STUDY THE IMAGE OF ANTI CORRUPTION INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH REGION

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ABSTRACT

The concept of democracy must be defined since it cannot be thought of as static, solitary phenomena Rather; it has changed over time and continues to do so, with new understandings occasionally emerging. These conceptions of democracy are crucial to comprehending and conducting any research on political corruption because they have led to various yardsticks for evaluating democracy, outlining its characteristics, and explaining how well it functions. Because anti-corruption institutions in India are ineffective and unable to stop corruption, citizens of the nation have come to distrust these institutions, which have increased the role of individuals outside of government in starting anti-corruption initiatives. These advancements have increased optimism for democratic transformation and highlighted the necessity of evaluating the effectiveness of democracy in reducing corruption. Democracy is now seen as a multi-dimensional, contested phenomenon rather than a linear process, which makes assessment even more challenging and complex. However, widespread corruption and its effects on democracy's operation have increased the need for a new and fresh appraisal of democracy, which can aid in the launch of successful and efficient anti-corruption efforts. It is crucial to realize that proper research on the subject, which must be done at two levels—theoretical and empirical—should not be conducted before anti-corruption policies are implemented. It must be understood that ineffective or insufficient efforts to address the issue are frequently undertaken due to a lack of adequate corruption research. In light of this, the importance of conducting a democratic evaluation is highlighted.

KEY WORDS: Anti Corruption, Institutions, Public Opinion, Empirical, Democracy.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONCEPT OF CORRUPTION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

The definition of corruption is receiving favors in exchange for illegal gain. This multifaceted monster has existed for eons in both rich and developing nations, in all eras, and is not a recent occurrence. History records several instances of kings in the distant past lying, deceiving, and engaging in similar behavior. British employees and officials participated in unethical behavior during the East India Company's rule. Corruption has long roots in political and administrative organizations after independence. A crucial need for sustainable development is good governance. Development is stifled and hampered by bad government. The process of development is hampered in nations when there is corruption, bad management of public funds, a lack of accountability, and violations of human rights. The most amazing development triumphs in human history can be attributed to a number of key causes, one of which is good governance. According to the World Bank monograph on Governance and Development from 1992, solid economic strategies must be complemented by effective governance. The effectiveness of markets and governments, and subsequently economic progress, depend on predictable and transparent policy frameworks and efficient and responsible public sector management. The World Bank understands that effective governance cannot be guaranteed by a prescriptive set of rules. Because of a variety of historical, geographical, and cultural circumstances, every country is at a different stage of political, economic, and social development. Some nations, like Singapore, have established very effective institutions and regulations that support the growth of an economy based on transparency. On the other hand, the performance of the government is still severely constrained in some other nations due to political, institutional, and other factors. To counter this, ineffective governance may very well weaken the capacity of individuals, institutions, and communities to provide for even the most fundamental requirements of the population. Human poverty and inequality are not just a result of poor economic performance; rather, they are linked to social and political issues that have their roots in bad administration. A strong relationship between the citizenry and the government is the foundation of good governance in a democracy. The Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, Sections 161–171 of the Indian Penal Code, and the Civil Services Conduct Rules all define corruption in India as it relates to the citizen–administration interface. All of the arguments have in common that corruption happens when public servants abuse or misappropriate their positions of authority. It must be noted, though, that the phenomena is not always one-sided. Many times, someone from outside the government—either an individual or an organization—stands to gain from a corrupt conduct committed by a government official.

Regarding the connections between corruption and governance, it is generally accepted that the pernicious threat of corrupt behavior eats away at the foundations of governance structure and procedure. Governance and corruption have diametrically opposed relationships because only an environment devoid of corruption can

guarantee the free and equitable provision of goods and services.

1.2 BUILDING TRUST IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

The process of interaction between the state, civil society, and the private sector in making political, administrative, economic, and social decisions that have an impact on citizens is known as governance. Building trust is a byproduct of inclusive government as well as its primary determinant. Government representatives, politicians, and political organizations are more likely to enjoy public trust. Citizens are more inclined to trust public officials, lawmakers, and political institutions where government is both efficient and democratic. Decentralization and local governance, electoral and parliamentary processes, civil society engagement and partnerships with the government and the private sector, accountability and transparency of governance, conflict management and recovery are key elements of good governance that influence trust in government and public sector capacity. The achievement of organizational goals, work happiness, and motivation are all reportedly impacted by trust. Trust is frequently thought to be closely related to a country's development or economic prosperity. Social capital is said to make it possible for people to confide in one another and create new organizations and gatherings. While encouraging with rules and regulations, trust in government and public institutions raises the level of acceptance of public policy and lowers administrative expenses. Increased values, accelerated growth, enhanced innovation, improved cooperation, stronger partnering, better execution, and increased loyalty are all characteristics of high-trust organizations. A culture of trust must be fostered for both individual and corporate success. In order to effectively implement their policy measures and achieve good governance, central and local institutions must prioritize developing public trust in institutions.

1.3 BUILDING TRUST IN ANTI-CORRUPTION INSTITUTIONS

In both industrialized and developing nations, corruption is identified as one of the most significant political reasons causing a fall in public trust. In India, corruption has grown significantly. The government has ranked the battle against corruption as a top priority. Despite this, there are still many cases of judicial corruption as well as political and bureaucratic corruption that involve the misappropriation of public monies. Major corruption scandals have also affected high-ranking officials. Public utilities, infrastructure, tax and customs administration, as well as the police, are some of the areas most impacted by corruption. Numerous surveys have found that the police are among the most corrupt agencies. The Central Vigilance Commission, Central Bureau of Investigation, and Lokpal at the national level, and Vigilance Departments, Anti-Corruption Bureaus, and

Lokayuktas at the state level, are the main anti-corruption institutions established by the governments within the legal and institutional framework. Additionally, the institution of Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) also plays a crucial part in making the public aware of the truth regarding embezzlement and money wasting.

2. RESEACH METHODOLOGY

The study is primarily a primary investigation based on a sample survey of the general public and Anti-Corruption Bureau staff, and the data is gathered using a questionnaire or schedule. However, information from both primary and secondary sources has been incorporated. The primary data is based on a random sample of the general public and police officers who work closely with the State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau's corruption investigations. Personal observations gathered during the field trip were also used to collect data.

2.1 PRIMARY DATA

A schedule has been used to collect primary data. In order to gather information from the general public, complainants, and police officials who are directly involved in corruption cases at the State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau, a schedule has been prepared. Additionally, information was gathered via conducting interviews with the respondents, making personal observations, and having sporadic informal talks.

2.2 MEASURES OF DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The features of the sample population as a whole are described using the descriptive statistical measures. They restrict generalization to the specific population being observed or researched. Most often used in action research, statistical analysis based on the calculation of descriptive statistical measures offers important details on the characteristics of the specific group and that group only. In the current investigation, the following descriptive statistical methods are employed.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Shimla, Kangra, and Mandi districts all share the same perception of SV&ACB as does the rest of society. In comparison to the overall respondents, 33.6 and 18.1 percent of public respondents said that the SV&ACB's public image was below average or poor, respectively, while a sizable number of respondents, or 47.7 percent, said that the Anti-Corruption Bureau's public image was average. Only 0.3 percent of respondents gave the

SV&ACB excellent or very good ratings. Table makes it clear that the majority of respondents believed SV&ACB's reputation was either poor or average.

TABLE-1: OCCUPATION-WISE RESPONSES OF PUBLIC REGARDING IMAGE OFSV&ACB AMONG PUBLIC

Occupational Background	Image of SV&ACB among Public					
	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor	Total
Students	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	27(45.0)	22(36.7)	11(18.3)	60(100)
Government Employees	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	35(58.3)	17(28.3)	08(13.3)	60(100)
Businessmen	0 (0.0)	0(0.0)	23(38.3)	24(40.0)	13(21.7)	60(100)
Agriculturists	0 (0.0)	0(0.0)	25(41.7)	22(36.7)	13(21.7)	60 (100)
Advocates	01(1.7)	01(1.7)	34(56.7)	15(25.0)	09(15.0)	60(100)
Journalists	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	28(46.7)	21(35.0)	11(18.3)	60(100)
Total	01(0.3)	01(0.3)	172(47.7)	121(33.6)	65(18.1)	360(100)

Note: Figures in parentheses depict percentages

χ^2 = **18.933**   **P-Value = .526**

The Chi-square test was used, and the resulting value (18.933) was determined to be insignificant at the 5% level of significance, supporting the null hypothesis. Therefore, it can be inferred that regardless of the respondents' backgrounds in terms of occupation, the perception of SV&ACB has remained consistent.

It is crucial for the public and SV&ACB authorities to appreciate and understand one another in order to expect collaboration. The results of an attempt to ascertain respondents' opinions with regard to SV&ACB are displayed in Table.

TABLE-2: OPINION REGARDING FEELING ABOUT SV&ACB: OCCUPATION-WISE DISTRIBUTION

Occupational Background	Feeling About SV&ACB			
	Fear of officials	**Respect officials**	**No opinion**	**Total**
Students	17 (28.3)	05 (8.3)	38 (63.3)	60 (100)
Government Employees	34 (56.7)	07 (11.7)	19 31.7)	60 (100)
Businessmen	34 (56.7)	05 (8.3)	21 (35.0)	60 (100)
Agriculturists	18 (30.0)	01 (1.7)	41 (68.3)	60 (100)
Advocates	23 (38.3)	08 (13.4)	29 (48.3)	60 (100)
Journalists	27 (45.0)	08 (13.3)	25 (41.7)	60 (100)
Total	**153 (42.5)**	**34 (9.4)**	**173 (48.1)**	**360 (100)**

Note: Figures in parentheses depict percentages

$\chi^2 = 31.315$ **P-Value = .001**

Table show that 42.5% of respondents from the general population said they were afraid to go see police officers. Only 9.4 percent of respondents said they respected the authorities, and 48.1 percent of respondents said nothing. The Chi-square test was used, and the resultant calculated value (31.315) was significant at a 5% level of significance, rejecting the null hypothesis and supporting the conclusion that there is still public distrust of officials in the Anti-Corruption Bureau.

According to the data above, people are hesitant to ask Anti-Corruption Bureau employees for assistance when they are in need. They are afraid of unnecessarily involving the police, thus they do not report cases of corruption that have occurred in their district to SV&ACB. The following information has been provided in Table regarding "police officials in SV&ACB sincerely ready to help when they need":

TABLE-3: OPINION OF PUBLIC RESPONDENTS REGARDING HELPING NATURE OF SV&ACB OFFICIALS

Occupational Background	Helping Nature of Officials of SV&ACB					
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
Students	08(13.3)	12(20.0)	16(26.7)	18(30.0)	06(10.0)	60(100)
Government Employees	0(0.0)	15(25.0)	1728.3)	26(43.3)	02(3.3)	60(100)
Businessmen	01(1.7)	06(10.0)	18(30.0)	35(58.3)	0(0.0)	60(100)
Agriculturists	03 (5.0)	08(13.3)	28 (46.7)	14(23.3)	07(11.7)	60(100)
Advocates	05(8.3)	07(11.7)	18(30.0)	24(40.0)	06(10.0)	60(100)
Journalists	05(8.3)	15(25.0)	08(13.3)	30(50.0)	02(3.3)	60(100)
Total	**22(6.1)**	**63(17.5)**	**105(29.2)**	**147(40.8)**	**23(6.4)**	**360(100)**

Note: Figures in parentheses depict percentages

χ^2 = **53.922**   **P-Value = .000**

Table make it clear that 6.4 percent of the general public respondents claimed that police officers from SV&ACB never came for assistance, while 40.8 percent, 29.2 percent, and 17.5 percent of respondents, respectively, said that officials were prepared to assist people infrequently, occasionally, and frequently. Only 6.1 percent of respondents believed that police officers were always willing to assist citizens.

At the 1 percent threshold of significance, the estimated value of (53.922) indicates a significant difference. This illustrates how individuals from various vocational backgrounds have diverse perceptions of the SV&ACB officials.

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3.1 BUREAUCRATIC AND POLITICAL INTERFERENCE IN ANTI- CORRUPTION INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION

The performance of obligations to control anti-corruption in any state has an impact on political involvement with government institutions. Most people think that politicians can influence police personnel to do whatever they want. Here, an effort has been made to use feedback from the general population to test this idea.

TABLE-4: PUBLIC PERCEPTION WITH RESPECT TO POLITICAL INTERFERENCE INANTI-CORRUPTION INSTITUTIONS

Occupational Background	Political Interference in SV&ACB					
	Very High Extent	High Extent	Moderate Extent	Some Extent	Not At All	Total
Students	28(46.7)	23(38.3)	0(0.0)	04(6.7)	05(8.3)	60(100)
Government Employees	32(53.3)	20(33.3)	01(1.7)	04(6.7)	03(5.0)	60(100)
Businessmen	38(63.3)	12(20.0)	06(10.0)	01(1.7)	03(5.0)	60(100)
Agriculturists	53(88.3)	04(6.7)	0(0.0)	03(5.0)	0(0.0)	60(100)
Advocates	33(55.0)	16(26.6)	03(5.0)	07(11.7)	01(1.7)	60(100)
Journalists	38(63.3)	17(28.3)	0(0.0)	03(5.0)	02(3.3)	60(100)
Total	222(61.6)	92(25.6)	10(2.8)	22(6.1)	14(3.9)	360(100)

Note: Figures in parentheses depict percentages

$\chi^2 = 54.280$ P-Value = .000

Table paints a very bleak image of how the State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau operates because more than 61.6% of respondents think political intervention in the bureau's operations is to a very high degree. All segments of society, including 88.3% of farmers, 63.3 percent of businesspeople and journalists, 55 percent of advocates, 53.3 percent of public servants, and 46.7 percent of students, hold this belief. Therefore, it would not

be inappropriate to note that the majority of respondents think that the Himachal Pradesh Anti-Corruption Bureau is influenced by pressure from political leaders in governance and others.

When using the two-test, the computed value of two (54.280) is significant at the 1% level of significance, indicating a very high level of political influence in the SV&ACB, which has reduced public confidence in the Himachal Pradesh Anti-Corruption Bureau.

4. CONCLUSION

There can be no disagreement over the fact that corruption has negative effects on democracy, making democratic states less likely to exist. But different thinkers have varied perspectives on whether corruption and democracy are negatively correlated. There is a negative correlation between democratization and corruption, but this correlation is not very strong because this is a statistical relationship and not necessarily a causal one, according to some recent studies by Transparency International and Freedom House on the effect of regime type on levels of corruption. Paldam agrees that the claim that democratization has a direct impact on corruption is unfounded. In his research, he discovered that, in general, corruption will decline with higher degrees of democracy; however, this correlation relies on the degree of democracy or the period of the democratic transition. In a similar vein, Daniel Treisman developed the hypothesis that democratic nations with press freedom and a strong civil society can have greater ability to expose corruption and, therefore, will have lower levels of corruption, as freedom of press and association help in monitoring public officials and exposing abuse of power. This hypothesis was based on a cross-national study on corruption. It's interesting that the study discovered that the relationship between democracy and corruption cannot simply be determined by examining the current state of a nation's political system or by determining if a nation is democratic at the moment. The only way to determine how corrupt a nation is is to look at how long it has been democratic. He believes that nations with long histories of democracy have had some influence on the decline in corruption. Recent years have seen an increase in social movements and non-party political processes, which have challenged and redefined Indian democracy. There is an increasing need to make fundamental structural reforms to the Indian political system as the existing systems of governance are being questioned. While there is broad agreement regarding the nature, causes, and effects of problems like poverty, hunger, and other social and political issues, there is no such agreement regarding the problem of corruption. As a result, any effort to combat corruption is weakened, and requests for anti-corruption reform that come from outside of state structures have very little impact on decision-makers. In India's history of social movements since independence, the recent anti-corruption movement spearheaded by Anna Hazare was a unique endeavor that sparked a national fight against corruption. This campaign might be considered as a

constructive attempt to increase public knowledge of the widespread corruption in governmental operations, which was absent up until now. It is crucial to realize that efforts to combat corruption will have little impact without such consciousness-raising.

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