

Oversight of Political Party Financing and the Prevention of Political Corruption: A Comparative Legal Analysis

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Abstract

Oversight of political party financing constitutes a central legal mechanism for safeguarding political integrity, ensuring fair competition, and preventing the transformation of financial power into improper political influence. This study provides a comparative legal analysis of party-finance regulation in Iraq, Iran, and Egypt, with particular emphasis on the supervision of financing sources, financial expenditures, institutional oversight, and legal sanctions. The study adopts a descriptive-analytical and comparative approach to examine how the three legal systems regulate public and private financing, donations, foreign and illicit funding, accounting obligations, financial disclosure, auditing, and the enforcement of financial rules. The analysis demonstrates that effective regulation depends on more than the formal existence of statutory restrictions. It requires an integrated system based on transparency, traceability of financial transactions, institutional independence, professional auditing, timely disclosure, and enforceable administrative and judicial consequences. The comparative assessment indicates that Iraq links party-finance supervision closely to electoral administration through the Independent High Electoral Commission, Iran relies substantially on a committee-based supervisory framework, while Egypt incorporates a comparatively stronger role for specialized financial auditing alongside administrative and judicial oversight. Each model offers distinct institutional strengths but also faces limitations concerning technical capacity, independence, access to financial information, and consistency of enforcement. The study further finds that political corruption may arise not only from unlawful sources of financing but also from the misuse of lawful resources, concealed expenditures, indirect contributions, and unequal access to financial power. Accordingly, the prevention of political corruption requires simultaneous regulation of both income and expenditure, together with effective monitoring of indirect financial support and third-party spending. The study concludes that a coherent party-finance regime should combine clear substantive rules, professional and independent supervision, transparent reporting, proportionate sanctions, judicial safeguards, and equal enforcement in order to strengthen political accountability, protect party independence, and preserve confidence in democratic competition.

Keywords: Political Party Financing; Political Corruption; Financial Oversight; Transparency; Political Parties; Iraq; Iran; Egypt; Comparative Law

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1. Introduction

Political parties occupy a central position in contemporary constitutional and democratic systems because they organize political participation, aggregate social interests, recruit political leadership, formulate programs, and compete for the exercise of public authority. Their ability to perform these functions, however, depends substantially on access to financial resources. Political organization requires permanent administrative structures, offices, personnel, communication networks, electoral campaigning, public outreach, research, media activity, and numerous other expenditures. Financing is therefore not a peripheral question in the law of political parties; it is one of the material conditions through which political competition becomes possible. At the same time, the financial dimension of party activity creates a significant area of vulnerability. A political party that lacks adequate resources may be incapable of competing effectively, whereas a party that enjoys uncontrolled access to substantial financial resources may obtain an advantage that distorts political equality. The legal problem is therefore not simply whether political parties should possess financial resources, but how those resources are acquired, disclosed, managed, spent, and supervised. The constitutional significance of political parties requires the legal system to preserve their organizational independence while preventing finance from becoming an instrument through which wealthy individuals, economic groups, public authorities, or foreign actors acquire disproportionate influence over political decision-making. Comparative constitutional scholarship consequently treats party regulation as part of the wider institutional architecture through which political pluralism and democratic competition are protected (Khafaji, 2020). Financial oversight must accordingly be understood not as an exceptional interference with party freedom, but as a legal mechanism designed to reconcile political liberty with transparency, equality, integrity, and accountability.

The relationship between party financing and political corruption becomes particularly important where political competition operates within institutional environments characterized by unequal access to economic resources, weak disclosure systems, insufficiently independent supervisory institutions, or ineffective enforcement. Political corruption may arise when financial contributions are exchanged, expressly or implicitly, for access, influence, public contracts, legislative preferences, administrative appointments, regulatory advantages, or other benefits connected with the exercise of public power. It may also arise when public resources are diverted toward partisan purposes, when foreign or anonymous funds enter political competition, when donations are concealed through intermediaries, or when party expenditures are deliberately structured so that their real beneficiaries and purposes cannot be identified. The study of party finance must therefore extend beyond the formal classification of permissible and prohibited sources. It must examine whether the legal system can trace financial flows, identify the persons or entities standing behind them, detect deviations, impose meaningful consequences, and disclose sufficient information to enable public scrutiny. Nasr emphasizes that systems of political party financing necessarily operate within a broader democratic framework in which the allocation and regulation of resources affect both party independence and the fairness of political competition (Nasr, 2016). From this perspective, financial supervision has a preventive character. Its purpose is not limited to punishing violations after corruption has occurred; rather, it seeks to create institutional conditions that make illicit influence more difficult, more detectable, and more costly.

The principal problem examined in this article concerns the extent to which legal oversight of political party financing can prevent political corruption and preserve the integrity of political competition. This problem has two interconnected dimensions. The first concerns the origin of party resources. Public financing, membership fees, donations, grants, income generated from lawful party activities, and other forms of private support may all contribute to the financial capacity of political parties, but each source raises distinct legal risks. Public financing may strengthen equality and reduce excessive dependence on private wealth, yet it may also become an instrument of governmental control if allocation criteria are partisan or discretionary. Private financing may strengthen organizational autonomy, yet large or concealed donations may create dependency upon donors and transform economic power into political influence. Foreign financing raises particularly serious questions because it may affect national political independence and expose domestic competition to external interests. Unknown or illicit sources create even greater risks because they prevent both the supervisory authority and the public from identifying the interests behind financial contributions. The second dimension concerns expenditure. Even funds obtained from lawful sources can be used improperly. Political parties may exceed lawful expenditure limits, conceal campaign-related spending, use public assets for partisan purposes, make payments outside official banking channels, or direct resources toward activities inconsistent with the purposes for which the funds were obtained. Effective oversight therefore requires the law to

examine both sides of the financial relationship: the legitimacy of income and the legality, transparency, and accountability of expenditure.

This dual structure provides the analytical foundation of the present study. The regulation of financing sources cannot function effectively without an expenditure-control system because money that enters a party through legitimate channels may subsequently be diverted toward unlawful objectives. Conversely, expenditure supervision cannot protect political integrity if the legal system fails to identify the actual origin of the funds being spent. The two dimensions must consequently operate as parts of a single regulatory framework. Talib's analysis of constitutional and political systems highlights the importance of legal mechanisms capable of connecting institutional responsibility with enforceable accountability rather than relying merely on formal obligations (Talib, 2021). In the context of party financing, this means that financial reports, banking requirements, accounting records, disclosure duties, audits, investigative powers, administrative measures, and judicial sanctions must be understood as mutually reinforcing mechanisms. A system requiring annual reports but lacking investigative authority may produce only formal compliance. A system prohibiting certain donations but failing to trace banking transactions may be unable to identify concealed financing. A system granting broad investigative authority while imposing insignificant sanctions may detect misconduct without deterring its recurrence. Effectiveness therefore depends on the integration of substantive financial rules with institutional capacity and enforceable consequences.

The comparative dimension of the study focuses on Iraq, Iran, and Egypt. These three legal systems provide useful grounds for comparison because each recognizes the legal importance of political parties and has developed rules concerning party resources, financial reporting, supervisory authorities, and legal responsibility, while their institutional structures differ significantly. In Iraq, the Political Parties Law No. 36 of 2015 places important financial obligations on political parties and connects their supervision closely with the Independent High Electoral Commission. Political parties are required to maintain financial records, use regulated financial channels, and submit information concerning their revenues and expenditures, while the Commission exercises supervisory functions and may refer violations to competent judicial bodies. The Iraqi model therefore reflects a relatively close connection between party-finance oversight and electoral administration. This connection can enhance the relevance of financial supervision to electoral integrity because the institution responsible for important elements of political competition also participates in the regulation of party finance. At the same time, institutional concentration creates the need to ensure that the supervisory authority enjoys sufficient independence, technical competence, access to financial information, and enforcement capacity. The effectiveness of formal controls depends not only on statutory provisions but also on the ability of responsible institutions to apply them consistently and impartially, a point that is broadly consistent with the constitutional understanding of party regulation developed by Layla (Layla, 2018).

The Iranian model places substantial responsibility on the institutional framework governing political parties, particularly the committee established under the legislation regulating the activities of political parties and groups. Parties are required to organize their financial transactions through legally recognized channels and to submit reports concerning their financial performance. The relevant supervisory body may examine compliance and take or initiate measures where violations occur. This model emphasizes administrative and committee-based supervision. Its principal legal advantage lies in the existence of a specialized structure dealing with party activity, but its effectiveness depends heavily on the institutional characteristics of the supervising committee, including its operational independence, expertise, access to documentary and banking information, and willingness to pursue violations. A supervisory institution that possesses formal jurisdiction but depends heavily on information voluntarily supplied by the parties it supervises may encounter difficulties in identifying concealed financial arrangements. The broader principles of public-law supervision demonstrate that a supervisory institution requires genuine investigatory competence if its oversight is to extend beyond a documentary exercise (Al-Tamawi, 2018). The Iranian framework therefore illustrates a central theme of this study: the existence of legal duties is indispensable, but the preventive effect of those duties depends on the institutional architecture through which compliance is verified.

Egypt offers a third model characterized by the interaction of party-specific supervision, specialized financial auditing, and judicial review. Political parties are subject to accounting and reporting requirements, while the involvement of specialized auditing institutions introduces a professional financial dimension into the oversight structure. This feature is important because sophisticated financial violations may not be detectable through a purely administrative reading of annual reports. Concealment may take the form of misclassification of transactions, indirect contributions, artificial contractual arrangements, payments by

affiliated entities, or inconsistencies between reported accounts and actual expenditure. Professional auditing can identify patterns that ordinary administrative review may overlook. Abdallah observes more generally that constitutional systems depend not only on formal institutional allocations of authority but also on mechanisms capable of translating legal responsibility into effective control (Abdallah, 2010). In the field of party finance, specialist auditing can therefore perform an essential evidentiary function by establishing whether the financial representations made by a party correspond to the actual movement and use of funds.

The objective of this article is to analyze comparatively the legal mechanisms governing the financing of political parties in Iraq, Iran, and Egypt and to determine how oversight of financial sources and expenditures can contribute to the prevention of political corruption. It seeks to evaluate the principal controls applicable to public and private financing, donations, foreign or illicit resources, accounting, reporting, auditing, supervisory institutions, administrative measures, and judicial sanctions. It further seeks to identify the structural characteristics that make financial oversight effective, including transparency, institutional independence, professional auditing, access to financial information, traceability of transactions, and enforceable sanctions. The study adopts a descriptive-analytical and comparative legal method. It examines the regulatory logic reflected in the three systems, identifies points of similarity and difference, and evaluates the capacity of their supervisory models to reduce opportunities for corrupt financial influence. The analysis does not attempt to address every aspect of political party law, such as establishment procedures, internal ideological requirements, ordinary organizational questions, or the general dissolution of political parties except where such matters directly relate to financial violations. This narrower approach is necessary because the legal regulation of party financing constitutes a sufficiently complex and distinct field of inquiry. The central argument advanced is that effective prevention of political corruption requires an integrated system in which lawful sources are clearly identified, prohibited sources are effectively excluded, financial transactions are traceable, expenditures are documented, competent institutions possess genuine auditing and investigative powers, financial information is sufficiently transparent, and proportionate sanctions are imposed where violations occur.

2. Legal Regulation and Oversight of Political Party Financing Sources

The supervision of financing sources constitutes the first component of an effective party-finance regime because the origin of financial resources may directly affect the autonomy of political organizations and the integrity of political competition. Political parties require stable resources to maintain their organizations and engage with society, but financial dependency can alter the substantive character of political representation. When a party obtains a significant proportion of its resources from a narrow group of economic actors, the risk arises that its programs, candidate selection, legislative priorities, or governmental conduct will become responsive to private financial interests rather than to its membership or electorate. This risk does not require proof of an explicit corrupt transaction in every case. Structural dependency itself may weaken autonomous political judgment and create persistent channels through which financial power is transformed into political access. Khafaji's comparative treatment of political parties recognizes that the legal framework governing parties must protect political pluralism without permitting private organizational freedom to undermine the constitutional order within which that pluralism operates (Khafaji, 2020). Regulation of financing sources should therefore be designed not to eliminate private participation in political life but to ensure that financial participation remains compatible with political independence, transparency, and equality.

Public financing represents one response to the unequal distribution of private financial resources. By providing public resources to qualifying political parties, the state may reduce excessive dependence on wealthy donors and allow organizations with meaningful social or electoral support to participate more effectively in political competition. Nasr treats public financing as an important component of contemporary systems of party finance because it may contribute to competitive balance when allocation mechanisms are objective and transparent (Nasr, 2016). Nevertheless, public financing creates a distinct set of legal concerns. If governmental authorities possess broad discretion to determine which parties receive resources or how much each receives, the financing mechanism may itself become a means of partisan pressure. Incumbent political forces may design allocation criteria in ways that disproportionately benefit established parties or disadvantage emerging competitors. For that reason, public financing requires clear statutory eligibility requirements, objective formulas, transparent distribution, financial reporting, and independent supervision. Criteria may legitimately include such factors as electoral performance, representation,

organizational activity, or compliance with financial obligations, but they should be predetermined and capable of legal review. The central principle is that public financing should support pluralism rather than transform fiscal power into political control.

The use of public resources must also remain confined to purposes permitted by law. Government assistance allocated to a political party does not lose its public-law significance merely because it has been transferred to a private political organization. The recipient should be required to demonstrate that public resources are used for lawful organizational, educational, political, or electoral purposes rather than for personal enrichment or unrelated commercial activity. Effective supervision therefore requires the maintenance of accounting records capable of distinguishing publicly supplied resources from other funds and identifying the expenditures made from them. Talib emphasizes the relationship between legal responsibility and institutional controls within constitutional systems (Talib, 2021), and this principle is particularly important where political organizations receive public resources. A legal regime that distributes state financing without requiring meaningful accounting may unintentionally create opportunities for misappropriation, patronage, or diversion. Conversely, oversight that is excessively politicized may threaten party independence. The desirable model is one in which objective financial rules are administered by an institution sufficiently independent from both the governing party and the parties being supervised.

Private financing remains equally important because political parties should not ordinarily become financially dependent exclusively upon the state. Membership fees, individual contributions, lawful donations, and permitted returns on party assets can strengthen the connection between parties and their supporters and may contribute to organizational autonomy. The legal challenge lies in distinguishing legitimate private political support from financial arrangements that create disproportionate influence or conceal corrupt exchanges. Layla's analysis of constitutional systems supports the broader proposition that political pluralism depends on organizational freedom exercised within legal guarantees designed to preserve equality and the public interest (Layla, 2018). In party finance, this balance requires the law to permit private contributions while defining who may contribute, in what amount, through what channel, subject to what disclosure duties, and under what prohibitions. Unlimited or opaque contributions may permit a relatively small group of donors to exercise influence inconsistent with political equality. The issue is therefore qualitative as well as quantitative: the source, identity, relationship, timing, and purpose of the contribution may be as important as its monetary value.

Donations constitute one of the most sensitive forms of private financing because they create a direct financial relationship between a contributor and a political organization. A donation may represent entirely legitimate political participation, particularly when provided by ordinary citizens in modest amounts. Yet the corruption risk increases where contributions are exceptionally large, originate from entities with significant regulatory or contractual interests, are made through intermediaries, or remain undisclosed. The legal regulation of donations thus commonly relies upon several complementary controls. The law may establish categories of eligible donors, impose quantitative ceilings, require identification and registration, prohibit anonymous contributions above specified thresholds, mandate banking channels, and require disclosure to the supervisory authority. Khafaji links financial regulation with the protection of party independence from interests capable of dominating political decision-making (Khafaji, 2020). Disclosure plays a particularly important role because it enables oversight bodies to identify suspicious patterns and allows the public to assess relationships between financial supporters and political actors. A contribution that is lawful in itself may become politically significant when viewed together with subsequent governmental decisions benefiting the donor.

The prohibition or restriction of foreign financing has particular importance in Iraq, Iran, and Egypt because party finance intersects with questions of sovereignty and the independence of domestic political decision-making. Foreign funds may originate from states, public bodies, corporations, organizations, or individuals whose interests are not aligned with the domestic political community. The principal concern is not that every cross-border financial relationship necessarily constitutes corruption, but that external financing can create political dependency, obscure accountability, and permit foreign actors to shape domestic competition through financial leverage. The Iraqi framework therefore prohibits political parties from receiving certain forms of direct or indirect external financing, while requiring financial resources to be documented and subjected to supervision. The Iranian system similarly restricts financing to legally permissible sources and subjects party resources to institutional scrutiny. Egyptian law also imposes restrictions on the receipt of foreign funds and requires disclosure of party resources. These approaches reflect the common premise that political parties are not ordinary private associations when they compete to influence or exercise sovereign public authority. Their financing may accordingly be subject to restrictions that

would not necessarily apply to other organizations. Abdallah's broader account of constitutional institutions supports the proposition that organizations exercising a central role in the formation of public authority may legitimately be subjected to legal safeguards designed to protect the integrity of the political order ([Abdallah, 2010](#)).

The regulation of unknown and illicit sources is even more fundamental. Funds derived from criminal activity, money laundering, corruption, unlawful public-resource transfers, concealed foreign support, or unidentified intermediaries create a direct threat to the integrity of party competition. Formal prohibition, however, is insufficient unless the legal system creates mechanisms capable of establishing the real origin of resources. This is why official bank accounts, transaction records, donor identification, documentary retention, periodic financial statements, and access by supervisory authorities are indispensable. Talib's discussion of legal accountability illustrates the importance of mechanisms through which abstract obligations can be translated into verifiable institutional practice ([Talib, 2021](#)). A requirement that parties declare their resources is valuable only if declarations can be compared with bank transactions, accounting documents, donor records, and actual expenditure. Otherwise, parties may comply formally while concealing parallel financial systems. Traceability therefore represents one of the core principles of preventive regulation. All significant financial transactions should be capable of reconstruction from their origin through their receipt and eventual expenditure.

The Iraqi system illustrates an electoral-administrative model of source supervision. Political parties operate under statutory obligations concerning their resources and financial records, while the Independent High Electoral Commission occupies an important position in oversight. The advantage of this model is that financial compliance is closely linked with an institution already responsible for important dimensions of electoral integrity. This relationship may facilitate the identification of situations in which unlawful financing produces an electoral advantage. The potential weakness lies in the concentration of supervisory responsibility. The Commission must possess the financial expertise necessary to analyze complex transactions in addition to performing its electoral functions, and its independence must be protected from political pressure. Financial oversight requires personnel capable of reading accounts, identifying inconsistent financial reporting, tracing related transactions, and distinguishing genuine party expenditures from disguised payments. Nasr's treatment of financing systems supports the principle that regulation must include not only substantive financial limits but institutional arrangements capable of ensuring compliance ([Nasr, 2016](#)). Iraq's framework therefore provides a relatively clear legal foundation, but its anti-corruption value depends upon the practical capacity of supervisory institutions to use the information they receive.

The Iranian structure relies more heavily on specialized administrative supervision within the legal framework governing party activity. Parties are required to conduct their financial affairs through recognized legal channels and to report their financial performance to the competent committee. This creates an identifiable point of accountability and permits financial irregularities to be connected with broader compliance by political parties. The principal question is whether the supervising committee can independently verify information rather than merely receive it. Administrative oversight is most effective when the authority can request additional documents, compare reported information with external financial records, identify beneficial sources behind contributions, and refer serious matters for judicial action. Al-Tamawi's treatment of administrative supervision underscores the importance of legality, competence, and review in controlling the exercise of administrative authority ([Al-Tamawi, 2018](#)). Applied to party financing, the same logic means that supervision must operate under clear legal standards while also providing procedural safeguards against arbitrary interference. Political parties must not be able to invoke organizational autonomy as a shield against legitimate financial scrutiny, but supervisory bodies must equally not use financial regulation as a pretext for discriminatory political control.

The Egyptian model adds a more explicit professional-auditing dimension to the supervision of political finance. This is particularly important for the verification of sources because complex financial relationships may be disguised through accounting techniques that ordinary administrative supervision cannot easily detect. Specialized auditors can examine whether recorded income corresponds to actual financial flows, whether donor information is internally consistent, whether transactions have been divided artificially to avoid reporting requirements, and whether related entities have provided benefits that should properly be characterized as contributions. The strength of this approach is the potential separation between political regulation and technical financial examination. Abdallah's constitutional analysis emphasizes that effective public control often depends upon distributing functions among institutions according to their legal and professional competence ([Abdallah, 2010](#)). The

Egyptian experience therefore suggests that party-finance oversight may be strengthened when specialized accounting expertise supports, rather than replaces, administrative and judicial supervision.

Comparatively, Iraq, Iran, and Egypt share several important principles despite their institutional differences. Each system accepts that political parties cannot obtain resources entirely free from legal control. Each recognizes the need to distinguish permissible from prohibited financing. Each subjects at least significant aspects of party resources to reporting or accounting obligations, and each provides a form of institutional oversight. The principal differences concern the degree of professional specialization, the location of supervisory authority, the relationship between administrative and judicial institutions, and the practical capacity to detect concealed financing. These differences demonstrate that regulation of financing sources is not simply a question of drafting prohibitions. The more important issue is whether the legal architecture produces transparency in practice. A well-designed system should require parties to use official financial channels, identify significant donors, disclose relevant contributions, maintain records, submit periodic reports, and permit verification by an independent or sufficiently autonomous authority. It should also impose special scrutiny on foreign, anonymous, unusually large, or otherwise high-risk contributions. The objective is not to eliminate the financial dimension of political activity, which would be impossible, but to prevent financial resources from operating as hidden instruments of dependency, unequal influence, or corruption.

3. Oversight of Political Party Expenditures and Supervisory Institutions

Regulation of party income alone cannot guarantee financial integrity because corruption and political inequality may arise from the manner in which resources are used even when those resources originate from lawful sources. Expenditure control therefore constitutes the second fundamental component of party-finance oversight. Political parties may use financial resources for ordinary organizational activities, political education, communication, electoral campaigning, staff remuneration, premises, research, public events, and other purposes connected with their political functions. The legal problem arises when expenditures are concealed, inaccurately classified, directed toward prohibited purposes, undertaken through unofficial channels, or used to acquire advantages inconsistent with equal political competition. Financial supervision must therefore connect each significant expenditure to an identifiable source, lawful purpose, recorded transaction, and accountable decision. Nasr's analysis of contemporary party-financing systems indicates that transparency in the use of resources is as important as regulation of their acquisition because the democratic implications of financing arise ultimately from the political activities those resources enable (Nasr, 2016). An effective oversight regime must accordingly follow the entire financial cycle rather than terminating its scrutiny when funds enter a party's accounts.

Accounting obligations form the technical foundation of expenditure oversight. A political party cannot be meaningfully supervised if it does not maintain accurate and sufficiently detailed financial records. The law should therefore require systematic recording of revenues, payments, liabilities, assets, and relevant financial commitments. Expenses should be supported by invoices, contracts, receipts, payroll records, bank statements, or equivalent documentary evidence. Cash transactions create heightened risks because they may be difficult to trace and should therefore be restricted or subjected to special documentation requirements. The use of official bank accounts improves traceability by creating an external record against which internal party accounts can be checked. Talib's account of institutional responsibility supports the broader proposition that accountability requires documentary structures capable of demonstrating whether an institution has complied with the law (Talib, 2021). In party finance, accounting is therefore not merely an internal managerial function. It is the evidentiary basis upon which regulators, auditors, courts, party members, and in appropriate circumstances the public can evaluate financial legality.

Periodic reporting translates internal accounting into a form accessible to supervisory institutions. Annual financial statements are a common mechanism, but their effectiveness depends on the scope and quality of the information required. A report that presents only aggregated totals may conceal the transactions most relevant to corruption. Effective reporting should allow the supervisory authority to understand the principal sources of income, major expenditure categories, outstanding obligations, significant contractual relationships, and any transfers involving affiliated organizations or persons. Reports should also be submitted within legally defined periods so that oversight remains sufficiently timely to prevent the consequences of misconduct from becoming irreversible. The value of disclosure decreases when reports are examined only after an election has concluded or after financial records have become difficult to verify. Layla's treatment of constitutional accountability

emphasizes that legal controls must operate in a manner capable of affecting actual institutional behavior rather than serving exclusively symbolic purposes (Layla, 2018). Timeliness is therefore a substantive element of financial supervision rather than an administrative detail.

Auditing differs from the mere receipt of financial reports because it requires verification. A supervisory authority that accepts the figures reported by a party without testing their accuracy performs registration rather than genuine oversight. Auditing may include examination of source documents, reconciliation of bank accounts, comparison of reported expenditures with publicly observable campaign activities, review of transactions with related parties, and investigation of unusual or unexplained payments. It may also involve sampling techniques or risk-based review where complete examination of every transaction is impracticable. Khafaji's comparative analysis of political parties supports the view that legal regulation must address the real conditions under which party activity occurs rather than limiting itself to formal organizational requirements (Khafaji, 2020). This insight is particularly relevant to financial auditing because sophisticated forms of political financing may be deliberately structured to appear formally compliant. Effective auditing therefore requires both legal authority and professional expertise.

In Iraq, the Political Parties Law No. 36 of 2015 provides an important framework for financial oversight by requiring parties to organize their financial transactions and submit relevant information to the Independent High Electoral Commission. The requirement to conduct financial activity through an official bank account strengthens the traceability of payments and reduces the space in which unrecorded transactions can occur. Annual reporting further creates a basis for institutional review. The Commission can examine accounts and related documentation and, where violations are identified, initiate or refer the matter through the appropriate legal channels. The Iraqi model thus connects financial auditing closely with the electoral supervisory structure. This arrangement may be advantageous because many of the most serious consequences of financial misconduct arise in the context of electoral competition. At the same time, the Commission's effectiveness depends on the resources, technical expertise, and institutional independence available to it. A large volume of party financial information cannot be effectively supervised without specialized staff and procedures capable of distinguishing ordinary errors from patterns indicative of concealment or corruption. Nasr's analysis suggests that a viable financing regime requires oversight structures proportionate to the complexity of the financial conduct being regulated (Nasr, 2016).

Egypt provides a comparatively specialized approach through the involvement of the Central Auditing Organization in the examination of party accounts. This feature gives the Egyptian framework a stronger technical auditing dimension than a model in which financial reports are examined exclusively by a political or administrative committee. Specialist auditors can evaluate the reliability of accounting records, test underlying transactions, identify inconsistencies between financial statements and supporting documents, and detect practices that may conceal the true nature of payments. Professionalization matters because party-finance corruption can involve complex methods of concealment, including indirect expenditures, transactions through associated persons, artificial service agreements, and payments recorded under misleading categories. Abdallah's analysis of political and constitutional institutions recognizes the value of institutional specialization where different forms of control require distinct technical competencies (Abdallah, 2010). Specialized auditing can therefore enhance the evidentiary foundation for subsequent administrative or judicial action. Its effectiveness, however, still depends on access to information and the willingness of other institutions to act upon audit findings.

The Iranian framework places the examination of party financial performance principally within the committee-based structure created by the legislation on political parties and groups. Parties are expected to record their financial transactions and submit annual financial reports to the competent body. The supervising committee may respond to violations and, where necessary, refer matters to judicial authorities. This arrangement establishes an identifiable chain of accountability, but it also demonstrates the importance of institutional design. If the same body performs broad political-party supervision and financial review, it must possess adequate technical capacity for both functions. Complex auditing should not be reduced to a legalistic review of whether a document has been filed. Al-Tamawi's analysis of administrative oversight emphasizes that effective control depends upon the legal powers, procedural competence, and review mechanisms attached to the administrative body (Al-Tamawi, 2018). In financial matters, these principles imply that the committee should be capable of requesting detailed documentation, questioning unexplained transactions, requiring corrections, and distinguishing administrative deficiencies from conduct requiring judicial investigation.

The institutional independence of supervisory bodies is a recurring issue in all three jurisdictions. Political finance differs from ordinary financial regulation because the regulated entities are organizations that compete for governmental power and may themselves influence legislation, appointments, budgets, and institutional structures. A supervisory authority lacking adequate autonomy may therefore face pressures not ordinarily present in other regulatory fields. Independence should not be understood solely in formal constitutional terms. It also includes operational independence, security of tenure or institutional continuity, transparent appointment procedures, professional staffing, adequate budgets, protection against arbitrary interference, and clear statutory powers. Talib's treatment of public-law accountability suggests that control mechanisms are credible only where the institution exercising them possesses genuine capacity to act within its legal mandate (Talib, 2021). An oversight body dependent upon the political actors it supervises for resources or institutional survival may hesitate to pursue serious violations. Conversely, unchecked supervisory discretion can itself threaten political pluralism. Independence must therefore be accompanied by legality, procedural fairness, reasoned decision-making, and judicial review.

Access to banking and financial information is similarly indispensable. Political parties may submit internally consistent reports that nevertheless omit entire categories of transactions. Without authority to compare declarations with banking records, tax or corporate information where legally available, contractual documents, or other external data, supervisors may remain dependent on the honesty of the reporting party. Financial oversight becomes particularly difficult where contributions or expenditures are routed through third parties. A donor may pay directly for services benefiting a party rather than transferring money to the party itself; a related organization may finance advertising; an individual may make a payment on behalf of several contributors; or a contractor may provide services below market value. Such benefits may have the same political effect as direct contributions and should therefore be considered within a sufficiently comprehensive regulatory framework. Khafaji's comparative analysis of party systems supports the need to examine the substantive relationship between resources and political influence rather than relying exclusively on formal organizational categories (Khafaji, 2020). The anti-corruption objective requires a functional understanding of financial support that includes indirect economic benefits capable of affecting political competition.

Transparency to the public adds an external layer of accountability. Not every financial document can or should necessarily be made public, particularly where legitimate privacy or security concerns exist. Nevertheless, meaningful disclosure of significant sources, overall income, major expenditures, and compliance findings enables citizens, journalists, researchers, civil-society organizations, competing parties, and party members to scrutinize financial relationships that may affect political decision-making. Public disclosure may reveal patterns that institutional auditors overlook, especially where donors later receive public contracts, appointments, or favorable regulatory treatment. The preventive value of transparency derives partly from anticipation: political actors who know that financial relationships may become publicly visible have a greater incentive to avoid arrangements that cannot withstand scrutiny. Nasr's analysis of contemporary financing systems identifies transparency as a central condition for the legitimacy of party finance (Nasr, 2016). Public access should therefore be structured so that disclosed information is timely, intelligible, comparable, and sufficiently detailed to be useful.

The effectiveness of oversight also depends upon cooperation between financial supervisors and judicial institutions. Administrative bodies may be well positioned to identify reporting failures or accounting inconsistencies, but serious misconduct may involve fraud, embezzlement, money laundering, illicit enrichment, concealment, corruption, or other conduct requiring judicial investigation. A coherent legal system should therefore distinguish between administrative irregularities that can be corrected through supervisory measures and serious violations requiring referral for investigation or prosecution. Al-Tamawi's treatment of administrative judiciary illustrates the broader importance of judicial review in ensuring both legality and accountability within systems of public supervision (Al-Tamawi, 2018). Judicial involvement performs two functions in party-finance regulation. It provides an avenue for enforcing serious sanctions against violators, and it protects political parties against arbitrary or politically motivated administrative decisions. Effective oversight thus requires neither purely administrative control nor exclusive judicial intervention, but an institutional sequence in which each body performs the function for which it is best equipped.

From a comparative perspective, Egypt's reliance on specialist auditing offers a technical advantage in identifying complex irregularities, Iraq's integration of financial supervision with the electoral commission strengthens the relationship between finance and electoral integrity, and Iran's committee-based model provides a specialized administrative framework for party

compliance. None of these institutional models is inherently sufficient by itself. Each depends upon professional competence, access to information, procedural safeguards, enforcement authority, and independence. The most effective elements of the three models can be understood as complementary rather than mutually exclusive. A robust system would combine a specialized political-finance regulator with professional financial auditing and access to judicial enforcement. It would require parties to conduct significant transactions through traceable channels, preserve financial records, submit periodic reports, respond to requests for clarification, and correct deficiencies. It would also allow the supervisory authority to investigate discrepancies and refer serious matters for judicial action. The central comparative lesson is therefore that expenditure oversight should be institutional rather than merely documentary. Reports become meaningful only when an authority can verify them, and verification becomes meaningful only when proven violations produce consequences.

4. Party-Finance Oversight as a Mechanism for Preventing Political Corruption

The connection between financial oversight and the prevention of political corruption lies in the capacity of regulation to disrupt the exchange between money and public power. Political corruption does not always take the form of a direct payment made to a public official in return for a specific decision. In party politics, the relationship may be more diffuse and long-term. A financier may support a political organization with the expectation of privileged access after the party obtains representation or governmental authority. A political party may become structurally dependent on a narrow group of donors and gradually align its policy preferences with their interests. State resources may be redirected toward the governing party in ways that undermine competition. Foreign actors may use financial assistance to cultivate political influence. Party leaders may conceal donors precisely because disclosure would expose relationships inconsistent with political independence. Khafaji's discussion of the constitutional role of political parties demonstrates why these risks are especially serious: parties are intermediary institutions through which private political organization becomes connected to the formation and exercise of public power (Khafaji, 2020). Corruption in party finance can therefore affect not only the internal integrity of an organization but the legitimacy of governmental institutions that emerge from political competition.

Transparency is the first preventive mechanism because corruption thrives where financial relationships are concealed. Disclosure obligations create a legal expectation that parties explain where significant resources originate and how they are used. Their preventive effect extends beyond the formal submission of information to the state. Disclosure can expose conflicts of interest, enable comparison between donations and subsequent political decisions, reveal concentration of financial support, and permit competitors and the public to question suspicious financial patterns. Talib's analysis of constitutional accountability supports the wider principle that transparency assists in converting institutional power into answerable authority (Talib, 2021). In party finance, however, transparency must be substantive. A system may formally require financial reports while permitting aggregation so extensive that donors cannot be identified, publication so delayed that information loses electoral relevance, or reporting categories so vague that significant expenditures remain hidden. Anti-corruption transparency therefore requires intelligibility, timeliness, and traceability rather than mere bureaucratic disclosure.

Control over donations addresses the risk that financial contributions become instruments of undue influence. Limits on the size of donations can reduce the ability of individual financiers to dominate party resources, while restrictions on certain categories of donors may prevent relationships considered incompatible with political independence. The legal design of such restrictions should reflect the specific corruption risks of the political system. A low ceiling that is easily circumvented through multiple associated donors may be ineffective, just as a prohibition on foreign contributions may fail if funds can be routed through domestic intermediaries. Effective regulation must therefore address beneficial origin rather than merely immediate transfer. Nasr's analysis of party financing recognizes that the structure of financial regulation affects the relationship between political organizations and those who provide their material resources (Nasr, 2016). This relationship lies at the heart of corruption prevention because the objective is not simply to limit money as such, but to prevent financial support from purchasing disproportionate political influence.

Public financing can also serve an anti-corruption function by reducing excessive reliance on large private donors. Where parties receive a predictable level of state assistance under objective criteria, they may be better able to maintain organizational activities without entering financially dependent relationships with private interests. Yet public financing is not automatically anti-corrupt. If allocation criteria are manipulated, public resources may reinforce incumbent advantages and transform party

funding into a mechanism of political patronage. The distribution process therefore requires transparency and independent supervision. Layla's analysis of political systems emphasizes the relationship between pluralism and institutional equality within constitutional government (Layla, 2018). Public financing should accordingly be designed to support fair participation rather than entrench existing power. Its anti-corruption value depends upon clear eligibility standards, non-discriminatory allocation, verification of lawful use, and sanctions for diversion.

Control of party expenditures is equally important because corrupt influence can be exercised through spending rather than receipt. A party may use apparently lawful resources to purchase political loyalties, finance prohibited electoral inducements, pay intermediaries, conceal transfers to affiliated actors, or direct funds toward purposes that compromise the integrity of elections. Expenditure records can reveal relationships between parties and contractors, media companies, consultants, organizations, or individuals whose role might otherwise remain hidden. Detailed auditing may also identify discrepancies between the scale of visible political activity and the expenditure reported in official accounts. Abdallah's discussion of political institutions indicates that effective constitutional regulation requires attention to actual institutional conduct rather than merely formal status (Abdallah, 2010). In party finance, observable campaign activity may therefore provide an important point of comparison with declared financial information. If a party conducts extensive advertising, events, transportation, or organizational activity while reporting minimal expenditure, the discrepancy may justify further investigation.

Oversight also contributes to the early detection of financial conduct associated with broader forms of corruption. Unexplained income, repeated cash transactions, complex transfers, payments involving related persons, or funds originating from unidentified sources may indicate money laundering or concealment. Supervisors do not necessarily possess jurisdiction to investigate every criminal offense, but they can identify financial anomalies and refer them to competent authorities. This function is particularly important because political organizations may provide an attractive channel for illicit funds where financial transparency is weak. Al-Tamawi's analysis of administrative supervision illustrates that administrative authorities can play an important preliminary role in identifying legal violations even where final adjudication belongs to judicial bodies (Al-Tamawi, 2018). The party-finance regulator should therefore operate as part of a broader integrity system capable of exchanging information with auditing, judicial, and other competent institutions in accordance with law.

Administrative sanctions provide the first level of enforcement. They may include warnings, orders to correct financial statements, requirements to submit supplementary documentation, repayment of improperly used public resources, suspension or reduction of public financing, restrictions on particular financial activities, or other measures designed to restore compliance. Their principal advantage is speed. Not every reporting error warrants criminal proceedings, and a regulatory system that treats all irregularities as serious offenses may become cumbersome and disproportionate. Administrative measures permit the supervisory authority to respond promptly and encourage parties to develop stronger internal financial controls. Talib's account of legal responsibility supports the idea that effective systems require differentiated mechanisms capable of responding proportionately to different forms of non-compliance (Talib, 2021). Administrative sanctions should therefore be sufficiently meaningful to encourage compliance without becoming arbitrary instruments of political interference. Clear legal criteria and opportunities for review are essential.

The Iraqi framework illustrates the importance of linking administrative supervision with enforceable consequences. The Independent High Electoral Commission may examine party financial conduct and respond to non-compliance within the powers granted by law, while serious violations may proceed to the appropriate judicial authority. The inclusion of penal provisions in the Iraqi Political Parties Law demonstrates an attempt to ensure that financial obligations are not merely aspirational. Serious violations concerning prohibited resources, concealment, or other unlawful financial conduct may lead to legal liability. The deterrent value of such provisions depends upon consistent application. A severe statutory sanction that is rarely or selectively enforced may have less preventive effect than a moderate sanction that is applied predictably. Khafaji's analysis of comparative party systems reinforces the importance of treating political parties as legally accountable organizations rather than actors existing outside ordinary principles of responsibility (Khafaji, 2020). The Iraqi model therefore contains important elements of an integrated system, but the anti-corruption effect ultimately depends on enforcement practice.

Iran similarly combines administrative supervision with the possibility of judicial consequences for serious financial misconduct. The competent committee can respond to violations within the party-regulation framework, while conduct involving misuse or unlawful treatment of party property and resources may engage broader legal liability. This layered

approach is appropriate because financial misconduct ranges from technical reporting failures to deliberate acts of concealment, misappropriation, or corruption. Nasr's examination of financing regimes suggests that sanctions must be connected to the financial rules they are intended to enforce (Nasr, 2016). In the Iranian context, the central institutional issue is whether violations detected administratively can be investigated and resolved without political interference and whether the responsible persons, rather than only the abstract party organization, can be held accountable where individual misconduct is established. Personal accountability is important because organizational sanctions alone may harm ordinary members or supporters while leaving the decision-makers responsible for financial abuse insufficiently deterred.

In Egypt, the combination of specialized auditing and judicial mechanisms creates the potential for a more evidentially developed response to financial violations. Audit findings can provide a factual basis for administrative action or referral, while judicial review provides a mechanism through which serious measures affecting a political party can be tested against law. Abdallah's analysis of constitutional structures highlights the importance of differentiated institutional functions in maintaining lawful accountability (Abdallah, 2010). This division is particularly valuable where sanctions may affect political participation. Measures such as suspension, deprivation of public resources, or dissolution can have profound democratic consequences and should therefore not depend solely upon the discretion of an administrative regulator. Judicial involvement offers procedural legitimacy while preserving the possibility of serious sanctions where financial misconduct threatens the integrity of political competition.

Judicial sanctions perform a distinct deterrent role. When financial violations involve deliberate concealment, fraud, misappropriation, unlawful foreign financing, corruption, or comparable serious conduct, administrative correction may be inadequate. The legal system must be capable of imposing sanctions proportionate to the gravity of the violation, which may include fines, confiscation of illicit resources, personal liability, deprivation of improperly obtained benefits, restrictions on activity, or other consequences authorized by law. Al-Tamawi's account of administrative judiciary underscores that judicial control is essential where administrative regulation intersects with rights, public legality, and serious legal consequences (Al-Tamawi, 2018). Judicial enforcement is particularly important in party finance because the regulator may itself be exposed to political pressures. Independent adjudication can reduce the risk that sanctions are imposed selectively while also ensuring that serious violations do not remain within an exclusively administrative process.

Sanctions, however, should satisfy the principle of proportionality. Excessively severe penalties for minor accounting mistakes may discourage political participation and allow financial regulation to become a weapon against opposition organizations. Conversely, insignificant fines may simply become a cost of political activity for well-financed parties. A rational sanctioning regime should therefore consider the seriousness of the violation, amount involved, degree of intent, duration, repetition, concealment, source of the funds, impact on political competition, cooperation with the investigation, and whether responsible officials personally benefited. Layla's analysis of constitutional government supports a broader commitment to proportionality and lawful institutional action (Layla, 2018). This is especially important where sanctions affect not merely financial interests but the ability of a political party to participate in democratic competition.

Internal party governance represents another preventive dimension. External supervision cannot examine every transaction in real time. Political parties should therefore maintain internal systems of authorization, accounting, responsibility, and review. Financial officers should have clearly defined duties, significant expenditures should require documented approval, and party leadership should receive regular financial information. Internal controls also create evidence that enables responsibility to be attributed where misconduct occurs. Khafaji's treatment of political parties as structured constitutional actors supports the importance of internal organization in ensuring that party activity complies with legal requirements (Khafaji, 2020). Strong internal financial governance can prevent violations before external regulators become involved and can reduce the possibility that party leaders deny knowledge of financial practices conducted in the organization's name.

The three jurisdictions reveal a common challenge: the distinction between formal regulation and effective enforcement. Each contains legal mechanisms designed to increase transparency and control party finance, yet the actual prevention of corruption depends upon institutional independence, professional competence, information access, coordination, timeliness, and political willingness to enforce the rules impartially. A system may prohibit foreign financing but fail to identify indirect foreign support. It may require annual accounts but lack the capacity to audit them. It may authorize sanctions but apply them inconsistently. It may possess specialized institutions whose appointments or budgets remain vulnerable to political influence.

The comparative lesson is that anti-corruption effectiveness cannot be measured solely by counting statutory prohibitions. It must be assessed by examining the complete regulatory chain from disclosure and traceability to verification, investigation, adjudication, sanction, and public accountability.

A stronger model for Iraq, Iran, and Egypt would therefore integrate several complementary legal safeguards. Financing should pass through identifiable and traceable channels; substantial donors and beneficial sources should be capable of identification; prohibited external and illicit resources should be subject to meaningful detection mechanisms; financial accounts should be prepared according to consistent standards; and significant information should be disclosed in a timely form. Oversight institutions should possess financial expertise and access to relevant records, while serious matters should be capable of referral to judicial authorities. Sanctions should be proportionate but sufficiently substantial to remove the economic or political benefit of violations. Public financing should be distributed through objective criteria and should remain subject to verification. Above all, enforcement should be non-selective. Political corruption is not prevented when rigorous financial rules apply only to opposition parties, minor organizations, or politically unprotected actors. The legitimacy of the entire supervisory system depends on equality before the law.

5. Comparative Evaluation of the Iraqi, Iranian, and Egyptian Models

The comparative examination of Iraq, Iran, and Egypt reveals that the three systems share a common legal objective while pursuing it through different institutional arrangements. All recognize that political parties require financial resources but cannot be permitted to acquire and use those resources without legal restraints. All accept, at least at the normative level, the importance of financial reporting, restrictions on certain sources, institutional supervision, and legal responsibility. The primary differences concern the distribution of supervisory competence and the degree to which financial control has been professionalized. The Iraqi model is closely associated with electoral administration, the Iranian model relies substantially on a specialized committee operating within the law governing party activity, and the Egyptian model incorporates a comparatively significant role for professional auditing alongside party-specific and judicial institutions. These variations affect the ability of each system to identify violations, evaluate complex financial records, and ensure that detected misconduct produces legally enforceable consequences. Khafaji's comparative constitutional approach demonstrates the importance of examining political-party regulation not in isolation but through the institutional relationships that determine how legal rules operate in practice (Khafaji, 2020). The same principle applies to financial oversight: the text of financial rules cannot be separated from the identity, competence, and independence of the bodies responsible for enforcing them.

Iraq's principal strength lies in the relationship between financial supervision and the electoral system. Because the Independent High Electoral Commission occupies a central position in administering and protecting electoral competition, its role in party-finance supervision can connect financial irregularities directly with their consequences for political equality. A party that receives prohibited financing or fails to disclose significant resources may obtain an unfair electoral advantage, and an electoral authority is institutionally positioned to appreciate the implications of that advantage. The Political Parties Law No. 36 of 2015 also provides a relatively structured framework regarding financial accounts, reporting, and oversight. Nasr's discussion of contemporary political-party financing emphasizes the importance of rules that connect financing practices with the conditions of competitive democracy (Nasr, 2016). The Iraqi model therefore possesses a coherent regulatory logic: financial discipline is treated as part of the integrity of political competition rather than merely as an internal accounting issue.

The principal challenge for Iraq is whether concentration of responsibility within the electoral supervisory system provides sufficient technical depth for complex financial investigations. Electoral administration and forensic financial auditing require overlapping but distinct forms of expertise. An institution may be highly competent in voter registration, election procedures, candidate administration, and results management while lacking sufficient accountants, auditors, financial investigators, or data-analysis capacity to detect concealed contributions and sophisticated expenditure practices. Financial supervision should therefore be supported by specialized expertise and mechanisms for cooperation with other competent public institutions. Talib's analysis of constitutional institutions suggests that effective accountability frequently depends upon functional coordination rather than exclusive reliance on a single body (Talib, 2021). Iraq could accordingly strengthen its model by ensuring that the electoral regulator retains central responsibility for party-finance compliance while obtaining professional auditing support where necessary and maintaining effective channels for judicial referral.

Institutional independence is equally important in Iraq because financial enforcement may affect powerful political organizations. A regulator whose leadership, budget, staffing, or operational decisions are vulnerable to partisan pressure may hesitate to investigate influential parties. The law should therefore seek to insulate financial oversight from both governmental control and domination by the regulated political actors. Independence must nevertheless be balanced with accountability because a financial regulator also exercises significant power over political participation. Al-Tamawi's analysis of administrative legality supports the need for supervisory powers to be exercised within defined jurisdictional limits and remain subject to review (Al-Tamawi, 2018). This is especially important where regulatory findings can lead to electoral restrictions or judicial proceedings. The Iraqi system should therefore combine institutional autonomy with transparent procedures, reasoned decisions, opportunities for parties to respond, and judicial oversight.

Iran's model has the advantage of placing political-party oversight within a dedicated institutional framework rather than treating financial regulation as an incidental element of general administration. The committee responsible for party affairs can develop familiarity with organizational structures, recurring reporting obligations, and patterns of compliance over time. This continuity may enable the regulator to identify unexplained changes in a party's financial position or repeated deficiencies in its reports. Layla's account of constitutional organization demonstrates the importance of stable institutional structures in translating general legal norms into sustained regulatory practice (Layla, 2018). A specialized committee may therefore provide an effective point of coordination for financial supervision, especially where it has authority to require reports, issue warnings, demand corrective measures, and refer serious violations to judicial bodies.

The Iranian model's principal weakness, however, lies in the risk that committee-based financial supervision may remain predominantly administrative rather than professionally forensic. The ability to receive and examine annual reports should not be equated with the ability to audit financial conduct. Genuine auditing requires technical expertise, access to supporting documents, transaction testing, reconciliation of records, and the capacity to investigate inconsistencies. Abdallah's treatment of public institutions suggests that the effectiveness of a regulatory structure depends upon whether its functional competencies correspond to the nature of the responsibility assigned to it (Abdallah, 2010). Where party-finance supervision involves sophisticated accounting issues, committee members may require permanent professional staff or external auditing support. Iran could therefore improve its framework by strengthening the independence and professional financial capacity of the supervisory mechanism without undermining the legal role of the existing committee.

The Iranian system also illustrates the importance of distinguishing institutional pluralism from fragmented responsibility. Multiple institutions may contribute to financial legality, but unclear divisions of competence can allow violations to fall between regulatory mandates. The party supervisor may identify an irregularity but lack authority to investigate its criminal dimension, while another institution may not act without a formal referral. Effective law should therefore establish clear procedural pathways from detection to investigation and adjudication. Talib's analysis of political and constitutional systems emphasizes the importance of defined institutional competence in avoiding gaps in responsibility (Talib, 2021). Party-finance cases should not depend on informal cooperation between institutions. The circumstances requiring referral, the information that may legally be shared, the authority responsible for preserving evidence, and the institution competent to impose different categories of sanctions should be specified with sufficient clarity.

Egypt's major comparative strength is the involvement of a specialized auditing institution in party financial oversight. Professional auditing provides a degree of technical scrutiny that ordinary administrative supervision may lack. A specialized auditor can evaluate accounting methodologies, examine supporting records, identify irregular classifications, assess the consistency of transactions, and recognize patterns suggesting concealment. Nasr's analysis of financing systems supports the proposition that transparency requires verification rather than reliance exclusively on self-reporting by political parties (Nasr, 2016). Egypt's institutional structure therefore demonstrates an important principle: political-finance regulation benefits when legal supervision is complemented by financial expertise.

The Egyptian framework also benefits from the possibility of judicial involvement in serious disputes and violations. Because sanctions against political parties can affect constitutional participation and political pluralism, judicial review performs an important legitimating function. Al-Tamawi's analysis of administrative judiciary is particularly relevant in this respect because judicial control provides a mechanism for reconciling effective administration with the protection of legality and rights (Al-Tamawi, 2018). Financial regulation should neither immunize political parties from legal consequences nor

expose them to unchecked administrative discretion. An institutional sequence in which professional auditors establish financial facts, administrative authorities determine regulatory compliance, and courts review serious legal consequences can therefore provide a comparatively balanced model.

Yet the presence of a professional auditor does not by itself eliminate corruption risks. The effectiveness of the Egyptian model depends upon whether audit findings are timely, whether the relevant supervisory institutions are required to respond, whether access to financial information is sufficiently comprehensive, and whether sanctions are consistently imposed. An audit conducted long after an election may accurately identify misconduct while failing to prevent its political consequences. Similarly, a technically sound report may have limited anti-corruption value if it is not acted upon. Abdallah's analysis of political institutions reinforces the distinction between formal allocation of functions and actual institutional effectiveness (Abdallah, 2010). Egypt's comparatively specialized system should therefore be evaluated not only by the existence of auditing authority but by the complete enforcement chain connecting audit findings with corrective, judicial, and public-accountability mechanisms.

Across all three jurisdictions, disclosure rules should be evaluated according to the quality rather than merely the existence of reporting. A party may satisfy a formal annual-report requirement while providing information too general to reveal significant financial relationships. Effective disclosure requires sufficient disaggregation to identify major sources and categories of expenditure. Particularly significant donations should be connected with identifiable contributors, subject to lawful privacy limitations. Payments to major contractors or service providers should be capable of verification. Public financing should be separately identifiable so that its use can be examined. Khafaji's analysis of political parties emphasizes the importance of legal frameworks that preserve confidence in political organizations as institutions of democratic representation (Khafaji, 2020). Financial transparency contributes directly to that confidence because citizens are entitled to know whether parties seeking public authority remain financially independent of concealed interests.

A further comparative issue concerns the treatment of indirect financial support. Conventional party-finance laws frequently focus on money transferred directly to a party, yet contemporary political competition may involve benefits provided outside the party's formal accounts. Supporters may pay for advertising, transportation, premises, digital communication, consultants, events, or other services that benefit the party without transferring funds directly. If such benefits fall outside reporting requirements, contribution limits and foreign-financing prohibitions can be circumvented. Nasr's treatment of political-party financing underscores that regulation must reflect the economic substance of political support rather than merely its formal legal structure (Nasr, 2016). Iraq, Iran, and Egypt would therefore benefit from legal definitions broad enough to cover significant in-kind contributions and third-party expenditures undertaken in coordination with political parties.

Public access to financial information also differs from internal governmental supervision. A system may provide regulators with detailed accounts while leaving the electorate largely unaware of financial relationships. Yet political accountability does not belong exclusively to state institutions. Party members and citizens have an interest in understanding who finances political organizations and how those organizations use their resources. Layla's account of political pluralism suggests that democratic competition depends on informed participation as well as organizational freedom (Layla, 2018). Timely publication of appropriately detailed financial information can therefore supplement institutional supervision. It can also reduce enforcement pressure by encouraging parties to avoid transactions likely to generate reputational consequences even if they do not clearly violate a specific prohibition.

The proportionality and consistency of sanctions represent another area in which comparative evaluation is necessary. A credible system requires a graduated range of consequences. Minor reporting deficiencies may justify corrective orders or warnings, repeated non-compliance may justify financial sanctions or restrictions, misuse of public funding may require repayment and additional penalties, and deliberate receipt or concealment of prohibited funds may warrant judicial or criminal consequences. Talib's analysis of institutional accountability supports the use of differentiated legal responses based on the seriousness of conduct (Talib, 2021). The purpose of sanctions should be corrective and deterrent rather than politically punitive. Particularly severe measures affecting a party's ability to participate in political life should therefore require strong procedural safeguards and judicial involvement.

Equality of enforcement may ultimately be more important than the formal severity of sanctions. Selective supervision can itself become a source of political corruption when financial rules are used strategically against certain parties while violations

by politically influential organizations remain unaddressed. The supervisory system must therefore establish transparent criteria for selecting reports for enhanced review, opening investigations, and imposing sanctions. Risk-based auditing can be legitimate where objective indicators such as unexplained discrepancies, unusually large donations, late reporting, or prior violations determine scrutiny. What must be avoided is enforcement based upon ideological affiliation or political convenience. Khafaji's constitutional analysis supports the fundamental importance of equality within systems of political competition (Khafaji, 2020). Financial oversight loses democratic legitimacy where it becomes an instrument for manipulating that competition.

The comparison consequently points toward an integrated model drawing on the strongest institutional characteristics found across the three systems. From Iraq comes the advantage of connecting party-finance oversight to electoral integrity and providing statutory financial obligations within the party law. From Egypt comes the value of professional auditing and a more differentiated institutional structure. From Iran comes the existence of a dedicated party-supervision mechanism capable of maintaining continuing regulatory contact with political organizations. An optimal framework would combine these features rather than assume that a single institutional form is sufficient. The party regulator should receive and monitor financial reports, professional auditors should be available to verify complex accounts, and courts should adjudicate serious violations and review major sanctions. Financial information should move lawfully between these institutions, while enough of it should be disclosed publicly to support democratic accountability. Such an integrated structure offers the strongest basis for transforming formal financial regulation into an effective instrument for the prevention of political corruption.

6. Conclusion

The financing of political parties is inseparable from the functioning of contemporary political systems because financial resources enable parties to organize, communicate, recruit, campaign, and compete for public authority. The same resources, however, can undermine political equality and institutional integrity when their origin or use is concealed, unlawful, disproportionate, or connected with interests seeking privileged influence over political decision-making. The central problem of party-finance law is therefore not the existence of money in politics, which is unavoidable, but the establishment of legal conditions under which financial resources support political pluralism without allowing economic power to become an uncontrolled source of political power. The comparative examination of Iraq, Iran, and Egypt demonstrates that this objective requires simultaneous supervision of both the sources from which parties obtain resources and the purposes for which those resources are spent.

Oversight of financing sources should begin with clear legal identification of permissible and prohibited resources. Public funding may promote competitive equality and reduce excessive reliance on private wealth, but only where its allocation follows objective, transparent, and non-discriminatory criteria. Public funds must remain traceable after their transfer to political parties, and their expenditure should remain subject to reporting and verification. Private financing, meanwhile, is necessary for maintaining organizational independence from the state and enabling citizens to support political organizations with which they identify. Yet the freedom to receive private support cannot be absolute. Significant donations should be identifiable, recorded, and capable of scrutiny, while the legal system should prevent financial contributions from becoming a means of purchasing political access or creating hidden dependency. The risks are particularly substantial where donations originate from foreign entities, unknown sources, intermediaries, or persons with strong economic interests in future governmental decisions.

The comparison also demonstrates that formal prohibitions on illicit financing cannot operate effectively without transaction traceability. Political parties should conduct significant financial operations through recognized banking channels, maintain accurate accounting records, preserve supporting documents, and submit periodic financial reports. These requirements make it possible to reconstruct the movement of resources from receipt to expenditure and enable regulators to distinguish lawful political support from concealed or prohibited financing. Reporting requirements should not be designed merely to produce annual documents. They should provide information sufficiently detailed to permit meaningful verification, and significant information should become available within a period that preserves its political relevance.

Expenditure oversight is equally indispensable. Lawful income can still produce corruption if it is used to purchase influence, conceal benefits, finance prohibited electoral practices, compensate intermediaries, or provide unreported support to related

actors. Financial reports should therefore identify significant expenditure categories and enable supervisory bodies to compare reported payments with supporting documents and observable political activity. Particular attention should be given to indirect expenditures and in-kind benefits, because financial controls can easily be circumvented if regulation focuses only on money formally transferred through party accounts. Modern party-finance oversight must address the economic substance of political support and expenditure rather than limiting itself to the legal form in which transactions are presented.

The institutional comparison reveals important differences among Iraq, Iran, and Egypt. Iraq connects financial oversight relatively closely with electoral administration through the Independent High Electoral Commission. This arrangement has the advantage of integrating financial discipline with the broader protection of electoral integrity. Its effectiveness nevertheless requires sufficient professional auditing capacity and strong safeguards for institutional independence. Iran employs a committee-centered supervisory model within the legal framework governing political parties. This creates continuity and an identifiable institutional point of responsibility, but financial supervision should be reinforced by specialized auditing expertise and sufficiently broad access to financial information. Egypt provides a comparatively valuable example of integrating specialized financial auditing with party-specific supervision and judicial mechanisms. Professional audit capacity increases the likelihood that complex accounting irregularities and concealed transactions will be detected, while judicial involvement provides procedural safeguards where serious legal consequences are contemplated.

No single institutional arrangement, however, is sufficient on its own. Effective financial oversight requires a regulatory chain in which different mechanisms reinforce one another. Political parties must first be subject to clear substantive rules concerning permissible resources, prohibited financing, reporting, and expenditure. Those rules must be supported by reliable financial records and traceable transactions. Supervisory bodies must then possess the authority and expertise necessary to verify compliance rather than merely receive reports. Where irregularities are identified, administrative mechanisms should provide prompt corrective responses, while serious cases should be referred to competent judicial authorities. Finally, sanctions must be sufficiently meaningful to eliminate the advantage gained from unlawful financial behavior and deter repetition.

Administrative and judicial sanctions should operate in a complementary manner. Minor deficiencies in financial reporting may be corrected through warnings, supplementary reporting requirements, or other supervisory measures. Repeated or more serious violations may justify financial penalties, repayment of public funds, suspension of particular benefits, or increased monitoring. Deliberate receipt of prohibited resources, concealment, misappropriation, fraudulent reporting, or other serious misconduct should be capable of producing judicial consequences. At the same time, proportionality is essential. Financial regulation must not become an instrument through which administrative authorities arbitrarily restrict political participation. Sanctions that significantly affect a party's ability to compete should therefore be imposed under clear statutory standards and remain subject to meaningful judicial review.

The study further demonstrates that institutional independence is a decisive condition of anti-corruption effectiveness. Political parties are not ordinary regulated entities because successful parties may themselves control government institutions, influence legislation, determine public budgets, or participate in appointments affecting supervisory bodies. Regulators must therefore be protected against partisan interference and possess stable professional structures capable of investigating influential organizations as readily as smaller or opposition parties. Independence should include adequate funding, professional personnel, clear legal powers, transparent appointment arrangements, access to relevant financial information, and protection against arbitrary institutional pressure. Yet independence must be accompanied by accountability so that supervisory powers cannot themselves be used for political purposes.

Professional expertise is particularly important because contemporary financial misconduct may be sophisticated. Concealed contributions can be divided among intermediaries, disguised as contractual payments, routed through affiliated entities, provided in kind, or transferred through arrangements that appear lawful when each transaction is examined separately. Administrative officials without specialized financial expertise may be unable to identify such practices. Party-finance regulation should therefore incorporate professional auditors, trained financial investigators, and procedures for examining complex transactions. Cooperation between electoral authorities, party regulators, auditing institutions, and judicial bodies should be legally structured rather than dependent upon informal arrangements.

Transparency to citizens should also be treated as a substantive component of the anti-corruption framework. Institutional oversight alone cannot substitute for public accountability. Political parties compete for public power, and voters have a legitimate interest in understanding the financial relationships that may shape party behavior. Appropriate disclosure of

important donations, major categories of expenditure, public financing, and regulatory findings allows the electorate to evaluate whether political organizations remain independent from concentrated financial interests. Public access can also supplement official oversight by enabling journalists, researchers, civil society, competing parties, and party members to identify relationships or inconsistencies that warrant further examination. Disclosure should nevertheless be designed carefully so that legitimate privacy interests are protected without creating loopholes that defeat transparency.

The most serious danger to the legitimacy of any party-finance regime is selective enforcement. Extensive legislation and severe sanctions cannot prevent political corruption where the rules are applied differently according to the political identity or influence of the party concerned. Equality of supervision must therefore be an explicit institutional objective. Audit selection, investigation, requests for documentation, corrective measures, and sanctions should be based on predetermined legal or risk-based criteria rather than partisan considerations. Public reporting of supervisory activity can assist in demonstrating whether enforcement is consistent across the political spectrum.

The comparative analysis ultimately indicates that Iraq, Iran, and Egypt possess significant legal foundations upon which stronger systems of party-finance integrity can be developed. Their existing approaches demonstrate recognition of the importance of source regulation, accounting, disclosure, institutional oversight, and legal liability. The principal need is to move from formal compliance toward integrated and verifiable supervision. Iraq would benefit from reinforcing the specialized financial capacity of its electoral oversight structure. Iran would benefit from strengthening professional auditing and the operational independence of its party-finance supervisory mechanism. Egypt should ensure that its comparatively specialized auditing structure is connected to timely enforcement and effective public transparency. In all three systems, indirect contributions, third-party expenditure, beneficial sources of funds, and modern methods of financial concealment require increased regulatory attention.

The prevention of political corruption through party-finance oversight therefore depends upon the interaction of transparency, traceability, institutional independence, professional auditing, public accountability, judicial guarantees, and effective enforcement. None of these elements can substitute fully for the others. Transparency without verification may disclose inaccurate information; auditing without enforcement may identify violations without changing behavior; sanctions without procedural safeguards may threaten political freedom; and formal independence without adequate resources may leave supervisory institutions ineffective. A coherent legal framework must combine all of these elements so that financial regulation protects both integrity and political pluralism.

Ultimately, the legitimacy of democratic competition depends not only on whether citizens are formally free to establish political parties and vote for them, but also on whether competing political organizations operate under financial conditions that prevent hidden economic power from determining political outcomes. Party-finance oversight should therefore be understood as part of the constitutional protection of political equality and the rule of law. When financial resources are transparent, lawful, traceable, professionally audited, and subject to impartial enforcement, political parties are better able to perform their representative functions without becoming dependent upon illicit or disproportionate financial interests. Strengthening these safeguards in Iraq, Iran, and Egypt can consequently contribute not merely to improved accounting practice but to the broader objectives of preventing political corruption, preserving institutional legitimacy, protecting the independence of political parties, and sustaining confidence in political competition.

Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in this study were under the ethical standards.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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