

Chapter 15

Do the news media act as watchdogs, agenda-setters and gate-keepers?

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The reform agenda for democratic governance is about how to build states that are effective, responsive to social needs, inclusive, and accountable to citizens.² It requires big picture thinking about the mix of institutions and processes that can contribute to the attainment of these objectives in each country. The fundamental argument of this chapter is that the news media in each country is a vital part of the institutional mix, provided that it is set up in a way that allows it to play the roles of watchdogs, agenda-setters and gatekeepers. The normative framework employed in this study, discussed in the introduction, highlights the ideal roles of the news media as watchdogs, agenda-setters and gatekeepers. If we accept that these roles strengthen the quality of democratic governance, the question is: under what conditions do the media perform these roles most effectively? And under what conditions does it fail?

In this chapter, we pull together the strands of the argument and summarize the evidence. We highlight the way that a series of barriers – including restrictions on press freedom by the state, market failures, lack of professional journalistic standards, the weakness of civil society organizations, and limited public access and media literacy – mean that the news media often fails to live up to these ideals. In the next chapter, building upon this foundation, we then sketch the policy agenda that ought to be a central part of the democratic governance reform agenda.

The watchdog role

The watchdog role requires the news media to provide a check on powerful sectors of society, including leaders within the private and public domains. Journalists are expected to guard the public interest and to protect it from incompetence, corruption and misinformation. The available empirical evidence suggests that in many countries, the free press does indeed often promote transparency, but journalists are often face serious constraints and obstacles in this regard, especially in autocracies.

The most plausible systematic evidence is derived from cross-national comparisons testing whether press freedom and levels of media access function as external control mechanisms on corruption. Brunetti and Weder conclude that an increase by one standard deviation in a country's level of press freedom generally reduces the level of corruption in that country by 0.4 to 0.9 points, on a six-point scale.³ The reasons, they suggest, are that the press provides a platform for the private sector to

voice complaints. In addition, with a free press, journalists have incentives to investigate misconduct by officials. A series of other aggregate-level correlational econometric studies, incorporating the standard controls, generally point to similar conclusions.⁴ For example, Lederman, Loayza, and Soares analyzed the effects of democracy, parliamentary systems, and freedom of the press on corruption, and their results confirm the general assumption that a free press inhibits corruption.⁵ In addition to press freedom, media access is also found to be important; Bandyopadhyay reported that the degree of media and ICT penetration is associated with less corruption, with the strongest effect where newspaper circulation was deepest.⁶

To update the evidence, this chapter can compare how freedom of the press (monitored annually by Freedom House) relates to perceived control of corruption (measured by the Kaufmann-Kraay indices) for different types of regimes. As discussed in chapter 2, the Freedom House measure of freedom of the press is one of the most widely used cross-national indicators. The index is designed to measure how far the free flow of news is influenced by the legal, political and economic environments. The *legal environment* subdivision encompasses “both and examination of the laws and regulations that could influence media content as well as the government's inclination to use these laws and legal institutions in order to restrict the media's ability to operate”. In this category Freedom House assesses several issues such as legal and constitutional guarantees of press freedom, penalties for libel and defamation as well as penal codes, the independence of the judiciary and other factors. The *political environment* evaluates “the degree of political control over the content of news media”. This includes the editorial independence of the media, intimidation and threats to journalists, the access to informational sources, and also repressive actions such as arrests, imprisonment, physical violence and assassinations. Finally, under the *economic environment* category, the characteristics examined are related to “economic considerations that can influence the media's activities”. Within this category, Freedom House evaluates the existence of competitive pressures leading to biased press reports and investigations, the extent of sponsoring, subsidies, and advertisement and its effect on press coverage and content, the impact of bribery by self-interested actors on what is published and the structure and concentration of media ownership.

Both the ‘legal’ and ‘economic’ categories vary from 0 (complete freedom) to 30 (lack of freedom) while the ‘political’ sub-index ranges from 0 to 40. A country's overall press freedom score is simply the sum of the scores in each of the sub-categories. The assessment of press freedom by Freedom House distinguishes between the broadcast and print media, and the resulting ratings are

expressed as a 100-point scale for each country under comparison. The index is based on expert ratings derived from overseas correspondents, staff and consultant travel, international visitors, the findings of human rights and press freedom organizations, specialists in geographic and geopolitical areas, the reports of governments and multilateral bodies, and a variety of domestic and international news media.⁷ For an intuitively clearer interpretation, we reverse the Freedom House index, so that a higher number represents greater press freedom.

The Kaufmann-Kraay indices of Good Government have been developed to monitor multiple dimensions, including control of corruption in the public sector, defined as 'perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests.'⁸ Their methodology consists of identifying many individual sources of data on governance perceptions that are then assigned to six broad categories. A statistical methodology known as an unobserved components model is used to construct aggregate indicators from these individual measures. These aggregate indicators are weighted averages of the underlying data, with weights reflecting the precision of the individual data sources. The control of corruption index combines sources such as data provided by Transparency International, the World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Survey, and the Political Risk Services International Country Risk Guide.

Figure 15.1 illustrates the simple scatter-grams, controlling for three different types of regimes as classified by the Freedom House measures of political rights and civil liberties into democratic (free), consolidating democracies (partly free) and non-democratic (non-free). The pattern shows the correlation between the Freedom House's annual index of press freedom and perceived levels of the control of corruption, as measured by Kaufmann-Kraay. The results show that the regression line provides the best fit for the data in democratic states, generating a strong and significant correlation ($R^2 = .50^{***}$). Control of corruption sharply accelerates for those democracies which are above average for press freedom. Societies such as Iceland, Canada, Chile, and South Africa rank highly on both indices; in these places, a plurality of media outlets and a flourishing independent media sector generate the transparency which encourages clean government. But there is no such correlation in the consolidating (partly free) states, and the figure also highlights important outliers to the general pattern, such as Singapore. The non-democratic states display only a very modest correlation.

[Figure 15.1 about here]

Nevertheless while the correlation between free press and control of corruption appears quite robust in democratic states, we still understand little about how this relationship works in practice, and thus what needs reforming to strengthen good governance.⁹ It is commonly assumed that the *availability* of information underlies the relationship, where the greater availability of information is expected to generate more efficient political markets. Scandal headlines sell newspapers. A more informed public, aware of the short-comings of corrupt elected officials, decide to throw the rascal out. But the available measures of media systems at national level remain extremely abstract. In practice, even in the case of long-established democracies such as the United States, there are cases of high-ranking officials who have been charged and even convicted of corruption, in cases attracting widespread headline publicity, yet who are reelected to office by citizens.¹⁰ We lack systematic content analysis data monitoring how far journalists do or do not focus on exposing corrupt officials, investigating financial wrong-doings, or revealing cases of bribery in high office. We also need to dig down to know, in particular cases, what aspects of media systems, what forms of journalism, what types of media outlets, genres and formats, and what societal conditions, legal contexts, and political environments, help to establish the link.

The case of South Africa exemplifies this relationship and the underlying factors in the relationship between a plural media system and government transparency. Following the transitional democratic elections in April 1994, the media landscape was transformed through substantial reforms including the liberalization and deregulation of state control of broadcasting, the diversification of the print sector, constitutional and legal guarantees of freedom of access to state-held information, and growing use of the Internet. Deregulation, in particular, led to a proliferation of radio stations. Listeners in Johannesburg can tune into more than forty radio services, from the national broadcasts of the state-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) to community stations targeting local neighborhoods or ethnic groups. SABC operates three national TV networks and two pay-TV channels, while commercial national broadcasters offer free and pay-TV channels, offering the usual mix of news and current affairs, sports and entertainment, movies, reality shows, and soaps, combining locally-produced and imported programming. The constitution provides for freedom of the press, and this is generally respected. In 2006, for example, out of 168 nations worldwide, Reporters sans Frontières ranked South Africa 44th from the top in press freedom, higher than the United States (ranked 53rd) and Japan (51st), and roughly similar to Italy and Spain.¹¹ Laws, regulation and political control of media content are considered moderate. Human Rights Watch, an international watchdog body, praises the progress that South Africa has made in freedom of expression, despite remaining critical of the

countries' human rights record on other issues, including deep levels of rural poverty, challenges of patriarchy and gender equality, and violations of the rights of asylum-seekers and economic migrants.¹² Newspapers and magazines publish reports and comment critical of the government and the state-owned SABC is far more independent now than during the apartheid era. As a result, although there remain tensions in the complex relationship between journalists and the ANC, during the last decade the news media have emerged as an increasingly autonomous actor, less closely aligned with the interests of the government or political parties.¹³ In the latest (2008) ranking of perceptions of corruption, South Africa also ranks 54th out of 180 nations worldwide, similar or marginally higher than Italy, Greece, Poland and Turkey.¹⁴ In chapter 11, Tetey gives a more detailed account of how this process worked in South Africa, particularly the role of investigative journalism in exposing corrupt campaign finance practices.

By contrast, countries such as Zimbabwe, Uzbekistan, Syria, and Belarus rank poorly in Figure 15.1 in both press freedom and perceived levels of corruption. The case of Syria illustrates the role of the state in severely restricting freedom of expression and independent criticisms of corruption in public life. The Syrian government owns and controls much of the media, including the daily newspapers, *Al-Thawra* ("The Revolution"), *Tishrin*, and the English-language *Syria Times*, while the Baath party publishes *Al-Baath*. There was a brief flowering of press freedom after Bashar al-Assad became president in 2000. The normally staid government newspapers cautiously started to discuss reform and democracy. For the first time in nearly 40 years, private publications were licensed. The new titles included political party papers *Sawt al-Shaab* and *Al-Wahdawi*, and a satirical journal. But within a year, under pressure from the old guard, the president cautioned against over-zealous reform, a subsequent press law imposed a new range of restrictions, and publications could be suspended for violating content rules. Criticism of President Bashar al-Assad and his family is banned and the domestic and foreign press is censored over material that is deemed to be threatening or embarrassing. Journalists practice self-censorship and foreign reporters rarely get accreditation. Reporters without Borders documents common abuses: "Journalists and political activists risk arrest at any time for any reason and are up against a whimsical and vengeful state apparatus that continually adds to the list of things banned or forbidden to be mentioned. Several journalists were arrested in 2006 for interviewing exiled regime opponents, taking part in conferences abroad or for criticizing government policies. They were subjected to lengthy legal proceedings before the Damascus military court that, under a 1963 law, tries anyone considered to have undermined state security."¹⁵ Critical journalists outside the country write for the Lebanese or pan-Arab press, such as the Beirut daily *Al-Nahar*, and the influential London daily

Al-Hayat, as well as contributing to Al-Jazeera and other regional satellite channels.¹⁶ Syrian TV, operated by the Ministry of Information, operates two terrestrial and one satellite channel. It has cautiously begun carrying political programs and debates featuring formerly taboo issues, as well as occasionally airing interviews with opposition figures. Syria also launched some privately-owned radio stations in 2004 but these were restricted from airing any news or political content. With an estimated 1.5 million internet users in Syria by 2007, the web has emerged as a vehicle for dissent. In the view of Reporters Without Borders, however, Syria is one of the worst offenders against internet freedom as the state censors opposition bloggers and independent news websites. Human Rights Watch notes that the government of Syria regularly restricts the flow of information on the internet and arrests individuals who post comments that the government deems too critical.¹⁷ Overall Syria ranks 154th out of 166 countries in the RWB 2007 Worldwide Press Freedom index. Similarly, in terms of press freedom, Freedom House ranks the country 179th out of 195 states worldwide.¹⁸ In terms of perceptions of corruption according to Transparency international, Syria currently (2008) ranks 147th out of 180 nations, around the same level as Russia, Bangladesh and Belarus.

These observations are also supported by a growing number of case studies which also illustrate the ways that the news media perform their watchdog role in the fight against corruption. A study of Madagascar's educational system found that the effect of anti-corruption campaigns varied by the type of media; in particular, in areas of high illiteracy, radio and television – especially local broadcasts – are more effective at curbing corruption than newspapers and poster campaigns.¹⁹ Ferraz and Finan studied Brazil where the government published the findings of audits of expenditures of federal funds in selected municipalities.²⁰ The authors report that in regions where local radio stations covered the findings of the audit, non-corrupt incumbents experienced a vote bonus. Finally, there is the well-known World Bank example; Reinikka and Svensson report that in 1995, only one fifth of the money allocated to schools in Uganda actually made it to the schools.²¹ The government of Uganda initiated a media campaign to enable schools and parent to monitor the handling of school grants by local governments. By 2001, 80 percent of the allocated funds were indeed spent on the schools. The government's newspaper campaign was the major factor in the change.

The research presented in this volume describes many further cases illustrating the way that the news media has the capacity to perform the watchdog role. In the Arab region, for instance, Pintak shows how the arrival of pan-Arab satellite broadcasters like Al-Jazeera led to the advent of more critical, professional, watch-dog journalism. Similarly, in Asia Coronel describes the role the media in the

Philippines played in bringing down a corrupt president of that country in 2001. The evidence therefore suggests that there is indeed a systematic link between the roles of the press as watchdogs over the powerful, and the transparency of government, although there are also clearly certain important exceptions to this rule, such as the case of Singapore which is widely regarded as low on corruption despite restrictions on press freedom, as well as cases such as Papua New Guinea, Mali, and Philippines which continue to be afflicted with corruption despite a relatively flourishing and pluralistic independent media sector.

Yet the conditions limiting investigate journalism are also well-known, including those arising from lack of media freedom to criticize the state, commercial pressures from private owners, and also a more deferential culture of journalism which does not recognize this as an important, or even appropriate, role for reporters. There are contrasts in role expectations, even among European journalists.²² As discussed in chapter 9, in fragile states and those engaged in peace-building, such as Iraq and Ethiopia, reporters can see other short-term priorities as more important, with investigative journalism regarded as a destabilizing force for countries seeking to restore public confidence in governing authorities. It is true that ‘attack-dog’ journalism, where partisan commentators launch fierce and bitter personal assaults on political rivals, can reinforce mistrust within divided communities. Nevertheless even in these difficult conditions, we believe that in the long-run, public trust and confidence in the process of reconstruction is most likely to be established and reinforced where independent investigative journalists can freely highlights cases of misappropriations of public funds, human rights abuses, or examples of corruption among private sector contractors. In the long term, watch-dog journalism can help to raise standards in public life, ensuring that development funds are used for the purpose for which they were intended, deterring future misdeeds, and ensuring conditions of openness and transparency which attract further investment, aid and confidence in government.

The agenda-setting role

As ‘agenda-setters’, it is argued that ideally the news media should function to raise awareness of social problems, informing elected officials about public concerns and needs. In particular, in terms of the developing world, the press is thought to plays an especially important role where it highlights vital issues such as any major disasters, conflicts, or humanitarian crises that require urgent action by national governments or the international community. The concept of the news media’s role in agenda-setting first entered the study of mass communications in the early-1970s, although the general phenomenon had been discussed well before then.²³ During subsequent decades, an extensive

literature has examined the factors determining the salience of issues on the public policy agenda. Many studies have examined the *news media agenda* (gauged by the amount of news media coverage devoted to specific issues) compared with the *public agenda* (measured by public perceptions of the importance of issues in regularly opinion polls), and the *political agenda* (typically monitored by the number of the statements, speeches, or press releases emanating from official spokespersons, government officials, think tank and academic experts, and NGO commentators).²⁴ Yet this is a complex interaction and considerable care is needed to disentangle the precise time-line involved in the agenda-setting process, to establish who leads and who follows in the dance. In terms of development, most research has focused on whether domestic or international media coverage of specific natural or manmade disasters, conflict, and humanitarian crisis has influenced either public opinion and/or the policy response, such as international levels of development aid or foreign policy interventions. The much-ballyhoed 'CNN' effect in international affairs is one aspect of this much broader phenomenon.

One of the most often cited studies about this process was conducted by Besley and Burgess.²⁵ In their analysis of the political economy of government responsiveness, they documented a strong relationship between newspaper circulation and government relief in Indian states. In particular, they report that a one percent increase in newspaper circulation brought a 2.4 percent increase in public food distribution and a 5.5 per cent increase in calamity relief expenditures. The authors argue that Indian elected officials are more responsive to problems in their states where newspapers are more active.²⁶ Along similar lines, in a series of studies, Strömberg makes the case for the influence of the news media over public policy in America.²⁷ Using data from the 1930s in the United States, he showed that the availability of radio significantly determined how far citizens benefitted from government relief spending. Petrova compared the relationship between media freedom and public spending on health and education in democracies and autocracies: in democracies, the study found that media freedom was significantly related to increased spending in these sectors.²⁸ She concludes that by highlighting social needs, and connecting elected leaders with public concerns, media freedom in democratic states has a real effect on policy outcomes.

Here we can again replicate the Petrova study to describe the correlation between levels of press freedom in each country, as monitored by Freedom House, and domestic patterns of public health spending, measured as a proportion of GDP. The latter is only an indirect proxy for the effectiveness of public health; obviously there can be countries such as the United States where high costs drive up health expenditure, while in some other cases more efficient health care can be provided with lower

spending. Numerous complex factors contribute towards actual health outcomes, beyond government policies, such as patterns of nutrition, overall levels of affluence, and the provision of private hospitals. But the public expenditure devoted to health care (expressed as a proportion of GDP) represents a suitable cross-national proxy for measuring the priority with which this critical component of social well-being is given by elected officials. Figure 15.2 illustrates the correlation, without any prior controls, for contemporary states classified by Freedom House as free, partly free and not free. The results show that in democratic (free) states, there is a correlation between public health spending and press freedom, but the relationship is far less strong ($R^2 = .207$) than that already observed between control of corruption and press freedom. The comparison suggests that the European democracies with the freest press, such as Iceland, Denmark and Germany, also have relatively high levels of public health expenditure. By contrast, places such as Ukraine, Indonesia and Mexico rate relatively poorly on both dimensions. But no significant relationships are observable in the consolidating and non-democracies. Obviously multiple other factors -- including levels of economic development and democratization, the structure and historical legacy of the welfare state, the role of private and public health care, patterns of party competition and the ideology of the governing party, and levels of development aid—may all be contributing towards patterns of health care expenditure and these may have a stronger impact than the rather limited measures of levels of press freedom. Econometric models seeking to determine the policy impact of the free media are also fairly sensitive to the particular indicators of social welfare expenditure and the choice of lagged measures used in any comparison, to any systematic bias arising from problems of missing data, to measurement error, and to the specific controls which are selected. As observed earlier, we need more systematic and detailed studies, and more sensitive indicators which can connect the dots in the extended chain of causality which is commonly assumed to underlie the relationship between the agenda-setting role of the press, public concerns about an issue, and the response of elected officials to social needs in any democratic state.

[Figure 15.2 about here]

As discussed in detail in chapter 4, there is, in addition, evidence that the news media have an impact on disaster relief spending but this relationship remains complex and van Belle reports that the media's impact on US development aid spending has varied during different eras of American foreign policy. In particular, van Belle notes a strong statistical relationship existed between U.S. media coverage and U.S. humanitarian relief spending during the Cold War years. For instance, during this period, every *New York Times* story on a disaster correlated with a US aid increase of about US\$1.7

million. But this relationship broke down during more recent years. Others have also reported similar relationships, for example Eisensee and Strömberg found a significant effect of news coverage on relief spending; disasters covered in the media were on average 16 percent more likely to receive US disaster relief than similar events not covered by the media.²⁹ If a marginally newsworthy disaster is covered – at a time when there is little other news available - the probability of disaster relief increases to 70 percent. As Moeller reports in this volume, most of the public will only learn about disasters occurring in other countries when the media choose to report them. At the same time, there are also numerous ongoing challenges of development, often involving extensive casualties and even deaths, which receive minimal attention in the international headlines.

Gate-keepers/public forum

Lastly, as gate-keepers or indeed gate-openers, it is claimed that the news media should ideally serve as the classical agora by bringing together a plurality of diverse interests, voices, and viewpoints to debate issues of public concern. It is hoped that if the media performs this role well, citizens are more likely to be empowered and informed about their governments, thus keeping political leaders responsive, as well as educating citizens to facilitate rational debate and informed public opinion. This gate-keeping role is often regarded as particularly important during election campaigns, where citizens can only make an informed choice if media systems cover all parties and candidates fairly, accurately, impartially, and without undue favoritism towards those in power.

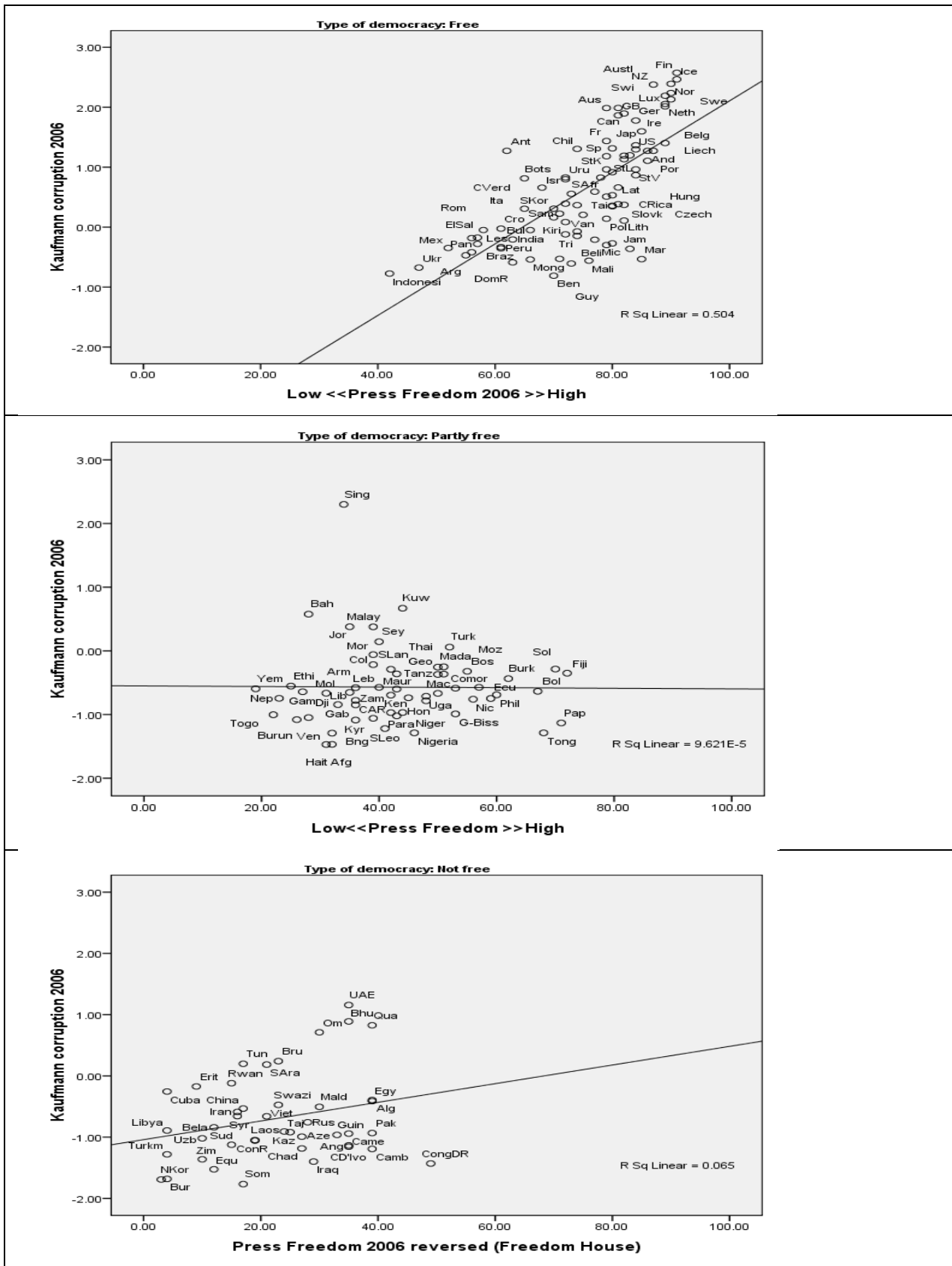
In chapter 6, Voltmer reports that in many newer democracies, the news media are indeed effective in strengthening political interests and knowledge (less so in affecting people's evaluation of politics). Almost all the media effects she finds in her study are positive for democracy, strengthening citizens' democratic orientation. She concludes that 'the media are a positively beneficial force in new democracies, in particular with regard to the empowerment of citizens.' Tettey, also in this volume, reports that the news media in Africa, for instance, are 'injecting marginalized voices into the public sphere.' Microphones are literally being put in the mouths of those who hitherto had no voice, and they are speaking up. Those being given voice for the first time include, according to him, the poor and downtrodden but also gays, lesbians, transsexuals, and, significantly – through the internet – Africans in the Diaspora. The other regional case studies in this volume contain numerous examples of the media playing the public forum role in different political communities.

Yet lack of balance persists -- and it matters. The most extreme cases are found in autocracies which use state controlled media as a mouthpiece. This situation persists, Pintak reports, in much of the

Middle East, “In the Arab world, media has traditionally been gatekeepers favoring those in power.” Despite this bias, the region has experienced a degree of liberalization and the growth of more critical reporting and independent journalism, following the example set by Al Jazeera. Moreover Dragomir emphasizes that even after reform dismantled the traditional state media monopolies in Central and Eastern Europe, old habits die hard, and content analysis of directional balance reveals that broadcasters often continue to favor the party in government, especially in places such as Moldova. This is important for public opinion; Norris and Inglehart compare a wide range of states with restrictive or pluralistic media environments. They find that in restrictive media environments, regular audiences of television and radio news express greater support for the regime. The authors conclude that ‘state control of the broadcast media and limits on press freedom do achieve their intended effect, by strengthening regime support among the news audiences in these societies.’ On the other hand, citizens in countries with a high degree of press freedom, which are among the most highly developed democracies, have very little confidence in their governments. These citizens tend to adopt a more critical stance towards their governments because they know more about what is really going on.

Overall we can therefore conclude that there is a substantial gap between rhetoric and reality, or between the ideals that are widely articulated in liberal democratic theory and the practices which are commonly found in states around the world. This gap needs addressing and the next chapter identifies a wide range of effective policy interventions and programs which can be implemented by national stakeholders and the international community.

Figure 15.1: Press freedom and corruption under different types of regimes



Notes: The Control of Corruption index 2006 is measured by the Kaufmann-Kraay Good Governance indicators. The Press Freedom index 2006 is measured by Freedom House.

Sources: Freedom House www.freedomhouse.org; Governance Indicators

¹ We would like to thank Anne-Katrin Arnold, CommGAP research consultant, for her help in researching this chapter.

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³ Aymo Brunetti and Beatrice Weder. 2003. 'A free press is bad news for corruption.' *Journal of Public Economics* 87(7-8):1801-24. p. 1802

⁴ Rick Stapenhurst. 2000. *The Media's Role in Curbing Corruption*. World Bank Institute Working Papers; Shyamal K. Chowdhury. 2004. 'The effect of democracy and press freedom on corruption: An empirical test.' *Economics Letters* 85(1):93-101; Sebastian Freille, M. Emranul Haque and Richard Kneller. 2007. 'A contribution to the empirics of press freedom and corruption.' *European Journal of Political Economy* 23(4):838-62.; C.Clague, P. Keefer, S. Knack and M. Olson. 1996. 'Property and Contract Rights in Autocracies and Democracies.' *Journal of Economic Growth* . 1(2): 243-276; Philip Keefer. 2007. 'Clientelism, Credibility, and the Policy Choices of Young Democracies.' *American Journal of Political Science* 51(3): 433-448; A. Adserà, C. Boix and M. Payne. 2003. 'Are You Being Served? Political Accountability and Quality of Government.' *The Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization* 19(2): 445-490; Nicholas Charron. 2009. 'The Impact of Socio-Political Integration and Press Freedom on Corruption.' *Journal of Development Studies*

⁵ Daniel Lederman, Norman V. Loayza and Rodrigo R. Soares. 2005. 'Accountability and corruption: Political institutions matter.' *Economics & Politics* 17(1):1-35.

⁶ Sanghamitra Bandyopadhyay. 2006. *Knowledge-Driven Economic Development*. Department of Economics Discussion Paper Series Number 267.

⁷ For more methodological details and results, see Freedom House. 2007. *Global Press Freedom 2007*. www.freedomhouse.org. The IREX *Media Sustainability Index* provides another set of indicators (<http://www.irex.org/resources/index.asp>). The Media Sustainability Index by IREX benchmarks the conditions for independent media in a more limited range of countries across Europe, Eurasia, the Middle East, and North Africa. Unfortunately the IREX index does not contain sufficient cases of countries included in the WVS-5 to be useful as a cross-check for this study.

⁸ Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi. 2008. 'Governance Matters VII: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators, 1996-2007.' *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper* No. 4654. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1148386>

⁹ Samarth Vaidya. 2005. 'Corruption in the media gaze.' *European Journal of Political Economy*. 21: 667-87; Henrik Oscarsson. 2008. 'Media and Quality of Government: A Research Overview.' *Quality of Governance Working Paper Series 12* Gothenberg: University of Gothenburg.

¹⁰ The most recent U.S. case is Alaska's Senator Ted Stevens, returned in the November 2008 elections despite being indicted on seven charges by a federal grand jury.

¹¹ Reporters sans frontiers. 2006. *Worldwide Press Freedom Index 2006*. www.rsf.org

¹² Human Rights Watch. 2008. *Submission to the Human Rights Council*. April 7, 2008 <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2008/04/11/global18513.htm>

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¹⁴ Transparency International. 2008. *Corruption Perceptions Index 2008*. http://www.transparency.org/news_room/in_focus/2008/cpi2008/cpi_2008_table

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¹⁷ Human Rights Watch <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/10/08/syria17024.htm>

¹⁸ Freedom House. 2008. *Global Press Freedom 2008*. <http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/fop08/FOTP2008Tables.pdf>

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