

Corruption: Nature and Definition

Corruption is a deviation from normal human behaviour in a geopolitical setting whereby causing the derailment of individual and institutional accountability, transparency and natural justice. Corruption is a barometer of a nations' development.

Eradication of this civil form our society is perhaps inconceivable at the present juncture of our developmental process' and all. We can hope for its prevention or control to the possible extent within the parameters of our socio-political and economic environment.

Even this, it is needless to say that it involves behavioural change and law is only one of the instruments for such a change. Fortunately, however, corruption in the form of giving and taking of illegal gratification has not yet become a customary behaviour in this country.

Webster's¹ Universal Dictionary (1961) provides the meaning of the word 'corrupt' as (1) to make or become evil or morally bad, (2) to take or become impure. The word 'corruption' means, according to Webster's as the act of corrupting or state of being corrupt. Such meanings of the word 'corruption' as given in Webster's Dictionary have religious-historic reasons. Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1961) defines 'corruption' in an entirely different context. It defines 'corruption' as 'inducement by means of improper considerations to commit a violation of duty' interlinked and are inseparable. However, 'corruption' is a wider term and has wider connotations than the term 'bribery'.

CORRUPTION: NATURE

Like that of several other socio-economic offences, corruption stands out as an offence, which affects the community as a whole. It is not just an offence between the perpetrator of a traditional crime like murder, theft or rape and an innocent victim. In fact and reality, the bribe-giver and the bribe-taker are equally guilty.

Although, corruption undoubtedly affects the morality of the people in general, but its overwhelming impact is on the economic health of a nation and accordingly corruption will have to be classified as an 'economic offence'. It goes without saying that the poor strata of our society, which has limited paying capacity, suffers the most due to administrative corruption and besides this, the economy of country beset with the evil of corruption is affected due to the generation of unaccounted or 'black money' which is a major factor responsible for unbridled inflation. The offence of corruption appears to have been regarded more as an economic evil rather than immoral hazard and accordingly corruption deserves to be classified as an economic offence.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CORRUPTION

Irrespective of what our legislators may have in their mind while enacting the Prevention of Corruption Act, the overall impact of corruption in developing countries like India is growing demoralization of our people. We are presently in the midst of a war against poverty,

malnourishment and economic disparities of our people. To wage a war of any kind whatsoever what is really important is the morale of the people. It is needless to say, that such morale is presently lacking. What has happened in the past is that a minority of the people have been enriched at the cost of vast majority. There is again another adverse effect of corruption which is by far the worst. It is a common belief today that much of the corruption in public servants has begun from the highest level. Unprecedented wealth has been accumulated not only by some of the political leaders but even by a large number of top and middle executives.

CAUSES OF CORRUPTION

Corruption is an offence like that of many other offences punishable under the criminal law of our country.

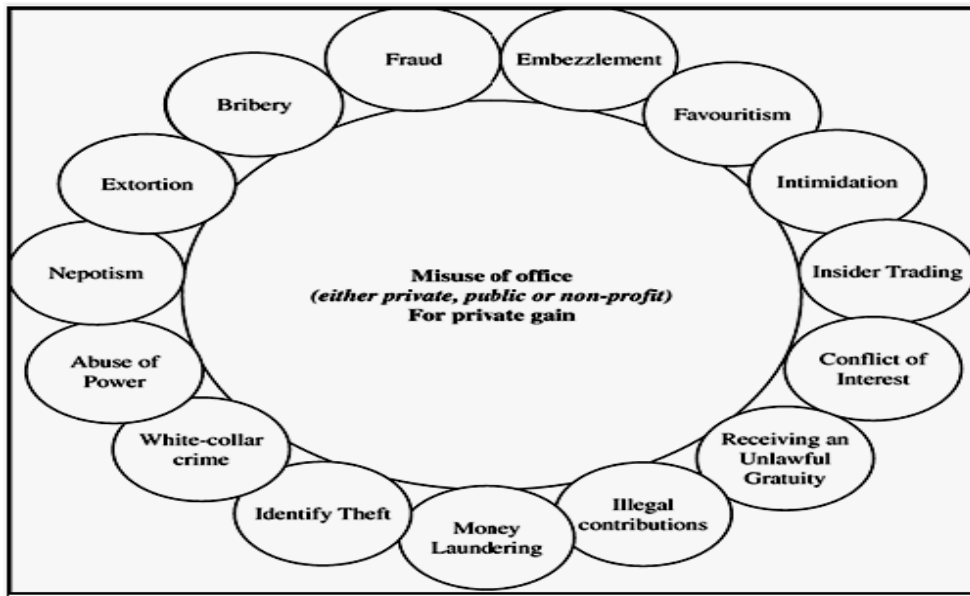
1. The aftermath of the second World War accompanied by scarcities, controls and the flush of easy money was perhaps one of the factors responsible for corruption.
2. The second factor was the fall in real income of the various categories of public servants.
3. Administrative delays and red-tapism is another major cause of corruption and this has led to the dishonest practice of giving speed money.
4. Rapid industrialization and consequent urbanization has changed our values in such a way as to enhance the import force of status through possession of money.
5. Social obligation towards the members of one's family, the customary practice of giving dowry for a daughter's marriage and the hankering for social status have been responsible for corruption to a certain extent. It is true that no person is corrupt at his birth but the environment in which he lies including the various institutions and associations around him make him learn the techniques and methods of corruption. The Santhanam Committee had aptly pointed out that corruption can exist only if there is some one willing to corrupt and capable of corrupting.

ELABORATE AND WRITE IN DETAILS OF THE POINTS THAT IS GIVEN BELOW-

6. High Taxes
7. Complex and Excessive Regulation,
8. Bureaucracy
9. Emergence of Political elite
10. Artificial Scarcity
11. Change in the value system and ethical qualities
12. Absence of strong public forum
13. Over population and wide spreads illiteracy

TYPES OF CORRUPTION:

NOTE: WRITE IN DETAILS OF THE POINTS OF TYPES OF CORRUPTION



CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION-

The consequences of corruption have many dimensions related to political, economic, social and environmental effects.

SUGGESTIONS TO MINIMIZE CORRUPTION

1. The first tool is education. We can minimize corruption with the help of education. According to a survey conducted by India today the least corrupt state is Kerala, the reason being that in Kerala literacy rate is highest in India.
2. We need to change the government processes. In India there is a rule that no person as a criminal shall be allowed as the MP or MLA. Unfortunately, a fairly large number of them are a part of it. Therefore a major shift in the government processes and administrative policies can make them more public oriented.
3. We can reduce corruption by increasing direct contact between government and the governed. E-governance could help a lot towards this direction. Sivraj Patil said that the Right to information can ensure transparency. We have legal rights to know any information. According to this act, (Right to Information Act, 2005), generally people should follow the procedure of law given to them when there is no transparency and accountability in the working of public authority. This act would be of great help in order to control corruption.
4. Revising the act for its better implementation. Strong and stringent laws need to be implemented which gives no room for the guilty to escape.
5. Individual effort. We should be honest to ourselves. Until and unless we will not be honest, we cannot control corruption.

