# Money and the power of communication

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Received:27/02/2024 Accepted:10/06/2024 Published:30/06/2024

#### **Abstract:**

explores how financial power influences study communication and social interactions within society. It defines key concepts such as money, power, financial power, and communication, and examines how individuals and entities can benefit from financial power in various domains. The problem statement focuses on two hypotheses: the first suggests that financial power affects individuals' and institutions' presence in society and their social relationships, while the second proposes that positive use of financial power enhances social communication. Through interviews and data analysis, the study concludes that financial power significantly shapes relationships and communication process. Finally, we advocate for raising awareness about the role of financial power in communication, and emphasize the need for ethical and responsible use of this power to foster positive change in social relationships.

**Keywords:** Money, Power, Financial Power, Communication

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ISSN: 2437-041X	مجلة أنثروبولوجيا
E-ISSN:2588-2325	مجلد: 10 عدد: 01 السنة 2024

# **INTRODUCTION:**

The When money is perceived as shaping the structure of social relationships, it means that money is not just an economic exchange unit or a means of trade, but it also reflects social relationships and interactions among individuals in the social context. Money is created, defined, and accepted by society; the latter also determines its worth and function as a means of exchange and expression of value. Thus, money indicates the structure of social relationships, such as persuasion, trust, cooperation, purchasing power, and all shared values in society. In this way, money maps social communication, indicating that money is an integral part of the social, cultural, and political framework, and its value and function are influenced and changed based on these social relationships.

From the previous perspective, we can say that money gains a kind of power in human communication and interaction. For example, when someone has sufficient money, he is able to satisfy his desires and needs, and achieve many things in life. Moreover, he can have authority, power, and the ability to affect others. Money can also contribute to establish strong social relationships and communication networks, enabling wealthy individuals (financial institutions and government entities...) to use their financial resources to influence decisions and achieve a high social status. So what kind of influence does money have on communication?

# 1 Conceptual framework:

# 1.1 definition of money:

In the Oxford dictionary, we find the definition of money as follows: "The means of paying for sth or buying sth how much money

ISSN: 2437-041X	مجلة أنثروبولوجيا
E-ISSN:2588-2325	مجلد: 10 عدد: 01 السنة 2024

do you earn week. Young people spend a lot of money on clothes. Our holiday cost an awful lot of money. Do not change your money at airport. They charge a lot there. If we do the work, ourselves we will save a lot of money. To borrow/lend money my father invested his money in stocks and shares .Is this picture worth a lot of money" (oxford, 2010, p. 510)

While in Arabic, we can say that money ''Urefers to everything owned by humans (The General Secretariat of Endowments, 2020, p. 304),

Accordingly, money is a medium of exchange, a measure, and a store of value. Which means, its value is not determined by the materials it is made of; some forms of money are paper-based. Therefore, money is a unit of account representing the value of goods and services in economic exchange within the social sphere.

As for the terminological definition of money, the International Rulings Magazine has defined it as "money is what human nature inclines towards and can be saved for future needs, whether it is transferable or non-transferable". (The General Secretariat of Endowments, 2020, p. 305).

The Financial Science Dictionary also defines it as "any commodity that can be used for trade, as a store of value, and as a unit of account. The value of money is derived from its purchasing power, which usually decreases over time. Money is often referred to as the lifeblood, given its significant role in meeting needs and achieving benefits. (Atwan, 2013, p. 701).

Therefore, we can summarize the definition of money by saying that money is a medium of exchange used for trade and storing value. It serves as a means of payment for goods and services, and its value depends on the purchasing power. Money is fundamental in modern economies; we consider it a vital factor for survival, success, and

ISSN: 2437-041X	مجلة أنثروبولوجيا
E-ISSN:2588-2325	مجلد: 10 عدد: 01 السنة 2024

prosperity in individual and social life. Based on the above, in our research money refers to metallic or paper money used through both conventional and digital methods.

#### 1.2 Definition of power:

The approximate equivalent of the word power in Arabic (in this research) is " سطوة" and roughly speaking, it means oppression by force. It carries a meaning of power, dominance and authority. (Ibn Mandhour, (2023), سطو (لسان العرب), 2023

It is a concept that refers to the ability to control, influence, or dominate individuals, events, or resources. This power can be either negative or positive; "it is the ability to influence others and create a general authority over them in various ways" (Kaddouri, 2021), thereby achieving one's goals.

The concepts of power vary among cultures and societies, encompassing a wide range of social, political, economic, and cultural dimensions. For example, political leaders may have control over decision-making and guiding societies. CEOs of large corporations may have authority to take financial decisions and direct economic operations. Artists, writers, intellectuals can hold power in disseminating ideas and shaping public opinion, and the common thread in all these forms of power lies in the abundance of wealth.

#### 1.3 Definition of financial power:

It is the authority exerted by individuals or official and/or unofficial groups (financial institutions, government agencies or economic bodies) and they wield it due to their financial position in society. We can define it also as the ability to deploy money to achieve life goals (political, economic, societal, etc.) or fulfill personal desires in life better and more than others can.

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E-ISSN:2588-2325	مجلد: 10 عدد: 01 السنة 2024

#### 1.4 Definition of communication:

According to the definition we find in the famous lexicon by Ibn Mandhour, we can say that the approximate equivalent to the word 'وصل' in English, is the verb 'connect' or 'reach', and it is the opposite to the verb 'separate'. Furthermore, giving money to someone in the Arabic culture is a form of connection; therefore, if you give money to someone, you have reached out to them and communicated with them (Ibn Mandhour, .(2023, السان العرب).

While in English, we find the definition of communication in Merriam Webster Online dictionary as follows: "a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior" or is "a technique for expressing ideas effectively (as in speech)" (communication, s.d.)

On the other hand, the word 'communication' has gone through three stages in defining its terminological meaning, the first stage was "from IC 15, the object thus made common: a communication. This has remained its main range of use. But from IC17 there was an important extension to the means of communication, specifically in such phrases as Lines of communication. In the main period of development of roads, canals and railways, communications was often the abstract general term for these physical facilities. It was in C20, with the development of other means of passing information and maintaining social contact, that communication came also and perhaps predominantly to refer to such media (q.v.) as the press and broadcasting." (Williams R. , 1985, pp. 98-99) It means that humans live their day and spend their lives in endless interactions, all in the pursuit of earning money to fulfill their biological needs and ultimately achieve well-being.

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E-ISSN:2588-2325	مجلد: 10 عدد: 01 السنة 2024

Therefore, money can be considered the 'determinant' of social relationships and the creator of the human interaction network.

#### 1.5 Conceptual definition of financial power in communication:

It is a term we use in our research to describe the power, capability, and influence that individuals (or financial institutions, government agencies or economic bodies, etc.) possess due to the money they own (or what the law allows for governmental entities). They use it strategically to achieve personal life goals, influence decisions, and build social relationships in various fields.

# 2 A brief story of money:

Human beings have engaged in bartering or exchange transactions since ancient times. "The origins of money, like those of trade, lie far beyond the earliest written history... It is probable that, as barter transactions grew more sophisticated, men formed the habit of assessing 'prices' in terms of standard article, and that this standard also came to enjoy preferential treatment a medium of exchange" (Morgan, 1965, p. 11)

With time, problems started to arise in the bartering process, making it impractical, such as the lack of desire or need for the exchanged items or goods by both parties. With this difficulty of bartering, one of the clever men proposed exchanging everything with gold, as it is practical, rare, cannot be forged or counterfeited, and is easy to carry. As a result, it became possible to purchase many things with a quantity of gold that could be carried in one's pocket, and this marked the beginning of money.

However, owners of gold began to fear theft, whether they carried it with them or hid it. This concern led to the inception of the

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first primitive banking system. The basic premise was for owners to deposit their gold with trusted individuals who would safeguard it using swords and daggers in exchange for a nominal fee. To formalize this arrangement, a document or certificate detailing the deposited quantity of gold was signed between the owner and the bank as proof of deposit. Such documentation was essential as it ensured the rightful retrieval of the gold. Over time, this concept evolved, giving rise to paper currency that held an equivalent value to gold. This innovation allowed individuals to carry paper currency instead of gold, marking a significant advancement. Ultimately, this system proved practical and devoid of significant drawbacks, solidifying its continuation. (Adnan, 2016)

Thus, the process of trade and economy evolved from bartering to storing value in gold, then to paper bonds representing real equivalents of gold. These bonds later became paper money traded by people, leading eventually to the banking system and financial institutions. With the advancement of society, the financial and monetary system evolved, giving rise to digital currencies and non-cash payment methods, Such as credit cards and electronic transfers. This has changed the ways people engage in financial transactions. This evolution reflects the increasing need for easy and efficient means of exchange and storage in complex economies and new technologies.

# **3** Functions of money:

People need money for its important functions in organizing social and economic life. "It facilitates exchange as a measure of value; it brings different communities together by enabling gift giving and reciprocity. It maintains social hierarchy. And finally, it is a means to enforce the power of the state" (The Translation Team, 2022).

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E-ISSN:2588-2325	مجلد: 10 عدد: 01 السنة 2024

Therefore, we will address each function individually in order to elucidate the operational mechanics of money and its influence on interpersonal relationships:

# 3.1 Value and exchange:

As mentioned previously, difficulties arose in exchanging goods and commodities during the barter period, leading to the emergence of money as a means of assessing and exchanging values (monetary valuations) between individuals or communities. This made exchange easier, and the parties involved in the process became apparent: the seller, the buyer and the price. "The process of buying and selling became separated and money became the alternative used in each transaction separately. As a result, we began to use the term buyer for the one who provides the money and seller for the one who receives the money in exchange for the services rendered or goods offered. As for the money provided, it is referred to as the price. However, it is required for money to have general acceptance among all members of society as a fundamental condition for performing this function" وظائف النقود في الفكر الإقتصادي الإسلامي والإقتصاد الوضعي-, Nadhir & Hijeb) ,2013 عدراسة مقارنة-, 2013. Therefore, when goods and services are valued in monetary terms, it becomes easy to assign value to them and facilitate efficient exchange, thus aiding in the facilitation of economic transactions

#### 3-2 Human and social communication:

Money plays a foundational role in shaping the structure of social interaction. In the economic process, individuals compose their communicative messages based on the goal of earning money through economic activities, starting from production to consumption. This influence is not limited to the economic process alone but extends to social life, because "at the social level, money not only reflects social relationships, but also alters them" (Simmel, 2020, p. 15), which

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means restricting them. For instance, individuals utilize financial actions such as giving gifts, donations, and showing appreciation towards others. This reinforces the process of human communication and the network of social relationships.

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#### 3.3 Social stratification:

We can consider social stratification as one of the negative functions of money, as all societies suffer from social inequality. The latter results from the unequal distribution of wealth, opportunities, and goods.

Moreover, the unbalanced or unequal salaries in both public and private sector jobs creates a class hierarchy in the arrangement of individuals within society. "Classes serve as an illustrative framework for understanding social structure, these classes consist of individuals, and community resources unevenly distributed across these layers. The social stratification dates back to the agricultural revolution communities between 7000-10000BCE (lumen, 2023). Therefore, the

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function of money is to maintain social stratification and organize the various classes within society.

## 3.4 Enhancing state authority:

The state resorts to various sources to strengthen its authority over the public sphere. In this regard, "Geoff Mulgan has theorized the capacity of the state to assume and exercise power through the articulation of three sources of power: violence, money, and trust". (Castells, 2009, p. 16) In the words of Manuel Castells, money is used in two important dimensions: giving and taking. By giving, receiving, and distributing money, the state controls its roles, finances its services and programs, and strengthens its authority in the public sphere. **Conclusion:** 

It is crucial to highlight that money does not only organize economic activities but also regulates social interactions. Understanding the role of money and its impact on social communication sheds light on ways to enhance social relationships and foster deeper connections within society.

# 4 The value of money in people's life:

There is widespread agreement regarding the capacity of money to improve the quality of life, "as for many people, money is a source of security and a means of achieving their goals and aspirations. It can be used to pay for necessities, such as food, housing, and healthcare, as well as for luxuries, such as vacations and fancy cars. For others, money is a way to gain power, status, and respect in society" (ALLINSON '2023). Thus, the money owner (whether individual, governmental or economic entity, etc.) is able to wield power in the communication process and occupy a prestigious position within it.

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# 5 The elements of the communication process in the context of financial power:

The elements of the communicative process help us understand how information and messages are transmitted between individuals, financial and economic groups, and governmental entities. Accordingly, we will attempt to clarify these components while considering the hypothesis regarding the dominance of money and its influence on the communication process.

#### 5.2 The sender:

the owner of money or –the job supervisor- (private sector job, governmental, economic, or financial entity). The sender consistently holds a prestigious position in the communication process. He composes his messages within the context of financial power, seeking to achieve his financial objectivities by influencing others and imposing specific behavioral patterns.

#### 5.3 The receiver:

refers to the audience that also seeks financial gain (such as workers and employees). Therefore, in order for the audience to earn money and satisfy their daily needs, they receive various offers from financial resource owners. The latter seek to implement their programs and plans according to a job contract. Consequently, the recipient or the audience chooses or prefers one message over another, according to the context of financial power and its role in life.

#### 5.4 The message:

refers to the information, plans, or ideas that are sent for implementation within the context of financial dominance, aiming to achieve financial gain. The message is an expressing of financial

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desires or objectives, even if they occasionally manifest as political, economic, or other types of objectives.

#### 5.5 The channel:

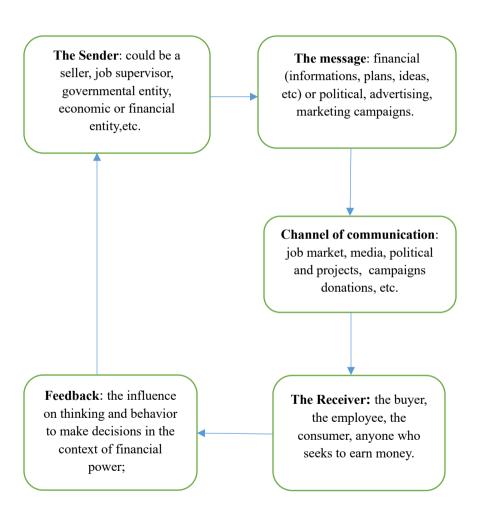
is the job market where the exchange and transmission of messages occur through channels, which may include media, projects funding or political campaigns, donations, or community service in general. All these communicative channels aim to generate wealth and preserve it, whether for the sender or receiver, by earning, increasing and maintaining wealth.

Therefore, money wields power over both the sender and the receiver collectively, but in differences in status in the communication process and financial returns disparity.

#### 5.6 Feedback:

The response of the receiver to the message (individuals, groups, consumers, employees, etc.) and the way this message effects the receiver's thinking and behavior, such as decision-making in social or political contexts, or selecting the type of work that yields financial gain, and influencing their preferences towards consumption habits.

# A diagram illustrating the elements of the communicative process in light of financial power within the social unit.



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Understanding the elements of the communicative process in the context of financial power helps us comprehend how this power influences communication within society. It sheds light on how financial power affects the structure of social relationships and how messages are produced and directed more effectively to achieve financial gain.

#### 6 How does money wield power in the process of communication?

The ability of money owners (or governmental, economic, and financial entities) to choose the overall structure of communication and frame its boundaries within the social sphere indicates the potential existence of monetary power in the process of communication and the construction of social relationships.

To validate this hypothesis, we conducted interviews with a group of academics and media professionals (30 interviewees) in the states of Laghouat, El Bayadh, and Telemcen. The interview questions included both structured and open-ended questions.

# 6-1 The problem statement:

How does financial power influence communication and social interactions?

#### 6-2 The hypothesis:

- Financial power influences the nature of individuals and institutions in society, as well as their social relationships.
- The positive use of financial power in society enhances social communication.

## 6-3 Research methodology and tools:

In this study, we relied on reviewing previous research to gain a deeper understanding of key concepts related to money, power, and

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communication. Additionally, we analyzed the data collected through interviews, where the sample was purposefully selected from the original research community.

#### 6-4 Previous studies:

#### 6-4-1 George Simmel's research:

George Simmel's "philosophy of money" is considered an innovative work where the sociologist explores the complex relationship between money and human society. Through this work, he presents a unique perspective on the philosophical, social, and psychological dimensions of money on a broad scale.

In his book, Simmel delves into the profound impact of money on our lives, interactions, and the structure of modern civilization as a whole. He begins by studying the origins and evolution of money, emphasizing that as a symbol and store of value, money influences human behavior and thus social dynamics.

George Simmel points to the dual role that money plays; a force that both unifies and divides, and fosters both cooperation and competition among individuals and groups. On the one hand, money enhances individual freedom and self-expression by achieving personal goals. On the other hand, it interconnects people in their economic transactions, imposing constraints on them.

Therefore, money has psychological and cultural dimensions that go beyond mere economic aspects. Money can be a source of power and security, as well as a source of anxiety and alienation. Simmel discusses the impact of the "incentive of money" on human emotions and aspirations, suggesting that the way individuals strive to earn money shapes their character and values.

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We can consider the "philosophy of money" as a profound contemplation of the wide-ranging effects of money on our lives, identities, and social structures. Through this philosophical exploration, Simmel invites readers to contemplate the multifaceted nature of money and its role in shaping the modern world.

# 6-4-2 Nadir Abderezak and Hijeb Aissa's research:

Entitled "The Functions of Money in Eslamic Economic thought And Positive Economics: a Comparative study", published in "Economic studies" journal, issued by university of Djelfa, volume 07, Issue 02. And quote the summary of this study as follows:

"Functions of money are not considered replaces a consensus among the various economic systems, not even economic schools in a single system so that most economists still believe that the original traditional jobs are the real functions of money as a mediator in the exchange and a measure of values. that is why the central banks in most countries have not The expensive at more than achieve the stability of the general price level that emerges from these positions as economists Muslims see the money and the two main functions are as a means to facilitate economic exchanges and it is a common scale for pricing of goods and services and therefore refused to economic thought, which is the money a commodity and its price is the interest that the money market is real market like other markets". (Nadhir & Hijab, وظائف النقود في الفكر الاقتصادي الإسلامي والاقتصاد الوضعي - دراسة مقارنة ,2013 ,-p. 341)

Drawing from previous studies, our research focused on the concept of the function of money in exchange and measuring the value of things, as it generates social interaction and constructs the framework of social relationships, forming a social unit. According to Simmel this social unit serves as the foundation for monetary

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exchange, thus establishing social relationships and interactions based on financial power.

#### 6-4-3 Field research:

We collected primary data from interviews with a sample of academics and media professionals from Laghouat, El Bayadh, and Telemcen, due to their interest in communication phenomena. We used this data to understand their perspectives on the subject. The interview model included:

#### • Participants demographics:

- 1. Sex:
- 2. Age:

#### • The social context:

- 1. Does money play a significant role in determining your social status?
- 2. Do you have a friend (or acquaintances) who possess financial power?
- 3. Do you have financial power that effects your relationships with friends, relatives, and others?

## • Communication and social relationships:

- 1. Does financial power influence the way you interact with others in the social environment?
- 2. Do you have examples of how financial power influences the social relationships of people you know or have heard about?

#### • Communication and media:

- 1. Do you think that individuals (or entities) with financial power, can have an influence on the media and social media platforms?
- 2. Do you believe that financial power influences the content of media and the messages you receive?

# • Communication and decision-making:

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- 1. Does financial power influence decision-making processes in society?
- 2. Do you have any examples of how financial power influences decision-making processes in specific fields?

#### • Personal opinions:

- 1. What is your personal opinion on the impact of financial power on communication in society?
- 2. Do you think there are ways to reduce the impact of financial power on communication and achieve justice?

#### • Additional comments:

1) Is there any comments you would like to share regarding the impact of financial power on communication in society?

# 7 Presentation and analysis of the interview data:

In this study, we tried to understand the presumed prestigious position of individuals with financial power in the communication process within society, as perceived by interview participants. This was explored in various social contexts, including social interaction and relationships, communication and media, communication and decision-making. Subsequently, we gathered the personal opinions of the sample group. The findings were as follows:

#### Social context:

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3
Questions			
result			
Yes	30 (100%)	25 (83.33%)	30 (100%)
No	00 (00%)	05 (16.67)	00 (00%)

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total	30 (100%)	30 (100%)	30 (100%)

All participants perceive that money plays a significant role in determining social status, and they acknowledge acquaintances or friends who possess financial power. They also recognize having financial influence that affects their relationships with friends, relatives, and others. These findings underscore the importance of financial power in the social context and its impact on interactions and relationships among individuals.

#### Communication and social relationships:

	Question 1
Questions	
Response	
Yes	28 (93.33%)
No	02 (06.67%)
Total	30 (100%)

Most responses indicate that financial power influences individuals' communication within the social environment, as evidenced by the increased respect and esteem accorded to those with financial power.

From a different perspective, some responses suggest that other factors intersect with 'financial power' in shaping social relationships, such as ethics, educational level, and culture. Furthermore, some participants stated that financial power can have a positive impact on social relationships by supporting humanitarian social projects.

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# Communication and media:

Questions	Question 1	Question 2
result		
Yes	26 (86.67%)	28 (93.33)
No	04 (13.33)	02 (06.67)
total	30 (100%)	30 (100%)

The table indicates that the majority of participants perceive an influence of individuals with financial power on the media, and the messages that the audience receive. Finally, powerful individuals can effect media content through owning media outlets, or working with media institutions.

## Communication and decision-making:

Questions	Question 1
result	
Yes	24 (80%)
No	06 (20%)
Total	30 (100%)

The responses indicate that the wealthy individuals or financial entities influence decision-making processes in the social context. They have the capacity to apply economic pressure, thereby leveraging monetary resources to direct decisions and shape interests within society in accordance with their profit-oriented objectives, such

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as influencing political orientations (establishing political parties, shaping public opinion in political processes like election, etc.)

# Personal opinions of the participants:

Analysis of the responses from the sample revealed a wide array of viewpoints among participants concerning the influence of financial power on communicative dynamics within society. While some perceived this power as innate, commonplace, and inevitable, others advocated for its reductions to promote social equity and justice.

#### Additional notes:

Participants in the interview provided further insight into opportunities for individuals with financial power to influence media content and utilize social media platforms to steer their messages. Additionally, the research participants highlighted the impact of financial power on the economy and business, leading to increased wealth and financial success.

Among the observations regarding the political aspect, one participant stated that financial power can influence political decisions and relationships between government entities and individuals. She provided an example citing major global corporations, especially media companies like Meta, Netflix, and Disney. These companies leverage their financial influence and power to market their ideas and ideologies, such as feminism and LGBTQ rights. Their impact extends beyond their platforms to press legislators indirectly into passing laws, like those permitting same-sex marriages. Furthermore, they have integrated these ideas into educational programs for children in school.

Participants also added cultural and social factors, such as values and beliefs, play a role in shaping social relationships and human communication as well, emphasizing that influence is not solely linked to financial aspects.

# 8 Result:

After conducting the research, we can conclude that financial power plays a significant role in shaping relationships and social structures within society. Individuals and entities with financial power

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have the ability to leverage their wealth to influence various aspects of social, cultural, and political life.

We can consider that financial power has both positive and negative aspects: it can be used to support social projects and serve individuals. Conversely, financial resources can be used to control and direct public opinion and decision-making. This includes utilizing money to achieve personal goals even at the expense of societal wellbeing.

#### 9 Discussion:

It is essential to note that money in itself is insufficient to build a solid and enduring social status, whether for individuals or financial and government entities. It is necessary to couple money with proper social behavioral, ethical value, and essential skills. Otherwise, wealthy individuals or government officials may have a weak and temporary status, (as evidenced by the protests in the Arab world since 2011 and the detention of financial company owners and government leaders).

This proposition raises further questions: how can financial power influence social and cultural relationships? How can the media shape effective strategies to reduce financial power's impact on communication in society? And how can society ensure responsible and ethical use to achieve social benefits?

#### **Conclusion:**

In summary, financial power is an inherent force that influences communication in society through various complex ways. It manifests in the ability to utilize money to build relationships, shape public opinion, and influence policy in any country (at least sometimes). This financial influence can shape societal thinking and behavior, making this power indispensable.

Therefore, we must question whether it is possible to use financial power ethically and responsibly. Can individuals and institutions leverage their financial influence positively to support social causes and effect change? Or should they be wary of losing their esteemed position controlling wealth and social relationships? For this

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reason, individuals and societies (nations) must work to ensure that the use of financial power is responsible, ensuring the achievement of justice and equality.

#### **Recommendations:**

We finish this article by proposing recommendations that highlight the importance of utilizing financial power ethically and responsibly, and leveraging it to enhance positive and effective social communication, and achieve social justice.

- 1) Raising social awareness through organizing educational campaigns or programs to understand the role of money and its power in communication and social relationships, and understanding how to utilize this power positively.
- 2) Supporting social projects by encouraging individuals with financial means to support social initiative and humanitarian services that contribute to improving the lives of individuals in society. They can also invest in projects that promote social justice.
- 3) Developing research studies and academic initiatives that delve deeper into and explore the relationship between money and communication would aid in gaining a better understanding of the social and cultural impacts of financial power, and how to manage it effectively and appropriately.

#### Références

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