

Corruption as social problem



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Understanding such questions as why corruption remains largely outside the purview of sociology, and how sociological agendas are set can be found in the works of Syed Hussein Alatas, who wrote about corruption as far back as the 1950s. Sociology of corruption as a subfield failed to take off despite the ubiquity of this phenomenon. Studies of corruption remain a prerogative of the political scientists and public policy experts. Economists see corruption as a market-distorting externality and treat it as a peripheral subject. Gunnar Myrdal, who was an exception, in his? Asian Drama, identified corruption as a serious bottleneck for Asian development.

The problem persists 40 years on from Myrdals analysis. In many countries in the developing world, corruption has become part of the fabric of society. Yet, sociological theorization and empirical studies are lacking. This article examines corruption both as a social problem and an indicator of the ??? corruption of sociology??™, drawing on the writings of Alatas, especially his notion of ??? captive mind??™ or the absence of intellectual autonomy on the part of the Third World sociologists.

Corruption is any course of action or failure to act by individuals or organizations, public or private, in violation of law or trust for profit or gain. Corruption affects all regions of the world and all levels of society, but the impact is greatest in developing countries. Every year, developing countries lose USD 50 million to 100 million through corrupt acts (World Bank estimate, 2004). Corruption undermines political, social and economic stability and damages trust in institutions and authorities. It also fuels transnational crime. Terrorists and organized criminals are aided in their illegal activities by the complicity of corrupt public officials. Corruption is of particular concern for the world's police and judicial systems, as corruption in one country can compromise an entire international investigation. There is clear recognition by the international community that further work to enhance co-operation between law enforcement authorities is needed in order to co-ordinate global action against corruption.

Corruption is associated with a range of problems – Parallel societies and economies – Lack of transparency – Erosion of accountability – Weak democratic structures – Mistrust in political and judicial institutions

Types of Corruption

By being able to define what something is then we can understand how to prevent it. That is not the same as suggesting that you ignore corruption. It is the opposite. Blandly labelling something as corruption is meaningless. For example, we cannot cure cancer unless we know what type of cancer it is. Traditionally, intellectual argument on ethics in Ireland has qualified as assuming that corrupt behaviour is wrong.

We know that. The challenge is to diagnose it so we can cure it. The challenge is to distinguish between systemic and individual corruption; petty

and grand corruption; moral and legal corruption; and rumors and reality of corruption. A Glossary of Terms: Systemic corruption As opposed to exploiting occasional opportunities, endemic or systemic corruption is when corruption is an integrated and essential aspect of the economic, social and political system, when it is embedded in a wider situation that helps sustain it.

Systemic corruption is not a special category of corrupt practice, but rather a situation in which the major institutions and processes of the state are routinely dominated and used by corrupt individuals and groups, and in which most people have no alternatives to dealing with corrupt officials.

Examples might include contemporary Bangladesh, Nigeria, Kenya, Cameroon and many others. (Michael Johnston: Fighting Systemic Corruption: Social Foundations for Institutional

Reform.) Sporadic (individual) corruption Sporadic corruption is the opposite of systematic corruption. Sporadic corruption occurs irregularly and therefore it does not threaten the mechanisms of control nor the economy as such. It is not crippling, but it can seriously undermine morale and sap the economy of resources.

Political (Grand) corruption Political corruption is any transaction between private and public sector actors through which collective goods are illegitimately converted into private-regarding payoffs. Political corruption is often used synonymously with grand or high level corruption, distinguished from bureaucratic or petty corruption because it involves political decision-makers. Political or grand corruption takes place at the high levels of the political system, when politicians and state agents entitled to

make and enforce the laws in the name of the people, are using this authority to sustain their power, status and wealth. Political corruption not only leads to the misallocation of resources, but it also perverts the manner in which decisions are made. Political corruption is when the laws and regulations are abused by the rulers, side-stepped, ignored, or even tailored to fit their interests. It is when the legal bases, against which corrupt practices are usually evaluated and judged, are weak and furthermore subject to downright encroachment by the rulers. Grand corruptionHigh level or ??? grand??? corruption takes place at the policy formulation end of politics. It refers not so much to the amount of money involved as to the level in which it takes place: grand corruption is at the top levels of the public sphere, where policies and rules are formulated in the first place.

Usually (but not always) synonymous to political corruption. Petty corruptionSmall scale, bureaucratic or petty corruption is the everyday corruption that takes place at the implementation end of politics, where the public officials meet the public. Petty corruption is bribery in connection with the implementation of existing laws, rules and regulations, and thus different from ??? grand??? or? political corruption. Petty corruption refers to the modest sums of money usually involved, and has also been called ??? low level??? and ??? street level??? to name the kind of corruption that people can experience more or less daily, in their encounter with public administration and services like hospitals, schools, local licensing authorities, police, taxing authorities and so on. Legal and Moral CorruptionCorruption is derived from the Latin verb? rumpere,? to break. According to this approach, corruption is where the law is clearly broken.

This requires that all laws must be precisely stated, leaving no doubts about their meaning and no discretion to the public officials. A legal interpretation of corruption provides a clearly demarcated boundary between what is a corrupt activity and what is not. If an official's act is prohibited by laws established by the government, it is corrupt; if it is not prohibited, it is not corrupt even if it is abusive or unethical. The legal approach provides a neutral and static method of adjudicating potentially emotive and perception determined concepts of corruption. An understanding of corruption from law perspective serves to underline a deterioration of self-regulated behaviour and a dependence on the legal approach to determine right from wrong. The complexities of modern governance and a proliferation of corruption scandals have corresponded with a proliferation of complex corruption legislation. Legislation for behaviour warrants focus upon the legality of an action and not the morality of that same action. Morality is increasingly being legislated for in the absence of and a loss of faith in self regulated behaviour.

Although an act is committed within legal parameters it may lie outside moral boundaries. A corrupt act can be camouflaged by lawful justification. For example, undue emphasis on narrow legalism has obscured more subtle yet costly manifestations of misgoverned where legal corruption may be more prevalent than illegal forms. From this perspective corruption encompasses undue influence over public policies, institutions, laws and regulations by vested private interests at the expense of the public interest. Cultural change, rather than legal change, may be necessary to impede corrupt behaviour. Non-corrupt actions may be within

the letter of the law but do not account for the spirit of the law. The legal approach diminishes the role of moral discretion and is constrained by clearly defined edicts.

Economic Causes of Corruption The state intervenes in the economy to lay out a framework for economic and social activity. It establishes property and personal rights, provides police protection and national defense and promulgates laws governing private transactions such as contracts, firm organization and marriage. It enforces the law and sets up courts, where private legal disputes can be resolved. The state may correct market failures and provide public goods that are not supplied by private markets. The state may redistribute income; equalize opportunities for education, health and employment; and reduce risk by providing pensions and unemployment and disability insurance. It may also further certain moral, religious or cultural values. But the state can also be an instrument of repression. It can restrict the behavior of individuals and groups beyond that needed to further public aims.

It can benefit narrow but powerful groups with access to legislatures and chief executives. Top officials may organize the state to enrich themselves. Even when a state's aims are broadly democratic, public policies can be implemented in wasteful and incompetent ways. Lower-level officials may take advantage of their power and insist on bribes.

Government failure may be as prevalent as market failure. Both private individuals and public agents may seek to benefit personally from their privileged positions in the economy or the polity. All states, whether

benevolent or repressive, manage the distribution of valuable benefits and the imposition of onerous costs.

The distribution of these benefits and costs is generally controlled by agents with discretionary power. Private individuals and firms who want favorable treatment may be willing to pay these agents. And what is wrong with paying for what you want? That is, after all, the basis of the market system. The problem arises from the fact that the recipient is an agent. The agent is responsible to a principal whose goals will seldom line up with those of the ??? paying customer???.

Low-level bureaucrats are agents of superior officials, ministers are responsible to the governing coalition, elected officials are responsible to the voting public, judges are responsible to legal norms. Payments are corrupt when they are illegally made to public agents with the goal of obtaining a benefit or avoiding a cost. This definition leaves room for different societies to set the border between legal gifts and illegal payoffs, but in thinking about where it ought to fall, one must ask whether payments to agents further or undermine public goals. The most important situations in which corruption can dictate who obtains the benefits and bears the costs of political, judicial and bureaucratic actions include:??? Bribes clear the market.

The government may be charged with allocating a scarce benefit to many individuals and firms using legal criteria other than willingness-to-pay. ??? Bribes act as incentive bonuses. Officials in the public sector may have little incentive to do their jobs well, given official pay scales and the level of internal monitoring. They may impose delays and other roadblocks.

Bribes increase the value of public employment. Thus job applicants may pay to obtain public sector jobs. ??? Bribes lower costs of doing business. Those engaged in legal pursuits seek to reduce government-imposed costs, be they taxes, customs duties or regulations.

Bribes are a way around restrictive rules. In addition, those engaged in illegal businesses want to avoid state intrusion into their activities. ??? Bribes transfer monopoly rents to private investors, with a share going to corrupted officials. Governments frequently transfer large ? nancial bene? ts to private ? rms through procurement contracts, privatizations and the award of concessions. ??? Bribery of politicians buys in? uence, and bribery by politicians buys votes. Bribes can substitute for legal forms of political in? uence. Politicians may pay and receive bribes and illegal contributions. ??? Bribes can override legal norms.

The judiciary has the power to impose costs and transfer resources between litigants. Part 2: Corruption in BangladeshReality of

CorruptionThe? Annotated Bibliography? in this Study establishes the reality of corruption as a social phenomenon in Bangladesh. In some 38 works selected and reviewed, only a few deal with corruption in a general and global context. All the remaining works in the selection, either implicitly or explicitly, provide ample evidence that corruption exists as a process, usually as a form of social, economic or political exchange, often in an institutionalized form, in the socio-economic and political life of Bangladesh. It reaches far, wide and deep: from the senior bureaucracy in the capital city, to the far-flung corners of the country, from the apex of political activity to the minute activities of a rural community. Corruption is not just an

economic exchange, generated by a monetary or economic motive. Neither is corruption an exclusively political activity, motivated by a desire to attain or retain political power.

The process of corruption is more than economic or political – it is a social process as well, existing side-by-side with, and sometimes complementing economic and political activity. As a social process, therefore, corruption is everywhere in Bangladesh. It is present, for instance, in the process of political patronage, and/or the socio-political institutional arrangement called a patron-client relationship, through which public resources are appropriated by a select group of people, usually described as elites; it is visible in economic exchanges such as the process of rent-seeking which (regulatory requirements by) public servants impose on players in the market: also known as *ghoosh* or bribe; it is visible and invisible in a host of activities which range from outright bribery to more subtle forms of patronage or persuasion such as *tadbir*, from underhand deals involving vast sums of money at the national and international levels, to petty, everyday *baksheesh* which the doorman at a bureaucrats office extracts in order to perform his normal duties.

Yet, as the *Annotated Bibliography* will also disclose, there is very little objective analysis to explain why and how there is corruption in Bangladesh. This is not because there are no reasons attributed for corruption. On the contrary, a majority of works both directly or indirectly attribute several causes and advance various theories for the existence and survival of corruption. But attempts to understand the fundamental social processes which are related to corruption are notably absent. For instance, the

dichotomy of good versus evil is a popular theme in many works – both in those few works (mainly articles and reports) which specifically address the issue of corruption in Bangladesh, as well as in a large number of books, journal articles and reports, which make references to corruption, while examining other issues such as socio-economic or political events, poverty or development in Bangladesh. In these works, corruption frequently features as a vice, caused by human failings such as greed, avarice, selfishness, self-interest, callousness, and consequently, its eradication is seen to require actions which are virtuous, such as nobility, patriotism, dedication, honesty, integrity, zeal, and so on.

Some works rely on modernization theory as their basis, implying that countries like Bangladesh have not progressed from a primitive to a modern state of polity and hence are still showing signs of traditional forms of organization, among which corruption features prominently. At the same time, a number of authors blame capitalism and the quest for modernity as the root causes of corruption. Many blame politicians, bureaucrats, the state apparatus, regulatory policies, political upheaval, tradition, culture and western influences for the prevailing high level of corruption in Bangladesh. Indeed, although corruption as social process is difficult – some would say impossible – to measure, many works allude to more or increasing levels of corruption in this country. Social costs of corruptionCorruption is divisive and makes a significant contribution to social inequality and conflict. This divisiveness can take two forms: lateral and vertical.? Laterally, it separates the poor from the rich, the observers from the players.

? Vertically, it helps divide ethnic groups and communities from each other and promotes rivalries and jealousies. High levels of corruption help breed a culture of suspicion and distrust. Encounters with strangers, especially those in authority positions, are fraught with difficulty. In extreme cases, social cohesion breaks down. In a corrupt society, it becomes more difficult to persuade people to work together for the common good.

Corruption encourages and rewards selfishness and denigrates collective action. In social terms, corruption develops a range of behaviors, attitudes and beliefs: * It disempowers people and encourages their sense of alienation.” It undermines respect for authority and increases cynicism about leaders at all levels of society.

* It discourages participation in civil society and elevates self-interest as a guide to conduct. * In practical terms, corruption can divert resources away from social programs with a number of negative consequences. * As education spending falls, so will levels of literacy. * As health spending falls, so the incidence of disease will increase.

* The poor will be increasingly marginalized and their sense of social exclusion will be strengthened. * Within the ranks of the poorest people, women will be particularly disadvantaged and prevented from developing their capacities and taking a full part in society. These are some of the costs, which are particularly characteristic of developing countries but similar if less stark consequences follow for developed countries. Where the belief is widespread that all politicians are crooks, it is bound to widen the gap between the political class and the rest of society. It will stimulate people

with resources to turn away from government and politics and provide their own solutions to problems.

Corruption will foster an increasing withdrawal from membership of political organizations for fear of being identified with the corrupt political class.

Consequences (threats) of CorruptionImpact of CorruptionA significant consideration in this discussion must be the impact of corruption and with it, the moral impact of corrupt acts, especially when committed by the state.

Although there is considerable debate about the causes of corruption, and also about the manner in which corruption manifests itself, there can be no denying the negative impact of corruption. True, there are arguments which claim that, under certain circumstances, corruption can be beneficial in oiling the wheels of a rigid, over-regulated economy, in providing a safety-valve from repressive regimes, in overcoming delays caused by administrative hurdles and even in personalizing what would otherwise have been an impersonal and uncaring distribution system. It is true that under certain circumstances, corruption can provide some instrumental advantages.

It is possible that without corruption, administration in many parts of the developing world would – at least temporarily – be impeded. It is also undoubtedly true that under certain conditions, corruption lends a humanizing aspect to what may otherwise have been an impersonal and rigid exchange. In economic terms there is no difference between illicit and licit goods indeed, as an economic exchange; corruption often stabilizes the business environment, functioning as an important medium through which the logic of the market asserts itself. Examples abound, a well-known one being the case of Brazil where a class of brokers called? despachante? had

emerged entirely to act as intermediaries in a bureaucratic maze which evidently was so complex that in one celebrated case, it required 1470 separate legal actions, 13 government ministries and 50 agencies to obtain a single export license. Arguments in support of corruption can be applied to many developing societies, where a large bureaucracy is usually so extended and inefficient, that business and trade can only function with the aid of consistent corruption. In Bangladesh, certainly, although corruption is seen to be a serious problem, it is also evident that corruption has its uses. Two works in particular convey the distinct impression that without corruption, business would be paralyzed. As these studies explain, the plethora of bureaucratic rules and regulations in the country is such that entrepreneurs like an ordinary rickshaw malik (owner) or a garment exporter can survive only by being corrupt.

But if we grant these instances imply that we might regard corruption as being beneficial in any way, that in the absence of exchanges which make the bureaucracy flexible, much activity in Bangladesh would come to a halt. But surely the illicit exchange, or the bribe, itself, is not the problem. It is extremely important to realize that the benefits of corruption are, in all likelihood, masking symptoms of a seriously dysfunctional socio-economic or political system. It is more than likely that corruption has emerged because of other, hidden or deep-seated problems or, as is often the case in the developing world, corruption flourishes because structures have been imposed on people without due consideration of their applicability in these environments. Whatever the circumstances or the historical reasons, there is no getting away from the fact that the impact of corruption is negative.

Furthermore, although corruption in any form is undesirable, it appears to be considerably less acceptable when the state is corrupt.

This is partly because the state presumes upon the membership and loyalty of its citizens – something which a private body does not (cannot) assume. Consequently, because the state has a special position, and is regarded to be a neutral, impartial, and representative body which will provide for and protect the rights of the people, any perversion of this understanding is regarded to be far more serious than if the same act were carried out by a private body. The general consensus seems to be that although corruption may have some instrumental advantages, it is undesirable in the balance and should be controlled, as far as possible. Corruption and its impact on the poor The impact of corruption on the poor and on poverty reduction processes has now been reasonably widely discussed. The effect of corruption on the poor can be gauged through both its direct impact (through, for example, increasing the cost of public services, lowering their quality and often all together restricting poor peoples access to such essential services as water, health and education) and the indirect impact (through, for example, diverting public resources away from social sectors and the poor, and through limiting development, growth and poverty reduction).

While this impacts negatively on most of the segments of the society, it is suggested that the poor are more vulnerable both in terms of being easy targets for being subjected to extortion, bribery, double-standards and intimidation as well as in terms of being hit by the negative and harsh consequences of corruption on countrys overall development processes. So,

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in addition to the negative impact of corruption, there is also an element of disproportionality and inequality. The following short examples (drawing on research, studies and diagnostic tools) are set to demonstrate some of the negative and disproportionate impact of corruption on the poor. Corruption affects income inequality and poverty as well as affecting economic efficiency. Corruption can also have distributional consequences. This affects income inequality and poverty by reducing economic growth, the progressivity of the tax system, the level and effectiveness of social programs, and by perpetuating an unequal distribution of asset ownership and unequal access to education. These findings, based on various empirical analysis, hold for countries with varying growth experiences, at different stages of development, and using various indices of corruption (used to compare the correlation of corruption with real per capita GDP, Gini coefficient and quintile income shares, etc). In a cross-section of 37 countries, a significant impact of corruption on inequality was found, while taking into account various other exogenous variables.

When controlling for GDP per head, this impact remains significant at a 10 % level. It was concluded that deterioration in a country's corruption index of 2.5 points on a scale of 0 to 10 is associated with the same increase in the Gini coefficient as a reduction in average secondary schooling of 2.

3 years. Researchers have also tested various instrumental variables to ascertain whether the relationship between corruption and inequality is not a case of reverse causality. Suggested Solutions??? Develop and help to develop spiritual qualities like love, purity, cleanliness, duty, sincerity, empathy, non-injury, equity, unity, philanthropy, justice, happiness etc.

among people Let spirituality / morality be taught in academic institutions as a compulsory subject of study at every stage.??? ? All the religious leaders viz Muslim Imams, Hindu Gurus, Christian Fathers, Buddhist Monks etc should preach spirituality / morality as the universal religious teachings not fanatic / bigoted / malicious /dogmatic / ritualistic / narrow minded teachings that stands against unity in diversity.

Spirituality should be the common teaching to the people by the religious leaders.??? Corruption during the elections i. e. distribution of money, intoxications, drugs, throwing parties/feasts etc to the voters by the candidates or demanding them by the voters to the candidates should be stopped.

This excess of expenses during elections are the root causes of corruption by the elected public leaders when they become Ministers, MPs or Chairmen etc.? General public also cannot stop them from corruption as they got corrupted money & treats during election. So, there should be strict rules to punish both the candidates and the voters who give or demand money etc. Only when elections are held corrupt free, then we can expect corrupt free government functioning.

??? The heads of all the government departments should be the examples of dutiful & corrupt free people of integrity. They should see how his/her department is functioning in the interest/welfare of the people. Result oriented, innovative plans/projects should be implemented sincerely & effectively. Any careless & undutiful staff should be subjected to immediate disciplinary action.???? The heads of educational & other training institutes

viz VCs, Principals, Head Masters, Head Mistresses, CEOs; Directors etc should be people of integrity and set examples of dutifulness. Then, they should see that all the teaching & non-teaching staff are discharging their duties properly.

? The teachers should be dutiful and teach the students not just for salary but to produce good students. Education is not business [unfortunately now the reverse is true!]. Education is for making of good human beings not money making alone.? ??? Presidents, Secretaries & other Heads of the Social Welfare Organizations, Non Governmental Organizations, and Revolutionary Groups should be the people of ideal characters, corrupt free, dutiful people of integrity with broad outlook for common good above their narrow group interests.? ????? Ministers, MPs, Mayors, Chairmen should always keep peoples welfare above all in all their undertakings. All their dealings should be based on justice.

Quality work/control must be ensured. They should not exercise their power for selfish ends. They should be paid good salaries & other facilities to ensure them live decently and discharge public duties smoothly without any fear or pressure.

Ministers, MPs, Mayors, Chairmen are the most important people to stop corruption. Direct government functionaries like Governors, Secretaries, and officers should be models of dutiful, corrupt free people of integrity. They should stand for justice and public good.??? Parents / Guardians first duty is to give birth to children whom they can guide properly. Early & unplanned marriages should be avoided. Parents / Guardians should have spiritual

qualities and inherit them to their children.? They should ensure that their children become good human beings with spiritual qualities while providing higher education.

They should not encourage children to any kind of corrupted dealings.

Morality is above money. Home is the best place for spiritual / moral education.??? It is very dangerous because human life is at stake.

Unqualified/substandard doctors/surgeons may cost human life due to wrong prescriptions or wrong operations.

Drugs from substandard manufacturers can damage peoples health severely or even death. Undutiful doctors again cost human life. So, it is in the public interest that all kinds of corruptions be stopped in Health Care.???

Substandard office buildings, hospitals, complexes, roads, bridges, canals, walls, drainages ??| are all the clearly reflected images of corruption in this sector.

Department heads, Contractors, Engineers, and Suppliers have drained out public money in their pockets with the dismal work outputs. It is really a pitiful situation indeed. This corruption in public works should be stopped immediately with the exemplary punishment of those who are guilty of misuse of the public funds.??? Problem with the police force is the misuse of force on common people while overlooking injustice of the high commands.

Police is meant for social security, for punishing the guilty & protecting the innocent people. Corruption of police at all levels has to stop immediately.? Army is meant for defending the country against foreign invasions not for harassing the innocent citizens.

Navy & Air force personals are not supposed to live in luxury in the name of water & air defense. All the three defense wings should do social work while there is no war else it is a waste of public money to maintain them.

Corruption in gun deal or boats/ships/aircraft carrier or fighter jets etc. are to be stopped at all levels.??? Whether Agriculture, Horticulture, Sericulture, Veterinary, Public Distribution Systems, Accounts, Statistics, Trade & Commerce, Legal, Social Welfare, Forestry, banks, post Offices, Irrigation & Flood Control or any other government department you name it and there is found corruption in one way or the other.

So, now all these nonsense called corruptions have to stop in all the departments else the future is very gloomy for the society.??? Stop bribery in all kinds of appointments. Appoint only qualified & merited people.

Justice should rule not influence or quota please.? ??? Todays misguided youths are dazzled by money & material power. They are materially overfed and spiritually starved. They are getting lost in material whirlpool while neglecting spiritual qualities.

This trend of youths results in looking for fast & easy money to fulfill their immediate material desires while forgetting efforts to earn/deserve them. Then come the delinquent crimes graduating to armed gangs. Rest of the youth are doing blind imitation of Hollywood & Bollywood, drug culture of the spoiled children of the west, uncontrolled sex, indiscriminate eating & drinking habits, free use of fire-arms, loss of interest in studies, general lack of discipline etc eating up their moral fabrics. Todays youths are the worst products of the morally degraded modern society. Instead of revolting

against corruption they themselves are involved in the corruption. Now is the time for the youths to wake up and analyze things, take up good things & discard the bad, not to follow people blindly but use their intelligence to do what is best for them and revolt against corruption of all kinds.

Conclusion This? Sociological Study of Corruption as? a Social Problem in Bangladesh has examined the existing discourse on corruption, with particular reference to our contemporary understanding of the term. This Paper has found the issues of corruption to be shaped by historically specific ideological influences, among which modernization theories have played an important part. As a result of these influences, it is generally believed that the eradication of corruption will have a civilizing effect on society, the implication being that corruption is closely related to backward or traditional forms of organization.

According to this theory, since third world countries have not yet achieved the required level of sophistication to be completely civilized or modern, they are required to emulate the example of the developed societies which, it is implied, have achieved a higher level of modernity already. The ideal held up before the third world, personified in the concept of a rational-legal bureaucracy, and a liberal-democracy, is regarded to have been nearly perfected in the developed world. But, as this Study has argued, the basis upon which the above thesis originates is faulty. In the first place, the changes which came about in the developed world were largely the result of socio-economic changes of a specific kind. They were not, as is claimed, universal movements of cultural development which can be replicated with the same results elsewhere. Yet, there is a general perception that

developing countries are more corrupt than developed countries. Granted that in the developing world, corruption permeates both the routine as well as the exclusive aspects of the state and polity; while in the developed world it does not – here it is found mainly at the apex of political activity.

But there is evidence to indicate that corruption in the developed world is by no means negligible. Indeed, the significance of corruption to Bangladesh is not underestimated. It has been noted that corruption in Bangladesh is almost a way of life.

There is ample evidence that corruption in the polity undermines the moral fabric of society. But it is also noted that in spite of this reality, there is little independent and objective research on the process of corruption, removed from its (undoubtedly) normative implications. Most works which deal with the subject tend to focus on the normative aspects of corruption, often confusing cause with effect. The drawback of this approach is that it tends to obscure reality, and implicitly or explicitly, it usually encourages the attribution of blame for the existence of corruption. Consequently, there is an urgent need for social science to devise effective ways of addressing the issue of corruption. In order to do this, it is necessary to isolate and where necessary, abandon concepts which are inaccurate, alien or ideologically biased, so that the various characteristics of corruption as they exist in the real world can be understood.

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