

Moral Norms And Corruptibility Of Administrative Facet Of Pakistani Society

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Abstract

The present paper focused on determining the cultural contexts of corruption in Pakistan with special reference to administrative norms. Out of four public sector organisations, a total of 384 respondents were selected. Data were collected via a questionnaire based on the Likert scale. In order to evaluate and establish associations between variables, statistical analysis using the Chi-square test was used. Statistical analysis showed that the perception of corruption was significantly related to a specific variable on the bivariate level. A number of policy recommendations and proposals are based upon comprehensive research findings: redefinition and revitalization of religious and moral values, of openness, uprightness and patriotism at the families, educational and community levels, through active participation by all sectors of society with particular attention to media, religious leaders, teachers and politicians; promoting admiration and honesty awards; devising research-based policies and laws to discourage standards promoting corruption; and implementing anti-corruption training in Pakistani society at all levels of education.

Key Words: Corruption, Culture, Moral Norms

Introduction

In some countries, because of the cultural prerogative, corruption is more acceptable to their peoples (Olivier and Jean, 1999), the officials involved in corruption justify their actions due to the consistency of local culture. Furthermore, strong flexible standards for the prevalence of such rules help corrupt officials and corrupt forces in the masses to perpetuate their business without any fear of government or system. In this case, the bureaucratic system is also no more than a fantasy, as the state balance should not determine the legitimacy or illegitimacy of acts. Gupta (1995) concluded corruption as a purely social phenomenon, but in his work for developed and underdeveloped nations with changes from culture to culture. Bribery and other illegal contacts are usually given a very negative significance in most of the developed countries. Without any other exit, payment has been linked to a solution of the problem. There are two obvious reasons for the feeling of mutual obligations: at first the idea that helping others means helping oneself does not reciprocate or self-interest in the back of one's mind. Corruption often suffers from the sins of a member of the organisation because it leads to a departure for new generations and therefore marks its ancients as deviant. In traditional societies, where value change is rare, it is usually regarded as less acceptable. The results of moral violation, whether or not the existing law is violated, are usually taken without consideration. Cultural prospects are widespread in excessive or appropriate corruption actions. A loser culture can serve as a precaution to corruption by accepting corrupt practices as a cultural norm. This sense of ownership of those affected leads to legitimate, legal and consistent with the prevalent culture in the illegal actions. The social rules therefore approve of the prevalence of this type of behaviour as an increase in value for prevalent culture to promote and dissolve corruption (Yang, 1994; Chiabi, 2006; and Olivier and Jean, 1999).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1.1. Moral Norms

Neu et al. (2014) has examined the role of informal inspections and formal monitoring in shaping organisational members' ethics and moral behaviour. The Author suggested that anti-corruption practices are not effective until these strategies are designed that are based upon the analysis and understanding of policies and practices, and have the ability to discourage corruption and enhance morals within the organisation. Such measures are effective in building the sense of organisational members being free to perform an action and being exposed to anti-corruption practices simultaneously. The practices for individuals and organisations are therefore productive and disciplinary.

The effects on the morale and ethical conduct of employees of organisations were investigated by Neu et al. (2014). The study focused on two firms and specifically examined employee ethical behaviour. The Author stressed the development, based on situation analysis of power relations, of such anti-corruption strategies and practices and promoting visibility of activities to increase transparency. This will help to overcome corrupt actions, improve employees' ethical behaviour and reduce corruption. Although such transparency

arrangements do not fully prevent corruption, the author stressed that they promote positive ethical interaction among stakeholders, which reduces the chances of corruption. This initiative's philosophy is that these soft measures do not prevent the freedom of employees to work and decide, and do so ethically in order to prevent corruption. The role that these rules play in informally disciplining employees also increases their productivity and benefits the company's results.

The stigma is a strong innate prohibition against corruption which **Spichtig and Traxler (2011)** say has forced normal behaviour to be promoted. Stigma is high if most people in society dislike corruption; hence corruption in such societies becomes rare. But a high prevalence of corruption robs the minds of the general masses of the sensations of stigma.

In developing countries such as **Estonia, Ruth, and Kulliki (2008)** have referred to development efforts. In their opinion, the Estonian government has been stressing economic development since the last fifteen years. Development policy is expanded and further items on the social agenda are included. One focus of the government was on raising awareness of the social responsibility of Estonian managers and owners. In addition, certain visible changes in the social responsibilities of stakeholders are observed, in particular from the lower levels. Personal initiatives take responsibility in some rare cases, but that is not the general tendency. Therefore, personal initiatives are not enough to trigger more social change. However, changes are taking place, albeit slowly, and will be dynamised in due course. Personal initiative by individuals plays a role in bringing about social changes in every developing society with an emphasis on economic development.

Miller (2006) found that increasing cultural acceptance of corruption reduces the real costs of corruption and thus increases the performance of corruption. The author said that corruption in society reduces the chances of detecting corruption and subsequently punishing corrupt people. Citizens of such societies do not file corruption complaints if bribe is requested directly or indirectly. The result is a growing case of corruption and a greater balance of corruption.

Moral Norms Objectives of the Study

1. To know the cultural contexts of corruption with specific reference to administrative norms in Pakistani society.
2. To identify the perception of the people in different positions from sampled organizations towards corruption.
3. To measure the relationship between cultural contexts of corruption and corruption perception with special reference to moral norms.
4. To put forward recommendations / Suggestions on the basis of study findings for curtailing / minimizing the menace of corruption from society.

MATERIALS & METHODS

The present study, being quantitative in nature, was carried out in Swat district. The study units included District Police, Excise & Taxation, Revenue & Estate, and Forest Departments whereby employees from lower to higher cadre were interviewed on the issue.

Sampling

Results obtained from sample are reliably generalizable to whole population, if properly drawn (Sekaran, 2003). In this study proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used for sampling purpose. The study population was divided into four strata on the basis of administrative departments namely, District Police, Excise & Taxation, Revenue & Estate and Forest Departments. Respondents from all cadres were then randomly chosen for data collection.

Sample Size

The sample size of the current study was drawn while adopting the analogy of Sekaran (2003). As per that analogy, the sample size of 384 was selected. It was further sub divided into 04 strata as per breakup given in the table, wherein samples are shown proportionally distributed. This distribution was made through proportionate stratified sampling. In each stratum samples were taken randomly. For allocation method, the following formula was used;

$$n_i = \frac{n \cdot N_i}{N} \quad (\text{Chaudry and Kamal, 1996})$$

Where;

n_i = Proportion of sample allocated to i th stratum

N_i = Population of i th stratum

n = Total sample size

N = Total Population

Breakup of Sample Size as per Proportionate Stratified Sampling.

S.No	Categories of Respondents (Departments)	Sample Size
1	Excise and Taxation	51
2	District Police	74
3	Revenue and Estate	185
4	Forest	74
TOTAL		384

Data Collection

Conceptual frame work for the current article is comprised of an independent and one dependent variable. For primary data collection on stated variables, a well thought-out and comprehensive questionnaire was prepared that encompassed all the aspects of the study variables.

Conceptual Framework

Keeping in view the study dimensions based on observation on everyday practice and derivations from the related literature, the following conceptual frame work was designed.

Independent Variables		Dependent Variable
	Cultural Contexts	Corruption
1.	Moral Norms.	

Tool of Data Collection

In present study, the questionnaire was constructed on the basis of study objectives, conceptual framework and research questions. Likert scale questionnaire was design with three option (agree, disagree, don't know).

Indexation

The responses on attitudinal statements (items) of dependent variable were indexed. The items were indexed to measure a single variable, "corruption perception" in analogy with Nachmias(1992). The indexed dependent variable was cross tabulated with independent variable for testing their significance of association.

Data Analysis

The data was entered and analyzed through SPSS (20) software for drawing the inferences from Uni-variate and Bi-variate analysis.

Uni-variate Analysis

All study variables including background, independent and dependent variables were analyzed through uni-variate technique by using frequencies and Percentagewise.

Bi-Variate Analysis

For ascertaining the strength of association between independent and dependent variables, the statistical technique of Bi-variate analysis was used. The tests used for this purpose included Chi-square test and Fishar Exact test respectively.

Chi-Square Test

For calculation of Chi-square value (χ^2) the procedure outlined by Tai (1978) was adopted.

$$(\chi^2) = x^2 = \sum_{j=1}^j \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{(o_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}} \quad (\text{Tai, 1978})$$

Where

(χ^2) = Chi-square for two categorical variables

o_{ij} = the observed frequencies in the cross-classified category at ith row and jth column

e_{ij} = the expected frequency for the same category, assuming no association between variables under investigation

The degree of freedom is calculated as follows;

Df	=	(r-1) (c-1)	where
Df	=	Degree of freedom	
r	=	the number of rows	
c	=	the number of columns	

One of the assumptions of Chi-square test i.e. no expected frequency is lesser than 5 was violated for several times in the data. Therefore, Fisher Exact Test was employed instead of Chi-square test to rectify the effects of assumption violation (Baily, 1982).

$$\text{Fisher Exact Test} = \frac{(a+b)!(c+d)!(a+c)!(b+d)!}{N! a! b! c! d!}$$

Where a, b, c and d were the observed numbers in four cells of contingency table and “N” the total number of observations

Moral norms are common universals. These are internalized during socialization process at various social institutions. Human by instinct try to violate such standards that restrict his behavior. Formation of coalitions and groups to continue immoral acts becomes common in environment with ambiguities and loss of control, which in turn promotes mistrust and dishonesty. The emerging new values are cheating values that are devastative for social order with high moral costs.

In this study perception of respondents regarding moral norms is limited to few statements as given in the table. Majority of 46.1% respondents disregarded moral norms as rigid and unalterable whereas, 32% were in favor of this view and 21.9% were uncertain about it. Similarly, 68.8% respondents negated that our institutions were providing sufficient training to its members to be aware of all the ills of corruption, 23.7% found social institutions accomplishing this function and 7.6% were uncertain in this regard. Likewise, majority of 67.2% respondents refuted that fear of disintegration of society was contributing as driving force behind observance of moral norms, whereas, 28.9% accepted this view. In addition, 48.7% respondents reported that evaluative standards of life changes with change in economic and power status of individuals, 34.4% negated this view and 16.9% were uncertain in this regard. Furthermore, a majority of 66.9% respondents disregarded the view that due to acceptance of corruption in society its moral costs are reduced, 27.9% adhered to this view and 5.2% were uncertain. Conversely, 50.2% respondents thought that moral norms entertain various social classes uniformly, 45.3% respondents negated it and 4.4% were uncertain about it. Similarly, majority of 65.1% respondents agreed that corruption could be reduced by providing encouragement and reward to the honest deeds in government organizations. It is evident from these findings that moral development embodies consistent cultural norms predictable in situational contexts. Support to these findings is vivid from Plateau (1994) report that stressed on establishment of sound basis for moral development otherwise human being prefer to swerve wherever he found an opportunity to deviate. Successful events of immoral deed reduce trust on morality and pave the way for deviance, especially when social control is weak or biased. The resulting outcome is promotion of cheating values. However, the losses of these cheating values in the form of social disorder and disintegration are so high that the society has to conform to moral values for its own

safety and existence. Education and religion, according to the author, can perform their role in bringing positive changes for reestablishment of the environment of trust. However, some additional efforts in form of monitoring of institutional systems and an appropriate check for misconducts are desired. Goel and Rich (1989) also narrated that before making a corrupt transaction the actors make a comparison of costs and benefits. The costs of corruption are reduced in case of greater societal acceptance. Moral costs of corruption are reduced when the family members, relatives, friends and close circle groups don't see corruption with disdain.

Majority of 67.2% respondents reported that corruption could be reduced by providing public service training to public servants emphasizing service delivery to client; this view was negated by 28.9% respondents. Similarly, a big chunk of 56.3% respondents viewed organizational norms are strong enough to deflect individual's norms that contradict with organizational objectives, 31.5% denied this view and 12.2% were uncertain. Likewise, incentives provided by the organization were found influential in molding employee ethical behavior by 47.4% respondents, 38% found these incentives ineffective and 14.6% were uncertain about it. These findings suggested a unified role on part of the government for devising anticorruption strategies, strictly in accordance with the prevalent cultural perspectives. Goel and Rich (1989) had similar findings, that before committing a corrupt act the actor makes a cost benefit comparison of repercussions of such act. A society with loose moral norms permits occurrence of corruption. Societies with profuse corruption, the citizens are less likely to file complaints when victimized through corrupt deeds. The result is an optimal increase in corruption and development of high corruption equilibrium. Migdal (1988) investigated the causes of low state capacity of developing countries in controlling corruption. The author stated that among many organizations, state is one that struggle to control corruption. The rules set by the state help in controlling citizen's behavior. Anti-corruption rules set by the state confront with the local culture most of the times. These rules stress on public service delivery with impartiality, however, the cultural norms promote the values of gift giving, nepotism, and favoritism for up keeping the kinship solidarity.

Frequencies and Percentagewise Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of their Perception of Moral Norms

Statements	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Moral norms are Rigid and unalterable.	123(32.0)	177(46.1)	84(21.9)
Our institutions give sufficient moral trainings to its members to be aware of ills of corruption.	91(23.7)	264(68.8)	29(7.6)
People observe moral norms out of fear that its violation will disintegrate society	111(28.9)	258(67.2)	15(3.9)
People varying in economic and social power have different evaluative standards of life.	187(48.7)	132(34.4)	65(16.9)
Moral costs of corruption are reduced as our society has greater corruption acceptance	107(27.9)	257(66.9)	20(5.2)
Though classes exist but moral norms entertain	193(50.3)	174(45.3)	17(4.4)

them with uniformity.			
Encouraging and rewarding honest deed in government organizations discourage corruption.	250(65.1)	116(30.2)	18(4.7)
Public service training to public servants emphasizing service delivery to client can reduce corruption.	258(67.2)	111(28.9)	15(3.9)
Norms and values of organizations deflect the influence of norms and values of employees that interfere with organizational objectives	216(56.3)	212(31.5)	47(12.2)
Extrinsic incentives influence employee ethical standards.	182(47.4)	146(38.0)	56(14.6)

Association between Perception of Moral Norms and Corruption

Moral norms are the established patterns of morality that are developed and accepted by majority of population in certain areas of human life. These norms are taught to all members of society right from the childhood. Moral norms act as tool to integrate and control human behavior for achievement of societal goals. Corruption in a society has its moral costs. It brings personality changes and develops preferences for personal gains over societal objectives, hence, leads to dissatisfaction of masses in general. To test the association of moral norms and corruption in this study the perception of moral norms was limited to few statements as explained under following subsections.

Table Association between Moral Norms and Corruption

Statements	Perception	Corruption		Total	Chi-Square (P=Value)
		Agree	Disagree		
People observe moral norms out of fear that its violation will disintegrate society.	Agree	86(22.4)	25(6.5)	111(28.9)	$\chi^2=28.321$ (0.000)
	Disagree	245(63.8)	13(3.4)	258(67.2)	
	Don't know	15(3.9)	0(0.0)	15(3.9)	
People varying in economic and social power have different evaluative standards of life.	Agree	171(44.5)	16(4.2)	187(48.7)	$\chi^2= 14.302$ (0.001)
	Disagree	110(28.6)	22(5.7)	132(34.4)	
	Don't know	65(16.9)	0(0.0)	65(16.9)	
Moral costs of corruption are reduced as our society has greater corruption acceptance.	Agree	85(22.1)	22(5.7)	107(27.9)	$\chi^2=19.728$ (0.000)
	Disagree	241(62.8)	16(4.2)	257(66.9)	
	Don't know	20(5.2)	0(0.0)	20(5.2)	
Encouraging and rewarding honest deed in government	Agreed	235(61.2)	15(3.9)	250(65.1)	$\chi^2=13.049$ (0.001)
	Disagree	95(24.7)	21(5.5)	116(30.2)	
	Don't know	16(4.2)	2(0.5)	18(4.1)	

organizations discourage corruption.					
Norms and values of organizations deflect the influence of norms and values of employees that interfere with organizational objectives.	Agree	200(52.2)	16(4.2)	216(56.2)	$\chi^2= 15.979$ (0.000)
	Disagree	99(25.8)	22(5.7)	121(31.5)	
	Don't know	47(12.2)	0(0.0)	47(12.2)	
Extrinsic incentives influence employee ethical standards.	Agree	153(39.8)	29(7.6)	182(47.4)	$\chi^2= 15.872$ (0.000)
	Disagree	137(35.7)	9(2.3)	146(38.0)	
	Don't know	56(14.6)	0(0.0)	56(14.6)	
Moral norms are Rigid and unalterable.	Agree	117(30.5)	6(1.6)	123(32.0)	$\chi^2=7.807$ (0.200)
	Disagree	159(41.4)	18(4.7)	177(46.1)	
	Don't know	70(18.2)	14(3.6)	84(21.9)	
Our institutions give sufficient moral trainings to its members to be aware of ills of corruption.	Agree	82(21.4)	9(2.3)	91(23.7)	$\chi^2= 0.325$ (0.850)
	Disagree	237(61.7)	27(7.0)	264(68.8)	
	Don't know	27(7.0)	2(0.5)	29(7.6)	
Though classes exist but moral norms entertain them with uniformity.	Agree	181(47.1)	12(3.1)	193(50.3)	$\chi^2= 5.959$ (0.510)
	Disagree	150(39.1)	24(6.2)	174(45.3)	
	Don't know	15(3.9)	2(0.5)	17(4.4)	
Public service training to public servants emphasizing service delivery to client can reduce corruption.	Agree	231(60.2)	27(7.0)	258(67.2)	$\chi^2= 0.367$ (0.832)
	Disagree	101(26.3)	10(2.6)	111(28.9)	
	Don't know	14(3.6)	1(0.3)	15(3.9)	

Association between Observing Moral Norms out of Fear of Disintegration in Society and Corruption

Corruption perception had a highly significant association with observing moral norms out of fear of disintegration in society ($p=0.000$). It is evident from these results that people had a high faith in morality and considered it a tool of social and cultural integration. Moral norm is the expected morality being a member of a social group. These norms, in majority cases, have religious basis which exert a psychological push for its observance from the believers. Violation of moral norms is believed to be associated with anger and aversion from divine powers and brings curse on nonobservant. Moreover, disregarding morality may bring division and destruction to the society. These beliefs are strong driving forces to avoid personal gains in lieu of avoiding destruction to society. Support to these findings is vivid from Plateau (1994) who reported that stress on establishment of sound basis for moral development otherwise human beings prefer to swerving, wherever, he finds an opportunity

to deviate. Successful events of immoral deeds reduce trust in morality and pave the way for

deviance, especially when social control is weakened or biased. The resulting outcome is the promotion of cheating values. However, the losses of these cheating values in the form of social disorder and disintegration are so high that the society has to conform to moral values for its own safety and existence.

Summary

respondent's perception regarding moral norms are summarized as majority of 46.1% respondents disregarded moral norms as rigid and unalterable, 68.8% respondents negated that our institutions were providing sufficient training to its members to be aware of all ills of corruption, 67.2% refuted that fear of disintegration of society was driving force behind observance of moral norms, 48.7% reported that evaluative standards of life changes with change in economic and power status of individuals and 66.9% disregarded the view that due to acceptance of corruption in society its moral costs are reduced. Conversely, 50.2% respondents thought that moral norms entertain various social classes uniformly, 65.1% agreed that corruption could be reduced by providing encouragement and reward to honest deed in government organizations, 67.2% reported that corruption could be reduced by providing public service training to public servants emphasizing service delivery to client, 56.3% viewed organizational norms are strong enough to deflect individual's norms that interfere with organizational objectives, 47.4% agreed that incentives provided by the organization were found influential in molding employee ethical behavior.

The association between perception of moral norms and corruption perception makes it evident that corruption perception had a significant association with observing moral norms out of fear of disintegration in society ($p=0.000$), different evaluative standards of life based on people's power ($p=0.001$), moral costs of corruption are reduced as society has greater corruption acceptance ($p=0.000$), rewarding honest deed in government organizations to discourage corruption, norms and values of employee deflected by organizational norms ($p=0.000$) and extrinsic incentives to influence employee ethical standards ($p=0.000$). Contrarily the association of corruption perception was non-significant with rigidity of moral norms ($p=0.200$), moral training provided to members by their institutions ($p=0.850$), moral norms entertain different classes uniformly ($p=0.510$) and provision of public service training to the employee ($p=0.832$).

Conclusion

Moral norms in a nut shell have psychological consequences which help to avoid all ills. But these standards are diluted over time and thus promote acceptance of discriminatory treatments based on power and economic status in society. Organizational standards are subject to individual norms that encourage personal gains over organisational objectives. The poor state of education of public servants in morals and honest deeds promotes dishonesty and corruption.

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