

WHAT'S THE USE OF A FREE MEDIA?

The Role of Media in Curbing Corruption and Promoting Quality of Government

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Abstract

Free media have traditionally been seen as vital to democratization and economic development. International actors, such as UN, the World Bank, the EU, Transparency International, the OECD and the research field in its entirety regard free media as one of the main means of curbing corruption. Numerous policy proposals and recommendations stress the importance of media freedom. Nevertheless, our knowledge of how effectively media actually perform to combat corruption is still limited – albeit growing.

What's the Use of a Free Media? presents three independent empirical studies that contribute to an understanding of this role, analyzing the media's importance in curbing corruption and in promoting and generating high quality political institutions.

The research design and robust empirical approach broaden the analytical scope of earlier studies and stressing the need to look beyond simple models of direct effects of media freedom. The dissertation problematizes and elaborates the specifications of both media freedom and quality of government, thereby helping to bridge the gap between theory and the equivalent empirical world.

Keywords: accessibility; accountability; corruption; impartiality; media freedom; media systems; political empowerment; public authority; quality of government; responsiveness.