

Corruption and Indian Political System

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Abstract:

The efficient operation of the Indian political and administrative system is severely hampered by corruption. Transparency, accountability, and public trust are undermined when governmental authority, power, and resources are misused for private or commercial benefit. With a focus on the criminal justice system and governance, this study investigates the nature, historical evolution, forms, causes, and effects of corruption in India. Bribery, extortion, embezzlement, fraud, and scams are among the main types of corruption that are covered. Weak legal frameworks, bureaucratic delays, political meddling, a lack of accountability, institutional weaknesses, and socioeconomic disparities are some of the factors that contribute to corruption. A review of pertinent literature highlights the relationship between corruption, governance, and inefficient resource distribution. The study also uses the data presented in the document to examine perceptions of corruption across selected Indian states and neighboring countries. The results discussed show that corruption can negatively impact social welfare, economic development, access to justice, and institutional effectiveness. In order to improve good governance and assist sustainable development in India, the study highlights the significance of bolstering legal systems, encouraging moral values, increasing openness, and putting in place efficient anti-corruption measures.

Keywords: Corruption, Indian Political System, Good Governance, Political Corruption, Political Interference, Anti-Corruption Measures.

Introduction

A worldwide problem, corruption includes abusing power for one's own benefit, eroding public confidence, and impeding advancement. The foundation of justice and moral behavior is undermined by widespread behaviors like nepotism and bribery. It is essential to acknowledge its widespread effects in order to encourage societies to adopt reforms and countermeasures. Fighting corruption necessitates a multifaceted strategy from moral teaching to legal frameworks in order to uphold the principles necessary for a just and equitable society, promote transparency, and restore integrity.[1]

A complex interaction of institutional, cultural, and socioeconomic elements leads to corruption in India's criminal justice system. First of all, judges and law enforcement personnel are vulnerable to bribery and other types of corruption due to their poor pay. This financial vulnerability fosters the growth of immoral behavior. Second, there are plenty of opportunities for corruption to flourish due to bureaucratic red tape and procedural delays. People are frequently forced to use bribes in order to speed up their cases or obtain favorable outcomes due to the convoluted legal procedures. Thirdly, systemic corruption is made worse

by a lack of openness and accountability. When wrongdoing is allowed to continue, it gives offenders more confidence and fosters a culture of impunity.

The historical context of corruption in India is a nuanced narrative shaped by centuries of socio-political changes.

- **Ancient India:** Corruption, in various forms, can be traced back to ancient Indian kingdoms. Instances of bribery and misuse of power were evident, reflecting the human tendency to exploit positions of authority.
- **Mughal Period (1526–1857):** The Mughal rulers faced corruption within their administrative structures. Bribery and corruption were prevalent, often associated with the misuse of power for personal gain.[2]
- **British Colonial Rule:** The colonial era further fueled corruption due to exploitative policies and economic subjugation. British authorities often engaged in corrupt practices, contributing to a culture of dishonesty within administrative and financial systems.
- **Post-Independence Era:** The period post-1947 witnessed the continuation of corruption. The nexus between political leaders, bureaucrats, and business magnates fostered an environment conducive to corrupt practices. The Bofors scandal in the 1980s was a notable case that exposed systemic corruption.
- **Economic Reforms (1991):** The economic liberalization in 1991, while transformative, also brought new opportunities for corruption. Foreign investment surges and industry privatization made room for corrupt activities to increase.
- **21st Century:** The 21st Century saw an increase in high-profile corruption cases, exposing the depth of the issue. Scams like the 2G spectrum scandal and the Commonwealth Games scam underscored the systemic challenges and the need for comprehensive anti-corruption measures[3]

Forms of corruption

Extortion, embezzlement, fraud, frauds, and bribes are the five main types of corruption. These types of corruption entail the abuse of resources, authority, or power for one's own financial or personal benefit. When someone uses coercion or threats to extract money, favors, or other rewards, it is known as extortion. The misappropriation of funds or property entrusted to an individual, frequently within an organization, is referred to as embezzlement. Scams are dishonest plans intended to defraud people or organizations in order to make money. The deliberate use of misleading information, deceit, or dishonest tactics to gain an unfair or unlawful advantage is known as fraud. Offering, giving, getting, or requesting money, gifts, or favors in order to sway the choices or actions of someone in a position of power is known as bribery. These types of corruption have the potential to erode public confidence, erode institutions, result in financial losses, and have a detrimental impact on social and economic advancement.[4]

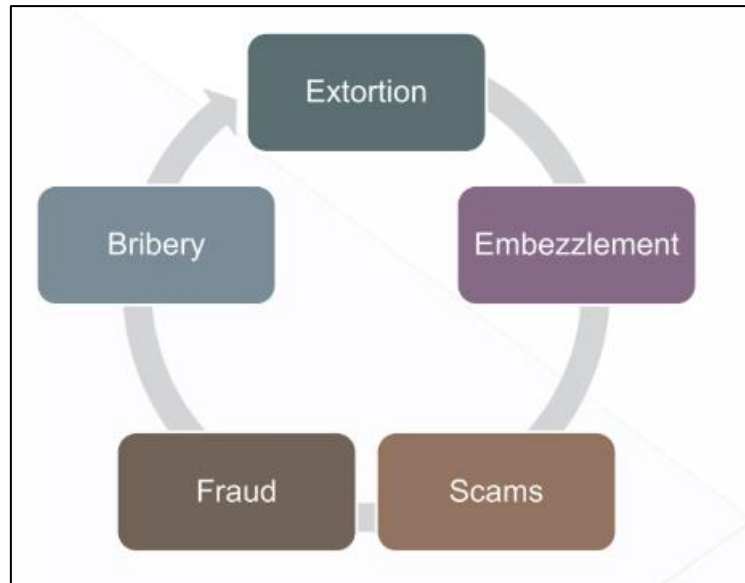


Fig.1 Forms of Corruptions

Impact of Corruption in criminal system:

Corruption within India's criminal justice system is influenced by a combination of factors, each of which contributes to its pervasiveness and resilience. Some of the key factors that exacerbate corruption within the Indian criminal justice system include:

- **Weak Legal Framework:** Inadequate laws and regulations, as well as loopholes in existing legislation, create opportunities for corruption to thrive. Ambiguities in the law can be exploited by corrupt individuals to manipulate legal proceedings and evade accountability.
- **Low Salaries and Poor Working Conditions:** Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judicial officials often receive low salaries and work in challenging conditions. This financial vulnerability makes them susceptible to bribery and other forms of corruption as they seek additional income to support themselves and their families.[5]
- **Bureaucratic Red Tape and Procedural Delays:** Lengthy and complex legal procedures, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and procedural delays contribute to frustration among citizens seeking justice. In such a system, individuals may resort to bribery to expedite their cases or circumvent bureaucratic obstacles.
- **Lack of Accountability and Transparency:** Weak mechanisms for accountability and transparency within law enforcement agencies and the judiciary enable corrupt practices to go unchecked. When corrupt acts are not met with swift and severe consequences, they embolden perpetrators and perpetuate a culture of impunity.
- **Political Interference:** Political interference in police investigations, prosecutorial decisions, and judicial appointments undermines the autonomy and independence of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary. This interference can be driven by partisan interests, patronage networks, or attempts to shield allies from legal scrutiny.[6]
- **Institutional Culture and Norms:** Ingrained cultural norms and institutional practices that tolerate or even encourage corruption exacerbate its prevalence within the criminal justice system. The normalization of bribery and other corrupt acts can make it difficult to challenge or eradicate such behavior.

- **Social Inequality and Poverty:** Social inequality and poverty create conditions conducive to corruption by exacerbating vulnerabilities and disparities in access to justice. Marginalized communities and economically disadvantaged individuals may be disproportionately affected by corrupt practices within the criminal justice system.
- **Complexity of Cases:** Complex criminal cases involving multiple stakeholders, intricate legal issues, and extensive evidentiary proceedings can create opportunities for corruption to occur. The sheer complexity of such cases may overwhelm law enforcement agencies and the judiciary, making them more susceptible to manipulation or bribery.

Effect of Corruption in India

An illustration of the consequences of corruption in India. It draws attention to the ways that corruption can exacerbate a number of significant social and economic issues. Hunger, poverty, and inequality are highlighted in the diagram as the main effects of corruption. When public welfare resources are misused or do not reach those in need, hunger may rise. By diverting public funding and limiting economic prospects for underprivileged populations, corruption can exacerbate poverty. Unfair distribution of resources and benefits can exacerbate inequality. The flowchart also illustrates the connections between poverty and illiteracy, inequality and crime, and hunger and pollution. Overall, the picture highlights how corruption can negatively impact public safety, education, social welfare, and environmental circumstances, impeding India's overall growth.[7]

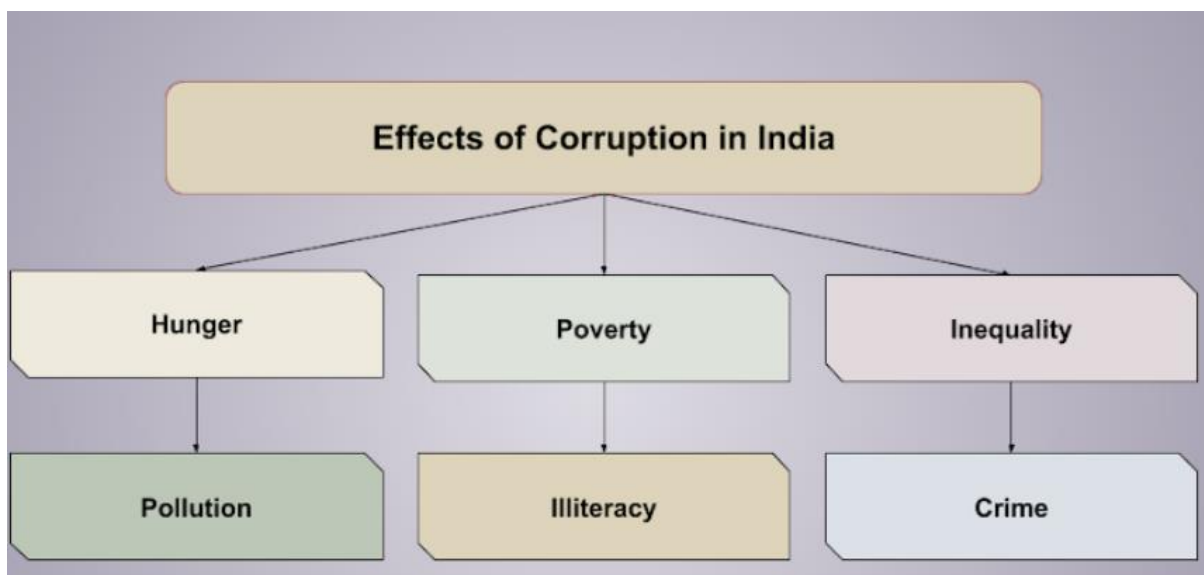


Fig. 2 Effects of Corruption

Source: RMN News Service

Research Methodology

All of the techniques and procedures used to conduct research are included in research methodology. Therefore, the approaches that researchers use to carry out their research studies are known as research techniques or procedures. However, the methodical approach to solving research problems is known as research methodology. It is a science that examines how scientific research is carried out. Under it, the researcher familiarizes themselves with the several methods typically used to investigate a research

problem, as well as the reasoning behind them. Therefore, it is crucial for the researcher to understand both the scientific approach known as methodology and research procedures and methodologies. the procedure for gathering data and information in order to make business decisions.[8] Both current and historical data may be included in the methodology, which may also involve surveys, interviews, publication research, and other research methods. The word "research methodology" essentially refers to the science of doing scientific study. It helps us comprehend the process rather than just the final product of study, assesses methodologies in addition to the data they yield, and solves problems methodically and logically.

Review of Literature

Stapenhurst and Sedigh (1999) [9] claim that corruption results in a loss of up to 50% of government tax revenues and a three to ten percent increase in the cost of a particular transaction. Corruption might be considered one of the causes of market failure since it leads to an inefficient distribution of resources (Jeon 2003) [10]. According to Shepsle and Weingast (1984), if we see corruption through the lens of market failure, we might presume that corruption is the area in which government intervention is required since it could solve the issue when market failure occurs. In the context of corruption, the aforementioned governmental intervention can be converted into a government-initiated anti-corruption program, the effectiveness of which depends on the government's capacity (i.e., governance). Therefore, persistent corruption is a sign of poor governance (Shah 2006). Given this theoretical framework, a number of literary threads have illustrated the connection between corruption and governance (Kaufmann 2005; Ka 2006; Quah 2009). Although those earlier researches have helped us comprehend the relationship between corruption and government, they have the following drawbacks. First, they have seldom ever looked into the relationship between corruption and government in India. Examining a governance-corruption relationship in the Indian context is an important and urgent problem, nevertheless, since India is the most populous and ethnically diverse country and is eager to achieve good government. Apart from its multifaceted nature, it should be highlighted that the various aspects of governance are not independent entities functioning independently of one another; rather, they are interconnected in that a single dimension may have different effects on particular outcomes based on how it is combined with other dimensions (Enders et al. 2008) [11].

With this theoretical foundation, we may see governance as a configuration of interrelated aspects that have a combinative effect on certain outcomes. According to this perspective, while examining how governance affects corruption control, it is important to concentrate on the collective impact of governance aspects rather than the overall impact of governance or of any one of the dimensions.

In light of this, this work aims to close a research gap in the literature by examining a particular set of governance dimensions (i.e., configurations of dimensions) that lead to high control of corruption (low corruption) across Indian states. It employs fs/QCA, a configurational method, for analysis. This methodology would be suitable to fulfill the goal of the investigation since it is helpful in identifying a joint influence of a certain group of causal variables with a synergistic nature on a result (Ragin 2008).[12]

Result and discussion

The pie chart shows how three groups—bureaucrats, politicians, and corporations—perceive their own responsibility for corruption in India. The research shows that officials make up the highest share (60%),

indicating that they are thought to be the most accountable group for corruption. The fact that politicians make up 33% suggests that they are also thought to play a major role in corruption. At 7%, businesses make up the smallest percentage. Overall, the graph illustrates the belief that politicians and bureaucrats are mostly responsible for corruption, with businesses making up a smaller share. The source and technique would be required to determine the true accountability for corruption in India, as these percentages just represent the data displayed in the chart.[13]

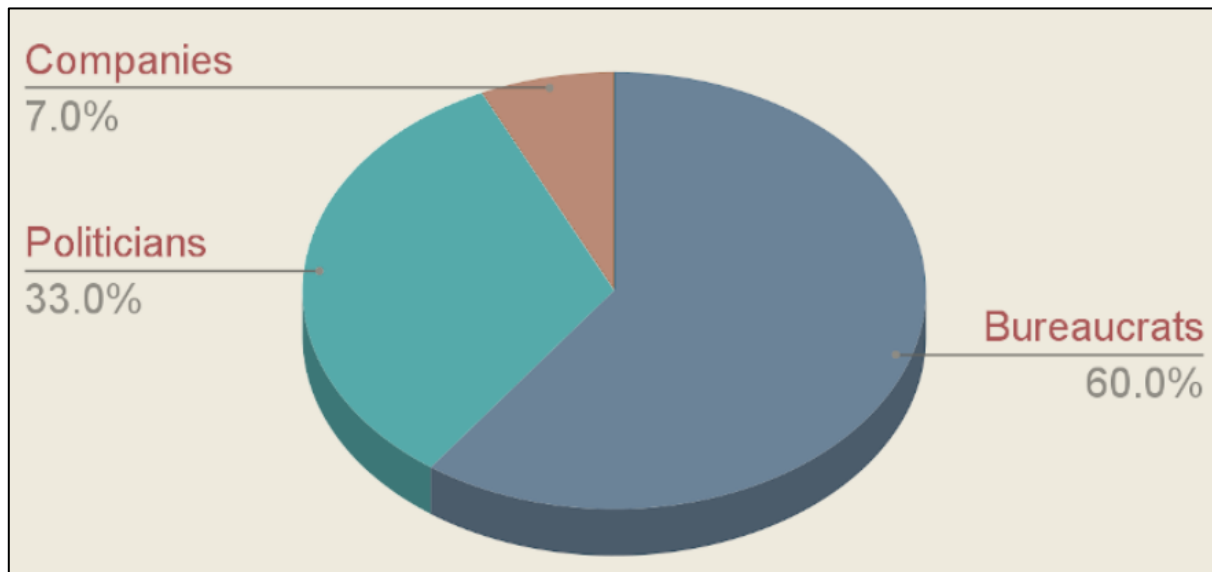


Fig. 3 Responsible person for corruption in india

Source: Raman Media Network

The districts of Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan (Karnataka), Bihar, Jharkhand, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu have higher rates of state-level corruption. An investigation of corruption in various departments and authorities revealed that land issues and property registration were the most significant authority where citizens were required to pay a bribe, with 26% of citizens voting in favor of it. Just 13% of respondents said they had paid bribes to other officials, such as the energy board (3%), the police and municipal corporation (13%), the transportation office (8%), the tax department (9%), and the water department (5%).



Fig. 4 India Corruption Poll State Wise Source:

The graphic shows how perceived levels of public-sector corruption in India and its neighbors changed between 2012 and 2021. A severely corrupt public sector is represented by a score of 0 on the corruption perception scale, whereas a very clean public sector is represented by a score of 100. India's score rose from 36 in 2012 to 40 in 2021, indicating an improvement in the country's perceived integrity in the public sector. China's score grew from 39 to 45, suggesting an improvement in its perceived corruption-control performance, whereas Pakistan's score slightly increased from 27 to 28. Bangladesh's score did not alter across the period, staying steady at 26. Myanmar's impression score significantly improved, rising from 15 to 28. Nepal's perceived public-sector transparency improved, as seen by its score rising from 27 to 33. Afghanistan's score rose from 8 to 16, while Sri Lanka's went from 37 to 40. Overall, the graph indicates that between 2012 and 2021, the majority of the nations saw an increase in their perceptions of corruption. However, rather than being precise measurements of actual corruption, these scores represent perceptions of corruption in the public sector, and gains in scores do not always signify the whole eradication of corrupt activities.[14]



Fig. 5 Changes in level of corruption in india

Conclusion

The Indian political and administrative system continues to face serious challenges from corruption, which has an impact on social welfare, public trust, economic growth, and governance. Bribery, extortion, embezzlement, fraud, scams, and other types of corruption are highlighted in this study, along with the institutional, political, and economical elements that support their continuation. Corruption in the criminal judicial system has the potential to erode the rule of law, impede the administration of justice, and produce disparities in the availability of legal services. The conversation also shows how corruption can erode institutional efficacy and divert public resources, which can lead to poverty, starvation, illiteracy, inequality, and criminality. The literature study highlights the connection between corruption prevention and good governance, emphasizing the significance of accountability, openness, and efficient institutional processes. Therefore, thorough legal reforms, more robust monitoring mechanisms, less political meddling, ethical education, and active public participation are all necessary to combat corruption in India.[15] For integrity to be promoted, democratic institutions to be strengthened, and sustainable and inclusive development to be achieved, government institutions, civil society, and citizens must work together.

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