



## Corruption-Hindrance to Good Governance: Role of Social Work Professionals

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### Abstract:

*The Article is based on the available recent published National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) Statistics to show the Magnitude of the Evil of Corruption, and aims to bring out the role of Social Work Professionals in Creating awareness regarding the menace of Corruption and its evil consequences which hinders social and economic development of our society.*

*The Incidence of corruption is alarming as per the official reports of Crime in India NCRB Data 2022 - Prevention of Corruption Act and related sections of IPC cases of all India in 2022 is of 2180. There can be no second opinion as far this evil effect of corruption on country's polity economy and society as a whole. In a socialist democracy, corruption weakens the very base of good governance and the common citizens become the most affected victims of the corrupt practices.*

The **Corruption Perception Index (CPI)** is an index published annually by Transparency International (TI) since 1995; which ranks countries "by their 'perceived' levels of public sector corruption, as determined by experts' assessment and opinion surveys." The Transparency International (TI) generally defines corruption as "**the misuse of public power for private benefit**".

India's Rank is 93 among 180 countries in 2023.

In the Post independence India to control corruption, there are several attempts in form of laws and institutions Like CVC, CBI, Lokpal and ACB However hard we may try, the policing or vigilance systems cannot succeed in controlling corruption without the active participation of common citizens. Corruption Laws are as follows:

- The Indian Penal Code Act 1860 Now as The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023.
- The Prevention of Corruption Act 1988
- The Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2002
- The Central Vigilance Commission Act 2003
- The Right to Information Act 2005
- The Central Bureau of Investigation Act 2010
- The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act 2013
- The Whistle Blowers Protection Act 2014

### 1. Corruption Defined

- Webster's 1 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.
- Corruption is commonly defined as the 'abuse of public or corporate office for private gain.'
- The simplest definition of corruption is 'improper or selfish exercise of power and influence attached to a public office or to a special position in public life.'

- Peter H. Odegard, explains "Corruption is in a sense a product of the way of life of an acquisitive society where 'money talks', where what 'works' is justified, and where people are judged by **what they have** rather than **what they are**, the over-emphasis on the general cultural milieu may suggest that spiritual values as distinct from material pursuits are an antidote to corruption". Thus, "Corruption is the betrayal of public trust for individual or group gain".

## 2. Corruption Types

- Grand (Big Scale) Corruption
- Political Corruption
- Corporate Corruption
- Administrative Corruption
- Petty Corruption
- Systematic Corruption
- Sextortion Corruption.

## 3. Consequences of Corruption

- Corruption undermines economic development.
- Corruption affects political stability and government legitimacy.
- Corruption undermines the social fabric itself and public morality standards.

**Source** (World Bank Global Issues Seminar Series , Topic ; Cancer of Corruption by Dr Vinay bhargava Director International Affairs The World Bank,October 2005).

The law CVC Act 2003 itself solicits peoples' active participation in controlling corruption and identifying corrupt officers. The question is-how aware is the community about the nitty-gritty of the complex mechanism of the anti-corruption mechanisms? How many ordinary citizens will understand the meaning and scope of corruption? How many of them know where to report if they are forced to be a part of corruption.

## 4. CVC's Annual Report 2022 Emphasises

Assess Implementation as organized Watch groups and Community Awareness to challenge Corruption CVC's appeal for public participation as:

- Keeping in view the spirit of the Constitutional obligations and the need to encourage ethical conduct, the Commission endeavours to promote integrity and eradicate corruption which can be achieved only with the active support and participation of the citizens and other institutions. Public participation plays a vital role in the fight against corruption in the following ways:
  - (i) Encouraging ethical conduct of individuals and organisations;
  - (ii) Educating and creating awareness about the rights and duties of the citizen, the rules, regulations, duties and responsibilities of public officials and public institutions and public awareness regarding various public welfare schemes being run by the Government.
  - (iii) Acting as a watchdog through public scrutiny of the actions of public servants by exposing the wrongdoers.
    - Standing by upright and honest officials.
  - (iv) Acting as a feedback channel to the public authority for redressal of grievances of the citizens.
  - (v) Institutional and moral support to those fighting corruption.
  - (vi) Exhorting the citizens and organisations to perform their lawful duties.
  - (vii) Exhorting citizens and organisations to follow due processes.

(The starred one from the above list fall within the domain of social work)

In order to attain a corruption free society, all stake holders including Government, citizens and the private sector must share the responsibility for creation of awareness of corruption as well as refrain from

indulging in unethical acts. Aware, active, involved and empowered public is, therefore, essential to any anti-corruption campaign. Anti-corruption strategies are not simply policies that can be planned in advance and isolation, but often a set of subtler insights that can be developed only in conjunction with public participation. Combating corruption is, therefore, not just a matter of making laws and creating institutions, but is deeply rooted in human values and morals of individuals and the fight against corruption cannot be won without citizens' support, participation and active vigilance by all concerned. **\*One of the roles specified by CVC to fight against corruption is “Acting as a Watchdog” As most of the appeals for public participation go in vain for want of awareness and motivation, social work can rightly play the link role in awareness building and raising a collective conscience.**

The reality is, despite the system's formal efforts to reach all to common citizens there is a lot of ignorance about citizen rights as well as duties in their matter. Before assessing how social work can help curb corruption one must understand the Definition of Social Work Profession

“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, Humans rights, **Collective responsibility** and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and **structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing”** Source (IFSW and IASSW 2014)

## 5. Social Work Relevance

- Criminology and Correctional Management is one of the Important fields of social work.
- Community Crime Prevention, Crime reduction, Correction of the Criminal Rehabilitation of the offender and Education of potentials victims are the major tasks of professional social workers.
- The Write up is closely linked with social work as it aims to facilitate **Enhancing Good Governance through Community Awareness building** and there by preventing white collar crimes Such as Corruption.
- Social workers' role is to intervene in resolving problems, promoting Socially healthy behavior and functioning of individuals and creating watch groups in community to promote safe environment.

Social work professionals have skills to reach out to people and the community at large and build awareness of a common individuals, groups and communities. Crime and corrections being one of the major fields of social work profession, it is important for them to focus on their major hindrance to good governance and bridge the gap so that the people learn to resist, report Corruption and thereby contribute in good governance.

In The end, the Authors propose to throw some reflections on the role of Social work profession in collaborating with the anti-corruption system and mechanism and seek the learned audience's views on the subject.

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