the relevant anti-corruption bodies in a timely manner. Nevertheless, their absence from performing their duties will lead to increased manipulation of public funds, violations and breaches of financial laws, an increase in embezzlement, waste of public funds, and the exploitation of influence and government positions. The research reached a set of recommendations, including the need for serious work by all official and popular sectors to lift all covers on corruption, especially technical covers. Legal and administrative measures are needed to enable external audit and inspection bodies to combat corruption more effectively. Proposals for draft laws criminalizing practices and actions that contribute to the emergence and spread of corruption are also proposed, and legislative bodies are required to approve and implement them. Managements of state institutions are selected from those with a good reputation and professional competence, not based on criteria of proximity or distance from influential authorities.

Keywords: External audit, Inspection bodies. Institutional corruption, combating

INTRODUCTION

Institutional corruption is considered one of the most dangerous phenomena facing the state and all its governmental institutions, due to its social, economic, and moral repercussions, devastating its economy, as well as its financial and administrative capabilities. Therefore, the issue of inspecting and auditing the performance of government institutions, their management of public funds, and combating corruption is an important topic, given that external auditing and inspection serves the public interest by uncovering shortcomings and deficiencies in the administrative aspect. This prompted the legislator to establish audit and inspection bodies, granting them the authority to monitor administrative activities, combat institutional corruption, and ensure the integrity of state funds and employees' performance of administrative duties. Iraq is one of the countries where institutional corruption has emerged, despite the presence of three external audit and inspection bodies (represented by the Federal Board of Supreme Audit, the Integrity Commission, and the Offices of the Inspectors General). Therefore, combating and reducing corruption requires a number of comprehensive measures, some of which relate to the role of governments, which is represented by imposing the rule of law and applying it at all levels. As for administrative bodies, their role is represented by the procedures and methods implemented by oversight bodies. This requires them to have broad powers and multiple needs, based on the principles of efficiency and integrity. The procedures of audit bodies are capable of eliminating cases of corruption before they appear. Therefore, the research attempts to identify institutional corruption in its various forms and to explain its causes and methods for combating and reducing it.

Concepts of Institutional Corruption - Its Types - Its Causes:

The phenomenon of institutional corruption is a widespread global issue, with varying extents across different countries. Many countries have suffered from this phenomenon and its negative repercussions, which extend to all sectors and impact their economies, political stability, and security, as it hinders economic development and progress. Consequently, it leads to an imbalance in the social structure of society, corruption, which thus affects social security, administrative performance, and economic growth.

Institutional corruption includes several axes, the most important of which are:

A: Public administration employee corruption: It is defined as a deviation or defect in the course of administrative functions from their proper form, through the employee's use of their

professional powers to achieve financial gain or personal interest. Thus, public administration employee corruption precedes three main types of corruption (Ali, 2023).

1- Accidental individual corruption: Corruption may sometimes be an occasional case for some political individuals or public officials, or temporary and not regular.

2- Institutional corruption, which is found in a specific institution and in specific sectors of economic activity to the exclusion of other sectors, such as the presence of some corrupt official employees in some ministries and various sectors.

3- Regular corruption: which becomes a phenomenon that society suffers from in all its classes and its different treatment, which affects institutions and the behavior of individuals at all levels of the political, economic, and social system.

In addition, there are other types of administrative corruption crimes, namely, organized corruption and random corruption crimes.

The first type of corruption crime spreads through different organizations via specific procedures and arrangements. This type of corruption is defined by the amount of bribery and the mechanism of payment for the completion of certain transactions.

The second type, random corruption, is organized corruption where bribery is carried out without prior coordination and the transactions cannot be guaranteed because the transactions may be initiated at any time.

B - Financial corruption, which refers to financial deviations and violations of the financial rules and regulations governing the financial operations of the state and its institutions, in addition to financial deviations that arise due to weak accounting information systems and violations of the instructions of financial oversight bodies.

Institutional corruption takes many forms and types. It has been classified based on its size (Ashour, 2018).

1-small administrative corruption crimes, so-called, the lowest grades, are carried out by individuals without any coordination with others. These crimes are committed by young employees who receive bribes from others. Such types of criminal behavior are committed by employees in different sectors, and it is based on the economic need of the perpetrators.

2 Large administrative corruption crimes; this kind of crimes is committed by senior officials and officials such as heads of state and government and ministers. The main factor behind this kind of crime is greed, as their goal is to achieve greater financial or social interests

While some researchers classify institutional corruption according to position levels (Latif, 2023)

A. Corruption at the presidential level: This type of corruption is at the top of the political pyramid, that is, the corruption of presidents and rulers by exploiting their powers for personal illegal gain.

C. Corruption at the institutional level, this is the corruption of some members of the legislative, judicial, and executive authorities. Perhaps the most serious form of institutional corruption is the corruption of ministers, senior managers, and members of parliament.

D. Corruption at the administrative level, this type of corruption is the corruption of some employees in the middle and lower levels of the administrative pyramid.

Upon looking at the corruption environment in Iraq, one can figure out that it has the following forms:

1. Societal Corruption: It is related to corrupt societal practices and corrupt individuals. Some society groups can, consciously or unconsciously, get involved in corruption until it becomes acceptable and widespread and the honest and decent people feel estranged and a minority. Societal corruption is more dangerous than the political one because when some society categories get involved in corruption, the society outputs, whether political or otherwise, will be corrupt and the entire society becomes an incubator for corruption. Therefore, fighting societal corruption requires fortifying society from being trapped in it. This requires a set of social mechanisms and measures in which all take part, including civil society organizations, employers, and all the other social actors.

2. Political Corruption: It is linked to the power and behavior of the political factions occupying the legislative and executive powers. It is one of the most dangerous corruption behaviors and has serious implications, including obstructing development and undermining social justice. Worse, it emboldens ordinary people to be involved in corruption when they see the elite breaching the law to achieve personal or partisan gains. This eventually leads to weakening citizens' trust in the state and its institutions even if some of them are actually decent and working hard. Political corruption can take many shapes and forms, but it starts with distancing people who have the required expertise and integrity and appointing instead

incompetent, and dishonest people. What is most dangerous is when the legislative and executive powers do not dismiss those proved to be corrupt and failures.

3. Administrative and Financial Corruption: It is related to the legal violations committed by the administrative authorities, i.e., state institutions that commit administrative or financial violations. For example, some officials appoint their relatives to the fourth degree in the (competence and integrity to select administrative leaders at the advanced and middle levels. This kind of corruption is the weakest link in the corruption chain unlike what is popularized by all Iraqi parties which focus on this kind of corruption and try to limit corruption to the administrative and financial one and portray it as the root of all the country's ordeals. This is not true for many reasons (Al-Saadi, 2021).

Manifestations of corruption in public administration

1-Lack of respect for working hours or laxity or laziness and irresponsibility and disclosure of the secrets of the job.

2- Citizens are forced to follow twisted methods to accomplish their work because of the inability or failure of the administrative system to achieve.

3-Selection of unqualified administrative leaders for government departments (Frijawya, 2018).

4- Harming public money is one of the most widespread manifestations of corruption in Iraq, as the number of recruitment orders issued by the Integrity Commission in relation to this crime amounted to 1,168, with a rate of 32.61% of the total recruitment orders issued by the Integrity Commission during the first half of 2019.Arrest warrants in connection with this crime totaled 474 warrants of arrest for the suspect.

5- Embezzlement of public funds is also one of the most common manifestations of corruption in Iraq, as the number of recruitment orders issued by the Integrity Commission in relation to this crime reached 158 orders, by 4.41%, and the arrest warrants issued for that crime amounted to 321 arrest warrants, or 19.42% of all the arrest orders issued during the first half of this year.

6- Bribery is one of the most prevalent manifestations of corruption in the administrative apparatus in Iraq.The recruitment orders for the crime of bribery amounted to 99 orders, 2.76% of the total issued orders. Arrest warrants issued by the competent authorities in this crime exceeded 92 by 5.57% of the total arrest warrants issued in cases related to corruption in Iraq.

7-Favoritism, which means favoring one party over another unlawfully, as in awarding contracting, bidding, leasing and investment contracts and other contracts that are in return for public money .

8- Abuse or deviation of authority to achieve a special goal or different to the one for which that power was granted. The arrest warrants for this crime amounted to 474, or 28.68% of the total arrest warrants in corruption cases during the first half of this year, and 44 defendants were seized from the seizure of the flagrante delict, 6.37% of the seizures of the crime witnessed in corruption crimes in Iraq (Ateiah, 2020).

Because the corruption in Iraq is systemic, there are many types of corruption schemes in operation. The first type of corruption involves public procurement and contracting, where graft and kickbacks (diverting contracts to maximise private or political interests), fraud (false billing), extortion, and blackmail are used widely to ensure public funds are captured or extracted to the benefit of the political elite. The second type is theft of public funds using embezzlement (such as the ‘heist of the century’). The third is patronage (to ensure voters, loyalists, and party members are rewarded by pushing them into the public sector), payroll fraud (through absenteeism or ghost employees), and salary skimming. The fourth is smuggling of oil and derivatives, contraband and fake goods. The fifth is facilitating the narcotics trade and other similar trades. The sixth is bribery, extortion, blackmail for political or purely financial purposes (Jiyad, 2023).

The most important factors contributing to the spread of institutional corruption in Iraq at the present time can be summarized as follows (Yasir Kuoti, 2018)

Reasons for widespread corruption are various and many. Most detrimental is the existing weak rule of law and even weaker democratic institutions such as the Judiciary, intended to serve the rule of law, leading to issues of bad governance.)

Other writer suggest some factors stop behind spread of institutional corruption classified as follow: (Ali, 2023)

1- For economic factors represented in the following

-The expansion of the economic role of the state and its monopoly of a limited number of institutions and the disruption of market.

-Failure to take into account the need to achieve balance or justice in the distribution of economic resources to the population..

- The high standard of life and low pay in the public sector are significant and basic contributors to corruption. This situation leads to a negative result through which the desire to accept bribery, embezzlement, fraud

2- Political factors: Represented by the absence of political ability, i.e. the weak political leaders to fight .

3- Social factors: the weakness of religious faith among individuals and the absence of conscience, which caused the spread of corruption. In addition, there are some social variables that contribute to creating an atmosphere of corruption and motivate some to practice it.

4- Administrative-related causes: the imbalance in the public sector has a significant impact on the growth of the problem of administrative corruption. This is exemplified by how poorly tasks and responsibilities are defined in government organizations, how poorly self-control is exercised (Mayamin Karim, 2022)

Harmful negative effects of Institutional corruption :

Administrative corruption has many harmful negative effects. Administrative corruption has economic, political, and social consequences that have a devastating effect on society. The destructive effects of this phenomenon affect all those who contribute to life in the state, wasting money and time, disrupting public services, and leading to sabotage. The corruption is not only at the economic and financial field, but it is also in the political, social and cultural arena, not to mention the deterioration of the institutions and public services that are related to the lives of the citizens. Moreover, this type of crime leads to the disintegration of moral values and there will also be frustration and criminal activities will increase.

Means and Methods for Combating Institutional Corruption

There are numerous steps and measures that must be taken to combat institutional corruption. Foremost among these measures are:

1-Reduce the incentives for corruption, transparency, aggressive to communicate to the public regarding the progress and purpose of the campaign.

2-Changing the culture of corruption killing the existing market for corruption

Increasing the possibility of being caught while taking a bribe will cause unwillingness to solicit or give a bribe..

3-Declaring corruption a grave crime and apportioning a punishment of its magnitude, the cost of taking a bribe will be extremely high.

4-Reducing the incentive of the person paying the bribe. It will involve removing the subsidies on all items including oil, agriculture and electricity so that there is a standard price for the official and market rates.

5-- Decrease the influence of ministries by devolving power to the provincial entities to encourage competition between provinces and reduce incidents of corruption.

6-Enhance accountability by use of such systems as e-governance which will not only speed up processes but offer easy access for the relevant bodies to cross-check each other

7-Combating poverty, as one of the corruption causes, and striving to achieve social justice.

8- Prevent the waste of public funds and establishing security agencies to monitor the use of public funds and hold negligent individuals accountable.

9- Activating the role of civil society organizations in combating corruption by instilling the concepts of integrity, honesty, and behavioral discipline

11 - Reconsider the functional immunity exercised by department heads to protect their employees from accountability

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Research Problem

It is evident that many efforts are being made by external audit and inspection bodies to combat institutional corruption of all kinds, to limit it and minimize its effects. However, the phenomenon of corruption has spread more widely across the state and society, reflecting the weakness or inability of those responsible for combating it. The research problem is the extent of the effectiveness of the relevant oversight bodies in confronting and combating corruption. Are the legal legislation and technical skills of external inspection and audit bodies sufficient to combat institutional corruption?

The importance of the research

The importance of the research lies in clarifying the roles played by external inspection and audit agencies in combating institutional corruption and the extent to which these institutions adhere to regulations and laws to preserve public funds.

The objectives of the study

To identify the manifestations of institutional corruption in all its forms and how to reduce and eliminate them. It also outlines the procedures and methods that must be followed by the agencies responsible for combating it, given the inspection and auditing powers these agencies possess, and their use in combating corruption.

The research hypothesis

Null hypothesis: H0: External inspection and audit bodies don't play a role in reducing and preventing corruption in government institutions in Iraq.

Alternative hypothesis H1: External inspection and audit bodies play a role in reducing and preventing corruption in government institutions in Iraq.

Data Collection and Study Tools

A questionnaire was used to collect data for the study, consisting of 48 paragraphs (questions) covering the most important points directly related to inspection and external auditing work. The target sample size was 130 employees working in oversight and auditing activities, representing 10% of the Bureau's employees. Responses totaled (102) completed questionnaires with the required information. Communication technology was used through the Facebook platform and the Messenger application to send and follow up on the questionnaires.

Table 1: *Case Processing Summary*

Cases	N	%	
Valid	102	99.0	
Excluded	1	101	
Total	103	100.0	

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient: The questionnaire data was processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to obtain an estimate of the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient as a measure of the questionnaire's reliability for all (48) items. The Cronbach's

alpha coefficient for all items reached (0.848), a high value indicating the questionnaire's stability, as follows:

Table 2: *Reliability Statistics*

Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
48	0.848

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part was devoted to the sample's personal information, including gender, age, academic level, experience, and profession. While the second part was devoted to the questionnaire questions, it consists of nine axes, each of which represents a set of questions related to the dimensions of the phenomenon of financial corruption, its causes, and the role of the Bureau in combating it through the performance of its job duties.

Processing the sample data

The researchers used the (five-point Likert scale) to estimate and evaluate the answers of (102) employees for the purpose of statistical analysis and testing the study hypotheses, as shown in the following table..

Table 3: *Five-point Likert scale*

The phrase	Completely disagree	Disagree	Nutral	Agree	Completely agree
Rating	1	2	3	4	5

Validity and Reliability Tool Test

To verify the validity of the tool (questionnaire), the questionnaire was presented to experts specialized in the field of accounting and auditing, who expressed their opinions on the extent to which its components were consistent with the nature of the research topic and its objectives. Statistical measures were also used to calculate certain indicators to verify the stability, consistency, and reliability of the results across all variables.

A - The Cronbach's alpha coefficients calculated using the split-half method were (0.720, 0.706) for the first part (24a) and the second part (24b), respectively. These are acceptable ratios indicating the reliability of the questionnaire tool for the two halves of the questionnaire, which consists of 24 items for each part. The correlation coefficient between them was 0.861, indicating a high level of correlation and reflecting the reliability of the tool used in the research.

B - The researcher used Pearson's correlation coefficient to calculate the reliability coefficient by dividing the received questionnaire forms into two equal parts (odd and even questions) and processing the data to obtain the correlation coefficient between the two parts as follows:

First: The calculated value for the odd-numbered coefficient was (0.861), which is a relatively high and acceptable value to ensure that the tool used is stable.

Second: Spearman and Brown's R-value (R-Q); The calculated value of the Spearman - Brown coefficient was 0.925, which is a relatively high and acceptable value, indicating the reliability of the questionnaire responses.

Table 4: *Stability, Consistency, and Reliability Statistics*

Cronbach's alpha	Part1	Value	0,720
		N of items	24a
	Part2	Value	0.706
		N of items	24 b
		Total Nof items	48
Correlation Between Forms			0.861

C - Correlation Coefficient Significance Test: To test the significance of the Pearson correlation coefficient, the researchers used a t-statistic at a significance level of 0.05. The calculated t-value (13.366) is greater than the tabular t-value of 2.845. These figures indicate a statistically significant relationship between the two sample data sets, which points to the stability of the study tool.

Statistical Analysis of data

A - Table (5) shows that the arithmetic mean for all items related to the first axis was 4.016, which exceeds the theoretical mean of 3.00, indicating a relatively high level of agreement. Regarding the axis items, paragraph (2) (The most common cases of institutional corruption are represented by the collusion of inspection and receipt committees) ranked first among the other paragraphs, with an arithmetic mean of (4.30), which is also higher than the hypothetical mean. It also obtained the lowest indicators of standard deviation and variance (0.966) and (0.946), respectively (with a coefficient of variation of (0.169). Then, paragraph (1) came in second place, which states that (The most common cases of institutional corruption are represented by the exaggeration in estimating the costs of contracting and equipment) with an arithmetic mean of (4.33), a standard deviation of (0.848), and a variance of (0.719), with a coefficient of variation of (0.169). While paragraph (6) (The most common cases of institutional corruption are represented by the forgery of deeds and documents and the disbursement of fictitious sums) ranked last, which reflects the technical and engineering dimension of institutional corruption.

Table 5: *Statistics of First axis*

NO:	First axis -Institutional corruption is common in Iraq and takes many forms, the most common of which can be distinguished	Cv	Varian ce	Std. Deviation	Mean	m
1	The overestimation of contracting and equipment costs.	0.195	.719	.848	4.33	442
2	collusion of inspection and receipt committees.	0.169	.530	.728	4.30	439
3	disbursement of salaries, wages, subsidies and financial aid..	0.287	.921	.960	3.34	341
4	embezzlement of state funds and property.	0.257	1.078	1.038	4.03	411
5	embezzlement of state funds.	0.274	1.208	1.099	4.00	408
6	forgery of checks and documents and disbursement of fictitious sums..	0.301	1.175	1.084	3.59	366
7	exploitation of public funds for personal gain.	0.251	1.083	1.040	4.13	421
8	waste of public funds..	0.218	.865	.930	4.25	434
9	bribery and extortion.	0.231	.939	.969	4.18	426
	total		8.518	8.696	36.15	3688
	General average		0.946	0.966	4.016	

B - The overall arithmetic mean for all items in the second axis (Table 6), which dealt with a survey of specialists' opinions on the cover enjoyed by institutional corruption in Iraq, was 4.102, which is higher than the hypothetical mean of 3.00. This reflects a relatively high level of agreement on the (4) items in the axis, as shown in Table 4. Item (4), which states that institutional corruption enjoys political cover, had an arithmetic mean of (4.54), a standard deviation, variance, and coefficient of variation of (0.7920, 0.627, and 0.138), respectively. These indicators reflect the superiority of the item and its first place among the covers of institutional corruption in Iraq, followed by item (3) which states that "corruption has an administrative cover." This paragraph had an arithmetic mean of (4.06), with a standard deviation and a coefficient of variation of (0.715, 0.511, and 0.176), respectively. Paragraph (3), which states that "institutional corruption has a technical and engineering cover," had an arithmetic mean of (3.89), which is higher than the hypothetical mean, with a standard deviation, variance, and coefficient of variation of (0.868, 0.228, and 0.753), respectively.

Table (6): **Statistics** of Second axis:

NO	Axis Two: Financial corruption has multiple political, technical, administrative, and legal cover	Rank	cv	Variance	Std. Deviation	Mean	Sum
1	technical and engineering covers	4	0.228	.753	.868	3.86	394
2	legal covers .	3	0.202	.641	.801	3.95	403
3	administrative covers	2	0.176	.511	.715	4.06	414
4	political covers .	1	0.138	.627	.792	4.54	463
	total						
	General average					4.102	

C-Data from Table (7), related to the third axis(the causes of institutional corruption,) shows that the overall average value for all paragraphs in the axis reached (3.76), which is greater than the hypothetical mean (3.00) and the standard deviation and variance (0.953, 0.979) respectively are the lowest values for the dispersion indicators, indicating that the sample's opinions agree that there are many reasons behind the spread of corruption in Iraq. Paragraph (3), which states, "Institutional corruption is widespread due to weak follow-up on the implementation of decisions to hold corrupt individuals accountable," came in first place with an arithmetic mean of (4.57), the highest mean among the axis's paragraphs and higher than the hypothetical mean and the general average. It also had the lowest values for the standard deviation, variance, and coefficient of variation among the remaining paragraphs in the axis,

reaching (0.653), (0.426), and (0.142), respectively. The paragraph, "Institutional corruption is widespread due to the failure to implement anti-corruption laws," came in second place with a relatively high mean value compared to the values of the remaining paragraphs and a relatively low standard deviation, reflecting general agreement among sample members that the failure to implement anti-corruption laws has a significant impact on the spread of corruption.

Table 7: Statistics of Third axis

	Axis Three: The Multiple Reasons for the Spread of Institutional Corruption in Iraq	Rank	cv	Variance	Std. Deviation	Mean	Sum
1	weak ability to identify cases of corruption.	4	0.459	1.524	1.235	2.69	274
2	lack of specific anti-corruption laws.	3	0.355	1.449	1.204	3.39	346
3	lack of implementation of anti-corruption laws.	2	0.164	.518	.720	4.39	448
4	weak follow-up of decisions to hold corrupt individuals accountable.	1	0.142	.426	.653	4.57	466
	Total			3.917	3.812	15.04	1534
	General Average			0.979	0.953	3.76	383.5

D - It is noted from the data in table (8) on the axis of requirements for addressing and reducing the phenomenon of corruption that there is a consensus among the sample members on the existence of a need to secure the requirements, and this is evident from the values of the statistical indicators, as the value of the general average reached (4.265) points, which is higher than the hypothetical mean value for the acceptance score. Paragraph (5), which states (combating corruption requires a competent and impartial judiciary), ranked first among the five paragraphs of the axis, as its arithmetic mean value reached the highest of all average values and higher than the general average of all paragraphs, as it reached (4.72), while the values of the standard deviation, variance, and deviation coefficient were (0.587, 0.344, 0.124), respectively, which are lower than the values of the corresponding statistical indicators for all other paragraphs - which reflects that an efficient and impartial judiciary is the primary factor in addressing the phenomenon of institutional corruption, and without it, no matter how great the efforts, it will not succeed in reducing this harmful phenomenon economically and socially.

Table 8: Statistics of Fourth axis

	Axis Four: Requirements for Combating institutional Corruption in Iraq	Rank	cv	Variance	Std. Deviation	Mean	Sum
1	clear and specific legislation to combat financial corruption.	4	0.245	1.023	1.012	4.13	421
2	specialized anti-corruption body.	5	0.378	1.670	1.292	3.41	348
3	efficient and impartial oversight.	2	0.141	.410	.640	4.53	462
4	efficient and impartial administrations.	3	0.154	.489	.699	4.53	462
5	efficient and impartial judiciary.	1	0.124	.344	.587	4.72	481
	Total			3.936	4.23	21.32	2174
	General Average		0.198	0.787	0.846	4.264	

E - The fifth axis dealt with data on the sample's opinion poll regarding role of external inspection and auditing bodies in diagnosing patterns of institutional corruption, represented by the eight paragraphs (table9). These included diagnosing waste, concluding supply and implementation contracts that are plagued by major defects, transgression and manipulation of public funds and spending them outside the controls, in addition to embezzlement, theft, manipulation, and forgery, in addition to exploiting public office for personal purposes.

The results of the axis data analysis show that the sample's opinions agreed on all paragraphs of the axis, but to varying degrees. The overall average value for all paragraphs reached (4.295) points, which is relatively high and greater than the hypothetical arithmetic mean of (3.00) points. The first paragraph, which states that (external inspection and auditing bodies work to diagnose cases of waste of public funds), ranked first with a high arithmetic mean of (4.40) points, which is higher than the hypothetical mean of (3.00) points and the overall average of (4.295). It also obtained the lowest standard deviation. The variance ,standard deviation and coefficient among the paragraphs reached (0.693, 0.480, 0.157), which is lower than their general average counterparts, which amounted to (0.786, 0.786, 0.182). Paragraph (3), which states that (external inspection and auditing bodies work to diagnose cases of abuse of state funds), came in second place in terms of its ranking among the paragraphs of institutional corruption that external inspection and auditing bodies work to diagnose, as its arithmetic mean value reached (4.38) points, which is higher than the hypothetical mean (3.00) points and higher than the general average (4.295) points.

Table (9): **Statistics** of the Fifth axis

	Axis Five: The Role of the inspection and auditing bodies in Diagnosing institutional Corruption in Iraq in its Various Forms	Rank	cv	Varian ce	Std. Deviat ion	Mean	Sum
1	* diagnose cases of waste of public funds	1	0.157	.480	.693	4.40	449
2	* diagnose defects in the conclusion and implementation of contracting and equipment contracts	6	0.184	.633	.796	4.31	440
3	diagnose cases of encroachment on state funds	2	0.167	.536	.732	4.38	447
4	diagnose cases of violations of controls over the disbursement and collection of public funds	4	0.181	.629	.793	4.36	445
5	diagnose embezzlement of public funds	8	0.210	.796	.892	4.24	432
6	diagnose cases of theft	5	0.182	.598	.773	4.24	432
	Total			3.672	4.679	25.93	
	General Average			0.612	0.779	4.321	

F. Table (10) shows that there is near aggregate agree among the sample's opinions on the paragraphs of the sixth axis, which includes governmental, legislative, oversight, and judicial bodies, public opinion, and the media in general, to which the inspection and auditing bodies inform of discovered cases of corruption in a timely manner (3.34). This is slightly higher than the hypothetical mean value of 3.00. Paragraph (5), which states that “external inspection and auditing bodies shall inform the Integrity Commission of cases of corruption in a timely manner,” ranked first among the paragraphs of the axis, as evidenced by the value and coefficient of the standard deviation of (0.324), which is the lowest value among the other paragraphs. It is followed in terms of ranking by paragraph (3), which states that “external inspection and auditing bodies shall inform the Public Prosecution of cases of corruption in a timely manner,” with an arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and variance of (3.49, 1.167, 1.361), respectively. The value and coefficient of the standard deviation of (0.334) ranked second.

Table 10: *Statistics of Sixth axis*

	Axis six : procedures for reporting corruption cases to relevant authorities.	Rank	v.c	Varian ce	Std. Deviation	Mean	Sum
1	Informing ministries, general directorates, and their affiliated departments.	3	0.351	1.515	1.231	3.57	364
2	Informing Parliament of corruption cases in a timely manner.	4	0.370	1.565	1.251	3.38	345
3	Informing the Public Prosecution of corruption cases in a timely manner.	2	0.334	1.361	1.167	3.49	356

4	Informing the public, the press, and the media of corruption cases in a timely manner.	5	0.435	1.606	1.267	2.91	297
5	Informing the Integrity Commission of corruption cases in a timely manner.	1	0.324	1.203	1.097	3.84	392
	Total			7.25	6.013	17.19	1754
	Overall Average			1.45	1.202	3.438	

E - It is noted from Table (11) that there is a general agreement among the sample's opinions that the failure of external inspection and auditing bodies to carry out their duties will lead to (increased manipulation of public funds, increased violations and breaches of financial laws, increased embezzlement, increased waste of public funds, increased exploitation of influence and government positions for personal purposes). This is evident from the statistical indicators, as the general average value for all paragraphs of the seventh axis reached (4.414) points, which is a very high value according to the Likert scale, with a standard deviation and variance of (0.722, 0.523) respectively. Paragraph (2), which states that the absence of external inspection and auditing bodies will lead to increased manipulation, came in first place, as its arithmetic mean value reached (4.47) points, which is the highest value of all the arithmetic means of the paragraphs of the axis, in addition to being greater than the values of the general average and the hypothetical mean, which amounted to (4.414, 3) respectively, in addition to it having the lowest value for the standard variation coefficient index. (0.143).

Table 11: Statistics of Seventh axis

NO	Axis Seven: There are negative effects on the fight against corruption when the inspection and auditing bodies are absent.	Rank	v.c	Variance	Std. Deviation	Mean	um
1	Its absence leads to increased waste of public funds	4	0.169	.566	.752	4.44	453
2	Its absence leads to increased manipulation of public funds.	1	0.143	.410	.640	4.47	456
3	Its absence leads to increased embezzlement.	3	0.167	.540	.735	4.40	449
4	Its absence leads to increased exploitation of influence and government positions for personal gain.	5	0.183	.612	.783	4.26	435
5	Its absence leads to increased violations and breaches of financial laws and regulations	2	0.155	.490	.700	4.50	459

Total			2.618	3.61	22.07	
Average			0.523	0.722	4.414	

F - Eighth axis: Requirements for activating the work of external inspection and auditing bodies. Table (12) regarding the requirements for activating external inspection and auditing bodies showed that the sample members agreed on the requirements represented by granting them powers of administrative investigation, referring corruption crimes to the judiciary, and criminal investigation of those involved in corruption crimes. The overall average value for all paragraphs of the axis reached (4.24) points, which is relatively high and greater than the hypothetical mean value. Paragraph No. (1), which states (the work of external inspection and auditing bodies will be effective if they are granted powers of direct administrative investigation of those involved in institutional corruption crimes), ranked first among the paragraphs, as its arithmetic mean reached (4.38) points, which is higher than the overall average and the hypothetical mean, which amounted to (4.24, 3.00), respectively. Its standard deviation (0.753) and standard deviation coefficient (0.171), which are the lowest statistical indicators compared to their counterparts for the other paragraphs, which reflects agreement. The sample's opinions are that the work of external inspection and auditing bodies is effective when they are granted the powers of direct administrative investigation into crimes of institutional corruption that were within the jurisdiction of the inspectors general in government ministries and the Integrity Commission pursuant to Article (14) of the Bureau Law No. (31) of 2011 (amended). Upon discovering a violation, the Bureau may request the Inspector General or the Integrity Commission to conduct an investigation, take the necessary measures, and eliminate the violation and its effects. Paragraph (3), which states, "External inspection and audit bodies shall be effective if they are authorized to refer institutional corruption crimes directly to the competent courts," ranked second among the paragraphs on powers, with an arithmetic mean of (4.53), and a standard deviation of (0.817, 0.667, and 0.180), respectively. This reflects near-complete agreement on the authority to refer corruption crimes. This empowers external inspection and audit bodies to work to reduce the phenomenon of corruption.

Table 12: *Statistics of Eight axis*

No	Axis Eight: Inspection and auditing bodies will be effective if they are granted the investigation powers in combating corruption.	Rank	v.c	Variance	Std. Deviation	Mean	Sum
----	--	------	-----	----------	----------------	------	-----

1	if they are granted administrative investigation powers	1	0.171	.753	.868	4.38	447
2	if they are granted direct criminal investigation powers	3	0.305	1.368	1.170	3.83	391
3	if they are authorized to refer institutional corruption crimes directly to the competent courts,.	2	0.180	.667	.817	4.53	462
	Total			2.788	2.855	12.74	
	General Averages			0.929	0.951	4.24	

G - The indicators of Table (13), related to the ninth axis, showed that most of the opinions agreed. The sample members agreed that the coordination of the work of external inspection and auditing bodies increases its effectiveness through coordination with other government agencies. This is evident from the value of the general average of the arithmetic means of the axis paragraphs, which reached (4.038) points, which is higher than the hypothetical mean value of (3.00) points. Paragraph (2), which states that (external inspection and auditing bodies will be effective if their work is coordinated with the judiciary), came in first place among the (5) paragraphs of the axis, with an arithmetic mean of (4.40) points, which is greater than the hypothetical mean and the general mean of (3.00, 4.038), respectively. Note that the values of the standard deviation, variance, and deviation coefficient are the lowest among the indicators of the other paragraphs, as they reached (0.633, 0.401, 0.143), respectively.

Table 13: *Statistics of Ninth axis*

No	Axis Nine: Activating the Federal Court's work requires coordination with multiple entities.	Rank	v.c	Varian ce	Std. Deviat ion	Mean	Sum
1	The Court's work will be effective if it coordinates with the judiciary.	1	0.143	.401	.633	4.40	449
2	The Court's work will be effective if it coordinates with the oversight and internal audit agencies in the departments.	2	0.234	.891	.944	4.02	410
3	The Court's work will be effective if it coordinates with the Integrity Commission.	3	0.236	.991	.995	4.20	428
4	The Court's work will be effective if it coordinates with the Ministry of Finance.	4	0.244	.909	.953	3.89	397
5	The Court's work will be effective if it coordinates with the National Security Agency.	5	0.299	1.211	1.101	3.68	375

Total		1.156	4.403	4.626	20.19	
General Averages		0.231	0.808	0.925	4.038	

Hypothesis Tests and Results

The researcher used statistical measures for performance of external inspection and auditing bodies in combating corruption in Iraq to calculate the values of the t-test statistic with the following formula and test the nine sub-hypotheses:

$$t = (x - \mu) / (S / \sqrt{n})$$

Table 14: *Statistics of Hypotheses Tests*

Axis Number	Tab ti	Cal ti	Variance	Std .Deviation	Mean	d.f	N
First Axis	1.860	4.4626	37.896	6.15597	36.1569	8	9
Second Axis	2.353	3.8207	5.334	2.30949	16.4118	3	4
Third Axis	2.353	2.4616	6.097	2.46930	15.0392	3	4
Fourth Axis	2.132	5.2878	7.128	2.66989	21.3137	4	5
Fifth Axis	1.895	5.8629	24.986	4.99859	34.3627	7	8
Sixth Axis	2.132	1.051	21.823	4.67146	17.1961	4	5
Seventh Axis	2.132	5.1303	9.519	3.08521	22.0784	4	5
Eighth Axis	2.920	2.7915	5.400	2.32373	12.7451	2	3
Ninth Axis	2.132	3.6359	10.173	3.18950	20.1863	4	5
All Groups	1.671	19.6541	224.345	14.97814	186.8235-	47	48

The data in table (14) were used to test the study hypotheses as follows:

1- Results from the null hypothesis test (H01) indicate no statistical significance at a significance level (Sig = 0.05) with a degree of freedom (8) for the prevalence of institutional corruption in Iraq and its spread in various forms. The calculated value of the t-statistic reached 4.4626, which is greater than the tabular t-value of 1.860. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H01) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H11) was accepted, which states that there is statistical significance at a significance level (Sig = 0.05) with degrees of freedom (8) for the prevalence of institutional corruption in Iraq and its spread in various forms.

2 - The calculated t-statistic for testing the null hypothesis for the second axis (H02), which states: There is no statistical significance at a significance level of 5% with degrees of freedom (4) for institutional corruption in Iraq to have multiple political, technical,

administrative, and legal covers, was (3.8207), which is greater than the tabular (t) value of (2.353). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H02) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H12) was accepted, which states that there is statistical significance at a significance level of 5% with degrees of freedom (4) for institutional corruption in Iraq to have multiple political, technical, administrative, and legal covers.

3 - The result of testing the hypotheses for the third axis showed that the alternative hypothesis(H13)was accepted, which stipulates the existence of statistical significance at a significance level (Sig = 0.05) with degrees of freedom (3) for multiple The calculated (t) value reached (2.4616), which is greater than the tabular (t) value of (2.353), which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H03), which states: (There is no statistical significance at a significance level (Sig = 0.05) with a degree of freedom (3) for the multiplicity of causes of institutional corruption in Iraq) .

4 - The calculated (t) statistic value for the fourth axis related to the legislative, judicial and administrative requirements for combating institutional corruption in Iraq reached amount (5.2878), at a significance level of 5% and with degrees of freedom (4) which is greater than and greater than the tabular (t) value of (2.132), which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H04) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H14), which states: (There is statistical significance at a significance level (Sig = 0.05) with a degree of freedom (4) for the legislative and judicial requirements. and administrative measures to combat institutional corruption in Iraq.

5 - The data in the appendix above showed statistical significance at a 5% significance level and with degrees of freedom (7) for external inspection and auditing agencies in diagnosing cases of institutional corruption in Iraq in its various forms. This is evident from the calculated t-statistic value, which reached (5.8629), which is greater than the tabular value of (1.895). Accordingly, the alternative hypothesis (H15) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H05) was rejected, which states that there is no statistical significance for external inspection and auditing agencies in diagnosing cases of institutional corruption in Iraq.

6 - By testing the hypotheses of the sixth axis, regarding external inspection and auditing agencies reporting cases of corruption to the relevant authorities, the calculated t-statistic value (1.051) appeared to be lower than the tabular value of (2.132) at a 5% significance level and with degrees of freedom (4). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H16) was rejected and the null hypothesis (H05) was accepted. The null hypothesis (H06) states that "there is no

statistical significance for external inspection and auditing bodies to report corruption cases to the relevant authorities in a timely manner" at a significance level and with the same degrees of freedom.

7 - The results of testing the hypotheses of the seventh axis indicated the rejection of the null hypothesis (H07), which states that there is no statistical significance at a significance level of 0.05% (with a degree of freedom of (4)). The absence of external inspection and auditing bodies from carrying out their duties leads to increased manipulation of public funds, violations and breaches of financial laws, increased embezzlement, waste of public funds, and exploitation of influence and government positions for personal purposes. The calculated t-statistic value reached (5.1303), which is higher than the tabulated value of (2.132) at a significance level of 5% and with degrees of freedom of (4). The alternative hypothesis (null hypothesis (H17)), which states that there is statistical significance for the study axis at the same level of significance and degrees of freedom, was accepted. (4)

8 - Testing the hypotheses of the eighth axis of the study revealed the rejection of the alternative hypothesis (H18) and the acceptance of the null hypothesis (H08), which states that "there is no statistical significance for activating the work of external inspection and auditing bodies by granting them investigative and criminal powers in financial corruption cases." The calculated t-statistic value reached (2.7915), which is lower than the tabular value of (2.920) at a 5% significance level and with degrees of freedom (4), as long as there is a governmental administrative and criminal investigative system.

9 - The calculated t-statistic value for testing the hypotheses of the ninth axis reached (3.6359), which is higher than the tabular value of (2.132) at a 5% significance level and with degrees of freedom (4). This calls for rejecting the null hypothesis (H09) and accepting the alternative hypothesis (H19), which states that there is statistical significance for the requirements for activating the work of external inspection and auditing bodies through coordination with relevant authorities. Other governmental institutions at the level of significance and degrees of freedom referred to above.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

A - Institutional corruption in Iraq is a widespread phenomenon in various forms, and it enjoys political, technical, administrative, and legal cover.

B - There are multiple causes of institutional corruption in Iraq, and combating them requires numerous legislative, judicial, and administrative requirements.

C - External inspection and audit bodies have a clear role in identifying cases of institutional corruption in Iraq, but they do not report them to the relevant anti-corruption agencies in a timely manner..

D - The work of external inspection and audit bodies can be enhanced by coordinating their work with other state agencies, especially the judiciary (the Public Prosecution) and internal inspection and audit bodies, rather than by granting them investigative and criminal powers in cases of institutional corruption.

Recommendations

A - The need for serious work by all official and popular sectors to lift all veils of corruption, particularly technical, legal, and administrative veils, to enable external inspection and auditing bodies to combat it more effectively.

B - Develop proposals for draft laws to criminalize the practices and actions that underlie the emergence and spread of corruption, obtain legislative approval for their enactment, and strive diligently to ensure their implementation.

C - Establish sound, objective criteria for selecting leadership cadres for all state institutions, based on a good reputation and professional competence, rather than on criteria of proximity or distance from influential parties.

D - The need for external inspection and auditing bodies to redouble their efforts to identify cases of financial corruption, report them to the relevant authorities in a timely manner, follow up with those authorities, and notify the highest authority in the state if they discover intentional procrastination or delays that allow corrupt individuals to escape responsibility and create psychological frustration among employees of the Federal Board of Supreme Audit.

E - Continuous coordination between external inspection and auditing agencies and the country's public prosecution agencies to combat corruption by providing and presenting objective evidence, and moving from general to detailed investigations to facilitate the work of prosecution agencies and close all loopholes that provide corrupt individuals with avenues to evade accountability.

REFERENCES

- Al-dinouri, M. K. A. (2022). The role of the commission of integrity of Iraq in reducing the phenomenon of administrative and financial corruption. *World Bulletin of Management and Law*, 17, 15-23.
- Al-Frijawy, J., Militaru, C., & Ali, M. H. (2018). The phenomenon of the spread of administrative and financial corruption in Iraq despite the multiplicity of oversight bodies. *American Academic Scientific Research Journal for Engineering, Technology, and Sciences*, 49(1), 8-18.
- Ali, M. K. (2023). Economic Corruption and Its Impact on the Dimensions of Development, with Special Reference to Iraq. *World Economics and Finance Bulletin*, 21, 68-83.
- Al-Saadi, A. J. (2024). National Integrity and Anti-Corruption Strategy 2021-2024. https://nazaha.iq/pdf_up/6479/StrategyNCIEnglish.pdf
- Ashour, A. J. (2018). Criminal Measures to Combat Administrative Corruption in Iraq. *Opción: Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales*, (17), 859-881.
- Ateiah, G. Z. (2020). Constitutional Mechanisms to Combat Corruption in Iraq" The Integrity Commissionas A Model. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 17(6), 15099-15126.
- Jiyad, S. (2023). Corruption is the lifeblood of politics in Iraq.
- Kuoti, Y. (2022). *Anti-Corruption Efforts in Iraq*. Middle East Research Institute..
- Turki, A. A. L., Habeeb, H. B., & Salman, H. A. (2023). Analyzing the Phenomenon of Financial and Administrative Corruption in the Iraqi Economy. *International Academic Journal of Economics*, 10(1), 27-38.