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School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**PERCEPTIONS OF NGOS EMPLOYEES OF THEIR FRAMING
IN THE EGYPTIAN MEDIA**

A Thesis Submitted to the

Public Policy and Administration Department

**in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Public Policy**

By

Ghadeer Ahmed Ali

Fall 19

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List of Acronyms

CPJ   Committee to Protect Journalists

EIPR   Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights

HRW   Human Rights Watch

MOSS   Ministry of Social Solidarity

NFP   Not-For-Profit

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

NMA   National Media Authority

POMED   Project on Middle East Democracy

RSF   Reporters Sans Frontiers

SCAF   Supreme Council of Armed Forces

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PERCEPTIONS OF NGOS EMPLOYEES OF THEIR FRAMING IN THE EGYPTIAN MEDIA

Ghadeer Ahmed Ali

Supervised by Professor Ghada Barsoum

Abstract

NGOs have been in Egypt since the 19th century; they had different nature, forms and activities throughout their history. In the past decade, attention to NGOs operating in Egypt has been increasing, especially after Jan. 2011 uprising and the changing political realities since then. The way media has been covering NGOs has been controversial, characterized by changing trends. This study seeks to understand and analyze the perceptions of employees of NGOs about their representation in the Egyptian media. The study will look at the image produced and how this image affected the existence and ability of NGOs to perform their activities through qualitative in-depth interviews. The interviews are conducted with 12 employees in health, educational, sustainable development and human rights, with experience in the NGO sector for not less than 4 years. The analysis showed that the framing of NGOs is affected by many factors including the relationship between NGOs and media, the relationship between the media and the state, and the relationship between NGOs and the state. The analysis of the interviews showed that the Egyptian media regularly frames the NGO sector with a negative image. This framing occurs regardless of the ownership type of the media outlet and the nature of the different organizations in the sector. It also showed that there are trends in the coverage of NGOs that are usually associated with the political landscape in Egypt. All these findings were associated with affecting the nature and the ability of NGOs operating in Egypt, some NGOs were closing down, some other had to work from outside the country, and others have their activities.

Keywords: NGOs, framing, employees, representation, media,

I.   Introduction

Globally, there is an increase in the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on the ground for different purposes, there is an estimated increasing number of NGOs worldwide reaching 10 million NGO. With the number increasing day by day, there needs to be a thorough understanding of the nature of the relationship of these organizations with different entities and concepts like the state and the media. NGOs can sometimes be considered as media organizations that sheds light on how social activism and volunteerism can turn into a profession (Waisbord, 2011). Since media is considered a cornerstone in our societies nowadays as the main way of disseminating information and understanding how the world around us is functioning, millions of people turn to the media, in particular the news daily to stay updated of the news, including news about NGOs. which in turn tells us how media affects the public opinion and has a great role in people's perceptions of the world (de Vreese, 2005) and of NGOs and civil society.

In this regard, this research aims to better understand how employees of local and international NGOs in Egypt perceive how media frames NGOs and how as a result this image might affect their existence and their ability to perform their activties in Egypt. The theoretical framework used to analyze this study is the framing theory of media. The entire study of mass communication theory is based on the fact that media messages have considerable effects (McQuaill, 1994). Framing is one aspect of the media theory studies that is into understanding how a message is made to affect, reinforce or weaken a certain belief or opinion, and it is considered as part of the larger research on media effects (Scheufele, 1999). Based on this, the researcher in this study aimed at analyzing these media frames through the perceptions of NGOs employees.

This study argues that the NGOs employees and managers believe that most of the media coverage of NGOs is subjective, no matter whether the media outlet is private or state-owned, all

themed with one negative idea, especially if the NGO is working in advocacy for social and human rights or promoting democratic rights. The researcher also argues that NGOs employees and managers believe that their image in the minds of the public is a negative image, reinforced by the way media frames NGOs as foreign organizations seeking to implement their own agenda that could be against the national security. This study argues that the way media frames NGOs in the Egyptian media and how NGOs are represented affects the ability of NGOs to perform their activities within the current socio-political landscape.

The next section of this study provides a background for the history of NGOs in Egypt, how they gained their legal personality. What the relation was between NGOs and the Egyptian state looked like before and after Jan. 2011 uprising, what the trends in the way Egyptian state dealt with NGOs are. Followed by an introduction to the nature of media ownership in Egypt and how it changed overtime and affected the coverage of the media on topics related to NGOs.

A plethora of research was found on the NGOs situation in Egypt since the early 1900s, but very little literature has been found on the relation between NGOs working in Egypt and the media framing. This study aims at exploring the perceptions of NGOs employees and managers about the relation between media, NGOs, and state, and how they all interact through context literature review of four main approaches. First, the roles and definition of NGOs, what the expression entails, and what tasks they perform. Second, the relation between NGOs and the media, how the media usually covers news related to NGOs, does NGOs make it beyond gatekeeping or not, and why NGOs need the media coverage for their activities and existence. The third part of the literature is about the media-state relationship, and it explains in detail the nature of media ownership, and how it affects the objectivity and pluralism of the news, and referring to William Rugh's (2004) and (2007) Typology of media systems in the Arab World. The last part

of the literature review is concerned with NGO-State relationship, the history of the conflict and cooperation between them, and what the different models that best describe this relation.

A. Background

In this section, the aim is to have more deeper and insightful understanding of the perceptions of NGOs managers and employees about NGOs representation in the Egyptian media. This cannot happen without proper understanding of the nature and history of NGOs in Egypt, and understanding how the media operates, who owns the media and who controls it, to better understand what these perceptions are based on.

1. NGOs in Egypt: History and Present

The Civil society and NGOs in Egypt are as old as Egypt itself, in the form of charitable activities performed by Egyptians through the Pharaohs period, passing by Christian Egypt, ending by Islamic Egypt where endowments and Awqaf were an important mark of the Egyptian Muslim society through different eras (Walton, 1923).

The Modern concept of NGOs appeared in Egypt in the 19th century, and it had philanthropic religious groups such as the Orthodox Coptic Association, and Muslim Youth Association. The policies regarding NGOs in Egypt has changed dramatically from a stage known as laissez-faire to complete government control over NGOs (Kandil, 1998)

The efforts of modernization that started since Muhammad Ali has created a new segment of national bourgeoisie of Egyptians who in turn contributed to the development of working class and a professional middle class. These new classes wanted the right of establishing associations for the professional groups they created; however, the first groups who acquired these rights were political elitist such as the lawyers and businessmen. (Al-Sayyid, 1993). There were also social

welfare voluntary efforts by elitist women of Egypt, which they thought of as an activity because they were being sided from participating in politics. The Mabarreat Muhammad Ali Al-Kabir was founded in the early 1900s from the royals as a humanitarian contribution to the Egyptian who had a high infant mortality rate at that time (Baron, 2005) . However, although Egypt had a liberal constitution in 1923, but these groups have not been guaranteed a legal personality until the 1940s (Al-Sayyid, 1993).

Other groups of the new classes of Egyptians did not hesitate to establish associations to gain a bargaining and powerful position vis-à-vis the state. In the 1950s and the 1960s, the Egyptian government distrusted the civil society as a whole, it published the first association law that opened doors for the government restrictions over NGOs and the civil society sector as a whole (Kandil, 1998). Authorities encouraged their endeavors because they found such organizations effective instruments for controlling both the middle classes and workers. Thus, the biggest increase in both the number and size of membership of voluntary associations took place in the 1950s and 1960s under the tight rule of a military regime that had many features associated with "4state-corporatist" (Al-Sayyid, 1993)

The NGO sector in Egypt has been increasing vastly in number. With 14,000 registered NGO in 1993 during Mubarak's era, to reach 30,000 when he stepped down in 2011 (Harold, 2016). The number in 2017 according to the Minister of Social Solidarity has reached more than 48,300-registered NGO (Al-Mobtada, 2017).

Egyptians have a problem with accepting the notion of foreign funding for NGOs. Media outlets are reinforcing a systematic attack against NGOs in Egypt. According to a survey conducted by Gallup on February 2012, Egyptians opposing US funds has reached 85% compared to only 74% opposing in December 2011 (Gallup, 2012), whilst the amount of those opposing

foreign funds from International organization such as World Bank, and fellow Arab governments shows increasing suspicion towards their funding as 57% opposed those funding in Feb. 2012, compared to 42% in Dec. 2011.

2. Case 173 – Foreign Funding of Civil Society Organizations

In 2011 an investigation began on a number of NGOs working in human rights in Egypt by an order from the cabinet at that time and under the rule of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). The government established a fact-finding committee and was known in media as "Case 173 - Foreign Funding of Civil Society"; that started its work by investigating the financial resources of several human rights that receive funds from foreign sources or institutions such as Freedom House (EIPR, 2016). The committee issued a report on September 2011 and it contained inputs from National Security Agency, and General Intelligence that also included names of international organizations working in Egypt that got suspended and sentenced. The case continued, and in June 2013, the court sentenced 43 foreign and Egyptian employees to a sentence ranging from one to five years (ibid). It also ordered the closure of some of the foreign organizations in question such as International Republican Institute, National Democratic Institute, Freedom House, International Center for Journalists and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The charges that these defendants might have faced is regulated by article 78 of Penal Code (ibid). President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi amended the article in September 2014, and it increased the penalty of imprisonment up to 25 years sentence in prison and a fine of 500,000 LE if the judge and the court saw they received foreign funding for pursuing acts harmful to national interest (ibid). In May 2017, the Egyptian President has approved law 70 of 2017 on NGOs and civil associations organizations in Egypt, which created some additional restrictions on NGOs in Egypt in terms of registration and funding processes. The law later had been ratified awaiting for the release of the

executive regulations, however, it was summoned for more revision and modifications based on Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi's orders at his questions and answers session in the World Youth Forum held in Sharm El-Sheikh on November 2018 (Al-Ahram, 2019)

Later on, although "Case 173 - Foreign Funding" was dismissed and the investigating judge announced all accused members of the NGOs in case 173 were innocent and free to go in December 2018 (Al-Ahram, 2018). However, the situation is not getting any better, the newest NGO law, issued in July in 2019, is not doing any good to NGOs and civil associations in Egypt, but rather it was described by international organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) as more restrictive (HRW, 2019; Al-Monitor, 2019). However it was heralded by government officials.

3. Nature of Media Ownership in Egypt

The question of media biases or how the media frames and represents certain issues such as NGOs should not be addressed without referring to the media ownership. Media ownership affects news coverage, and the difference in ownerships must be acknowledged when talking about media biases, because it greatly affects the degree of objectivity presented by the media and the news. In Egypt, the earliest print newspaper dates back to the 19th century. However, the birth of what is known as the national press emerged during the British occupation of Egypt, between the periods of (1882–1922) which was calling for independence. Since after the independence and the Egyptian state has been the owner of the press and the TV. The control of the state has been over tightened after the ousting of King Farouk during the 1952 revolution, when the Free Officers movement of the army announced control over the state, including the press, radio and TV in a movement named "Nationalization"(Dabbous, 1994).

Not long after the independence, Nasser placed an officer in every newspaper to make sure every journalist is well aware and "educated" about the principles of the Free Officers, and to make sure every published piece complied with these principles, and not allowing any person to talk negatively of any policy adopted by the government or the president (Dabbous, 1994). After the nationalization in 1961, the press was described as a "mouthpiece of the regime", and the same was applied on TV as well (Ayubi, 1994, p. 15).

After President Sadat took control of the country, he tried to open the space for more democracy and freedoms to the media. He allowed the partisan newspapers, reducing restrictions on press, however after the peace treaty when the criticism against him increased and reached the peak, Sadat carried an attack against partisan newspapers and journalists and imprisoned most of them, and many of these newspapers were closed (Nasser, 1990). After Mubarak was announced president in 1981, he freed all the detained journalists, and allowed the closed partisan newspapers to be back to work. However, through indirect orders, the government took control of the media once again indirectly, despite the introduction of satellite and the private newspapers and TV satellite channels in 2001 (Rugh, 2004). Press laws continued to be vague, unclear, and for endless times caused detentions for opposition journalists (Hafiz and Rogan, 1996; RSF, 2017). The privatization of numerous media outlets, on the contrary, did not lead to a freer media system in Egypt (Sakr, 2013). However, according to Khamis (2011), "the introduction of these new media outlets signified a shift away from a highly monolithic media scene to a more pluralistic one. However, it was not until the 2011 revolution that the proliferation of these new media aided a genuine shift toward political reform in Egypt" (Khamis, 2011, p.1161).

William Rugh (2004) and (2007) created a typology that describes the relationship between political and media systems in the Arab world, and how it affects the media landscape in the Arab

countries. The Typology of Rugh (2004) categorized Egypt in the mobilization model, where there is no form of democratic rule, and the government exercises direct control over the media but with a positive attitude, through using the media outlets, whether state-owned or private-owned, as means to mobilize the public towards supporting the policies and decision adopted by the government.

In 2011, and after the eruption of Jan. 2011 uprising, a wave of changes in the media took place, with social networking and social media websites gaining momentum, and the establishment of news independent websites such as Al-Mobtada, Mada Masr, Al- Manassa, Masr Al-Arabiya (Chang, 2015). Later when President Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood took the Presidential office, the media landscape was no different. The constitution adopted in 2012 during Morsi's era was criticized for limiting the freedom of media and expression. With the establishment of the National Media Authority (NMA) with powers to regulate media and responsible for setting "controls and regulations that ensure the media's commitment to adhering to professional and ethical standards" and "to observe the values and constructive traditions of society," (CPJ, 2012). The journalists and opposition media outlets, who once took a radical oppositional role during Morsi's era, have turned to reclaim their regular traditional role with the Egyptian government after Mohamed Morsi was ousted in 2013 and Adly Mansour took the office (Issawi and Cammaerts, 2015).

In 2014, Abdelfattah El-Sisi won the Presidential office, and the same attitude towards media outlets whether private or state-owned continued, with more than 400 news and independent media websites were blocked under suspicions of "supporting terrorism" (RSF, 2018; AFTE, 2017; Egyptian Streets, 2017). The Egyptian government took extra measures to control the private newspaper and media outlets, by encouraging businessmen who have direct relations

with the government and the intelligence to buying these private media outlets to make sure they stand within the line (Bahgat, 2017). With the continuity of such restrictive environment, controlling the media in Egypt, and the issuance of restrictive new laws that control freedom of expression made it difficult for the media to be independent, and even harder to seek objectivity (RSF, 2018).

Although the press and the media outlets are considerably more private, but the pluralism is weak, whether in the press or the TV, there is still a lack of freedoms and media outlets, no matter private or state-owned, act as "Mouthpiece of the Regime" (Ayubi 1994: 15). With such atmosphere, it becomes hard to seek objectivity in the media coverage, especially for a controversial topic such as NGOs, who have been in an open fight for years with the Egyptian state that controls the media.

4. **Media Coverage for NGOs-related Topics:**

The media coverage for topics related to NGOs is worth noting in this regard. In 2018, the famous scenarist Waheed Hamed wrote an Op-ed on Al-Masry Al-Youm, accusing Egypt's Cancer Hospital 57357 of wasting donations (Al-Masry Al-Youm, 2018). Once the op-ed was published, the Egyptian private and state-owned media kept covering the topic for days and months, which caused a massive decrease in the size of donations, not only to 57357, but to other small NGOs as well. No matter how objective the media tried to act by showing reports from the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MOSS) certifies that 57357 were spending donations under surveillance, there was a negative atmosphere and suspicions around the topic (Al-Masry Al-Youm, 2018).

Another incident that took much of the coverage of the Egyptian media on NGOs and the donations they receive as well as the funds was about Al-Orman Association, A famous Egyptian charity Association. In a conference of El-Sisi, the CEO of Al-Orman stood and

said "Egypt has no poverty", a quote that made many people reluctant about the activity of the famous charitable NGO. If Egypt has no poverty, to whom is the association raising donations for? In this specific incident, the coverage of several media outlets were focused on the fact that NGOs receiving donations should be more monitored, to make sure that the public money and donations are making it to the real people in need and beneficiaries, and to make sure the organizations are allocating the money in its real places.

Another very famous incident related to the coverage of NGOs was the rumors surrounding Resala charity organization after 2013 that they are backed by the Muslim Brotherhood and the donations and the funds they receive were used to support them. This kept revolving in the media for months, without any real accusations from the courts or the public prosecutor (Masrawy, 2014; Al-Fagr, 2017). Rumors about the connections between the Muslim Brotherhood and Resala have reached a limit that harmed the famous charity organizations, causing the donations curve to fall down. In 2016, the Committee of confiscating and managing the funds and assets of the Muslim Brotherhood started its investigations on Resala, resulting the confiscation of only one branch of Resala in Damietta governorate between 60 other branches who has been proven to have no connections with the Muslim Brotherhood at all (Al-Youm Al-Sabea, 2016).

B. Problem Statement

In the literature, Deacon (1996) and Hale (2007) showed that the nonprofits fundraising activities are the frequent stories about NGOs in the media to conceptualize where it performs its actions and the descriptions of these actions as attributes of the story. According to Hale's (2007) proposition on the main themes of media coverage of NGOs, he states fundraising is the most frequent topic in media stories about nonprofits.

Along with fundraising activities, Hale (2007) proposed that although media is more likely to use negative frames than positive frames, but this is not the case in the coverage of NGOs and nonprofits. Media coverage of NGOs and nonprofits are usually positive, in contrary to the negative frames usually created by the media on almost every topic or story (Graber 2001). For example, only 1% of the coverage was indulgent focusing mainly on maladministration and inefficiency, which is compared to 36% of the coverage related to the fundraising and seeking resources (Deacon, 1999).

In Egypt, this is not the case, several incidents that took place throughout different periods before, during and after 2011 shows the complete opposite. The coverage of NGOs-related topics is usually negative. Take for an example the coverage of the famous 57357 op-ed in Al-Masry Al-Youm, or the media coverage of Al-Orman Manager statements as well as the Resala charity organizations rumors about their connections with the Muslim Brotherhood. All these incidents were covered negatively by the media in the news, which has affected these NGOs in a way that caused some of them to change their activities.

The situation in Egypt is contradicting with the existing literature about the relation between NGOs and Media by stating that NGOs coverage, that is why this study aims at

analyzing the perceptions of NGOs employees on how do they think media frames and covers hem and how this affects their ability to perform and function normally.

C. Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What are the perceptions of employees working in NGOs in Egypt about the framing of their image and activities in Egyptian Media, private or state-owned?

RQ2: How does the framing of the Egyptian media, positive or negative as perceived by NGOs employees, affect the ability of NGOs to perform their activities in Egypt and affects the public opinion regarding the presence of NGOs?

II. Theoretical Framework

The entire study of mass communication theory is based on the fact that media messages have considerable effects (McQuaill, 1994). Framing is one aspect of the media theory studies that is into understanding how a message is made to affect, reinforce or weaken a certain belief or opinion, and is considered as part of the larger research on media effects (Scheufele, 1999). It is a concept that states communication as a dynamic process with different phases: Frame building, frame setting, and individual and societal consequences of framed media messages (D'Angelo, 2002; De Vreese, 2005; Scheufele, 2000).

Framing has gained an increased momentum in the past few years. Framing was originally introduced in 1974 in a book by Erving Goffman called "Frame Analysis". He proposed his book as a method to analyze how people think and conceptualize their understanding (Goffman, 1974).

Later on, the concept of framing has gained a wide momentum in the media studies, giving guidance to both the investigations of the media content and studying the relationship between media effects and the public opinion. It was also being translated into how people think and understand the messages sent by the media, and how media frames issues and stories to give a certain framing or understanding of a topic (ibid). Goffman (1986) added that media frames could be understood in terms of how people give meaning to symbols. An increasing number of studies and research papers have focused on the construction of the frames itself, and others focused on how certain frames are in competition with other frames (Ihlen et. al, 2015).

Although framing is a rich concept, it suffers from a lack of similar or coherent definitions. You can find more than 1,000 different citation of framing in the literature adopted in different contexts depending on the circumstances of the research, the research question, or the interest and most of these studies have different operational definitions for framing that is designed specifically

for the purpose of the study (de Vreese, 2005). Building on that, de Vreese (2005) and Scheufele (1999) concluded that the definitions of news frames differ in empirical and theoretical approaches are considerable. Not only the operational definitions, but also since frames are mostly used in political arguments, and social movements discourse to examine and analyze different reactions to campaigns, advertising and "issue stances", it is always harder to find a consistent definition that can be applied to all disciplines and fields. (de Vreese, 2005; Cappella & Jamieson, 1996; Iyengar, 1996; Kinder & Sanders, 1990; Nelson & Willey, 2001; Pan & Kosicki, 1993, 2001; Zaller, 1992).

The lack of conceptual definitions might not be attributed only to the different contexts and disciplines that use framing, but due to the inter-relation between framing and agenda setting theory to the extent that some scholars stated they both do not only have similar effects, but they explained framing as an extension of agenda-setting theory (McCombs et al. 1997). They used this term "second-level agenda-setting" to further describe the salience of certain characteristics of certain media messages on the interpretation of the message receivers of the topic being discussed (Scheufele, 1999). However, one simple feature described by de Vreese (2005) that could clearly differentiate between framing and agenda setting, where agenda setting is used to emphasize on the salience of issues, framing is more focused into how the issues are presented by the message creator.

Another explanation for the difference between agenda-setting and framing is that framing which was referred to as "second-level agenda setting" is more concerned with affective perceptions, focusing on the attributes and giving them due importance as the cognitive level of the issue. It also, in contrary to first-level agenda setting, is not concerned with which issues are presented, but rather how the chosen issues are being presented, and therefore affecting how it is defined (Coleman and Banning, 2006)

Later on, general conceptual definitions were needed for the framing theory to be developed, which can be applied to different disciplines and contexts and be used as a cornerstone in analyzing media effects research.

Gitlin (1980) defined frames as "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion by which symbol handlers routinely organize discourse" (Gitllin, 1980, P. 7). In this manner, framing is referred to as the way media communicates different messages to the audience, and the way the audience understand these messages, which is referred to as the interaction between messages sent by the media and the audience receiving it (Entman, 1993). Goffman (1986) also referred to framing as the way media interpret and organize experience to the audience, and how it gives meaning to different symbols.

These definitions do have some elements in common. They all are concerned with how certain elements in a message are focused on, and how they are transmitted to the audience, the framing theory can be seen as a bridge linking between the social and cultural values and the daily understanding of the interactions in a society (Friedland and Zhong, 1996)

Communication cannot be referred to as static, but it is rather a dynamic process, with lots of phases, and each phase has certain characteristics. Framing applies the same concept of being a process that contains multiple steps (de Vreese, 2005). Adding to that, framing is not only a process with several phases. Framing has several locations, including the communicator of the message, the receiver, and the culture in which the frame is embedded in (Entman, 1993). These locations are important in maintaining the required steps for the production of a frame: frame-building, frame-setting and the consequences of framing including societal and individual consequences (d'Angelo, 2002; Scheufele, 2000; de Vreese, 2005).

Frame-building refers to the internal factors that affect the presentation of the message such as the agenda of the journalist or the organization he belongs to (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996) and external factors such as the policy landscape, elites and social movements' response to what is happening (Gans, 1979). This results in the frame manifested in the text. The second step, frame-setting takes place as the interaction between media frames and the predispositions of the audience and their beliefs and values. Frames affect knowledge and interpretation of different topics by the audience under certain circumstances (de Vreese, 2005). The last step is the consequences, both on the individual and societal levels. The consequences on the individual level could be altering or changing the beliefs and attitudes of the person towards a specific topic, and consequences on the societal levels could contribute to shaping public opinion, affecting political socialization, decision making by those in power and the collective actions of the audience (ibid).

Since framing emphasize some elements in a message over others, it provides a way to understand and interact with an issue. This is why according to Cappella and Jamieson (1997) frames stimulates knowledge and the cultural values and beliefs embedded in the audience minds.

Although framing to Entman (1993) is a "scattered conceptualization" (P. 51), it defined central elements in framing process, which are defining problems in terms of the costs and benefits of it. Then diagnose its causes by understanding the forces creating the problem, followed by producing a moral judgement depending on the evaluation of the causes and their effects, and then suggest remedies based on a specific approach. All these four functions can exist in only one frame of a certain message, and according to Entman (1993); they are applied to both print journalism and TV. "To frame is to involve selection and salience, and then select a certain aspect of the reality perceived and then makes more obvious in the communication of the text in order to

promote this specific aspect of the story or the problem, its interpretation and then its evaluation or the proposed treatment based on the definition created" (ibid, P. 51).

Adding to the central elements of a frame suggested by Entman (1993), Cappella and Jamieson (1997) said that considering a message as being framed only for having a certain feature is a broad way to define framing, so they suggested criteria that should be found in a frame to be called so. First, a frame should have a conceptual characteristic; second, it has to be widely observed in different journalism practices. Third, it should be identified independently from other frames, and fourth, it should have a "representational validity" which means it should be recognized by others and not fragmented by only the researcher. (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997, P. 47).

In a media message, the frame put into it defines the meaning of the message through shaping the inferences made by the people who have been subjected to that message. Which reflects clearly the judgements and the preferences of the people who created this message, some of the representation is called "alternative valancing information" which means putting the message in a negative or a positive image. While other frames involves simple alternative phrasing which is commonly referred to as "Semantic framing" (Hallahan, 1999).

Framing has the ability and the power to affect both individuals and society (Hamdy and Gomaa, 2012). The individual effects can alter a person's belief or opinion towards a certain issue or topic; it can alter attitudes about a certain issue or story regardless of the predisposition based on being subjected to certain frames, whereas the effects on society can have consequences on political socialization (de Vreese, 2005).

Building on that, framing consequences can't be just crossed over, because the media affects public opinion, therefore contributes greatly to shaping public opinion and affects the decision making process and actions of the public as well (de Vreese, 2005).
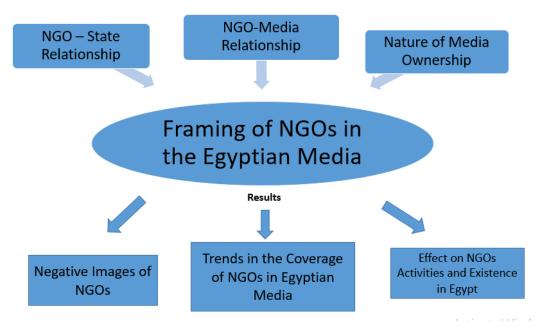
Frames created by media messages are numerous, and they can be categorized into many typologies, but a general typology will be adopted here that belongs to Vreese (2002),

Categorizing media frames into "Issue-specific frames" which are pertinent to only a specific type of topics or events coverage, and "Generic frames" that can transcend thematic limitations and they are identified in different cultural and social contexts such as the coverage of political issues and stories. This typology works as an outline that categorizes past framing research and help explain it for better understanding of its effects (de Vreese, 2005). Issue-specific frames is often referring to the frames that are used in covering a specific issue or event. Applying this approach in studying the effects of the frames in news coverage means a deeper specifically and details in the analysis of the frame used. However, although this is considered an advantage, but the detailed specification makes it harder to generalize, compare and use the analysis as empirical evidence on building the theory (ibid). This also has led researchers to "easily find evidence for what they're looking for" (Hertog & McLeod, 2001, pp. 150–151)

Generic frames transcend the thematic limitations of the issue-specific frames, since they can be used to analyze trends in different topics no matter how different they are, and no matter the cultural differences and it could be applied over different periods of time (Vreese, 2002). Generic frames can be categorized into two groups, the first is concerned with politics coverage, which affects greatly the "political cynicism" (Cappella and Jamieson, 1996: 1997). The second is focusing on the conventions that is directly related to journalistic conventions such as ethics and values (de Vreese, 2005).

This study argues that the NGOs employees and managers believe that most of the media coverage of NGOs is subjective, no matter whether the media outlet is private or state-owned, all themed with one negative idea, especially if the NGO is working in advocacy for social rights or promoting democratic rights. The researcher also argues that NGOs employees and managers believe that their image the minds of the public is a negative image, reinforced by the way media frames NGOs as organizations seeking to achieve their own agenda that could be against the national security. The study shows that the way media frames NGOs in the Egyptian media and how NGOs are represented affects the ability of NGOs to perform their activities within the current socio-political landscape.

This is a matrix that defines the relation between the theoretical famework of the framing theory, the liteature reiew and based on the analysis of the interviewees conducted with the participants.

Source: Author's conceptualization based on the literature review, the theoretical framework and the data analysis

III. Review of the Literature on the Relation Between NGOs, Media and the State

The perceptions of NGOs employees about their representation in the Egyptian media is a multifaceted topic. One cannot adequately assess this relation without referring to different stakeholders, including the media itself, NGOs operating in mEgypt whether local or international, and the state, which has an effect and control over both the media and NGOs. This section of the study used context review to assess the literature around the topic, which is used to link the topic under research to a large body of knowledge (Neuman, 2006). In this context review, the study linked the perceptions of NGOs employees and managers with the larger image of the relationship between the media and NGOs, the media and the state, and the media ownership and its effect on the media framing and representation of NGOs operating in Egypt. The literature review depended on work of several scholars of media and civil society disciplines from different periods of time due to the fact that the literature on the relation between NGOs and the media is not widely discussed especially in the Arab region.

A. NGOs Definition and Roles

The concept of Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is still ambiguous in the literature (De Mars, 2005; Jad, 2007; Martens, 2002; Willetts, 2001), due to the fact that NGOs perform a variety of activities. However, the term is usually used to describe Not-For-Profit (NFP) and civil organizations that has both a professional paid staff, and might resort to volunteers at some point of its work, and whose work is usually categorized into humanitarian aid, advocacy, and providing social services (Waisbord, 2010). The roots of this concept is as old as time, in different forms and in different cultures and religions such as Al-Awqaf and Christian missionaries in Egypt for

example. On the other hand, not only does NGOs are seen as human rights advocates or service providers, but they are seen as a viable alternative to the government in development especially in the developing countries (Chakawarika, 2011). Streeten (1997) also mentions that the most important functions of NGOs are that they are good in mobilizing the poor and rural communities, they empower poor people to take control of their lives, carrying projects with lower costs than the government, and promoting sustainable development.

In this context, Streetan (1997) defines their mission into two main categories: humanitarian aid, that aims at developing people's lives and improving their welfare, and the second one is advocacy, which means involvement in government policies. That is why they might be considered as targets, due to their involvement in policies and laws that affects the human rights promotion in a specific country (Chakawarika, 2011).

B. Media - State Relationship

According to the media literature: "It is the responsibility of a mass political media system to provide information to citizens to participate in the processes of governance" (Becker, 2004, p. 145), and governance includes the assessment of the NGOs. For the media to be able to achieve this task, there has to be an access to the media and a wide variety of media outlets for citizens, what is referred to as pluralism, to express different views and perspectives, and the press should not be under the control of conglomerates or the state (Becker, 2004, p.146). Pluralism and objectivity in the media allow the public to assess the quality and validity of the opinions revealed by the media and to critically assess them (ibid).

1. Media Ownership in Egypt

The question of media biases or how media frames and represents certain issues such as NGOs should not be addressed without referring to the media ownership. Media ownership

affects news coverage, and the difference in ownerships must be acknowledged when talking about media biases, because it greatly affects the degree of objectivity presented by the media and the news. State ownership of the media is not always a negative thing. However, it is State repression on what is to be viewed on these media outlets is the negative thing. Controlling the views presented and framing the issues in a way that is only consistent to the State's point of view have a detrimental impact on the issues discussed; resulting in a change in the public's attitude towards these issues (Becker, 2004). The effect will not only be on the viewers or the receivers of the framed message about NGOs, but media owners themselves create biased views of NGOs, and their relations with local communities are affected, which can have a varied effect on the portrayals and the framing of several social actors, including NGOs (Lee et. al, 2012).

2. William Rugh's (2004) and (2007) Typology

In pursuit of producing a model, that describes the relation between the political system and the media in the Arab World, William Rugh (2004) and (2007) created a typology that describes this relationship, and how it affects the media landscape in the Arab countries. The Typology of Rugh (2004) categorized media systems into three main categories in the Arab world. First, Loyalist model, represented in the Gulf countries and Morocco, where the political systems are completely undemocratic and following strict orders of the government with a passive attitude, since all of the media outlets are loyal to the state and to the ruling family. The diverse model, including Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon and Kuwait, represents a system where there are restrictive media laws, but they are not always implemented and usually forgotten in regular times. The mobilization model includes a number of Arab countries, Egypt included, where there is no any form of democratic rule, and the government exercises direct control over the media but with a positive attitude, through using the media outlets, whether state-owned or private-owned, as means to

mobilize the public towards the policies and decision adopted by the government. A critique to Rugh's (2004) typology was presented by Noha Mellor (2007) stating that Rugh (2004) has ignored the massive political changes taking place in the region and the expansion of the effects of the new media, and the new wave of media privatization that opened new spaces for media freedoms. Rugh (2007) developed his typology further adding new model called the transitional model, referring to the countries that are witnessing major political changes and affected how the media is operating in these countries, and it included Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Jordan.

This typology was not updated following the Arab Spring in 2011 that caused tremendous changes in the Arab media scene. However, the situation after 2013 has witnessed severe media restrictive laws (Reuters, 2013) that brought the media under full control of the state once again. It opened the space for business men who has direct links with the intelligent services in Egypt to own private channels serving the state's interest (RSF, 2018), moving Egypt back to the mobilization model, where the government has full control over the media.

Issawi and Cammaerts (2016, P. 562) assures the restrictions imposed on the media "tremendous degree of state and military control continued to be asserted over the media through an oppressive regulatory framework which imposes restrictions on independent reporting"

C. NGO – Media Relationship

Why the study of the relation between media and NGOs is important?

According to the literature, for many reasons. First, the noticeable and growing increase in the number of NGOs, and its appearance on the global and international agenda has made them an additional value as a news source to the existing media platforms and therefore creating a new link between NGO link and media outlets (Florini, 2001). Second, which is the main reason related to

this paper, is trying to analyze and measuring to what extent can the press be permeable to efforts of non-state actors of influencing the content and being on its agenda (Waisbord, 2011).

NGOs have been a subject given so much attention in the international and local scenes all together; it is a point of interest to many scholars in the fields of international relations and political science (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). However, the relation between media studies, journalism and between NGOs is still relatively at the beginning. Scholars state that there is a huge gap in the field. To many it is surprising that despite the increasing number of NGOs in the past decade around the world, and other civil society organizations, the gap is not getting smaller, but due to the changing nature of NGOs, and the wide range of activities they perform, it is actually getting bigger (Salamon, Haddock, Sokolowski, & Tice, 2007).

Part of the activities performed by NGOs, aside from advocacy and social service delivery, they have agendas that affect the policies of the governments, they have their own political networks where they lobby for certain causes, and they communicate with the public through different platforms including, but not restricted to, media (Waisbord, 2011).

Why NGOs need media Coverage? Another part of why the NGO-media relation is important is the reason behind NGO seeking to be covered by the news. Gamson (2004) argued about why social movements, including NGOs, search for media attention. This is attributed to the fact that news coverage is central and important to making claim by social movements, achieve the proper organizational goals, and maintain their own development and growth in a competitive environment of resources. News coverage for NGOs means achieving recognition among its members, and other public figures. Through media coverage, NGOs build their brand name, maintain their funds and donations, remind the public with their work, and demonstrate their achievements (Bob, 2006; Vliegenthart, Oegema, & Klandermans, 2005).

Since NGOs are organizations that advocacy is one of their core missions, and being part of political and social networks of the same interest, NGOs needs to resort to the media because they need their causes to be highlighted in the media, and to gain validation vis-a-vis various audience. As any other social or civil association, they depend on the media to gain the visibility they need to announce their existence, and highlight certain policy issues (Cottle & Nolan, 2007; Koopmans, 2004) .However, there has to be an understanding that the studies regarding the media and nonprofits are still in the beginning. The existing literature about this theme has been focused on Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand and Northern NGOs in general (Deacon, 1996) and (1999).

NGOs and Media Gatekeeping: According to the literature, several scholars such as Deacon (1996) and (1999) and Nowland-Foreman (2005) suggested that nonprofits have made it beyond the media gatekeeping, and were able to show and preview their work despite the different agenda that media outlets might have. However, this was referred to in general due to the lack of research on the media inherited meanings surrounding the culture of volunteerism in general and NGOs in specific (Hale, 2007). While the studies on the relation between media and NGOs are abundant in the US context, but it is also considered limited because the analysis mainly focused on a single newspaper or a limited number of issues. Despite these limitations might not reinforce the generalization of the literature, but there can be some sort of extracting basic proportions about what to expect to see in the theme of the relation between media and NGOs (Hale, 2007).

The relation between NGOs and different media outlets is worth noting through the relation between NGOs and media persons. NGOs strive to maintain regular relations with reporters, and the case similar to when reporters cultivate sources, NGOs also make relations and engage actively

with reporters, columnists, television and radio hosts who are known for their interest in specific issues that might act in favor of the principles and causes of the NGOs. Together they find a room for a dynamic environment filled with news making opportunities that can help both media persons and NGOs (Waisbord, 2011).

How is the media coverage of NGOs? Deacon (1996) and Hale (2007) showed that the nonprofits fundraising activities are the frequent stories about NGOs in the media to conceptualize where it performs its actions and the descriptions of these actions as attributes of the story. According to Hale's (2007) proposition on the main themes of media coverage of NGOs, he states fundraising is the most frequent topic in media stories about nonprofits.

The second proposition of Hale (2007) is that although media is more likely to use negative frames than positive frames, but this is not the case in the coverage of NGOs and nonprofits. Media coverage of NGOs and nonprofits are usually positive, in contrary to the negative frames usually created by the media on almost every topic or story (Graber 2001). For example, only 1% of the coverage was indulgent focusing mainly on maladministration and inefficiency, which is compared to 36% of the coverage related to the fundraising and seeking resources (Deacon, 1999). This is not the case in all NGOs; Deacon (2003) further explained that not all NGOs are effective in making it to the news. NGOs are likely to receive more coverage if they are interested or lobbying for non-controversial issues, mostly organizations that are working for good deeds, promoting solidarity and non-political issues are the ones who have a fair coverage in the media (ibid). On the same line, this makes us question if NGOs are capable of setting the news agenda, or change a predetermined agenda that already exists and set by powerful elites of the state, which reveals the weakness of NGOs of political or controversial issues in setting the news agenda (Fenton, 2010).

However, other researchers state that practicing human rights is one way to promote change through reporting facts on human rights violations in specific countries in order to go into deep investigation of specific cases through interviewing victims and witnesses, to get into the truth (Thomas, 1999). By publishing these information, this creates negative exposure on the countries invading these rights as Korey (1998) states, which creates what he called "Shame sanction" to pressing the government. NGOs working in human rights does not only include reporting and documenting, but as documentation is only a part of the process that is usually followed by lobbying nationally and internationally to enforce the norms and standards of human rights. That is why they are part of the actors for the international establishment of the norms by which states codes could be judged or measured upon (Paul, 2000)

By bringing global establishment of the standards, NGOs do so by bringing the abuses of human rights to the eyes and to be witnessed by the United Nations and the international community and to the masses of the people despite the fact that most facts of human rights abuses are not recorded, but what is revealed plays an important role (Chakawarika 2011). Which also means that despite the role they play, there is still a major work to be done due to the importance of the role NGOs play especially in developing countries where the rule of law neither applied nor respected (ibid).

Others wrote that NGOs are also important in supporting the UN policies by providing it with instruments with documentation through a number of UN mechanisms that were formed due to NGO lobbying and it includes thematic mandates that falls under the supervision of The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (Korey 1998).

According to the past literature such as Deacon (1999), volunteering organizations are more likely to be covered by the media for their deeds rather than their actions, meaning that NGOs

or voluntary organizations in general had twice the coverage on responding to people's needs and their fundraising activities. While the coverage on their comments as raising topics and providing information was much more less.

D. NGO – State Relationship

Referring to the state as core element in analyzing the relation between the media and NGOs is not surprising. Since NGOs is a heterogeneous field, as well as the state that also need to be taken into consideration and be acknowledged as heterogeneous, complex, and fragmented actor (Fisher 1997). The relation between these two sectors is quite controversial, since an increasing number of work carries an explicit and anti-state bias, and other work criticizes NGOs for providing services that is crucial and important to citizens of the developing countries (Bebbington, 2005; Foley and Edwards, 1996; Lipset, 1994).

This complexity of relations has helped in the creation of a big number of typologies to try to understand it from different angles and scopes. According to Swanepoel (2000), there are 3 ways in which NGOs relate to the state. The first is complementing the state, which means that NGOs participate with the state to provide services that the state was not able to provide in the first place. The second is opposing the state, as some advocacy groups do by contesting the state through pressure groups, in an attempt to engage the government concerning the policies that might be harming and badly affecting it. The third way is through reforming the state, where the NGOs stand for groups who are working in grassroots to negotiate with the government in order to improve and change its policies. The relation between the government and NGOs in each country is different according to the political and social landscape of each country. However, others argue that most NGOs tend to avoid direct confrontation with governments because it waste their

resources and at the end, it becomes self-defeating, and although the relation requires confrontation at some time, generally they both have the same goals and objectives to achieve welfare and the development of the public.

Swanepoel (2000) is not the only one who classified the relation between government and NGO. Newer models discussed this relation in a different scope related to the state's acceptance or refusal of pluralism. The relation according to Coston (1998) and Najam (2000) could be characterized by repression, rivalry and competition, where pluralism is rejected by the government and other relations could be characterized by co-operation, complementarity and collaboration, where governments greatly accepts pluralism.

Another typology is what Fisher (1998) describes the relationships between government and NGOs as being the resulted outcome of strategies that both sectors adopt, where an NGO could be proactive, reactive or somewhere in the middle between the two sides. Some researchers such as Young (2000) organizes this relation into whether it is supplementary, complementary and adversarial relations adopt a historical perspective. However, Young (2000) ensures that these relations are complex and they could be best understood as multilayered and composite of the views that are obtained through each different lens.

For all of these reasons, there had to be cautious management of the government – NGO relations, because the most important role for NGOs is the advocacy, which lies above program implementation in importance, as it is the key to their survival and sustainability and its status as an effective and valuable NGO (Maharaj and Jaggernath 1996).

IV: Methodology

For better understanding of the perceptions of NGOs employees about their representation in the Egyptian media. Since it is a topic that is poorly discussed in the literature, especially in the Arab world in general and Egypt in specific, this study adopted a qualitative approach. Because, as described by Marshall and Rosmann (2011), qualitative research is the best in analyzing little known phenomena in research.

A. Methods

This research study is mainly relying on qualitative approach that helps the researcher to understand the topic in an objective way and to get deep to understand the phenomenon (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). In-depth interviews were used to reveal the participant's feelings and interpretations about a phenomenon, which cannot be easily observed otherwise (Carson et al., 2001). This method is chosen to conduct this study through collecting primary data from conducting semi-structured interviews. The in-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face in the headquarters of the organizations in which the interviewees work or in a public place.

B. Sampling

Purposive and snowballing sampling is the strategy in choosing the participants of this paper. Purposive is a technique where the judgment of the expert is used for a specific purpose in mind that fits the research criteria (Neuman, 2006). The research interviewees are "unique cases that are especially informative" (ibid.). Preliminary selection criteria that is relevant to the research objective settled on 12 interviewees whose criteria of selection included: High -level employees and managers who worked for local and international NGOs for a period not less than 4 years. The NGOs they work in have different activities. Human rights, social rights, educational services,

development, health and cultural organizations. I chose experienced professional who mainly work for units that are in direct contact with the political and policy landscape in Egypt. Employees whose work should entail understanding how the media is covering NGOs, that's why most of the interviewees were either managers of communication units, monitoring and documentation, legal units, operations units, or managers and CEOs of NGOs. Interviewees had to be working in an NGO, leading managerial position, and their experience should not be less than 4 years.

C. Interviews

As Mack et.al (2005) states, in-depth interviews are the most common qualitative method for data collection. In this paper, semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewees to speak openly about what they think about media framing for NGOs, and how it might lead to any negative or positive image of NGOs in Egypt. Interviews were semi-structured in order to give them the freedom to talk without censoring. However, there were ready probing questions to be asked if the interview went to an unwanted track. None of the interviews lasted for more than 40 minutes and sometimes less. It is also important to refer to the fact that the small number of the interviews was due to the difficulty and sometimes the fear of participating in a study that speaks openly about the situation of NGOs in Egypt and the relation between both the media and NGOs to the state.

D. Data Analysis

The interviews were conducted in Arabic, and then later translated into English for the data analysis by the researcher, because all of the interviewees were Egyptian professionals. The researcher made the data categorization and every interview transcription was divided into several sections, and each section was given a certain theme that describes a specific topic covered in the study.

E. Ethical Considerations

The interviews were conducted in the period of June, July and August of 2019. The participation in the research was voluntary and no one was obliged to participate in the research, and those who will not pursue participating, they have the free will and to leave without any consequences. The respondents identities' will be anonymized as well as the names of the organizations they are working in to protect them from any possible harm and protect their identities, and before the interviews they were told about the exact purpose of the research by an informed consent form which they signed. The researcher had the respondent's approval before recording the interview, which were saved in a password-secured computer and they were later transcribed, analyzed and interpreted by the researcher. The American University in Cairo's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained in April 2019 and no interviews were conducted before the approval.

F. Limitations of the Study

The data of the research were collected through interviews from a limited number of employees working in different positions in local and international NGOs performing in Egypt, therefore the results of this research cannot be generalized to any other NGO in any other country, nor can they be used to explain the media framing of NGOs in any other country. The number of interviewees who participated in this study is relatively a small number, this is due to the fact the it was very difficult to reach NGOs employees and get them to talk even for research purposes due to the complexity of the situation regarding NGOs in Egypt.

V. Framing NGOs in Egypt: How does Images framed by the Media affect NGOs operating in Egypt?

The results of this study shows that the perceptions of NGOs employees about their representation in the media is mostly negative according to the interviews. NGOs employees believe that the media usually creates negative frames for NGOs especially those working in advocacy and human rights. These negative frames are not different according to the media ownership, this is mainly because all media outlets in Egypt are directed by the state, whether private or state-owned, they all have and sponsor the same agenda. However, the frames are not similar all the time; there are noticeable trends in the frames created depending on the political landscape in Egypt, which greatly affects how the media frames NGOs. According to the interviewees, the negative frames affect NGOs in a number of ways: some NGOs decide to shut their doors down, others change their registration and activity, and other NGOs seek some changes in their plans and visions.

A. Framed NGOs in Egypt: The "Traitors"

In this section of the data analysis, interviewees were asked about the images framed by the media to the NGO sector in Egypt, what is the frequently used frame, if any, and whether this frame is a negative or a positive one, according to their perception and understanding:

> *"Yes. Regularly. The presence of NGOs that monitors violations and finds a media outlet to speak about this is not something any state would desire. Someone like .. [A famous Egyptian Anchor] is always denying these violations, and even inciting violence against us… There are accusations all the time with spying and treason and the general public believes that we are part of an international agenda threatens Egypt's national security" (Male, Head of Monitoring and Documentation unit, local advocacy NGO)*

The presence of a frame is something assured by this interviewee. He is stating certain words used by well-known media practitioners that describe the NGO sector in general with treason and spying. The interviewee is speaking of a very prominent TV anchor, who works in a private-owned satellite channel. He, among many other media practitioners, believe that NGOs are operating in Egypt to implement a foreign agenda, sometimes supported by the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizbullah, The US government to destabilize the country, and threaten its national security. In this regard, it is obvious that according to this interviewee those NGOs are framed in a negative image usually related to treason and spying. Despite the fact that The Egyptian laws forbid inciting violence against organization or persons, but it seems like these laws are not always applied, and the room is open for threats for NGOs and its employees.

The same words were repeated by the head of legal affairs in a local human rights NGO, when she was asked about whether media has a negative frame made for NGOs or not. And what this image is usually associated

> *The media focus on one certain thing: that we [as NGOs] are funded from the outside, and our only goal is to threaten the national stability...There is always a negative image that we don't have the power nor the space to eradicate it or change it" (Female, head of legal affairs, local human rights NGO)*

This is again, about how the foreign funding issue is brought to the surface. The interviewee who worked for more than 5 years in different NGOs, and her follow up with the media can be summarized to one single frame presented about NGOs, treason. The media always frames NGOs in a negative way, accusing them with treason and the will to destabilize national security. The main thing we can extract from this quote is not only the framed negative image of NGOs, but also

the fact that NGOs no longer have the place nor the voice to express the unjust happening and said about them in the media, or to even seek to change this negative image.

Health NGOs were not safe from the media framing as well. An interviewee who has an experience of more than 10 years in the sector, and currently a CEO of a health charitable NGOs describes framing as follows:

> *"In the past few years, they [NGOs] are either framed as thieves or swindlers. Myself [as a representative for her organization] faced a similar situation when I interviewed by a famous anchor on TV and he was attacking my organization in a very subjective way. We [as NGOs] are either thieves, swindlers, or funding terrorism"*

Framing NGOs as thieves or destabilizing the national security is not restricted to advocacy or human rights NGO, but rather to every NGO who might be receiving donations in a way or another. No matter the legal personality of this NGO, and whether they are working in a political or social cause. The frames used in the media about NGOs does not care about the differences in the activities pursued by the NGO. If you are under the umbrella of an NGO, who has certain legal personality, receiving donations or funds, and have the ability and the power to operate under your own administration, you will be framed negatively. Even if you are delivering service to the society.

You can spot no difference between the earlier interviewees and the next quote, who assures that there is no knowledge about the sector in the first place, and how this affects the frames used by the media.

> *"There is a continuous framing of NGOs by the media. The concept itself is something they are not very familiar with. You are framed as either an organization that distributes oil, rice and sugar like Resala and Al-Orman charity organizations, or human rights organizations. There is no knowledge of the different activities inside the NGO*

sector" (Female, head of operations unit, local sustainable development NGO)

Working in a sustainable development NGO, the framing created by the media about the NGO sector as a whole annoys the interviewee. The interviewee points out to a very important element that, in her opinion, makes the media resort to only one frame of all NGOs; no matter how different they are or no matter what their activities are. The absence of the proper knowledge that summarizes the sector into either human rights NGO or a charity NGO, leaving NGOs with different activities with no real definition in the eyes of the media. Therefore affected by whatever happens in the policy landscape with human rights NGOs and charity NGOs because, in the media and the public's eyes, they are all framed as one thing: An NGO.

This can be related during the 2012 presidential elections, when Abdul-Mon'em Aboulfotouh, a former presidential candidate, and originally a medical doctor who works for years in the Islamic relief was referred to by the media as "the man who distributes blankets". This sentence tells a lot about how media perceive different activities and types of the NGO sector.

A local researcher who has been in the field for more than 5 years agrees with the latest quote by stating that there is a general illiteracy about the sector as a whole, which in turn affects how it is framed by the media.

> *"It is true that the media frames NGOs. The framing for NGOs is as charity organization that distributes blankets to the needy. However, the word human rights is the golden word, whenever it is mentioned people think that it only means arrests and trials, when actually everything related to health, education is a human right" (Female, head of a research unit, human rights NGO)*

Although she agrees to the concept of media framing NGOs, but she is speaking about the nature of this framing. She explains that the general illiteracy and the absence of knowledge from the media about NGOs has created a mess in the definitions and conceptions of NGOs which in

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turn has been transmitted to the public in a manner where all NGOs are seen as charity organizations providing food and covers to homeless people when this is not the case at all in reality. Summarizing the sector into the organizations that distributes blankets and supplies to people in need is a massive mistake that has wronged the whole framing and although it is existent, it is usually not true. One important thing to refer to here is the fact that human rights does not necessarily mean political rights or civic engagement, it is more than that. Health rights and education rights are part of the greater umbrella of human rights.

According to our interviewee, who has been the head of the medical unit in a health NGO concerned with helping victims of torture?

> *"NGOs are always framed in the media. There are continuous waves of attacks especially on human rights organizations. At certain times, there is an intensive attack, accusations of treason, and taxes evasion and destabilizing the national security, and other times where there is actually an interest in our reports, and sometimes we are invited to talk shows to speak about our perception of the situation in Egypt" (Female, head of the medical clinic unit, local health NGO"*

Frames of media, whether positive or negative, have trends. According to the interviewee, there were times when NGOs were severely attacked by the media, calling them treasonous groups who also seek to destabilize the country, but there were other times as well where they were given some space to express themselves. According to her, she says that this mostly happened due to the changes in the policy landscape in the country, which directly affects the direction of the media.

Some other aspects might be absent from the scene, which is what our interviewee reminded us with, the difference between framing in two different conditions: paid and unpaid media coverage.

> *"For charitable and development NGOs, I wouldn't call it framing, but rather publicity and advertising. They pay*

for the channels and talk shows for their projects to be covered in a positive way. However, in the case of human rights NGOs, they are never referred to as associations/organizations, but they are always called 'The human rights guys', 'restricted organizations receiving foreign funds', 'Source of evil' and so on...'' (Male, CEO of a local development NGO)

In the past few years, several NGOs working in health and charity have made their ways to the TV and other media outlets through advertisements aired on different seasons, such as Ramadan and Eid Al-Adha, to encourage millions of Egyptian who watch TV to donate for them. These ads although they cost millions of pounds, but they are increasing, and most importantly, approved, and directed by the NGO itself, which means a good positive image framed by the NGO itself and aired through the media. The case is different in human rights NGOs or advocacy NGOs, but they are always framed negatively, and referred to by different nicknames, that sticks to the public's minds whenever these NGOs are mentioned, causing or making NGO generally not very comfortable with the presence of NGOs.

Another interviewee respond with the difference in framing as per according to the type and nature of the coverage, whether it is news or advertisements, paid or unpaid.

"There are two sources for framing: First, the framing of the advertisements [paid by NGOs on different outlets], which has improved lately to include more development organizations than charity organizations, and the framing from the news, which has also improved since there no more talks of human rights organizations. They are no longer on the scene. Non-existent after 2014" (Female, CEO of a local educational and development NGO)

As the previous interviewee, this quote is also describing how the nature of the coverage affects the framing. She also adds that the recent ads had given more space to the development rather than charity NGOs to introduce themselves on the TV as a new sector, although this may have happened indecisively, but the result is the same. For human rights and advocacy NGOs, the

framing has improved due to the fact there is almost no current discussions around human rights in the media. These types of NGOs are no longer in the scene according to the agenda of the media practitioners and according to their interests, they disappeared because of the current policy landscape and political turmoil in Egypt.

The head of the health sector in a local health NGO explains framing as power dynamics of NGO and media, and how this relation is maintained between the two parts.

> *"Of course the media frames NGOs. This framing comes either from a power dynamics approach, or about the general conceptions of NGOs and what development and charity means. There is usually some statements and speeches that gets distorted and twisted by the news and the media to gain benefits" (Male, Head of the Health Sector, local health NGO)*

As explained earlier in previous quotes. Framing can be different according to the nature of the coverage; this is what our respondent is saying. That Framing is greatly affected by your position, if you are a very well-known NGO with many activities and known projects like 57357, you can pressure the media to frame you in a positive way, because you present a tangible service to the state and society in the shape of providing health services to children of cancer. However, if you already have a weak presence and your services are not recognized neither by the media, the public nor by the state advocating for controversial and political issues, then you are in a very weak position. Most probably, you will be framed negatively, especially if you are presenting abuses of human rights in front of the public and the international community.

B. Private and State-Owned Media: Different Ownership, Similar Agendas

According to the literature, for the media to be able to achieve its task of participating citizens in the process of governance through presenting all the facts, there has to be two thing.

First, access to media outlets. Second, a wide variety of media outlets for citizens, what is referred to as pluralism, to express different views and perspectives, and the press should not be under the control of conglomerates or the state (Becker, 2004, p.146). Pluralism and objectivity in the media allow the public to assess the quality and validity of the opinions revealed by the media and to critically assess them (ibid). Media ownership affects news coverage, and the difference in ownerships must be acknowledged when talking about media biases, because it greatly affects the degree of objectivity presented by the media and the news. State ownership of the media is not always a negative thing. However, it is state repression on what is to be viewed on these media outlets is the negative thing, controlling the views presented and framing the issues in a way that is only consistent to the State's point of view have a detrimental impact on the issues discussed. Resulting in a change in the public's attitude towards these issues (Becker, 2004).

In this theme of the data analysis, media ownership in Egypt was discussed with the interviewees, in pursuit of knowing whether they believe if there is a difference in coverage between private and state-owned media outlets of NGOs.

> *"I'm not a good follower of the TV, Except for …, but I won't assume there is any difference. I think the Egyptian TV is more like him. At the end all the media outlets whether private or state-owned, they are the same. The media policy regarding NGOs is clear with one strategy: whenever human rights NGOs or civil society is mentioned, the background should be about foreign agenda, treason, terrorism and foreign funding" (Male, Head of Monitoring and Documentation Unit in a local advocacy NGO)*

Our interviewee here discusses the fact that he has not been any longer a good follower of TV from a long time, except for a specific TV show presented on a private satellite channel. The interviewee believes that it is a good example of how the media in Egypt, private or government operates. He believes that both private and state-owned media outlets are of no difference, they

both have the same policy when it comes to human rights NGOs, which is speaking about foreign funds and supporting terrorism. The interviewee here speaks with disappointment, denying any hope there might be of having an independent media that covers NGOs subjects and topic objectively.

This quote by a head of the legal affairs unit in local human rights NGOs speaks with the same concepts like the previous interviewee when she was asked about the difference between private and state-owned media outlets.

> *"Some of the outlets were objective but the others*
> *were not and they were followers to the regime" (Female,*
> *Head of Legal Affairs Unit, local human rights NGO)*

Egypt since Sadat's Era has had a numerous number of partisan newspapers. After the introduction of private satellite channels in the early 2000s, booming in the number of private TV channels was seen, including Dream TV, El-Mehwar TV and so many others. The press has also witnessed a major shift with the introduction of Al-Dostour in 1995, Al-Masry All-Youm in 2004, Al-Shorouk in 2009, who were issued by prominent and known journalists known for their opposition to the policies of Mubarak. However, she was talking in the past tense, referring that some of these newspapers newspapers are no longer the same, after they were headed by state-backed-journalists who support the government's policies. The interviewee could not think of more than two media outlet, private or state-owned, that actually resorts to objectivity when covering issues or news related to NGOs.

An Interviewee with more than 25 years of experience, who works as the head of the medical clinic in a medical rehabilitation center for victims of torture, when she was asked about whether the coverage differs between private and state-owned media outlets she replied as follows:

> *"Nowadays, even the private-owned media no longer have the freedom to act differently… in 2011 we had some open space which continued to exist until 2013, then things start to collapse.. However. The media in Egypt, private or state-owned has never been objective; the regime allows for certain freedoms for a specific period of time and then tightens the grip again."(Female, Head of Medical Clinic Unit, local health NGO)*

This quote expresses much of the changing trends in the media coverage for NGOs between private and state-owned media outlets. The interviewee states that in the period of 2011, when there was a momentum in the streets and it was reflected by the variety of media outlets back then, there was some freedoms in the media. The private media back in 2011 and until 2013 has had some freedoms they could express differently than state-owned media, but the situation did not last long. Collapsing in the private-owned media outlets started after 2013, with the increasing political turmoil in Egypt between different political parties and groups. However, despite the limited freedoms the private-owned media enjoyed. The interviewee explains that this was not a result of a freer environment or out of respect for the role of media to be objective, but they were rather limited freedoms, for a specific period of time, to serve a specific purpose, and then things would go back to normal again.

This operations manager in a sustainable development NGO replied with almost the same.

> *"I don't believe that we have media and different agendas in the first place, I believe they are all the same in different ways" (Female, Head of Operations Unit, local sustainable development NGO)*

It is obvious that the interviewee believes there are no differences in coverage, stating that all the media outlets in Egypt whether private-owned or state-owned are all the same with similar agendas and the same adopted policies. Although she works in a sustainable development NGO,

which usually means better coverage by the media than human rights NGOs as stated by Deacon (1999) and more ability to make it to the news, but she still senses a problem in the coverage, no matter if it is private or state-owned media outlet. They are all operating with the same agenda that either have no knowledge about the different nature of NGOs in the sector, or speaking about funding and cooperating with the outside.

According to this interviewee, who had the same vision about framing NGOs in the Egyptian media, answered the question with a very interesting approach.

> *"They are all similar. The same journalists who work*
> *in private media work in state-owned media" (Male, CEO of*
> *local sustainable development NGP)*

Having to work in a local development NGO, and having to follow up with the news and talk shows to know about the policy landscape and the media coverage, it made him explain the situation of the difference between private and state-owned media ownership from a different approach. The media and its practitioners: The first is that since the media are moved by money and investments, therefore probably the coverage of NGOs would not be of much difference. All having similar agenda since they both employ the same journalists and employees, and it wouldn't make sense that an NGO pays for a journalist to write a piece publicizing its activities, and the same journalist would defame it in another outlet. SO yes, he says there is no difference in coverage, they both have similar agendas. However, these agendas differ from one place to the other.

The health sector director of a famous health NGO says the same:

> *"You can't tell if there is a clear difference between*
> *private and state-owned media nowadays. You are controlled*
> *by their interest only" (Male, Head of Health Sector Unit,*
> *local health NGO)*

He states that although ownership do affect the coverage usually, but in Egypt we have private and state-owned media outlets who are governed by their interests only, and to an extent, theses interests are common between them both, so you wouldn't find any difference in coverage between them. Interest as he explained later could be a financial benefit, or a political benefit. It depends on their situation.

This theme is in line with Shoemaker and Reese's (1996) definition of the phases of the framing process, where he identified Frame building as the first phase of framing process. The frame building phase refers to the internal factors that affect the presentation of the message such as the agenda of the journalist or the organization he belongs to and external factors such as the policy landscape, elites and social movements' response to what is happening.

C. Trends in Media Framing for NGOs: Loose and Tight Grips

Referring to the state as a core element in analyzing the relation between the media and NGOs is not surprising. In Egypt, the state has been the owner of the press and the TV since they were introduced, and the control of the state has been overtightened after the ousting of King Farouk during the 1952 revolution in a period known as "Nationalization", when the Free Officers movement of the army announced control over the state, including the press, radio and TV (Dabbous, 1994). With Sadat allowing for partisan press. Mubarak freeing all detained journalists and media practitioners after he took office in 1981, and allowing for more privatization of several media outlets with the introduction of satellite channels. It has been very obvious the new direction of the government, this has continued to flourish and increase, although with limited freedoms, but there was some space, Until 2011 Jan. 2011 uprising took place and the establishment of several

independent newspapers and websites. In 2014, President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi's government blocked more than 400 independent local and foreign news and political websites(RSF, 2018; AFTE, 2017; Egyptian Streets, 2017). This has caused a massive and a very noticeable change in the map of the Egyptian media that we will be better analyzed in this section depending on the perceptions of NGOs employees about the trends in coverage of media to NGOs before, during and after 2011. For these perceptions to be analyzed there had to be some questions related to the political landscape during that time, which was in a continuous change since 2011.

The Head of Monitoring and Documentation unit in local human rights NGO illustrated his perceptions of how the coverage has changed from before 2011 until now, relating it with the political landscape.

> *"The coverage and framing changed dramatically before and after Jan. 25th. We are currently in the worst period. In 2010, the situation was balanced with the presence of both private and state-owned media outlets. In 2011, there was an increasing momentum. In the meantime, starting from 2014, it [media coverage] has completely changed, the map of media outlets is no longer the same, and the numbers of operating websites is shrinking, especially after the famous website blocks, which tightened the space on independent media making the room available for state-owned media websites only. It is becoming very frustrating… the reason was the change in the political landscape [talking about the change in the coverage]" (Male, Head of Monitoring and Documentation Unit, Local advocacy NGO)*

The interviewee states that in Mubarak's era and before Jan. 25 revolution, the government, as the owner of the media, has left the situation very balanced. With a plethora of private-owned media outlets in the scene, giving some space for the opposition and representatives from different currents to express their opinions. Although there were restrictions, but the situation was bearable. In 2011 and after the revolution, he described the momentum in the streets that was definitely reflected by the media. Everyone was allowed to speak openly and freely, but only until 2012,

when the talks in the media has been only revolving around the foreign funds and what was known in the media at that time as "Case 173 - Foreign Funding" where a number of local and international NGOs were raided by the security. This event has been, to the interviewee, as the turning point in the coverage, from limited freedoms during Mubarak's time, moving to an open freer space during 2011, and ending by a very harsh coverage from the media to NGOs. The interviewee clearly associates all these changing trends in coverage to the policy landscape in the country associated with NGOs. In the meantime, and after the closure of over 400 websites by the government, the interviewee describes the current coverage as the worst, where there is no room for NGOs to change the negative framed image, which to someone who works in NGOs for more than 5 years is frustrating.

The same would apply to the interviewee who has more than 5 years' experience in the legal affairs associated with NGOs. She says pretty much the same:

> *"Before 2011 it was more of a silent atmosphere, but when something that has a massive effect takes place, they usually spoke with objectivity, other than that, our sector was ignored. From 2011 to 2013, the media launched a defaming campaign for the whole sector after what is known as 'case 173 - foreign funding'. The government attacked some organizations, and closed others, resulting in a severe defaming campaign against from the media, describing NGOs as 'funded by the foreign community and intending to destabilize the country'. Now, even charity organizations have problems... This is due to the change in the ruling regimes" (Female, Head of Legal Affairs Unit, Local human rights NGO)*

As per her quote, she is referring to the period during Mubarak's era as a "silent atmosphere" meaning that the overage about NGO, especially human rights NGOs was very superficial, and very weak, except when something big happens. This can be understood in terms of several incidents where the reports of NGOs about human rights violations were taken seriously

by the media, and human rights activists were interviewed on different outlets to speak of several violations such as the incident of Khaled Sai'ed and Sayed Belal. After the freedoms imposed by the political atmosphere as a result of the Jan. 25th revolution, things became complicated, and the coverage was characterized by attacks and NGOs were always framed as "receivers of foreign funds", not only human rights NGOs but also charity and humanitarian NGOs

As illustrated earlier, many of the media outlets did not have enough knowledge about NGOs before 2011, which created a confused image in the perceived frame of NGOs.

> *"Before 2011, the sector was not well known among media practitioners, only the charity organizations like Resala and Al-Orman. They [media practitioners] only thought of NGOs as organizations that distributes oil and sugar to the people in need. In 2011 and the transitional period, the media started to recognize the differences between the different NGOs, they know that some of them work on human rights, others in charity. Some journalists even asked us to go and speak of human rights situation although we are a sustainable development NGO… once you take foreign funds, then you are questioned. Before 2011, they would say you are only distributing food items, now they would say you are the 'foreign funds guys'"*
>
> *"The changes in the political landscape is why this shift took place, if it wouldn't have been for the revolution, things would have stayed the same". (Head of Operations Unit, local sustainable development NGO)*

As Hale (2007) proposed, media is more likely to cover positive frames about NGO, and Deacon (1999) added that voluntary organizations in general had twice the coverage on responding to people's needs and their fundraising activities. This was exactly the case before 2011 that all the coverage was associated with charitable side of NGOs, not differentiating between development and charity, and not realizing the huge difference the NGO sector entails within its organization. In 2011, it changed a little bit, may be due to the increase in the number of NGOs

established at that time, and were the number of registered organizations almost doubled from 2011 until 2017. She summarizes her input as follows: before 2011 NGOs are the charity organizations distributing food items and supplies to those in need. After 2011 NGOs are the organizations receiving foreign funds, all due to the changing policy landscape.

Referring to the period before 2011 during Mubarak's time as having noticeable freedoms is a very repetitive input by several interviewees including this one:

> *"Before 2011 there were noticeable freedoms. In 2011 although there were some attempts of defaming [by the media] but there were times when the media celebrated our existence, you could clearly see how the atmosphere was open. This open atmosphere in the media continued until 2013, and then the curve started to fall… before 2011 there were some good things happening until even 2012, after that nothing… All due to the change in the policy landscape".*
> *(Female, Head of Medical Clinic Unit, local health NGO)*

Again, the period during Mubarak's era the media coverage was either quite, or having noticeable limited freedoms. Moreover, celebrations of the role of the NGOs in developing the country. In 2011, despite the increased momentum, once the case of 173 foreign funds was opened in late 2011, the coverage has completely changed to reach its peak in 2013, defaming all NGOs and accusations of treason increased, and talks of funding has reached the surface ,all due to the change in the policy landscape.

Local Health NGO co-founder speaks of the same when she was asked about the different trends of media coverage before, during and after 2011.

> *"The media before 2011 presented a very regular image, that NGOs do present a favor to the community and they help alleviate some of the responsibilities from the government shoulder. In 2011 and 2012, there was an open space. The youth [working and volunteering with NGOs] were the stars of that period and they were presented by the media as a*

> *good example. After 2013, it became very difficult. The only*
> *talks by the media is about the foreign funds, the arrests and*
> *the fact that NGOs funds terrorism in the country" (Female,*
> *CEO and Founder of a health local NGO)*

This quote presents the same perceptions of the earlier interviewees, about how the situation before 2011 was quite normal, quiet, with no remarkable coverage theme that NGOs help the government alleviate poverty and provide services to the communities in need, focusing more on the "complementary" role of NGOs as Swanpoel (2000) describe the relation between them. NGOs during 2011, there was a celebration and an example setting by the media to the youth participating in volunteering activities, and they were always presented in a positive image. In 2012, things have changed dramatically and again all the coverage was revolving around foreign funding, leaving all organizations in the sector under suspicion all the time only because they receive foreign funds.

In this quote, the interviewee disagree a little bit about the situation after 2015, stating it was more positive and there were trials to re-include NGOs in the coverage in a positive manner

> *"The period from 2011 to 2015 the main theme was*
> *the foreign funds. A big reason behind this was the media…*
> *in the last 2 years, there has been some improvements,*
> *speakers from NGOs started to appear in the media, from my*
> *personal experience in certain circumstances the media*
> *allows Egyptians and foreigners to speak about the civil*
> *society, which is a good thing that wasn't really happening*
> *from 2011 to 2013. I think the reason behind this was the*
> *inability of NGOs to choose a proper language and subject,*
> *you shouldn't choose what may harm you and decide to speak*
> *of it openly". (Female, Head of a Research Unit,*
> *international human rights NGO)*

The interviewee replied to the question in a manner slightly different from the other interviewees. Despite she is working in a human rights NGO, she believes that after the negative

coverage related to foreign funds of NGOs reached its peak in 2015. The Egyptian media started to take another path, and try to decorate the coverage by bringing different representatives from NGOs and include them as speakers in panels and talk shows, in her opinion, that was mainly a result of the pressure from the international community and the increasing international interest of the presence of NGOs in Egypt.

The same point of view was adopted by this interviewee, who has more than 15 years of experience in the NGOs field, who worked for several NGOs, and established her own NGO:

> *"from 2011 to 2013 it was more of a negative coverage, focusing on human rights organizations and other NGOs affiliated with the Muslim brotherhood, maybe that's because the state was a bit a weak and chaotic. After the political turmoil intense started decreasing, the news went through a positive track, because there were no more threats after the human rights NGOs took a side… in my opinion, it's all related to the policy landscape in Egypt". (Female, CEO and Founder of a local educational and development NGO)*

In this quote, we can clearly understand that the reason the media was very negative and intense in the coverage of NGOs was human rights and advocacy NGOs, who had a clear disagreement with the Egyptian state and where this disagreement was constantly being displayed in different media outlets. She believes once the human rights and advocacy NGOs were pulled aside, restricted by laws issued by the government, the media coverage started to change, focusing more on the achievements of humanitarian and development NGOs. She attributes all the change in the coverage due to the policy landscape in Egypt, and how it reacts to the sector in general, which is later on adopted by the media in its coverage.

Referring to the media as the reason behind the dangerous situation of NGOs in Egypt, this interviewee talks about the change in the coverage trends, and turned the focus from human rights and advocacy NGOs to charity and development NGOs

> *"Before 2011 the trend [in the media] was a bit quiet, and then it started to increase in 2012 where the topic of foreign funding was brought once again to the surface. Later on after 2013 coverage focused more on charity and development if compared to the coverage of political and human rights NGOs... the biggest reason that can make a human rights NGOs like a drop of water inside an oil pan is the media"* (Male, Head of the Health Sector Unit, local health NGO)

With the stable coverage before 2011, things were almost unchanged. After 2013 when human rights NGOs and advocacy NGOs were again given a side, the media gave more attention to the projects related to charity and development. With this, he agrees with earlier two interviews, who said that the situation after most of the human rights NGOs were pulled aside after 2015, the coverage of the media started becoming more positive. He added a very important metaphor to the role of media in framing NGOs negatively, describing the media as the heating fuel that makes NGOs like a drop of water in an oil pan.

> *"After 2011 there was an increasing space for people to listen because the political landscape was open and the people were interested to open NGOs. Things have changed after 2013. This is mainly due to the change in the policy landscape surrounding NGOs and the talks about foreign funding raised many questions about the nature of these NGOs, where do they get money from, especially in the human rights sector"* (Female, Head of a Research Unit, international NGO)

This quote by an External Relations manager in an international NGO located in Egypt, is also referring to the fact that once the topic of foreign funds are discussed in the media, it usually means negative coverage and negative framing for NGOs. Although she works for an international

NGO, she thinks this might relate to her NGO because at the end of the day she would have to work and deal with people who have been subjected to this type of coverage and in turn affects her image. After 2013 when the political landscape in Egypt as very chaotic, the media coverage for NGOs was revolving around money and the foreign funding coming from abroad to the NGOs operating in Egypt. However it was negative-framed coverage that the money was flowing to the inside to be used in illegitimate activities such as supporting terrorist groups or threatening national security.

D. How Framing Affects NGOs: Coping and Surviving

All these incidents although it is important to be reflected on by the media, but continuing to cover without supporting the truth with real evidence has its harms. Moreover, creates even more frames that are negative for the NGOs. Due to the repetitive negative frames by the media about NGOs and their activities, it became hard for some NGOs to continue working on the ground in Egypt. In this theme, interviewees were asked about the effect the negative frames created by the media has affected their presence in different terms. The answers came as follows:

> *"We are not registered as an NGO, but rather as a law firm and we are its associated research unit. Before 2013, we used to make camps every year, now this is forbidden because of the fear of security. The last camp w organized was in 2013... this has not affected us only, a number of NGOs decided to work from outside the country"* (Male, Head of Monitoring and Documentation Unit, local advocacy NGO)

This quote describes some of what NGOs have been part of. Some NGOs as illustrated are not registering as NGO in the Ministry of Social Solidarity, but they are presenting themselves as research unit following a law firm and operating under the laws of the Syndicate of Lawyers to avoid any restrictions from the laws governing and managing NGOs in Egypt. The NGO where

this interviewee has been working for more than 5 years used to make camps in the summer for undergraduate students, to give a basic understanding of the meaning of human rights, freedom of expression and so on. After 2013, in line with the negative framing of NGOs as treasonous groups, the camp has never been done again, which can tell us so much about how the political and the policy landscape surrounding NGOs looked like. He adds:

> *"Not only were human rights NGOs, but also charity and development NGOs targeted by the media. Negative coverage like the famous op-ed of Waheed Hamed and the CEO of El-Orman affected the donations of many NGOs" (Male, Head of Monitoring and Documentation Unit, local advocacy NGO)*

This reveals that negative images does not only affect human rights NGOs only, but this negative image can and will affect the charity NGOs as well. As what happened to several local NGOs as a result if the famous Op-ed of Waheed Hamed and the manager of Al-Orman, which has greatly affected the funding and the donations received by NGOs

Relating to the same incident of Al-Orman and the op-ed of Waheed Hamed, the interviewee speaks out but from a different approach:

> *"After what happened with the Orman Manager or the Waheed Hamed op-ed, some people deserted the known NGOs and resorted to the small NGOs like ourselves ... This created a healthy variety in the options people resort to for donations, which is a positive impact of the media coverage, it may have negative effects, but in this case it was positive. In such cases, we always make sure we have numerous financial resources, so we avoid our total reliance on donations" (Female, CEO and Founder of a local development NGO)*

Although the negative coverage of the media of these two incidents that framed NGOs as thieves or swindlers, there was a positive impact for this. The interviewee states that the negative impact had been only on the 10 large charity and development NGOs (Al-Orman, Resala, 57357,

Masr Al-Kheir, Food Bank,etc), but the impact on the small charitable and development NGOs was positive. People wanted to donate to a small entity that does not spend their money on ads that cost millions of pounds, NGOs that they might be in direct contact with its CEOs and founders. NGOs they could actually trust.

This quote clearly explains from the experience of our interviewees in two different organizations about the effects of the negative framed images of the media:

> *"The existing coverage has negatively affected us, our abilities became very limited. The public and the security are constantly suspecting us. The reports we direct and publish are seen by the media as associated with terrorist groups… Now, most of the organizations operate from outside the country. The organization I used to work for before never hanged on an external billboard that we are human rights NGO; the locals could report me. We work in a frame of discreet". (Female, Head of Legal Affairs Unit, local Human Rights NGO)*

She adds how they had to cancel some of their activities.

> *"Of course some of the activities had to be changed. We used to film short movies with the victims as some sort of advocacy, but we no longer do this because it could be dangerous to show them off"(Female, Head of Legal Affairs Unit, local Human Rights NGO)*

The interviewee is speaking of their nonexistent abilities; how the negative frame created by the coverage of the media affected the NGO she works for. Trust is no longer a part of her relation with the public to the extent that she is unwilling to put the organization's name outside the apartment, because this might make her neighbors suspect her existence and might report to the police. She describes her work on the issue of human rights as a work in a framework of discrete. The interviewee in this quote explains how working in human rights Ngo is a risk, to her life and to her employee's. Stating that she might be reported to the police if the neighbors knew she is working on human rights related topics is something extremely frustrating and

disappointing. She adds that although she used to film some movies and short documentaries about the cases she is defending in courts to publicize their stories for more attention. However, she says that this was very risky and dangerous. In order to be safer, she stopped working on or filming advocacy videos. This can be related an in line with Cappella and Jamieson (1997) suggestion that frames not only embed certain messages, but they stimulate knowledge and the cultural values and beliefs embedded in the audience minds before they have been subjected to the message, and the message comes only to strengthen and reinforce the predispositions of the audience.

Working in a sustainable development NGO did not relieve this organization from the effects as well:

> *"Yes, because of the media and the new laws. All human rights NGOs now have a question mark no matter what their work is. Some of them shut down, others changed their activities… As a sustainable development NGO, I have volunteers, but I'm more reluctant to send them anywhere, especially during times of political turmoil." (Female, Head of Operations Unit, local sustainable development NGO)*

She adds how the effects of the media coverage has reached an unexceptional levels, where they as a sustainable NGOs had to find alternative sources of funding and revenues to be able to survive when there is a negative campaign that might affect their financial ability to implement programs:

> "*We now seek alternative ways to receive funds. Since we are a sustainable development NGO, we always try to have our own independent resources, because we do not have the luxury of falling down. It is a closed cycle, being financially sustainable has been our focus but it increased after 2011. The whole sector is thinking the same way nowadays".(Female, Head of Operations Unit, local sustainable development NGO)*

The interviewee states that upon her experience with the field in the past 10 years, she has seen so many NGOs shut down. Even as a sustainable NGO, one negative image in the media regarding an NGO have affected them terribly. She states that upon the waves of attacks on 2013, she was unable to send her volunteers anywhere, because of the threats they might face because of the negative perception of NGOs in the public's minds. She also stresses on the fact that they need to find alternative ways to receive funds or donations because they are never sure whenever the waves of attacks by the media is resumed, they know how it will negatively affect their image and therefore the donations they receive.

Effects of the negative image might go beyond changing the activities. Some NGOs seek different ways to make sure they are accepted in the atmosphere they are dealing in:

> *"We are a civil association and we are not registered in the ministry [Ministry of Social Solidarity], there are usually some waves of attacks on NGOs, especially human rights NGOs... The negative framed image of NGOs in the media affected our ability to continue our work naturally. Working in this place is a reputation above all. However, this backlash against us made more people from outside the country support us financially" (Female, Head of the Medical Clinic Unit, local health NGO)*

> *"Some organizations went on and changed their activity; some others went on and worked from outside the country and so on" (Female, Head of the Medical Clinic Unit, local health NGO)*

This rehabilitation clinic has been operating over 20 years ago, not registering in the Ministry of Social Solidarity might is a mere action to protect themselves from any attack on human rights NGOs. They now are seeking to register themselves as an entity under the supervision of the Ministry of Health. However, they always have a fear that the negative image framed by the media to the people might threaten their existence, especially being a psychological

rehabilitation center, which depends on reputation above all; they need to keep this image away from the media's negative frames.

Working in a development health organization was not safe from the negative media frames. She says that:

> *"Some NGOs had to shut down. Other NGOs changed their plans and activities and stopped working on the ground. The geographic expansion for us as a health organization is becoming very slow and even impossible"* (Female, CEO and Founder of a local health development NGO)

Despite the fact that some NGOs actually closed down because they could no longer operate, she stated that wanting to expand to provide services for other people who are in need in remote governorates in Egypt is no longer an option. She explains this because of negative images that defamed their picture as NGOs and service providers in the eyes of the public.

Another quote on the same issue by a researcher in an international NGO states the following regarding the effect of negative frames on their activity as an NGO:

> *"If I'm going to work on the ground in Egypt I won't take the team and instantly start working. I have to check the required permissions and whom I will be in contact with. One reason behind this is the media; it never presents good examples for NGOs working in human rights".* (Female, Head of a Research Unit, International human rights NGO)

Working on the ground is much more difficult, it shows by evidence how the frames produced by the media can actually affect people's perceptions about your existence. The interviewee states that she will never endanger her team to go out and start a survey or a fieldwork with having to coordinate with some authority or local mayors to guarantee their safety, because she knows to what extent this can be dangerous on her team.

This interviewee was citing by evidence what once happened with a team from his NGO who was assigned for a task on the ground:

> *"As an NGO that receive donations, we need to make sure that the money reaches the actual beneficiaries who are really in need. To do so, we need to make sure of the financial situation by surveying him; the employee doing so is reluctant to be arrested at any time. People in Suhag once called the police to arrest our employees although we had permissions. The framed image did not leave many options for the sector in general; you can see the difference in the quality of the reports of human rights situation in Egypt in 2011 and now. They don't present a real value nowadays"* (Male, Head of Health Sector Unit, local health and development NGO)

He also adds that a real effect of the current situation and negative frame of NGOs in the atmosphere has created some kind of poor quality of the published reports. NGOs are no longer keen on producing high quality and evidence based reports, maybe because they know these reports will reach no one's hands, or maybe because they do not have the tools, information or the resources they need to produce one.

This theme of the data can be attributed to de Vreese (2002) analyzing the latest phase of the framing process, which is the consequences, both on the individual and societal levels. The consequences on the individual level could be altering or changing the beliefs and attitudes of the person towards a specific topic. While consequences on the societal levels could contribute to shaping public opinion, affecting political socialization, decision making by those in power and the collective actions of the audience, in this case it can be applied to affecting the public opinion towards the presence and the existence of NGOs.

VI: Conclusions

In Egypt, the situation of NGOs as well as its nature are heterogeneous and complex. Understanding the perceptions of NGOs employees about their representation in the Egyptian Media is a multifaceted process that needs to take into consideration the relation between NGOs with both the state and the media, as well as the relation between the state and the media, reflected in the media ownership

In this study, the researcher analyzed these perceptions through four main approaches: the first approach is what is the image, if any, framed by the media for NGOs in Egypt? Second, the difference found between the frames created by private and state-owned media outlets in Egypt. Third: the trends in the framing of NGOs by the Egyptian media before, during and after Jan. 25 revolution. Fourth, the effects of framing NGOs on their ability to perform their activities in Egypt.

With regard to the first approach, all interviewed employees or CEOs of NGOs working in Egypt have assured that the media frames NGOs, mostly negatively in different outlets and for different reasons, no matter what their nature is, and not giving any importance to the fact that these NGOs vary in nature and in activities. The main frames created by the media for NGOs is usually associated with NGOs receiving foreign funds, which according to the media frames are used to destabilize the national security, therefore describing them as treasonous groups who are working against the Egyptian state to implement foreign agendas. This is in line with POMED (2015) report stating: "the accusations are as follows "colluding with NGOs has taken various shapes: Israel and the Zionists, Hezbollah and other Shia militias, counterrevolutionary movements, remnants of the Mubarak regime, the Muslim Brotherhood, Coptic Christians, the CIA, and of course, the U.S. government" (POMED, 2015). This is how NGOs are framed in the Egyptian media according to the perceptions of employees working in NGOs. These findings

oppose part of what Hale (2009) and Graber (2001) proposed that although most of the media coverage to any topic is usually negative, but the case is different in NGOs, where most of the coverage is usually positive. In the Egyptian media, this is not the case at all. But the findings partly agree with what Deacon (2003) said stated about the fact that not all NGOs can make it to the news, and even if they did, they have no control nor capability of setting the news agenda, or change a predetermined agenda that already exists and set by powerful elites of the State. Which reveals the weakness of NGOs especially that of political or controversial issues in setting the news agenda (Fenton, 2010). The researcher finds the interviewees answers in direct resemblance with what was mentioned earlier in POMED (Project on Middle East Democracy) report (2015) "Egypt's media is notoriously provocative and prone to incitement, encouraging viewers to direct anger at the very groups trying to serve the population" (POMED, 2015, p. 17).

The three locations of the framing process (Entman, 1993) are present in the first finding. The communicator of the message who are the media practitioners working in different media outlets. The receiver who are the general public being exposed to the negative frame set by the communicator, and the culture that is already embedded in the minds of the Egyptian public who do not accept the notion of foreign funding as per Gallup's 2012 report.

With regard to the second approach, all the interviewees in this study have seen no difference in the coverage between private and state-owned media, which is something worth noting. In the literature, media ownership is seen as an important determinant of how the coverage will be taking place. The press should not be under the control of conglomerates or the state (Becker, 2004, p.146). In Egypt, according to Sakr (2013), more privatization of media outlets in Egypt did not lead to a freer media system. The government through indirect orders took control of the media once again indirectly, despite the introduction of satellite and the private newspapers

and TV satellite channels in 2001 (Rugh, 2004). Press laws continued to be vague, unclear, and might for endless times cause detentions for opposition journalists (Hafiz and Rogan, 1996; RSF, 2003). This can be discussed in the light of William Rugh's typology of Arab Media systems, who compared them with the political system and categorized Egypt in the mobilization model. Egypt being in this model describes a lot about the relation between media ownership and coverage in Egypt. The mobilization model is where there is no any form of democratic rule, and the government exercises direct control over the media but with a positive attitude, through using the media outlets, whether state-owned or private-owned, as means to mobilize the public towards the policies and decision adopted by the government. Rugh (2007) developed his typology further adding new model called the transitional mode, referring to the countries that are witnessing major political changes that affected how the media is operating in these countries, and it included Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Jordan. However, according to the current circumstances and the website blocks in Egypt, severe restrictive media laws are introduced. Moreover, a new media regulatory body that has all the authorities to limit freedom of expression was established. The researcher argues that Egypt is back once again after Jan. 25 revolution to the mobilization model, where the state mobilizes all media outlets to promote for its policies, including the policies towards the presence of NGOs. Nowadays, although the press and the media outlets are considerably more privatized, but the pluralism is very weak, whether in the press or the TV, there is still a lack of freedoms and media outlets, no matter private or state-owned, act as "Mouthpiece of the Regime" (Ayubi 1994: 15).

The third approach conclusion is that it is clear from the interviewees answers and discussions around the changing trends in the media around NGOs is that the coverage before 2011 was characterized by quietness and the atmosphere was clear regarding NGOs. Several

interviewees have pointed out that Mubarak's era before 2011 had noticeable freedoms, and even sometimes, there were several anchors hosting NGOs representatives from human rights NGOs and advocacy NGOs to talk about their published reports regarding certain events that took place and were the topic of public opinion. In 2011, it was an open atmosphere, human rights NGOs were greeted for being a revealer of the corruption in the country. Charity and development NGOs were encouraged to do more for the country, everyone was welcomed, and the media coverage can be framed as positive to all types of NGOs some may refer to this because of a weak and chaotic. Until the government by direct orders of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took some measures to investigate the funds received by several NGOs, local and international, who are operating in Egypt resulting in the closure of several NGOs and the investigation with other in a case known as "Case 173 - Foreign Funding". Most of the interviewees refer to this incident as the beginning of a changing coverage of NGOs by the media to a negative coverage, which is more focused on funding. After 2013 and others say during 2015, some interviewees stated that the Egyptian media has reversed its negative coverage to a more positive coverage, due to the absence of human rights NGOs and advocacy NGOs, and when charity and development organizations prevailed the scene of the coverage. Other interviewees think that after 2013, things are not positive, but it was more of a silent status-quo. Where human rights NGOs no longer have the voice nor the space to express the violations. However, according to many interviewees, these changes and trends were affected by the political landscape, and many tie the change in the policy landscape, which is according to them "A follower of the regime" and acting "upon their interest".

These findings are in line with what is in the literature, Deacon (1996) and Hale (2007) showed that the nonprofits fundraising activities are the frequent stories about NGOs in the media to conceptualize where it performs its actions and the descriptions of these actions as attributes of

the story. According to Hale's (2007) proposition on the main themes of media coverage of NGOs, states "Fundraising will be the most frequent topic in media stories about nonprofits".

The fourth approach regarding the effects of the negative frames of the media has caused numerous impacts on NGOs operating in Egypt. According to the interviewees. Many NGOs had to flee the country and seek other places to work from, because they can no longer operate, others have decided to stop working in advocacy and limit their work to monthly and weekly reports about the situation without publishing it. Several NGOs have expressed their concerns about working on the ground, they believe is due to the negative perceptions conveyed by the media to the public, this might cause some trouble for them while working on the ground. The only positive impact that could be seen in several health, development, charity and educational NGOs is that all of these organizations have become aware to the fact of trying to find several financial resources to fund their programs, all of them have expressed the need for any NGO to start creating its own revenues that can be used when there is another wave of attack on the media that might affect their donations and therefore their presence. As any other social or civil association, they depend on the media to gain the visibility they need to announce their existence, and highlight certain policy issues (Cottle & Nolan, 2007; Koopmans, 2004). However, sometimes this visibility might not be in their best interest. The media negative coverage and framing for NGOs creates a fuss around their existence, leaving the public hesitant about their presence, and sometimes making them criminals in the eye of the state. This is in line with POMED's reports that states: "Suspicion of rights NGOs makes carrying out their work exceedingly difficult. Amr Abdelrahman of the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights said that efforts to defame the NGO community have a morally damaging effect and that is more difficult to deal with. 78 Some NGO employees

emphasized how media "hate speech" amplifies their already difficult positions and makes their work increasingly dangerous" (POMED, 2015).

A. Recommendations

Independent media shows off as the only viable alternative to the biases of concentrated media ownership, and it has an important role to play in contributing to the level of trust of NGOs by the public. Since the news in the media offer coverage for the NGOs activities, whether this coverage is positive or negative, the independent media will be more objective, and pluralism will be provided about the NGO sector as a whole. Pluralism, offers a broad range of information for the public to form an opinion that is well articulated and away from the usual frames created by the concentrated ownership of the media (ibid). An objective and pluralistic media coverage would allow the media to act over the NGOs as a watchdog. Positive media coverage will refer to NGOs best practices to help them make claim to their causes, achieve recognition and display their achievements, and the negative media coverage will push NGOs to correctly assess their mistakes and work on for better governance and to seek more accountability.

It is also recommended that NGOs should resort more to different types of the media. The emergence of the new media and the increasing dependency over it has made it a good alternative for traditional media. NGOs need to make use of the new media techniques to be able to express themselves and to have the space the need to showcase their achievements.

B. Suggestions for Future Research:

This study has focused on analyzing the perceptions of NGOs employees about their representation in the Egyptian media and how it affects their ability to perform their activties. For future research and for better understanding of the relations between NGOs and the media, there has to be framing study focusing on content analysis to different media outlets about the coverage of NGOs in Egypt, to have a solid data and representation of how this relation looks like and how it affects NGOs.

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VIII: Annexes

A. Annex 1: IRB Approval

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THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

To: Ghadeer Ali

Cc: Mariez Wasfi

From: Atta Gebril, Chair of the IRB

Date: March 1, 2019

Re: Approval of study

This is to inform you that I reviewed your revised research proposal entitled "**Framing NGOs in Egypt: An Analysis of the Perceptions of NGOs Employees about their Representation in the Egyptian Media**" and determined that it required consultation with the IRB under the "expedited" category. As you are aware, the members of the IRB suggested certain revisions to the original proposal, but your new version addresses these concerns successfully. The revised proposal used appropriate procedures to minimize risks to human subjects and that adequate provision was made for confidentiality and data anonymity of participants in any published record. I believe you will also make adequate provision for obtaining informed consent of the participants.

This approval letter was issued under the assumption that you have not started data collection for your research project. Any data collected before receiving this letter could not be used since this is a violation of the IRB policy.

Please note that IRB approval does not automatically ensure approval by CAPMAS, an Egyptian government agency responsible for approving some types of off-campus research. CAPMAS issues are handled at AUC by the office of the University Counsellor, Dr. Ashraf Hatem. The IRB is not in a position to offer any opinion on CAPMAS issues, and takes no responsibility for obtaining CAPMAS approval.

This approval is valid for only one year. In case you have not finished data collection within a year, you need to apply for an extension.

Thank you and good luck.

Dr. Atta Gebril
IRB chair, The American University in Cairo
2046 HUSS Building
T: 02-26151919
Email: agebril@aucegypt.edu

Institutional Review Board
The American University in Cairo
AUC Avenue, P.O. Box 74
New Cairo 11835, Egypt.
tel 20.2.2615.1000
fax 20.2.27957565
Email: aucirb@aucegypt.edu

B. Annex 3: Informed Consent Form - Arabic Version

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الجامعة الأمريكية بالقاهرة
استمارة موافقة مسبقة للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية

عنوان البحث : التأطير الإعلامي لمنظمات المجتمع المدني في مصر: تحليل آراء العاملين في منظمات المجتمع المدني حول كيفية تأثير صورتهم في الإعلام على ممارسة أنشطتهم المختلفة

الباحث الرئيسي: غدير أحمد علي – باحث دراسات عليا بالجامعة الأمريكية في القاهرة
البريد الالكتروني: ghadeerahmedali@aucegypt.edu
الهاتف : 01099709725

أنت مدعو للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية عن تأثير التأطير الإعلامي وكيف يرى العاملون في منظمات المجتمع المدني تأثير الإعلام والصورة النمطية التي يقدمها عنهم على قدرتهم على ممارسة أنشطتهم بصورة طبيعية دون أي تشويه محتمل للدور الذي يقدمونه في خدمة المجتمع.

هدف الدراسة هو معرفة آراء العاملين في منظمات المجتمع المدني على قدرة الإعلام على توصيل صورة مشوهة أو غير حقيقية للجمهور وهل يمكن أن يكون لهذه الصورة تأثير على قدرة منظمات المجتمع المدني على القيام بأنشطتها المختلفة

نتائج البحث سيتم نشرها على موقع مكتبة الجامعة الأمريكية في القاهرة، وسيتم وضعها كنسخة ورقية في مكتبة الجامعة الأمريكية، وقد تُنشر في دورية علمية متخصصة أو في مؤتمر بحثي.

المدة المتوقعة للمشاركة في هذا البحث الفترة بين مايو ويوليو من عام 2019.

إجراءات الدراسة تشتمل على الإجابة على بعض الأسئلة المتعلقة بموضوع البحث في مدة لا تتجاوز 60 دقيقة بأي حال من الأحوال.

المخاطر المتوقعة من المشاركة في هذا البحث غير واردة، وذلك لأن الباحث لن يقوم بإظهار هوية أي من المشاركين أو ممن سيتم مقابلتهم، وسيتم إعطائهم ألقاب لا تُظهر هوياتهم بأي شكل، ولا هوية المنظمات والجمعيات التي يعملون بها.

لا توجد استفادة متوقعة من المشاركة في هذا البحث، وذلك لأن المشاركة تُعتبر تطوعية ولا يُجبر المشاركين عليها بأي شكل من الأشكال.

السرية واحترام الخصوصية: المعلومات التي ستدلي بها في هذا البحث سوف تكون غير محددة، بمعنى أن هوية المشاركين سيتم إخفائها واستبدالها بأسماء وألقاب غير حقيقية وكذلك أسماء المنظمات التي يعملون بها؛ لتجنب أي مخاطر أو إفصاح هوية المشاركين أو انتهاكها من أي طرفٍ كان.

أي أسئلة متعلقة بهذه الدراسة أو حقوق المشاركين فيها يجب أن تُوجه إلى الباحث الرئيسي في هذه الدراسة وهو المذكور أعلى هذه الورقة وكذلك رقم هاتفه وعنوان بريده الإلكتروني.

إن المشاركة في هذا البحث ما هي إلا عمل تطوعي، حيث أن الامتناع عن المشاركة لا يتضمن أي عقوبات أو فقدان أي مزايا تحق لك. ويمكنك أيضا التوقف عن المشاركة في أي وقت من دون عقوبة أو فقدان لهذه المزايا.

الإمضاء: ....

اسم المشارك: ....

التاريخ: ..../.............../.............

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